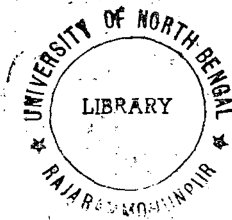
The Story of
CHINA'S REVOLUTION

O. M. GREEN

has also written

CHINA'S STRUGGLE WITH THE DICTATORS

THE FOREIGNER IN CHINA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DR. SUN YAT-SEN

(237)

The Story of
CHINA'S REVOLUTION

by

O. M. GREEN

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Preface

In offering this Story of China's Revolution the writer is conscious of many deficiencies; he hopes there are not too many errors. Records that would have been useful are either not to be got at in war-time or simply non-existent. Dr. Sun Yat-sen's life between his flight from China in 1895 and his return in 1911 is largely a blank; most of his private papers were destroyed when he was driven from Canton in 1922. Again, between Yuan Shih-kai's death in 1916 and the final establishment of the Central Government at Nanking in 1928 the Revolution lost all coherence. The North went one way, the South another, the West for a time pursued a private civil war of its own. Few men of eminence emerged, fewer still of character. They formed and re-formed in ever new combinations with bewildering variety, while the politicians who had stood together in the Revolution of 1911 lost heart and in many instances attached themselves to this or that faction or War Lord from the sheer necessity of making bread and butter. To attempt to trace in detail the interminable intrigues of these years would be a sheer waste of time.

In these circumstances I have tried to tell the story in a series of scenes presenting the chief landmarks of the Revolution, without following an exact chronological order of events, which would mean an enormous amount of jumping about from one end of China to the other. This method, I hope, will make the story easier for readers, as the relevance of the different scenes should be clear enough.

One word more. As one looks back over the past thirty or forty years, one becomes more and more convinced that the most important feature of the Revolution is the rise of the student body since 1919 as a social and political force. The Revolution must have come in any case even without Dr. Sun Yat-sen, although the value of his life, and particularly of his famous "Three Principles of the People", as a slogan embodying popular aims, is certainly not to be underrated. No one who believes in a divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them as we may, can doubt that the gift to China, in her terrible need, of such a leader as General Chiang Kai-shek was a direct act of Divine Providence. But General Chiang would probably be the first to acknowledge that he could not have done what he has done during the war without the spade-work already achieved by the students in awakening the national consciousness.

At the beginning they did silly and extravagant things and got themselves thoroughly detested by Chinese and foreigners alike. But drawing their inspiration from the teachings of K'ang Yu-wei and Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, fired by the sight of Western efficiency and prosperity, they stood for ideals and reforms which gradually permeated all China. The "old-school tie" spirit is strong among them. Once a student, always a student in China; and their agitation is thus not the mere ebullience of untutored youths, but is continually reinforced and tempered by the support of those who have passed on into the world of the professions, business or letters, but never forget that they were once students. It is hardly too much to describe the student movement as the first truly national force in China, its solidarity transcending the old provincial barriers. The great

Literary Renaissance of Dr. Hu Shih and the Mass Education movement of James Yen were both entirely national in aim; and these were seconded by the efforts of thousands of eager youths and girls to awaken a national consciousness among the masses and to inspire them to think of themselves as sons of China rather than of the few square miles to which they and their fathers had been rooted for centuries.

These efforts have naturally been stimulated by the upheaval of war, in which even the tremendous bondage of family ties has been loosened; the unity of China in resistance to Japan goes hand-in-hand with the growth of a public opinion which extends right down to the peasants, centred in a determination to realize the happier life for China which Dr. Sun preached.

This is the best, the most convincing answer to the distressing reports of political strife in high quarters that have been making so unfavourable an impression abroad while this book was being written. Prophecy is proverbially dangerous. But faith is not prophecy, and one cannot review the Story of China's Revolution without absolute faith that the new spirit will triumph over the remnants of reaction as it has triumphed over the hard blows of Japan.

O. M. GREEN.

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Chapter I

THE HERITAGE FROM THE PAST

"I COULD TELL YOU MY ADVENTURES—BEGINNING FROM THIS MORNING," SAID Alice a little timidly; "but it's no use going back to yesterday because I was a different person then."

"Explain all that," said the Mock Turtle.

"No, no! The adventures first," said the Gryphon in an impatient tone; "explanations take such a dreadful time."

The Gryphon's ejaculation is excellent advice for the composition of any book, or article or speech; and certainly China has known enough adventures since she discarded the Manchu Emperors in 1911 to fill many books. Unfortunately, however, it is impossible to understand the meaning of those adventures, the course they have taken and their immense significance for the future, without some acquaintance with the long historical background behind them, and the peculiar keenness with which China keeps that history in mind today as the best guidance to what she means to be after the war. Madame Chiang Kai-shek has emphasized the "spiritual strength" which China draws from the past to nerve her for her struggle with Japan. Without some knowledge of that past one misses completely the key alike to the errors and promise of the Revolution, and the fervour wherewith the Chinese are standing together against Japan.

Paradoxically speaking, China's 4,000 years of Imperial rule were simultaneously excellent preparation and a frequent cause of stumbling in the way of the grand transformation to which she committed herself in 1911. Whatever its faults, it embedded in the Chinese a conception of how life ought to be lived, all the more intensely appreciated now because of its contrast with the soulless totalitarianism of Japan and in defence of which they cheerfully endure any sufferings, serenely sure, as an oriental proverb puts it, that "this also will pass".

The unique feature of Chinese civilization, or rather, perhaps, of the cultural thought which is the only true basis of civilization, is its harmonious continuity from the remote ages of mythology down to modern times. There has never been anything resembling it. The origins of Egyptian civilization are, of course, far older. The Pharaoh who appointed Joseph his viceroy was a comparatively latecomer, and Joseph lived at the beginning of the 17th century B.C., roughly contemporaneous with the founding of the Shang Dynasty in China,* when her history was just beginning to take definite shape out of the mists of legend. But there is no connexion between the Egypt of the Pharaohs and Egypt today; while throughout Europe theories of government, society, art and architecture have been repeatedly broken off short to make a new start.

In China there has been no such break. One, it is true, was attempted by the so-called Napoleon of China, the Ch'in Emperor Shih Huang Ti, who reigned from 221 to 210 B.C., first of all the totalitarians, of whom more presently. But China would have none of the principles of government he tried to force upon her, and, already well set in her political and social theories, reverted to them directly he died. Those who saw the Chinese art exhibition at Burlington House in the autumn and winter of 1935–36 will not have forgotten the majestic bronze vessels from the Shang Dynasty—primitive perhaps, but bold and vital, anything but crude. Other relics have been unearthed in north-west China, perhaps even older

* Some authorities put the beginning of the Shang Dynasty much later. There is no possibility of being certain. It may have been any time between the 17th and 15th centuries B.C.

than the Shangs: vases and urns adorned with intricate geometrical patterns or figures of men, birds and animals bearing witness to an already highly developed artistic sense and skill. And, to revert to the exhibition at Burlington House, as one passed from room to room to study the successive stages of Chinese art—as most easily followed in the porcelain, the exquisite dignity and cool monochrome of the Sung vases, the rich blue and white of the Ming, the prodigal decorativeness of the reigns of K'ang Hsi and Ch'ien Lung—one could not fail to recognize the uniformity of the conception of art which inspired them all. One period was the natural offspring of the one before, richer, more ebullient in fancy, but identical in parentage, all stemming from the same root and faithful to the same traditions.

A like continuity is seen in Chinese writing. The origins of the beautiful ideographs so familiar to all, so difficult to learn, can be traced in the oracle bones* of the Shang Dynasty that have been dug up. For many centuries writing was scratched on slips of bamboo, all the time gradually evolving. But in 130 B.C. the art of writing with a brush on silk or paper was invented, and Chinese calligraphy became for all practical purposes fixed. The intimate association between Chinese painting and writing is well known. What, perhaps, is even more important is that a Chinese scholar must not only be a man of learning but a finished penman as well. There were, of course, degrees in this art according to the inexplicable gifts of Nature: the late Viceroy Chang Chih-tung, for instance, was recognized as the best calligraphist of his day, and specimens of his handwriting were treasured like the paintings of Turner or Constable. But there was a positive standard to which every scholar did his utmost to conform. It would be unthinkable to any Chinese that a man of learning should express his thought in the execrable scrawl perpetrated by some of our Western savants—may one mention the late Professor Saintsbury, whose writing, a scatteration of entirely arbitrary hieroglyphics, was, as he himself confessed in one of his books, "a hissing and a rebuke"?

This early standardizing of Chinese writing and its careful preservation has been of immense importance to the stability of the nation. In Europe we have never had anything like it. The Romans, it is true, set a standard which continues to hold its own, though not everywhere, and, in any case, is not the writing of everyday use. Here in England the pattern on which the infant hand is set to mould itself has totally changed in the past few decades, from the so-called "Italian writing" of our parents and grandparents,† with the end of the pen well sloped back leftwards across the shoulder, to the modern "script" writing, legible certainly, but how hopelessly lacking in character! And if one goes back a few centuries, no farther than to the manuscripts of the Tudors, one needs to be an expert antiquarian to decipher them.

It might have been for the good of our national sense of history, in which we are disastrously lacking, if we had stuck to the handwriting of Chaucer or Piers Plowman, as the Chinese have stuck to the calligraphy of the Hans. For in a country the size of China, some twenty-five times as big as Great Britain, with diversities of temperament between different provinces almost as marked as those between Northern and Southern Europeans, Chinese calligraphy has been one of the most potent agents in binding the Chinese people together and preventing them

* These were pieces of shell, or bone, used for divination on which were scratched the questions asked and the answer, or "utterance," returned. The writing used was a pictorial symbol of the subject of the question—fishing, hunting, trapping, farming, and so forth. The pictorial basis is easily identified in many Chinese characters today, even by those who do not know Chinese.

† And of many people still short of the threescore and ten. Whether the "script" writing mentioned a line or two later is still taught to infants, I am not enough of an educationalist to know. It certainly was being taught them twenty years ago. If some new fad has since been introduced it merely proves the point I am trying to make. But at the present rate of going, in a few generations handwriting will have ceased to exist, and Nature will be producing children with hands ready shaped for typewriters, like the horn-player's lip, or the "little piecer's" finger and thumb!

from breaking up into several separate States. And it can hardly be doubted that this writing, in which all their classics handed down through the centuries not only were, but had to be, written, has contributed to that acute appreciation of history which is so lively in all Chinese, and is the foundation of the "spiritual strength" that sustains them against Japan.

In Froude's story of the Cat's Pilgrimage, it may be remembered, the owl whom she encounters is for ever meditating on the unanswerable question which came first, the first owl or the first egg! In like manner we may ask ourselves whether the philosophers of China spontaneously evolved the principles of life which they gave to the people; or whether they borrowed from the people and formulated into a code the principles and philosophies already unconsciously hammered out and adopted by Chinese taste, as they passed from tribal to national status. Whichever it was, the rules of life—or, to borrow the language of a Chinese official early in the past century in memorializing the throne on the unreasonableness of foreigners, "the great maxims of reason", to which every Chinese subscribes,* are very ancient, indeed, far, far older than Confucius, who always insisted that he was no originator, but only a transmitter of the wisdom of the ancients, which, in the troubled, licentious days in which he lived, had been forgotten or deliberately burked.

No doubt the Chinese ascribed to the monarchs of their mythology all the virtues which had become popularly accepted as the *summum bonum* in a more developed form of society. It is also possible that the said monarchs never existed, and that their names are merely used poetically to express successive phases in the growth of the Chinese, like the six so-called days of Creation in Genesis. But it is noticeable that the achievements of these rulers are all connected with things of practical use and cultural advancement of their people, not with military glory or imperial wealth.

Thus Fu-Hsi, traditionally supposed to have reigned about 2800 B.C., taught his people to fish with nets, to rear domestic animals; he invented musical instruments and devised the ideograms which are the basis of modern writing. Shen Nung, the "Divine Husbandman", instructed his subjects in agriculture, and was the father of medicine. Huang Ti (the only one of whom fighting is recorded, and that was in saving his people from the inroads of barbarians) set up the first observatory, regulated the calendar, established a school of official historians, and invented bricks for building and several new musical instruments; while his wife taught the people how to weave silk and make silk garments, thus founding the oldest craft in China, still known as "the royal trade".

In this list of attainments the purely cultural nature of some is obvious, and is of the highest importance as indicating the early development of taste and intellect in China, whether the musical instruments, observatory, etc., were the invention of individual Emperors† or the evolutions of an age. Nothing in the least like them is to be found in the legends of the Japanese, who, in spite of their claim to an

* To save much bothersome argument and to meet the objection that "the great maxims of reason" are too often more honoured in the breach than the observance in China, let it be admitted at once that greed, cruelty, dishonesty, oppression, selfishness, and all the evils resulting from the pressure of the struggle for survival, have always been as prevalent in China as in any other country. But, as the late Professor Giles pointed out, although a Chinese might not always do what was right, he always knew what was right; he never lost sight of the code which his ancestors had prescribed as the best rule of life. We in England certainly cannot throw stones at the Chinese, for while we profess and call ourselves Christians, it is questionable how many of us even know what the Christian code contains, while our educators seem chiefly anxious to secure that as little of it as possible is taught in national schools, and that every parent may be free to say that his child shall be taught none at all.

† In any event, it is unlikely that the emperors personally did the inventing; probably they merely took the credit, after the habit of all oriental sovereigns. It will be remembered in the Old Testament that King Hezekiah "made a pool and a conduit and brought water into the city". The late Professor Sayce, in excavating that conduit at Jerusalem, found inscribed on the wall far inside the name of the actual engineer, and a brief record of how he had done the work. He was obliged to leave the credit to Hezekiah, but in the pride of his achievements he could not resist carving a record for future generations of his own successful engineering.

unbroken line of Emperors beginning from a great-grandson of the Sun Goddess 2600 years ago, were, in fact, little better than a congeries of semi-barbaric tribes until, in the seventh and eighth centuries A.D., the Augustan Age of the T'ang Dynasty, when China's art and learning were at their most glorious, they came to China to learn from her culture and handicrafts, and the elements of statecraft. Japan did not even possess a capital city until she borrowed the idea from China and founded Nara in A.D. 710.*

Moving on a few centuries, we come to three Emperors who do seem to have been real people: Yao, Shun, and the Great Yu, the last of whom founded the Hsia, which preceded the Shang, Dynasty. The dates commonly ascribed to their reigns, covering the period from 2357 to 2205, are, of course, guesswork. In 841 B.C. there was a comet, duly noted by Chinese astronomers, giving us a standard by which later events can be accurately tabulated. Before that date everything is uncertain, though that does not mean that the events of the pre-comet age did not happen. Confucius and his followers firmly believed in the three Emperors mentioned, and continually referred to them as presiding over "the Golden Age", to which China must strive to return. Certainly the august three deserve attention as embodying the primal virtues of man and the theory of kingship which are the very essence of Chinese thought. And from this point of view none is more conspicuous than the Emperor Shun.

He was, according to tradition, a man of lowly family, cursed with an impossible stepmother, a tyrannical father, and a jealous and arrogant brother. Yet by his extreme virtue and filial piety he kept the peace in this unpromising household; and, showing marked ability in other respects, he was recommended to the virtuous Emperor Yao's attention, when the latter was anxiously seeking for someone to share with him the heavy duties of caring for his people. Yao, finding in Shun all that he could desire, gave him his two daughters in marriage, and after reigning for seventy years passed over his own son to hand on the throne to Shun.

The Great Yu, to whom Shun at his death entrusted the throne, is famed in Chinese history for having brought the caprices of the four great rivers in Northern and Central China—the Yellow River, the Huai, Han and Yangtze—under control by dredging their channels, thus checking their incessant floods and the wreckage of the surrounding country. This alone would entitle the Great Yu to be gratefully remembered. But in all respects he was a model ruler like his two predecessors, so wholly devoted to the welfare of his subjects that when his first son was born very early in the morning, although the Emperor heard the child crying in the women's apartments and naturally longed to see him, he would not turn back to do so, saying that the day's work must first be finished. Yu died, according to Chinese calculation, in 2197 B.C., and was succeeded by his son, whether the aforesaid baby or another one cannot say, but for the first time the succession became hereditary, and the Hsia Dynasty was founded. We know nothing about it except that, unfortunately, it fell from grace, like every dynasty that ever reigned, and was eclipsed some four and a half centuries later by the Shang. But nothing can dim the radiance of its great founder, Yu.

Every country has had its golden age; few of them will hardly stand the test of cold, matter-of-fact consideration. We think of Queen Elizabeth's reign as the golden age of England, but we should be extremely sorry for ourselves if we had to live under the conditions common to her subjects. Think of houses without modern plumbing, open kennels running down the middle of the streets, and

* "Which typifies the blossom-time of Japanese civilization, the few bright decades of political ardour, aesthetic awakening and religious exultation, that were followed, in the seemingly inevitable cycle of events, by the sophistication, and then the decadence, and then the collapse, of the next, the Hei-an period" (*Japan*, by Sir George Sansom). The degeneration of Japanese statecraft, with its natural descent into the militarism of today, from the Chinese principles of government, is now only too painfully apparent.

having our teeth pulled out without gas! What makes the golden age of China so interesting is the special qualities for which its Emperors are revered—not military conquest, or wealth or power, all of which they despised, but single-minded devotion to the well-being of their people! "Oh, how great a king was Yao!" exclaimed Confucius. "Nothing is greater than Heaven, but Yao was in harmony with it. So great was his virtue the people had no name for it."

The pattern set by these Sage-Kings, as they are usually called, supplies the basis of all Chinese political thinking. Their material achievements were of less importance than their intrinsic virtue. Let the Emperor be virtuous and the prosperity of his people will follow automatically, Confucius taught, because the essence of the sovereign's virtue is that his subjects are the first consideration. He is the "Son of Heaven", who has received the "Mandate of Heaven" to rule, but as Heaven's vicegerent, representing its solicitude for the people of China. They come first, the Emperor second; his duty to them, not theirs to him, is the basic principle of the ideal State. When he fails in that duty and forgets his virtue he forfeits the Mandate of Heaven, and the people are entitled to hurl him from the throne.

Another feature of government in China may be noticed in the golden age. Shun was a man of humble family, yet he became Emperor through his virtue and ability. The point to notice is, not that founders of new dynasties have frequently been men of obscure origin, but that the practical rulers of China, Viceroys and provincial governors, have again and again sprung from lowly homes. There has never been a territorial aristocracy in China. Titles corresponding to, or at least translated as, dukes and marquesses exist—Confucius's descendants are the Dukes Kung and a former Chinese Minister to the Court of St. James was Lord Li —but they have never formed a ruling class as in France and England. Under the Chou Dynasty (1122–255 B.C.), as the power of the Emperors declined and the feudal princes they had created to help in governing the country grew more and more powerful and spent their time in quarrelling with each other (the era of the Warring States), administration passed into the hands of the scholar class. The only road to official life was through scholarship, and it was always possible, indeed it frequently happened, for the son of a peasant to become a Viceroy with powers of life and death over perhaps 70,000,000 people.*

Throughout these luminous traditions of the Sage Kings nothing is more clearly visible than the instinct for democratic practice which is the basis of Chinese political and social institutions. China is the land of many paradoxes, where things often appear to go in exactly the opposite way to what they do in the West. Men wear gowns and women wear trousers; two friends, on meeting, shake hands with themselves, not with each other; saucers are put on top of the teacup instead of underneath it; books are printed (and manuscripts written) from the right-hand top corner of the page downwards, and begin at what, for us, is the end of the volume. So, too, in the matter of democratic usage. In the West we elect our politicians on the strength of their glib assurances, and when these go the usual way of electioneering promises we elect someone else. The Chinese passively accept the rulers who impose themselves, without inquiring very closely into what they propose to do; but when the latter prove unsatisfactory, they are got rid of with unfailing regularity.

Nor is Chinese democracy affected by the fact that the Emperor was semi-divine, an autocrat, whose word was law and whose edicts ended with the invariable phrase: "Tremble and obey." Apart from the constant underlying theory of kingship that the Emperor's first duty was to his people, it was held that he

* The complete organization of entry into official life and promotion in it by means of success in State examinations was not achieved until the T'ang Dynasty. But the germs of it are visible under the Chous, and it was already well advanced under the Hans.

should interfere as little as possible with their affairs. Lao Tzu, the reputed founder of Taoism, said that "the best ruler of a great kingdom governs it as you would cook a small fish; meddle with either and it falls to pieces". Lao Tzu pushed his doctrine of *wu wei*, "do nothingness" (as the Red Lama in *Kim* preached, "to abstain from action is good"), to extremes. It was, nevertheless, the fact that the Emperor and his subordinates left the management of their own affairs almost entirely to the people; the chief business of Viceroys and governors was to keep order and collect taxes; they were enviably free from that itch to be always doing something which is the curse of Western democracies, and the mainspring of so much needless and often destructive legislation. The Chinese have never had much taste for written law, preferring to settle each controversial point as it arises on its merits, by common sense and according to the great maxims of reason. Along these lines the villagers and townsmen were left to manage their own business through the elders of their families or through their guilds, even legal disputes being disposed of by these agencies without reference to a law court.*

A Chinese, too, was singularly free from the inquisition of bureaucracy and the inordinate restrictions and intricacies of the red tape of Western democracy. He went where he pleased, and as he pleased, without having to trouble himself about registration, still less with passports; and so long as he paid his taxes and behaved like a peaceable citizen, which is the natural disposition of every Chinese, as those who have had to govern them in Hongkong, Singapore and elsewhere will amply testify, he was not likely to be interfered with.

One thinks, of course, of conditions as they were under the best Emperors; and on the principle of *corruptio optimi pessima* nothing could be more frightful than the chaos into which China plunged between the downfall of one dynasty and the installation of its successor. It is tragic to follow the invariable course of each dynasty, from virile, capable administration carried out by carefully chosen and still more carefully controlled officials; through gradual succumbing to the luxuries of palace-life, and the ascendancy of that curse of oriental courts, the cohort of eunuchs, revenging themselves upon the nation for their frustrated lives by intrigue, oppression and the lawless amassing of vast fortunes; then the corresponding oppression of the people by officials only able to maintain their places by bribing the eunuchs; until the maddened people revolted, the effete worn-out dynasty crashed, and for years, perhaps even for centuries, one claimant after another strove for mastery and the right of the strongest to ascend the Dragon Throne and to possess the mandate of Heaven.

China was never more prosperous and contented than under the best of the Han Emperors, who reigned for approximately two centuries on either side of our *Annus Domini*, and under whom Chinese government and society assumed the shape that lasted down to modern times. Of the Emperor Wen the Civilized, who came to the throne in 179 B.C., it is recorded that he would not even have a balcony built to a window of his palace, saying that he would be ashamed to spend the money when he already had so much of everything and many of his people were so poor. Yet it was not many decades before the palaces of the Han Emperors vied with any in Asia for luxury and magnificence, and the Emperor's relatives and grandees of the Court vied with each other in similar display.

* In respect of what was said above, of officials confining themselves to keeping order and collecting taxes, the *hsien*, or district magistrate, seems to afford a contradiction. Known as "the father and mother official", he was more closely in touch with the people than any other mandarin. It was his unpleasant duty to see that the farmers did their expected share in keeping the waterways clear, and in maintaining dykes against floods, perhaps the only form of public works about which China seriously concerns herself. He also had to see that taxes were paid, and that criminals were caught, which was usually managed by arresting the headman of the village to which they belonged. But the people, none the less, managed their own affairs, and troubled the magistrate as little as possible. It was good policy to do so.

"In the house of one of the Empress's family, bright pearls hung from the eaves, so that they looked 'like stars by day and moonshine by night'. His vessels were all of pure gold and the hammering of the goldsmiths in his court-yards echoed so loudly that passers-by would declare, 'In Kuo's house there is thunder without storm.'"*

There were, of course, other evils besides the Court's extravagance which led to the ultimate collapse of the Han Dynasty—the excessive growth of the mercantile and capitalist class, and corresponding decay of agriculture. But underneath all else the root cause of national distress was the departure of the Emperors from the traditional virtues of the Sage Kings and their failure to check, as they arose, tendencies that threatened the balance between the different classes and the State's stability.

After the disappearance of the Hans there followed some four centuries of disrupted government and chaos before the T'ang Dynasty brought in another age of glory. It is easy to understand that, while foreigners looked with dismay on the decade or two of disorder and civil war which resulted from the Revolution of 1911, the more philosophically-minded Chinese regarded them as small compared with other periods of upheaval due to the downfall of bygone dynasties.

It is also to be noticed, as proof of the native instincts of the Chinese people for democratic practice, that, throughout all these times of political storm, the life of ordinary folk continued to be lived as much as was possible according to the time-honoured plan; and when, at last, the tumult died down and a new Emperor was firmly installed, he accepted the old institutions as a matter of course. At its best the Government of China could fairly claim to be the best system of government in the world.†

It is hardly necessary to say that by far the greatest influence in moulding Chinese society taste and custom has been Confucius. Perhaps no other man has so powerfully, so continuously, and for so many centuries ruled the traditions of such numberless millions of his countrymen as K'ung Fu-tzu, *anglicé* Confucius. From time to time he has momentarily seemed to be displaced as some fashion swept over the Emperor's Court for preferring Taoism or Buddhism. But always, sooner or later, Confucius has come to his own again. In the early days of the Nationalists' rule at Nanking, to which they had moved the capital in 1928, the Kuomintang, declaring Confucianism to be a political heresy, closed the temples of the Sage, struck the celebration of his birthday out of the list of annual festivities, and even tried to confiscate the K'ung family's estates. But at this, with extraordinary unanimity, the people of China protested with such force that the Kuomintang desisted. Considering how many ill-conceived "reforms" and disturbances of old custom China was at that time resignedly enduring, the strength and unanimity of the devotion to Confucius thus displayed was the more remarkable.

Confucius was born in 551 B.C., when the Chou Dynasty, founded in 1122 B.C., was already going to pieces as the feudal princes established by the first of its Emperors elevated themselves into independent rulers continually at war with each other.‡ Confucius was descended from a half-brother of the last Shang

* *A Short History of Chinese Civilization*, by Tsui Chi.

† In modern times an ideal sample of Chinese government was provided by the little territory of Weihaiwei, leased by Great Britain in 1898 and restored to China in 1930. The British administrators simply adopted Chinese principles of administration; they collected taxes (leaving each village to divide among its residents the amount at which the whole was assessed), built roads and bridges, saw that order was maintained, and left the people to run their own affairs. There was no crime, a police force of under 100 sufficed for a territory of 250 square miles, with a population of about 175,000, and everyone was happy and, by Chinese standards, well-to-do.

‡ Period of "The Warring States", 481 to 221 B.C., when Chous and princes alike were submerged by the masterful Ch'in Shih Huang Ti.

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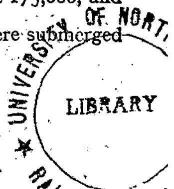

Emperor, and his father was a military official in the State of Lu, now Shantung, in North-east China. The father, 70 years old when Confucius was born, died when the boy was only three, and his mother moved to Ch'ufou, where Confucius's descendants still live on the ancestral estate. The child Confucius was of a sober-sided nature—as not uncommon in old men's sons, though the fact was naturally upheld by disciples as proof of his extreme wisdom—finding his chief amusement in grave imitation of ceremonies, while his favourite toys were the paraphernalia of sacrifices. He married when 18, and at the same time obtained a post under the Duke of Lu, as inspector of grains.* Then his mother died, and he had to retire into private life for three years of mourning, which he devoted to study, chiefly of history. He emerged to found a school of pupils; but later he became Minister of Justice under the Duke of Lu.

So wonderful now was the improvement in the prosperity and moral tone of the whole State that a neighbouring ruler became alarmed and sent to the Duke of Lu a present of lovely singing girls and beautiful horses to distract him from the Confucian path of virtue. The bait was fatally successful. Between his horses and his ladies the Duke rapidly forgot alike his duty to his people and the rites of religion. Confucius threw up his post in disgust. For several years he wandered among the States seeking vainly to find one Prince who might be recalled to imitation of the Sage Kings of the Golden Age. Finally, he returned to Lu, to edit the classics and to teach his disciples, who are said to have numbered altogether 3,000; over seventy of them attached themselves to him for life. (His conversations with these pupils, "The Analects", beautifully translated and annotated by Mr. Arthur Waley, contain some of the most delightful reading imaginable.)

In 479 B.C. Confucius died, weighed down by grief at the death of his favourite pupil, Yen Hui, and the conviction (how transcendentally contradicted by subsequent history!) that his life had been a failure. He was buried at Ch'ufou, where his tomb, surrounded by lavishly adorned temples, is still to be seen.

It is, of course, a fallacy to think that Confucius founded a religion in our sense of the word, although, as will be seen presently, ancestor-worship certainly contained in a very wide sense many of the best fruits of religious belief. When a Chinese feels the need of spiritual consolation or help, it is to the Buddhist temple that he repairs.† It would equally be wrong to suggest that Confucius did not believe in God. Many of his sayings prove the contrary: "At 50 I knew God" (Confucius was describing the six stages of his life); "It is only God who is great; Yao took him for his model"; "By pretending to have an official retinue when I have none, upon whom should I impose? Should I impose upon God?" and so forth. But this was a subject that he did not care to discuss, telling his disciples bluntly that they must learn to serve men before they could serve the eternal spirits. Confucius, it must be remembered, lived in a time of increasing political and social dislocation,

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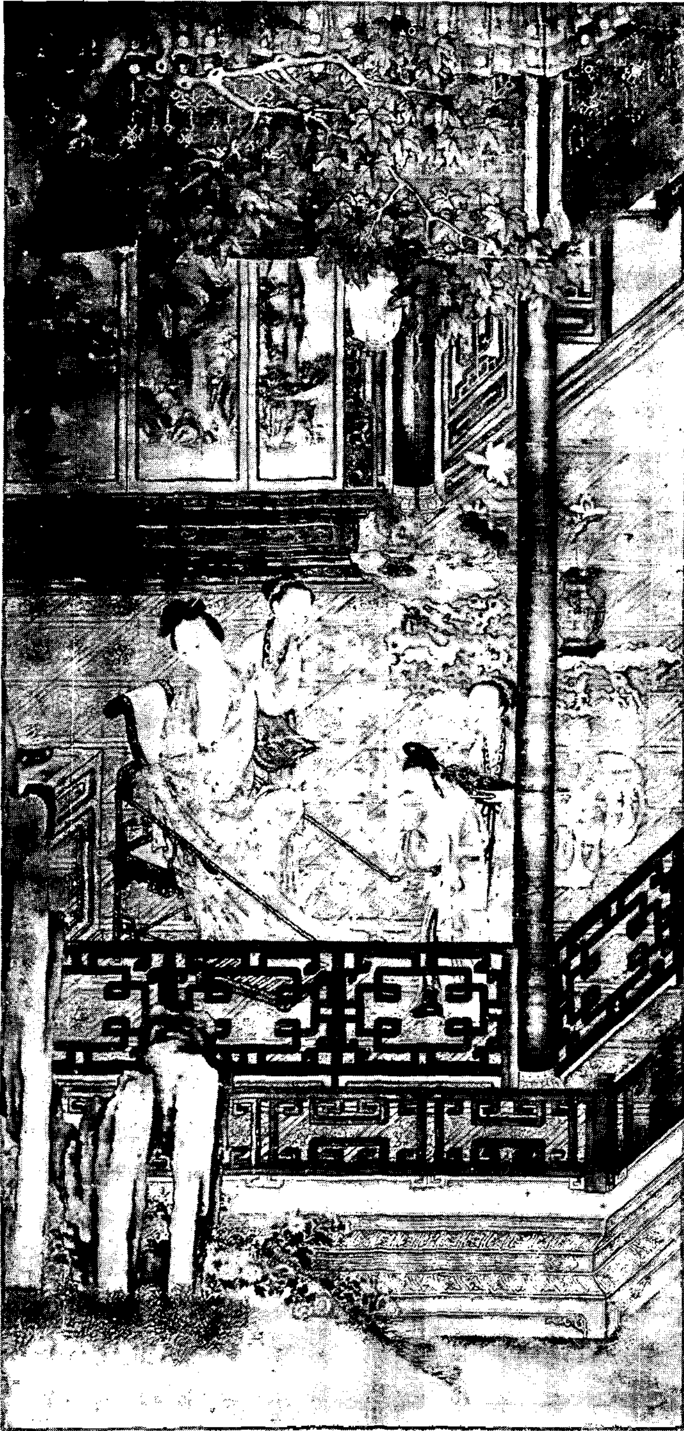
* The present writer was once giving a series of lectures for the Oxford Extension, which were followed by examination papers. One of the examinees, a bright girl of fifteen, supplied the delightful information that Confucius was an inspector of *drains*! Such conveniences are still rare enough in China; in Confucius's day they can hardly have been known. Doubtless he would have approved of them, bethinking him of what the Great Yu had done with the rivers of China.

† One of the rare instances of theft in the household that I remember during my life in China (for, if we except an uncontrollable weakness for your pocket-handkerchiefs, Chinese servants are singularly honest guardians of your belongings) occurred while I was staying with a friend, my wife being away from China, and my friend's gold watch and chain disappeared. The No. 1 boy was absolutely shattered at such a thing happening under his stewardship. After four days without the watch being found, he announced that he would go and "chin-chin joss" (pidgin-English for worship of the deity). It was to a Buddhist temple that he went to burn incense-sticks and invoke assistance—with the highly satisfactory result that on our return from business the boy met us radiantly to say that the watch and chain had been found—in my friend's waste-paper basket of all absurd places.

The end of the story is worth noting. The property having been restored, it would have been against all propriety to push inquiry further, although everyone knew who the thief was. Matters were left to the No. 1 boy, who about a week later announced that the culprit had got a better place, and would like to leave. So "face" was preserved and everybody satisfied.

BRONZE RITUAL WINE VESSEL OF THE SHANG-YIN PERIOD, 11$\frac{3}{4}$ INS. HIGH, IN THE CULL COLLECTION

(By courtesy of Prof. Perceval W. Yetts)



LADIES OF THE CHINESE COURT, BY LENG MEI, COURT PAINTER, IN THE EARLY 18TH CENTURY

(*British Museum*)

appreciated by him, no doubt, all the more keenly through his period as a Minister to the Duke of Lu. His teaching is permeated with the sound conviction that a well-conducted State consists fundamentally of well-conducted individuals, and he strove to inculcate the "duty to one's neighbour", as comprised in the Five Relationships, between ruler and subject, father and son, brother and brother, husband and wife, man and man.

He continually held up the ideal of the *chün-tzü*, which the late Liang Ch'i-ch-'ao suggested translating "gentleman" in the best sense of the word, as much more appropriate than Legge's "the superior man", with its, to our ears, unfortunate implication. "The gentleman," said Confucius, "is slow of speech, resolute in action." And again, when asked what his own ambitions were, Confucius replied: "To give rest and peace to the aged, to be loyal and faithful to my friends, to give loving care to the young"; which goes far in defining the duty of a gentleman, as does also his most famous saying, when asked for one word as a rule in life: "Would not reciprocity be such a word? Do not do to others what you would not have them do to you."

Confucius's teaching may be classified broadly in three divisions. Of the duty of the ruler to his people enough has already been said; upon his virtue hang the morality of the people and well-being of the whole State, for proof of which he cited again and again the example of the Sage Kings.

Next came his insistence on filial piety, with which, indeed, is closely bound up the respect due to the Emperor as the father of all his people, and one who, by his exalted state, was expected to set an example to them in piety towards his own ancestors. The phrase goes far beyond the meaning that it bears in the West. There is practically no act of virtue or of vice which cannot, in China, be brought "within the four corners", as lawyers say, of *Hsiao*, filial piety. If a man by committing a crime is sent to gaol he brings disgrace on his parents and is unfilial. If he ruins his health by dissipation he has been unfilial in not treating with proper care the body received from his parents; and we read of one very pious philosopher who, when dying, had himself stripped naked in order to show that he returned to his ancestors the body he had received from them unsullied by aught but the ravages of time. In paying worship to his ancestors a man clearly believes that they are worthy of reverence, and, looking forward to the time when he will join their company, he is encouraged to live so that he may prove equally worthy of the reverence of his descendants. Clearly filial piety and ancestor-worship may prove very strong motives for keeping a Chinese in the strait and narrow way.

The reverse side of this pleasing picture is that the intensity of the duty which binds a Chinese to his family may produce very undesirable results in the body politic. Some sceptics indeed refuse to believe that China will ever know a genuine national patriotism, and that the unity born of the war with Japan will break up when peace returns because every Chinese is steeped in the conviction that his first consideration must be the welfare of his family, not of the State. Under the Empire it was fully recognized that an official, on taking office, would immediately find jobs for all his relatives and that his business was to make as much money out of his post as he could, compatibly with the forbearance of the district he administered, in order to put his family beyond fear of want. But "the spoils of office" is a principle not unknown in other countries; and as for what may happen in China after the war, one may confidently predict that she will have had enough of fighting to last her for a very long time, not to mention that these years of strife have given her a lesson in the value of national unity which she is not likely to forget.

The third part of Confucius's teaching deals with the importance of ceremony and ritual. It is not enough, he taught, to do the right thing, but it must be done in the right style; in fact, it cannot otherwise be right. Now this, too, like filial

piety, has its reverse side. For in times of decadence, as in the last years of the Manchu dynasty, mandarins and scholars (like the Pharisees, who made broad their phylacteries and loved greetings in the market-places) had lost the spirit of Confucianism and occupied themselves solely with an empty shell of ceremoniousness; and the Chinese code of etiquette contains something like 3,000 precepts which the man of culture must endeavour to master. But that was not at all Confucius's meaning. He linked ceremonial, or ritual, with poetry and music. "Poetry," he said on one occasion, "is what gives the first stimulus to the character; ceremonial is what gives it stability; music is what brings it to full development." Mr. Tsui Chi, in his *Short History of Chinese Civilization*, says:

> "It was not that he (Confucius) ranked a man's behaviour above his soul, or thought that good government lay entirely in the proper observance of ceremony, but that the society he knew was so lawless and graceless that he did not believe a powerful Chinese Empire could be reborn without the regulaation of public and private behaviour from top to bottom."

And the late Sir Reginald Johnston, in his *Confucianism and Modern China*, appropriately quotes from the *Li Chi* (*Record of Rites and Ceremonies*):

> "Those who were the flower of civilization in olden times had no need to explain their views by making speeches; all they had to do was to express themselves in music and ceremonial. . . . Men who are the flower of civilization in our own time and who know how to express themselves in music and ceremonial have the quality of statesmanship. . . . But when the moral nature is unstable, music and ceremonial are practised in vain."

Perhaps we can best appreciate what was in Confucius's mind by analogies from our own country. The immense ceremony with which our judges and all their official movements are surrounded is something more than an expression of our regard for their deservedly high repute; it is a symbol of our reverence in them for that principle of justice and the equal rights of all before the law which is the foundation of our State. At the same time, the ermine and scarlet robes and all the stately elaboration of the law court are meant not only to separate the judge from those he is judging, but to set him, as judge, apart from himself as an ordinary man, so that, while he is on the bench, he is no longer liable to the common emotions and predilections of humanity, but becomes for the time being a passionless instrument of justice actuated solely by the facts laid before him.

Similar examples, all of which Confucius would have understood at once, might be cited from the complicated ritual of Parliament. Our British habit of studied understatement in language is, in itself, a form of ritual, based on the sound principle that the better we control our tongues, the less liable we are to fly off the handle in action. "I will take heed to my ways that I offend not in my tongue, I will keep my mouth as it were with a bridle," sang the Psalmist; very English and very Confucian. Whatever William of Wykeham had in mind when he devised his famous motto, the manners which "makyth man" assuredly meant more than to teach boys to hand about teacups nicely or, like Sir Willoughby Patterne, to show a leg. Even in quite ordinary life we may, when dressed in slacks and a slouch hat, be prone to do things of which we should be incapable when properly attired for Bond Street. True, in old-fashioned melodrama the villain invariably appears in evening dress, a black Inverness cape and a top hat. But may not his villainy have been largely attributable to the fact that he had a weakness for dressing himself in this way even for five o'clock tea? He was offending against the proper ritual of clothes and his moral nature went to pieces.

Such comparisons are but one phase of the many similarities between British and Chinese character—their common sense of justice, readiness for compromise, delight in a good joke, and normal good temper. But without enlarging on this tempting subject, the important thing to notice is that the Chinese evolved these qualities while we were wearing woad and that Confucius's teaching all served to enhance and stabilize them.

Reference has been made to the importance Confucius attached to music, corresponding exactly to Shakespeare's:

> The man that hath no music in himself
> And is not moved with concord of sweet sounds
> Is fit for treasons, stratagems and spoils.

And Confucius wrote that "music comes from within . . . if music be allowed to have its full results, the mind will cease to be dissatisfied and restless . . . there will be no oppressive government . . . no occasion for war".

He was, at least, as insistent on the virtue of poetry. Sir Cyril Norwood in one of his speeches on education has said that when a boy becomes awakened to the meaning of poetry, its effect upon his mind and character is almost incredible.* That would have been Confucius's view. So it was that he made his disciples learn the Odes by heart as a preliminary to all their training. These Odes, some 1,700 in number, Confucius had selected from about 3,000 that had come down from remote ages, rejecting all those which he considered worthless or morally injurious,† and enshrined them in his book of poetry. Many of them have been translated into English, and they give a vivid picture of early Chinese society, rooted in the avocations, labours, disappointments, triumphs, festivities and sacrifices of "the good earth", which is in itself a liberal education.

Underneath all the Confucian teaching, and dating from many centuries before him (his insistence that he was not an originator but only the transmitter of ancient wisdom will be remembered), lies the grand philosophic principle of *jên*. As Miss Winifred Galbraith well puts it in her book, *The Chinese*: "Man and his relationships have always been a subject of the deepest interest to Chinese thinkers." The word *jên* is hard to translate—human-heartedness, benevolence, kindness, charity (as in St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians).‡ It implies, in effect, a sense of the mutual responsibility of human beings one to another as the only solid basis for well-ordered society. In everyday affairs it bears a strong resemblance to our "playing the game". It is unnecessary to say that life in China has always abounded in glaring examples of disregard for *jên*. That does not affect its importance as the ideal rule of life which the Chinese always have at the back of their minds, which they evolved in the dawn of time, and in defence of which they are now fighting a tyranny at every point the very antithesis of *jên*.

One other phase of Chinese philosophy must be mentioned briefly, and that is Taoism. Older than Confucianism and approximating far more to a religion, it has not had the tremendous appeal of Confucius's teaching to the generality of Chinese. The miraculous powers attainable by its adepts (as some exponents of Taoism have taught), ability to walk unharmed through fire, to project oneself great distances through the air, and so forth, have, in the course of time, caused a degeneration of Taoist practice into mere conjuring and the peddling among

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* I am obliged to quote from memory, but this, at least, is the sense of what Sir Cyril Norwood (far more poetically) said.

† Confucius was the first Dr. Bowdler of whom we have record. The general decency of Chinese literature is probably due in great part to the example he set in editing the Odes.

‡ Surely those who now wish to substitute the word "love" for "charity" in St. Paul's well-known chapter make a mistake in not recognizing the subtle difference between the two words. St. Paul tells us distinctly that "Charity envieth not": but love can envy, on behalf of the beloved object. Love is not incompatible with several less admirable qualities, from which, as St. Paul shows us, charity is wholly free. In fact, "charity" seems to be *jên* at its best.

country folk of charms and incantations, for the cure of sickness, birth of a son and heir, the success of the harvests. As Buddhism, introduced from India about the third century A.D., gained in popularity, the Taoists borrowed a great deal of its ritual, and their temples are often hard to tell from the Buddhist. But in its purest form Taoism represents a very exalted scheme of life and thought which still has a strong attraction for refined and fastidious minds.

Taoism is popularly supposed to be the invention of the philosopher, Lao Tzu, born in 604 B.C. Mr. Arthur Waley says that he never really existed, and that the *Tao Teh Ching*, the book which enshrines his teaching, is the collection of aphorisms and injunctions by a number of scholars attributed to a mythical "Old One" * to enhance its value. Lao Tzu and Confucius are supposed to have met once, during the three years after Confucius had resigned from his inspectorship of grains, and they do not seem to have understood each other in the least. Which is not surprising, for Confucius was a practical man of the world, Lao Tzu a mystic.

Tao, as Lao Tzu taught, is the controlling principle of everything: God Himself is subject to *Tao*. The word is usually translated "Way"; but even in Chinese its exact significance can only be learnt by those who, through years of self-discipline and contemplation, have brought themselves into harmony with *Tao*. When that blessed state has been reached, a man becomes superior to all earthly passions and vicissitudes. "But," said Lao Tzu, "those who know [what *Tao* is] will not tell you, and those who tell you do not know." It follows necessarily from such teaching that all forms of action are reprehensible as calculated to disturb the sublime state of mind in which *Tao* can be apprehended. This approximates closely to the very early Chinese belief that the mere existence of consummate virtue in a ruler was enough to secure his people's welfare; and this maxim was embodied in the words *Wu Wei*, "Inaction", which were written up over the Dragon Throne of the Emperors. Thus the Prince of Huainan,† who did for Lao Tzu in popularizing his teaching much what Mencius did for Confucius, could write: "The softest things in the world override the hardest; that which has no substance enters where there is no crevice; thus I know what advantage there is in inaction."

Some of Lao Tzu's maxims, like some of Confucius's, are singularly like Christian precepts: "Recompense injury with kindness"; "If you would take, you must first give"; "Put yourself behind and the world will put you in front"; "When peace is made after great animosity, there is always a surplus of animosity behind. Is not this wrong? Accordingly the inspired man, when a creditor, does not exact his claim." In one sense the last saying seems to have made a specially deep impression on Chinese minds. In lawsuits, for example, the English practice of giving judgment wholly in favour of one side or the other is abhorrent to Chinese conceptions of justice; something, they insist, must always be allowed to the loser to preserve his self-respect, so that he may leave the court without utter loss of "face".‡

And now we come to the extraordinary break in the stream of Chinese development, the career of Shih Huang Ti (meaning First Emperor) and the short-lived Ch'in Dynasty, which, by repulsion, shows more clearly than anything else the democratic and individualist complexion of Chinese thought.

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* Among the legends which have gathered about Lau Tzu's name is one that he was already 60 years old when born—evidence of his transcendent wisdom.

† He was a grandson of the first Han Emperor, and thus lived between the first and second centuries B.C. The parallelism between this saying of his and the literal interpretation by the Society of Friends of the injunction "Resist not evil" is very noticeable. However, the Prince was scarcely true to his own dictum, for it is recorded that he spent all his fortune in vain searching for the elixir of life.

‡ During the civil wars of the 1920's it was noticeable that a victorious war lord never pressed home his advantage over his fallen rival, but always left him a loophole through which to evade the worst consequences of defeat. But whether this was due to respect for the teaching of Lao Tzu, or to a lively apprehension that the now triumphant war lord, too, might be glad of similar consideration another day, one would not venture to say.

There is no doubt that Shih Huang Ti was an extremely able man. He may also be called the first Prussian in history, the first totalitarian, the first advocate of "guns for butter" and, appropriately to these characteristics, utterly ruthless. He was born in 233 B.C., when China, under the Chou Dynasty, had broken up into a number of different dukedoms, and at the age of 13 succeeded his father as Duke of the remote western State of Ch'in. He did not, however, escape from the tutelage of his father's chief Minister until the year 221. I have called him the first Prussian in history, because the Ch'ins were militarized from top to bottom, with all power deriving from the ruler, the best treatment reserved for military officials, and the severest punishments for any infraction of discipline. Typically Prussian, too, was Shih Huang Ti's method of dealing with other dukes, with whom one by one he made agreements in order to break up any combination against himself so that he might devour each of them separately.*

Having thus by combined treachery and violence conquered all China, Shih proceeded to organize and weld it into a single empire as it had never been organized before. He swept away the feudal princes (who were no loss to anyone), divided the country into thirty provinces governed by his lieutenants, made great roads through China (always the hallmark of a conqueror), revised the Chinese script and introduced a uniform system of weights and measures for the whole nation, and several improvements in agricultural practice. The Confucian scholars, from whom we get our knowledge of Shih, were never fair to him, for reasons that will be seen, but there is no doubt that he was a remarkable man, with a restless, reforming mind, and a most able administrator.

The two actions, however, by which Shih is chiefly remembered are the building of the Great Wall and the Burning of the Books. Parts of the Great Wall, designed to keep out the northern barbaric tribes from the rich plains of China, had existed before Shih's day, but it was he who completed and fortified the Wall, and left it much as it is today, truly one of the wonders of the world. It starts from the sea-shore at Shanhaikuan, between North-east China and Manchuria, and extends for 1,500 miles across the borders of North China, scaling precipitous mountains and descending into dark valleys with forts spaced out at intervals. And perhaps there is not a brick in it which is not steeped in the tears, and commemorative of the deaths, of thousands of miserable slaves, whom the ruthless Emperor forced into its construction.

Yet, for all its mightiness, the Wall has failed again and again to keep back marauders from China. Mongols, Manchus and now the Japanese have swept across it to hold domain for a while over the Chinese. Still the Wall remains unchanged and unaffected. And in its changelessness one may see a symbol of the stability of Chinese institutions and social teaching which have always ultimately triumphed over their conquerors, and preserved the form that had already been hammered out by philosophic instruction and popular assent long before the masterful Shih won to the throne. It is strange that such a monument of the indestructibility of China should have been left by the very man who sought fiercely to blot out the old culture and mould China to a new shape.

For that was precisely what Shih Huang Ti intended to do by his Burning of the Books. In assuming the title of "The First Emperor" he saw in himself not only the founder of a new dynasty, which he declared would last for ever, but the creator of a new age, in which the soulless machinery of totalitarian rule was to replace the individual freedom and broad humanism inculcated by Confucius and his successors. Accordingly he not only ordered all the books containing the wisdom of the philosophers to be burnt, but he had 460 of the *literati* buried alive

* It is interesting to note that the different dukes tried to buy him off by various measures of appeasement; which merely whetted his appetite for further spoliation, as it always has done and always will.

under their ashes. Books in those days were made of thin strips of bamboo tied together. They burnt easily. But just so easily as they were burned and their ashes blown away by the wind did Confucianism re-arise from the holocaust like a young phœnix. Many copies of the Canon had been successfully hidden, to emerge again after the Emperor's death; and in spite of so many scholars having been buried alive there were still numbers who could repeat the whole of the Confucian writings by heart.

Shih's reign, indeed, was very short. By conquest and organization he had extended his empire from the mountain barriers of Tibet to the shores of Korea; from the Great Wall to the borders of Annam. He built himself a palace of unsurpassed size and luxury. He continually travelled about the long roads of his kingdom, not only to supervise its administration, but still more importantly to crush every sign of local independence in thought and custom before it should mar the symmetry of his work. He took inordinate pains to prolong his life. In order to foil assassins he slept in a different room of his palace each night, never letting it be known which he had chosen. And he spent large sums in the search for elixirs that might add to his days! But he died in 210 B.C., and in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye—for his son was a weak, infatuated man, with all the *desire but none of the ability to be a tyrant, who was overthrown within three* years of his father's death—all that Shih had laboured to create had gone to naught.

The dead Emperor lay in a gorgeous sepulchre, surrounded by slaughtered concubines and heaps of gold and precious stones. How vast was the treasure with which some monarchs of China have provided themselves for the next world may be seen from the fact that the gold and silver, pearls, jewels and jade ornaments which were buried in the tomb of the celebrated Empress Dowager, who died in 1908, were estimated to be worth £6,000,000: a full list was kept by her favourite eunuch (and chief Minister), Li Lien-ying, and obtained from one of his great-nephews by the *North China Daily News*, after the tomb had been rifled by lawless retreating troops on the capture of Peking by the Nationalists in 1928. Shih Huang Ti's burial treasure may well have been as great as the Empress Dowager's, and to guard against robbers the tomb was surrounded by man-traps and spring guns, while the workmen who had built the tomb were slain so that the secret of its approaches should never be known. But the dynasty which was to have been eternal dissolved into a mere memory, the superb palace went up in flames, the machine-like government and regimented life which Shih had momentarily forced upon the Chinese was scattered to the winds like fallen leaves, and China reverted to the teachings, tastes and practices which she had discovered before her Napoleon was born or thought of.

With Buddhism, the third of the three great religio-ethical schools of thought which reign in China, I do not attempt to deal, partly because the subject is so vast, partly because Buddhism came into effect much later in China than Taoism and Confucianism. The commonly accepted date of its arrival from India was in the A.D. 60's. But even if we believe with some Buddhist historians that it was being practised as early as the end of the third century B.C., this still gives the Taoists and Confucianists four centuries start of it, which they had used with good effect. In the course of time Buddhism acquired enormous popularity and wealth, especially in the T'ang Dynasty (A.D. 618–907), when one Emperor complained that the Buddhist temples eclipsed in splendour even his own. The contemplative sect of Ch'an Buddhism * attracted such numbers of the upper classes that there were at one time serious fears that the ranks of officialdom would suffer for want

* Called Zen Buddhism in Japan, where also it became popular. It was, and still is to some extent, a common practice for Japanese warriors to retire to a monastery and contemplate. They usually came out again.

of candidates. From time to time edicts were issued limiting the number of monks and nuns permissible in each monastery and convent; and in A.D. 845 there was a great persecution, when 4,600 monasteries are said to have been destroyed. But within two years they were being rebuilt.

Buddhism had immeasurable influence on Chinese painting and sculpture, giving it a new richness and new subjects, particularly the representation of the human form. It provided the Chinese with their favourite deity, Kuan Yin, the goddess of mercy; and, as has been shown, it supplied them with the means of spiritual consolation and assistance when they felt the need thereof. But it would not, I think, be unfair to say that in politico-social matters Chinese character was already so thoroughly set in its native philosophies that it would be much the same today, even if Buddhism had never come among them. Indeed, in respect of certain doctrines, particularly those connected with Nirvana, it was not China that was changed, but Buddhism, which had to adjust itself to the eminently practical and individualist tastes of the Chinese people.

Herein lies the peculiar interest of the experiment of Ch'in Shih Huang Ti. Having put all rivals under his feet, he had, as it seemed, a new world on which to use his talents as organizer and administrator. The Hsia and Shang Dynasties can never have controlled more than half, if so much, of the territory that he did. And although the Chous extended their dominion considerably south of the Yangtze, China had already broken up long before Shih's time into seven different States; how different they must have been we can tell from the widely differing characteristics of the eighteen provinces now. For the first time China, as we know it, had been welded into a single empire, and it would seem not unreasonable to think that with so powerful an Emperor in charge it would have preserved some of the stamp of government that he set upon it.

But Shih miscalculated the tenacity of Chinese adherence to their own institutions. His system had no root in popular taste—indeed, was wholly antipathetic to it—and when Shih's strong hand was removed the people of China rejected his theories with one accord. It is true that after the downfall of the Ch'in Dynasty some thirty years passed before China settled down contentedly in the ways she understood. But this was chiefly a matter of poor policy, mismanagement, and intrigue at Court. It is safe to believe that underneath the turmoil the ordinary Chinese citizen conducted himself by the rules of life that he knew and understood, as he always has done; and anyway thirty or forty years is nothing in the long, slow-moving tide of time in China.

Ch'in Shih Huang Ti's miscalculation was repeated by the Revolutionaries in 1911, when they shouted for a republic, a parliament, universal ballot-boxes, and all the paraphernalia of Western democracy; and again by the Russian Borodin and his Chinese Communist henchmen when they tried to introduce the militant Communism then taught in Moscow's training schools. Those who knew China well were confident that she would never turn Bolshevist after the Russian pattern, which was wholly alien to her native tolerance and individualism. The Communists today have become a powerful party in the State, not by what they have learnt, but by what they have rejected, of the early Moscow doctrine, and by moulding themselves to the natural instincts of the Chinese people.

As for the republic preached in 1911–12, it never stood the slightest chance of being accepted, because it was entirely foreign to the apprehensions of the Chinese people. Like David trying on Saul's armour before his contest with the Philistine, they might have said: "I cannot go with these, for I have not proved them." Even now, after more than thirty years of experiment and, in Dr. Sun Yat-sen's phrase, political tutelage, Mr. Tsui Chi, in his *Short History of Chinese Civilization*, says truly: "It must be admitted that China is not yet a republic."

That is no reason, however, why she may not become one. The ingredients are

there, in the age-long addiction of the Chinese people for managing their own affairs and the willingness of Emperors and officials that they should do so. But it must be a republic worked out by the Chinese in harmony with their own instincts, in the same way as they modify everything they borrow from abroad to their inherited standards.

To that end the war has immensely smoothed the way. For even more important than the practical experiment in popularly chosen government now being tried in Chungking, with good promise of success, in the National People's Council, and the network behind it of local assemblies, is the better awareness of common responsibility, a new *concordia ordinum* between the different classes of society that the war has brought about.

To take but one example: before the struggle with Japan the soldier ranked lowest of all in the four main divisions of Chinese society—scholars, farmers, merchants, and soldiers. "You do not take good iron to make a sword; you do not use a good man to make a soldier," says an ancient Chinese proverb. But now the soldier takes a very different place in Chinese eyes; and through him a new sympathy is felt for the patient myriads of the Chinese peasants who fill the ranks of the army, and have, indeed, borne ninety per cent. of the privation and suffering of the war.

This is *jên*, the spiritual strength which China draws from her ancient teachings and surely *jên* with a reality it has never possessed before; not a doctrine to be wrangled over by philosophers; not a pretty ideal to be kept wrapped up in a glazed cupboard where it can be duly admired (like the porcelain which a Chinese collector brings out for the admiration of friends on a holiday), but without detriment to the schemings and profit-takings of *yamêns* and counting-houses; but an active force between man and man, a solvent of controversy, an assuagement of discord, the touchstone of public well-being, the foundation of a China upon which the Sage Kings may look down, a little confused, perhaps, by the new idiom, but without too much disapproval.

Chapter II

THE END OF THE EMPERORS

IT IS THE CONVENTION TO SAY THAT CHINA WAS PECULIARLY UNLUCKY IN having to meet the impact of Western aggression and all the strange new ideas that came with it at a time when the once magnificent Manchu Dynasty was rushing downhill to perdition, and she was thus least able either to resist or accommodate foreign influences. But, on reflection, one may wonder whether this view is sound, and as one considers the course of the nineteenth century in the Western world one finds may reasons for doubting it.

Let us suppose that the Manchus had continued through the past century to produce rulers of the stamp of the two great Emperors K'ang Hsi and Ch'ien Lung: it is likely that the barbarian "red heads" at Canton would not have been allowed to get out of hand as they did, and the wars between China and the West might have been averted. But would the Emperors and their advisers have had the wisdom (or the knowledge) to realize the menace of the materialistic, mechanical civilization that was growing up outside China and to have fitted her to hold her own in it? Judging by the haughty, contemptuous answer sent back by Ch'ien Lung through Lord Macartney to King George III, it seems highly improbable. And then what? China would, no doubt, have continued as she was 150 years ago, and the notion of a country containing a quarter of the human race still in

the trappings and mentality of the 18th century, with the rest of the world panoplied in aeroplanes, tanks, and radio, is unthinkable. Under such conditions the shock of the forcible opening up of China, which must sooner or later have occurred, would have been far worse for her than it actually was.

Alternatively, if there had been no foreign Governments at hand in the 1860's, with interested reasons for bolstering up the Manchus; no Chinese Gordon to prepare the way with his twenty-three victories over the T'aipings for the *coup de grace*, dealt to the rebellion by Viceroy Tseng Kuo-fan, the T'aipings would almost certainly have set up a new dynasty, but at the cost of decades of disorder, perhaps of a break-up into another era of Warring States, and all to end in China being partitioned among the Powers, the fate that, indeed, seemed imminent after the first war with Japan.

Greatly as China has suffered, many as have been her humiliations and tragedies in the last hundred years, it is arguable that the invasion by the West, much as one regrets the miserable misunderstandings and conflicts which it entailed, was, in the long view, a better preparation for China's future when peace has been won than could have been found in either of the alternatives sketched above. A "Son of Heaven" Emperor of the classical pattern would be an impossible anachronism in modern times. Long before Dr. Sun Yat-sen came out to preach a Republic, philosophers in the 16th century saw in the Emperor the cause of all China's misfortunes.

> "In the Golden Age," wrote one of them, "the people or nation was the sovereign and the ruler the servant. But nowadays the monarch has become the sovereign and the people the servant. Life is everywhere insecure and intolerable because of the greed and ambitions of the ruler. He has no sympathy, even with those who fought and died for his sake. 'What do I care for the sacrifices and lives of others if I can be powerful and mighty?' "

But while this writer boldly reasserted the classical theory of the sovereignty of the people, he does not seem to have been clear as to how it should be achieved. Contact with the West at least suggested to Dr. San and his fellows an alternative to imperial rule; and although they were, like all reformers, too much in a hurry, the intervening years and the climax of the Japanese invasion on top of so much previous humiliation at foreign hands have taught the Chinese much, aroused a previously unknown national self-consciousness, and pointed the way to a popular form of government compatible with the old patterns of social custom.

"All power corrupts, but absolute power corrupts absolutely." Nowhere is Lord Acton's apothegm more perfectly illustrated than in the career of Chinese dynasties. They all went the same way. How, indeed, could they do otherwise? The founder of a new dynasty, who, to win such a position, would naturally be a man of exceptional qualities and keenly conscious of his responsibility, would rule well. His immediate successors, while the memory of their founder was still fresh, might continue to live up to his example. But as time went on, each successive Emperor yielded more and more to the enervating luxury of an oriental court, with its concubines and eunuchs, while the duties implicit in his title of "Son of Heaven" appealed less and less to him than the unbridled licence it gave him to gratify his desires. When it is remembered that the Emperor was the only male resident of the Forbidden City, all the other thousands of its inmates being women or eunuchs, the gulf that isolated him from all real knowledge of the state of his country, unless he were a strong, resolute man, can well be imagined. As the tone of the Court declined, so naturally did that of the official class. In dynasty after dynasty all power passed into the hands of the eunuchs, ever closest to and most subtle in gaining his Majesty's ear. Through them official appointments had to be bought

at a high price, for which the purchaser recouped himself from the wretched people. There were, of course, other intriguers besides the eunuchs—Ho Shen, for instance, favourite of the splendid Emperor Ch'ien Lung, whose intrigues and peculations clouded the last years of his aged master and started the rot that brought the Manchus down. But it will not be contended that they were more destructive to the dynasty than the eunuchs; and as for the latter, Chinese history teems with warnings by Emperors to their successors to keep these "rats and foxes" severely in their place.

Most of the dynasties are now so remote from us that "their powers, their honours and their errors", and their frightful demise, read like a chapter in the *Arabian Nights*. But the story of the Manchu Emperors we can follow with a sense of something present and real, partly because we have so many records of their actions, and of China's condition under them from first-hand foreign observers, notably the early Jesuits; and partly because anyone now of middle age was, so to speak, in at the death of the great House. Still we can, in imagination, watch the first Emperor Shun Chih absorbed in astronomical study with his friend, Father Adam Schall, or listening eagerly to his descriptions of life in the remote West; still we can accompany K'ang Hsi in his arduous campaign across the Gobi Desert against the Eluth Mongols, in which a brilliant victory was snatched from the jaws of utter defeat; still we can travel with Lord Macartney to the Court of Ch'ien Lung, we can stand behind him at the Emperor's banquet, share his pleasure and hopefulness when special dishes were sent him from the Imperial table, picture his utter dismay at the crushing, arrogant letter flung at him to take back to King George; above all, we can follow step by step the career of that wonderful woman Tzu-Hsi, the Empress Dowager, dazzled by her beauty, wit, scholarship and swift intelligence, asking ourselves again and again was she, indeed, to be called "great" or was she only a past-mistress of intrigue inordinately self-centred, of unsurpassed strength and utter ruthlessness.

The story of the Manchus is, indeed, irresistibly fascinating. There must have been a strong germ of statesmanship in the wild tribes of the Sungari River valley to have produced among their descendants two such great men as the Emperors K'ang Hsi and Ch'ien Lung, who between them ruled China for over 120 years. One may fancy that it was something more than mere desire for recreation which impelled K'ang Hsi, whenever he could escape from State business, to go off on those long days in the saddle a-hunting, in which none could excel his tire lessness and skill, some mysterious urge which drove him out to commune with his ancestors' spirits in their native haunts and, like another Geryon in the Hercules grip of Court seduction, to gather fresh strength from the touch of earth and forests.

All contemporary foreign records agree that these two Emperors were not only great and imposing personalities, but wise and diligent administrators, and that under them China was well governed, peaceful and prosperous. It is noticeable that both of them were sedulous in inculcating the strict observance of Confucian teaching: this was no doubt partly policy, since they were foreigners and knew that the Chinese regarded them as barbarians. But they contrast none the less markedly in this respect with Ch'in Shih Huang Ti, who had tried to root out all the old philosophy; and it is to be added that they were excellent scholars, K'ang Hsi, in particular, priding himself justly on his literary style and penmanship. This Emperor kept up magnificent state at Court, but in his own habits he was far from extravagant, and his continual thought was to keep down taxation. When one reflects that K'ang Hsi succeeded to the throne at the age of seven—which meant a Regency, a state of affairs almost always associated with disaster for China—that he assumed power when only 13, and when 15 had broken the power of the Regents and was ruling absolutely, his character and accomplishments are the more wonderful.

Yung Cheng, his son, who succeeded him in 1722, was largely taken up in quarrels with his brothers, of whom there were far too many (K'ang Hsi had had twenty sons and thirty daughters), but he was a hard-working man, who did not let down the prestige of the Ch'ing Dynasty. And then came the sixty years' reign of Ch'ien Lung. Succeeding to the throne in 1736, at the age of 25, he ultimately handed it on to his son Chia Ch'ing when he was 85, but lived for another four years in full possession of his powers, and always present at and dominating State Councils.*

Ch'ien Lung appeals to the imagination as a more glorious monarch than K'ang Hsi, about whose august figure there hangs a certain austerity. Perhaps this is due to the accounts we have in our own language from Lord Macartney's mission to Peking and Jehol in 1783 of the magnificence of his Court, and the actual pictures of its wealth and beauty, and decoration by the brush of the Benedictine friar, Castiglione. But under Ch'ien Lung China's domains were extended to the greatest extent they have ever known. His armies brought into his domains the huge north-western province of Sinkiang; they forced Annam to acknowledge him as suzerain, to send him tribute, and to submit to having its rulers invested by Peking; they brought Tibet once more firmly under his authority so that his Ambans in Lhasa supervised all the political acts of the Dalai Lama; they even crossed swords with the Gurkhas of Nepal when the latter showed signs of becoming aggressive, and drove them back within their own frontiers.

Ch'ien Lung was a great patron of the arts, a poet, the author of many comments on current matters and prefaces to books. In his reign the Chinese porcelain-makers achieved heights of ingenuity and luxuriant colouring and decoration never reached before. He was also a very human person; he liked festivities, and he liked his people to enjoy their festivities, too; and he frequently travelled about his empire to assure himself that things were well and to scatter upon his people the divine virtues that radiated from his person. Public wealth increased, cities grew to twice their former size, the population throve and multiplied. It was truly a splendid reign.

Sad to think that the Emperor's last years should have been defamed by the official corruption which, combined with dynastic degeneracy, always set in sooner or later. There was no degeneracy about Ch'ien Lung, who was hale and hearty to the end of his 89 years. But the peculations of his favourite Grand Secretary, Ho Shen, were so enormous that when he was indicted and executed by Ch'ien Lung's successor, Chia Ch'ing, his fortune was estimated at no less than £30 millions.† The list of Ho Shen's possessions, as prepared for Chia Ch'ing by the official investigators, has been published in English by more than one writer. It included several antique shops and pawnshops, full of treasures; 144 beds of lacquer inlaid with gold and jewels; gold bars worth £11,000,000; wash-basins in all bedrooms, and even more humble but necessary utensils, of pure gold; and most valuable of all the purest and largest pearl in the world, known as the Pearl of Glorious Good Omen, the mere possession of which (since it was supposed to be fit for Emperors only) was *lèse majesté*.

If the Grand Secretary could amass such enormous wealth, it goes without saying that other officials were lining their pockets as best they could. It was always well understood in China that an official should enrich himself out of his

* Sir Reginald Johnston, in *Twilight in the Forbidden City*, points out that "abdication" and "retirement" when applied to Ch'ien Lung create a wrong idea in Western minds. "Though relieved of the routine functions of the throne, he had the right and the power to reserve to himself the final decision in all matters of importance, and to overrule and set aside, if he felt so disposed, the mandate of his successor." The same was true of the Empress Dowager when she "retired" in favour of Kuang Hsu on his coming of age in 1888.

† In comparison with this, the £6,000,000 worth of gold and jewels buried with the Empress Dowager seems very modest.

office. His pay was small; that of a Viceroy ruling, perhaps, sixty or seventy million people was only Tls. 500 a month, or say between £60 and £70. And it was possible for a district magistrate when moved on to another post to have amassed a comfortable fortune and still to depart with a reputation for fair dealing and moderation, and to be presented with the honorific umbrella. But persons like Ho Shen really exceeded the bounds of propriety.

Chia Ch'ing was certainly not impelled by any sense of public welfare and the purifying of public life when he fell upon Ho Shen, as he did the instant his father was dead. He was a mean, morose and greedy man, whose only motive was to appropriate Ho Shen's riches for himself; and while he continued throughout the twenty-four years of his reign to take no interest in anything but his own pleasures, the evil powers of the eunuchs increased; the official world, ever accurately reflecting the character of the ruler, went from bad to worse; and the fine structure of good administration and popular prosperity built up by the first Manchus crumbled into deplorable decay.

Pirates preyed upon the coasts, there was a mutiny in the army, and secret societies multiplied widely. One group of plotters even got into the palace and would have killed the Emperor but for the bravery shown by his son, afterwards the Emperor Tao Kuang.

The latter, succeeding to the throne in 1820, was the last of the Manchu Emperors to show something of the spirit of his ancestors. He had some of the qualities of a moral reformer. In the quarrel with the foreign merchants at Canton over opium he seems to have been alive to the moral aspects of the question as well as to the economic loss to China due to the outflow of silver that went in payment for the drug. And he tried to purge official life of the corruption which had eaten into it in his father's reign. But he was no statesman; he had none of the strength of character and personality which enables some men to obtain instant obedience by a single word. He could bluster and fly into violent rages, as when he furiously cashiered the unfortunate Commissioner Lin for landing him in the war of 1840–42 with Great Britain, but he could not frame and carry through a set policy with judiciousness and decision. Incidentally, in his efforts to purify the Chinese officialdom, Tao Kuang never proceeded against the mandarins in South China, who, by their connivance at a trade which had been illegalized by Chia Ch'ing in 1800, but from which they nevertheless continued to make luscious profits, were at least as much to blame as the foreign merchants.

After Tao Kuang's death the descendants of K'ang Hsi and Ch'ien Lung hurried, it might be said galloped, downhill to perdition. Hsien Fêng, who succeeded in 1851 at the age of 20, was weak and dissipated as a man and contemptible as a ruler. He fled to Jehol in 1860 from the advance of the Anglo-French forces on Peking, and died there the year after, worn out by his excesses. His only claim to celebrity lies in his having taken the beautiful young Yehonala, afterwards the Empress Dowager, as his concubine and thus provided his tottering House with one last strong character to hold China together for another forty years under Manchu rule. Tung Chih, son of Hsien Fêng and Yehonala, became Emperor at the age of 5, assumed power when 17, and died three years later of smallpox and other diseases brought on by the viciousness of his pleasures, in pursuit of which he secretly issued night after night through a side door of the palace to revel in the lowest haunts of Peking.

Another baby was chosen for the throne, the miserable Tsai T'ien, better known in history by his reign title Kuang Hsü.* History can have nothing but

* It should be explained, perhaps, that the names K'ang Hsi, Ch'ien Lung, etc., are all reign titles, not the personal names of the sovereigns, which it was forbidden to mention. Thus the last Emperor of all (now called Emperor Kang Teh, of the puppet Japanese State of Manchukuo) was known as Hsuan Tung during his brief reign in Peking, but his real and, in this instance alone, far better known name, is Pu Yi.

sympathy for this unfortunate prince. He was a good man. He had realized, even before he came under the influence of the reformer K'ang Yu-wei, that China must reform herself if she was to keep her place among the nations (and considering the atmosphere and isolation of the Forbidden City, that is enough to denote him a man of remarkable intelligence), and in his famous "Hundred Days' Reform" in 1898 he was undoubtedly inspired by high zeal and sincerity. But, to use a familiar phrase of pidgin-English, Kuang Hsü "no got chance". He was not discreet; he should have known his formidable aunt, the Empress Dowager, better and proceeded more cautiously in a policy which she was certain to oppose. He was feverishly injudicious in his reforms, trying to cram China in three months with radical novelties enough for thirty years. He had no friends; lacking in personal magnetism, he was not the sort to make them easily. Above all, he had no support in the military forces around Peking. And in the end he was betrayed and swept aside by his aunt, who ruled unquestioned until her death in 1908. The Empire only lasted, under the nominal rule of yet another baby, Hsuan T'ung, for three more years.

Before dealing with the reign of the Empress Dowager, it may help to a clearer understanding of the manner in which the stage was set for the Revolution of 1911 to look back a little. The story is complicated by the number of factors in it, all distinct and yet all continually interacting—the degeneration of the Manchu Dynasty, which may be called a normal feature in Chinese history; the increasing rebellions of the secret societies, also normal; the effect in China of the foreign incursion, not only felt through China's repeated defeats in battle but also by the practical demonstration of what enterprise and clean government could achieve in the prosperous, well-administered cities built by the foreigners at Hongkong, Shanghai and elsewhere; and, finally, a new form of secret society plotting directly inspired by the example of foreign efficiency and basing its ideals of government for China on foreign patterns. This was the Tung Mêng Hui (United Revolutionary Party), which had its origin among Chinese students in Europe, who called a meeting at Brussels in 1905 for its formation. Dr. Sun Yat-sen, in his years of exile, took control of the movement that became the backbone of the Revolution of 1911, after which Dr. Sun reorganized it as the Kuomintang.

Secret societies are well-nigh as old as China herself and as prolific as her people. One notable secret society was a powerful factor in the civil wars of the Han Dynasty 2,000 years ago, calling itself the Red Eyebrow Society, because its members painted their eyebrows red; and all down through the ages secret societies have swarmed. Sometimes they were religious in aim, more often political, sometimes a mixture of both. Some of them seem to be purely for local self-defence, as, for example, the Red Spears, of which one heard a great deal during the civil wars of the 1920's, among the farmers of Northern China, whose lands were perpetually being marched over and their villages plundered by the rapacious soldiery of lawless war lords. The practice of magical arts and incantations, and claims to be invulnerable—the Boxers were particularly notorious for this—were common among all secret societies.

All through the Manchu Dynasty the secret societies were a source of anxiety to the Government. Even the great K'ang Hsi had to be on the alert against them, although owing to his strong and fair administration they did not make much headway in his reign. But towards the end of Ch'ien Lung's life, when, as already described, corruption was setting in among the officials, the secret societies burst into activity, which continued to swell in violence until it culminated in the fearful T'aiping rebellion, which raged for fourteen years in the middle of last century, with the deaths of 20,000,000 Chinese.

It is to be remembered that South China never really accepted, though for a century and a half it was compelled to submit to, the rule of the Manchus. There

the last representative of the Ming Dynasty met his doom. The South was always most fertile in secret societies. Dr. Sun Yat-sen and the chief leaders of the Revolution were Southerners. And as the South had not accepted the Manchus, so the North has never had any love for the Kuomintang, essentially a Southern creation. The seemingly instinctive antagonism between North and South in so many countries—between Northern and Southern States in America, as in Italy, and between Prussians and south-country Germans—is one of the most curious phenomena in history. It is, perhaps, a happy omen for China's future that General Chiang Kai-shek is neither of North nor South, but a native of the Central Province of Chêkiang at the mouth of the Yangtze.

From the end of the 18th century the names of three secret societies stand out conspicuously: the White Lily, the Triads—so-called from the three characters in their name meaning heaven, earth, and man, and also called the Heaven and Earth Society—and the Ko Lao Hui, or Elder Brother Society. The White Lily Society came into existence early in the 14th century, during the Mongol Dynasty under Buddhist leaders, and had a distinctly religious complexion. It was again to the fore in the unruly days of the end of the Ming Dynasty; and it broke out violently four years before the death of Ch'ien Lung and was not surpressed for ten years, by which time it had wrought havoc in four Southern provinces. No fewer than 20,000 of its members were executed. It was, of course, purely anti-dynastic, not anti-foreign. Foreign merchants at Canton were already building up a lucrative trade, and were becoming a nuisance to Peking. But the vast spaces of internal China knew nothing of them, and had no more suspicion than anyone else of their coming importance to China.

The Ko Lao Hui, or Elder Brother Society, had a very long life. It originated early during the Manchu Dynasty, and was always actuated by desire for revenge on the conquerors from Manchuria, and for their destruction. Although not directly anti-foreign, the Ko Lao Hui took a prominent part in the lurid anti-missionary riots in the Yangtze Valley in 1891, but, it was believed, mainly in the hope of making trouble for the Manchu Government with foreign Powers. In the Revolution of 1911 the Ko Lao Hui sprang up at once on the side of the Nationalists,* and it was they who were responsible for the cruel and really needless slaughter of 10,000 helpless Manchu bannermen and their wives and children at Sianfu, in North-western China (the city made famous twenty-five years later by the kidnapping of General Chiang Kai-shek). But as the Republican movement, under Dr. Sun Yat-sen, grew in importance, the Ko Lao Hui degenerated into mere brigands, and for many years before I left China I do not remember even hearing their name.

The Triads were another organization of formidable repute in the early 19th century, all the literature of which abounds in references to the terror of their name. They spread among Chinese overseas, and both the Hongkong Government in the '40's and that of the Straits Settlements in the '80's (as also the Dutch in the East Indies) found it advisable to suppress their activities, although these were not in any way aimed at the local authorities; indeed, the Triads were never anti-foreign. They fought, unsuccessfully, for the Mings in Fukien at the beginning of the Manchu Dynasty; and at intervals they stirred up rebellions in South China as the Manchu grip began to slacken. They were closely associated with the T'aipings and, at the beginning of the rebellion, it was the Triads which occupied the Shanghai district between 1853–54 and thus brought about the celebrated Battle of Muddy Flats.† The Triads were divided into five lodges, with an elaborate ritual, believed to have been drawn up for them by

* This term had not yet been coined for the revolutionaries, but for convenience's sake it is used here.

† The little foreign community of Shanghai found itself inconveniently placed between the rebels in the native city on the one side and the Imperialist troops on the other. Of these the Imperialists were

Taoist and Buddhist priests. Initiation was long and serious, with several degrees and thirty-six oaths to be taken and numerous secret signs by which the members could identify each other. But as the T'aipings increased in numbers and power, the Triads became merged in them; or, at least, nothing much was heard of them in the second half of the 19th century.

The T'aiping Rebellion, which broke out in 1851 and lasted until 1865, was the last of what may be called the classical rebellions, with no aim but that of overthrowing the Manchus and setting up a new dynasty. Their leader, Hung Hsiu-chuan, was actually proclaimed Emperor at Nanking and took the name "T'ai Ping", "Great Peace", for his dynasty. That the speed with which the rebellion spread was largely due to the impotence of the Manchus to save China from defeat by Great Britain in the war of 1841–42 is hardly doubtful. But it was never an anti-foreign movement, in spite of the part played, first by the American, Ward, and his Ever Victorious Army, and afterwards by Gordon, who commanded this force after Ward's death at Ningpo; nor were their ideas for the new dynasty based on foreign models of government, as those of the revolutionaries in 1911 were. But then the T'aipings knew nothing of any country but their own, and the success of the foreign Settlements, as an example of good administration, was not yet conspicuous enough to influence their policy. The sacred soil of Peking had not yet been desecrated by barbarian feet. The Summer Palace was not to be burnt down till 1860 by Lord Elgin as a piece of deliberate policy to punish the Emperor himself, not some wretched file of scapegoats, for the enormity of the treacherous seizure and torture of the British peace envoys, Parkes, Loch and their followers. The first British Minister, Sir Frederick Bruce, did not take up his residence in Peking, and the first Chinese students did not go to America until six years after the T'aipings had finally been crushed. And then they were fetched back in a hurry on the report of a visiting mandarin that they were becoming denationalized.

On the other hand, the T'aipings were influenced by foreign thought to the extent that they started as a professedly Christian movement. Hung, their founder, had come under missionary influence; he claimed to have had visions of God the Father and to have received a divine commission to rule China; and for this reason some of the missionary body were at first inclined to support him. But before long it became evident that Hung's conception of Christianity was fantastic and that of his followers none at all.

Often as one has read the story of those fourteen ghastly years of the T'aiping Rebellion, one still shivers at the horror of the mental picture it evokes. The civil wars of the war lords in the 1920's gave one some standard by which to visualize it. There was one area stretching across Shantung and Honan which was so often marched across and plundered by the Tuchuns' bandit soldiers, and was so often the field of battles in which the only sufferers were the innocent country people, that it came to be known as "the Grey Zone". But the desolation of the 1920's was nothing to compare with that of the 1850–60's.

Scientists tell us that rebellions, drought, pestilence and famine are Nature's necessary safety-valves in teeming oriental countries, without which the population would grow to unsupportable dimensions. But it is quite impossible to be detached and scientific as one thinks of the kindly, harmless Chinese peasant, the most easily governed, patient, friendliest creature on earth. The Yangtze Valley, too, and the provinces southward, which suffered worst in the rebellion, contain the fairest parts of the great land—fertile plains watered by innumerable streams and

by far the greater nuisance. Finally, Shanghai decided that they must be removed. A volunteer force of British and Americans was formed, with sailors from the ships in harbour, in all under 400 men, and sallied out to attack the Imperialist camp containing at least 20,000 men. The result was a glorious victory (though it must be admitted that the rebels sailed in to help when they saw the foreigners' bold assault), and the Imperialist camp was withdrawn to a more comfortable distance.

creeks, undulating hills and shadowy mountains the rich "rice bowl" of Hunan, the profitable indigo fields of Kiangsi, the tea plantations of Hupeh which produce the incomparable Keemuns black teas, the unrivalled porcelain industry of Chintehchên with furnaces that had not been let out for eight centuries, and dignified, picturesque cities Wuchang, Hangchow, Soochow, Nanking, and many others, ruined, desolated, soaked in blood. When the T'aipings stormed Nanking in 1853 they butchered every soul of the resident Manchu garrison, 20,000 men, women and children—"We killed them all, the devils, to the infant in arms; we left not a root to sprout from"—and sent their corpses floating down the Yangtze, like shoals of dead herrings.

It is proof of the unfitness of the T'aipings to found a dynasty that in all the ten years during which they held Nanking they never attempted to create an organized administration, nor even organized taxation. They merely took what they wanted from what was in sight. And so it was everywhere. In the first years of the rebellion the T'aiping army was disciplined and well behaved. South China had been in a state of rising ferment, with revolts breaking out continually in all directions—social and economic revolt of peasants, labourers and the poorer gentry against tyrannous officials and landlords—which the uselessness of the Imperialist troops could not suppress, and their cruelties only augmented, when Hung Hsiu-chuan, the Tien Wang, or Heavenly Prince as he now called himself, came to the front as leader in Kwangsi, in 1850 : then the rebellion took definite form. Now defeating the Imperialists in every engagement, the T'aipings swept northward to the Yangtze, where they captured Yochow, Hanyang and Wuchang in quick succession, and so down the Great River, taking city after city, finally, in March 1853, Nanking itself. Thence they pushed out north-west and north, prosecuting their triumphs far into Honan, and even to the outskirts of Tientsin. Why, in this latter advance, they did not push on against the feeble rulers in Peking is not explicable. Instead, the T'aipings fell back on Nanking, having done nothing but spread destruction. China still had years of misery to endure. But the zenith of the rebellion had been passed.

Sir George Bonham, Governor of Hongkong, visited Nanking shortly after its capture and was much impressed by the discipline and good order in the T'aiping army. It had grown greatly since it started from Kwangsi, and now numbered 500,000 men and 500,000 women combatants, commanded by a number of Wangs, or Princes, appointed by the Heavenly Prince, who had withdrawn into strict seclusion, amusing himself with his visions and his harem. But after the failure of the T'aipings to reach Peking, order and restraint went rapidly to pieces. As the treasure and stores found in Nanking and other cities, which had first kept them going, were exhausted, the T'aipings degenerated into mere merciless marauders, devastating the country, laying waste the cities, leaving large areas of once peaceful homes heaps of rubble over which Nature quickly spread her mantle of scrub and bushes, to be the home of wild beasts and birds. Along the Yangtze Valley, for ages a centre of culture, most of the best libraries in China, including three Imperial ones, were destroyed, with many academies, most of which have never been rebuilt. And to the T'aipings is due the loss of the exquisite Porcelain Tower in Nanking, built early in the 15th century by the Emperor Yung-lo in memory of his mother. Octagonal in shape, it was 280 feet high, with nine storeys divided by overhanging eaves, these being covered with green porcelain tiles, while the pagoda itself was faced with white ones. From the eaves hung golden bells and lanterns, and on top of the pagoda was a pole surrounded by nine rings and bearing a large golden ball. Apart from city walls, China is poor in ancient buildings, her architecture being chiefly of wood, so that the destruction of this lovely tower is doubly deplorable.

But far worse was the human suffering inflicted, through which, as always, the

THE EMPRESS DOWAGER TZU HSI

UNIVERSITY OF N
LIBRA
RAJARAMM

A PICTURE PAINTED ON SILK BY THE EMPRESS DOWAGER TZU HSI

(Kindly lent by Dr. Thomas Cochrane)

depredations of the T'aipings were aggravated by swarms of outlaws, who, now homeless and labourless, took to brigandage. By 1863, when Gordon began his memorable career of victories, the country at the mouth of the Yangtze, between Nanking, Shanghai and Hangchow, was so ruined that cannibalism was rife. Before the end of the Rebellion in 1864, twelve provinces, about equal in area to Germany, Austria, France and the Low Countries, had been devastated, and through battle, massacre and famine 20,000,000 human beings had perished.

It was not until 1862, that Great Britain and France took action against the T'aipings. It is to be remembered, as a sample of the incongruity of things in China in those days, that between 1856 and 1860 these two Powers were at war with Peking and invaded it, while at Shanghai and Ningpo Chinese mandarins were imploring their help against the rebels, and Chinese refugees were pouring into the foreign settlements of Shanghai by tens of thousands for safety. After Sir George Bonham's visit to the Heavenly Prince at Nanking, Great Britain and France decided to be strictly neutral. But the rapid deterioration of the T'aipings, the general destruction of trade, and the conclusion of peace with the Imperial Government, and inauguration, at last, of orthodox diplomatic relations with Peking, brought about a change of mind. Assistance was, at first, limited to an area within a radius of thirty miles of Shanghai. But subsequently the British Government withdrew its prohibition against officers entering Chinese military service, and the way was made clear for Gordon to take the command of the dead Ward's Ever Victorious Army and to push his operations wherever needed.

Frederick Ward, the American rolling stone who became a General in the Chinese service, was in his way as extraordinary a man as Gordon. A rough, adventurous life had brought him to Shanghai during the rebellion, and in 1860 he proposed to the Chinese merchants of Shanghai to form a force, which they agreed to pay for, to recapture Sungkiang (about thirty miles from Shanghai, on the way to Hangchow) from the rebels. Such was the beginning of the Ever Victorious Army, which, in the course of the next three years, was to fight nearly a hundred battles, with only three or four defeats, and capture nearly fifty walled cities. As the Powers were at that time neutral, Ward's action was frowned upon, and he was generally regarded as an adventurer who, to vary Hamlet's words a little:

> Hath in the skirts of China here and there
> Sharked up a list of lawless resolutes.

But after some early discouragements with the discharged foreign sailors and deserters with whom he had begun, Ward got rid of the lot, except for a handful of officers, and built his force entirely of Chinese to the number of 8,000, whom he welded and trained into a thoroughly efficient military machine devoted to himself; and when he was stricken down at Ningpo, in 1862, all the British military and naval authorities* who had known him were unanimous in lamenting him as a brave and gallant man, a fine commander, and a sincere and loyal servant of the Chinese, with whom his personal relations were always smooth, friendly and effective. He was buried at Sungkiang, where the Chinese erected a memorial hall containing a stone tablet inscribed with the story of his services, before which, at least until recent years, they burnt incense on the anniversaries of his death.

Of Charles Gordon, that perfect flower of Christian chivalry and military genius, may one venture to say that, if the modern generation have forgotten him, they would be well repaid for more than one reason in reading the story of his

* There were, of course, several of these, as also of the French, who were in action against the T'aipings, besides Ward and Gordon. But they did not operate so far afield as the latter, and it would take too much space, besides being unnecessary, for the purpose of this book to detail their doings.

life? (*Not* according to St. Loe Strachey, but either in Boulger's *Life of Gordon*, or in Dr. Bernard Allen's two admirable books, *Gordon in China* and *Gordon and the Sudan.*) He was given command of the Ever Victorious Army in March 1863, after a disastrous interregnum under others. He had to soothe away at the outset much hostility among the Army's American officers, who did not welcome an English commander. Later, after his capture of Quinsan, an important hill town about thirty-five miles west of Shanghai, when Gordon decided to move his headquarters there, both for the sake of his campaigning and to get the army away from Sungkiang, where long residence had impaired its discipline, there was a serious mutiny, and nearly 2,000 of his men left him. But Gordon promptly filled their places with an equal number of T'aipings,* who had surrendered at Quinsan; and very soon his men were as devoted to him as to Ward.

Though a dragon for discipline and ruthless in punishment (once, when there were signs of disaffection, he paraded the troops and shot the ringleader on the spot), Gordon was always tenderly careful for the welfare of his men, particularly the wounded, while his brilliant planning, unvaried success, and his courage gave him an almost superhuman prestige among the Chinese. The sight of Gordon, carrying only a light cane, always in the front wherever fighting was hottest, was, like "Wellington's long nose" on the morning of a battle, an inspiration to his troops, and his seeming invulnerability—in twenty-three battles Gordon was only once slightly wounded—caused him to be looked upon as something unearthly, a feeling much increased by his blunt rejection of the money with which Peking tried to placate his fury when, after the surrender of Soochow, Li Hung-chang beheaded the five T'aiping generals to whom Gordon had promised safety.

Gordon's last triumph was the capture of the walled city of Changchow, a very hard nut, in May 1864. The way was now open for the final assault and capture of Nanking, in July, by Viceroy Tseng Kuo-fan, when the Heavenly Prince committed suicide and the T'aiping Rebellion was virtually finished. But in this Gordon took no part. From Changchow heled the Ever Victorious Army back to Quinsan, saw that its members were all suitably rewarded, and then disbanded it, himself again refusing all monetary rewards, and returning home a General in the Chinese Army, but financially worse off than when he had entered China four years before. His extraordinary campaign had lasted but fifteen months.

It would be giving a wrong impression to suggest that Gordon actually crushed the T'aiping Rebellion. When he took command the Imperialist resistance was already in far better shape under the leadership of Tseng Kuo-fan and Li Hung-chang; and nothing should be said to detract from the merit of these two great Chinese. As early as 1855 Tseng had organized a militia in Hunan which dealt the T'aipings some hard blows. A scholar and an aristocrat, he developed also the qualities of a fine soldier. He was appointed Viceroy of Nanking in 1860, and after stamping out the embers of the rebellion remained there till 1869, when he was made Viceroy of Chihli. He died three years later, a poor man, in spite of his tremendous opportunities for amassing wealth, a perfect type of Confucian moral integrity revered to this day by all Chinese as the greatest of their race for two centuries past.

Of Li Hung-chang it seems almost unnecessary to speak. He too, like Tseng Kuo-fan, had made independent, vigorous headway against the T'aipings in his native province of Anhui, and when Tseng was made Viceroy of Nanking, Li was made Governor of Kiangsu, where he was Gordon's immediate chief. No Chinese

* The alacrity with which Chinese troops, in times of civil war, transfer their allegiance was repeatedly shown in the Tuchun wars of the 1920's. A defeated war lord, on deciding that his health would be benefited by a visit to Japan or Europe, would send a moving appeal to his opponent on behalf of his leaderless troops, which usually meant that they were enrolled in the other man's army, the troops themselves acquiescing in the arrangement with perfect comprehension. This is, perhaps, the most endearing feature of civil war in China.

was better known by foreigners in the 19th century than this tall, powerfully built, sagacious man, and in every crisis with foreigners, with Japan after the war, with Russia, with the Allies after the Boxer rising, it was to Li that the Empress Dowager turned to get her out of the mess as cheaply as possible. Li had not the lofty moral virtues of Tseng; one feels that Tseng would never have beheaded the nine Wangs at Soochow, though Li could put up a good case for what he had done. But he was none the less a great and far-sighted statesman, the first to appreciate the importance of what foreigners had to teach China, one who laboured incessantly for his country's good, who saw the madness of the Boxer rising, and was foremost in protecting foreigners from it.

Compared with the whole operations of Tseng and Li, Gordon's campaign was a small affair; and it is worth noting that when he took command of the Ever Victorious Army it was cut down to half what Ward had commanded. But Gordon was like the cake of barley bread, in the story of Gideon, that "tumbled into the host of Midian and came unto a tent and smote it that it fell". He came at precisely the right moment, when the Imperialists were in danger of being stuck, to apply what is now familiarly known as the "softening" process; and without the capture of Taitsang, Quinsan, Soochow and Changchow, fruits of his generalship, the way to Nanking would not have been opened, and the rebellion would undoubtedly have dragged on for very much longer than it did.

I have dwelt at some length on the T'aiping Rebellion not only for the drama of the story, a terrible illustration of what can happen in China when the Confucian virtues are forgotten by the rulers, but especially for certain features and incidents in it which had a direct influence on the future. And first one would emphasize the revelation to the Chinese in the persons of Ward and Gordon of what a foreigner can be. Hitherto the Chinese had thought of foreigners only as troublesome, arrogant, greedy, quarrelsome barbarians, impervious to "the great maxims of reason". In Ward and Gordon they discovered that the barbarians could be guided by principles of their own, and very high principles. Li Hung-chang's respect for and delight in Gordon's character, born of their first meeting, only increased as their association lengthened, though one may admit that Gordon was often a difficult man to deal with. Ward was less disdainful of pecuniary reward for his services than Gordon, but the actual amount he received was only about £20,000, mostly represented by debts which it took his family a long time to collect, and there was never the slightest doubt that he served the Chinese, not for what he could get, but in pure duty and loyalty. Foreigners, as well as Chinese, owe a real intangible debt to the memory of Ward and Gordon.

It was they, too, who first revealed what good soldiers Chinese can be when properly drilled and led. Ward was a fine organizer as well as a dashing leader, and of the army that he created the *North China Herald* of March 3, 1862, wrote, after it had decisively defeated the T'aipings at Minghong: "As for the Chinese force organized under Colonel Ward, they seemed to know no fear and in fact exposed themselves." The Ever Victorious Army was certainly allowed to "moult no feather" under Gordon. They always went into battle against heavy odds, and some of the fortresses they overcame would have tested the mettle of the best European troops. It is certain that Li Hung-chang took close note of these lessons in Western military science, and there can be little doubt that they were the basis of his later endeavours to equip China with an adequate army and navy. Unfortunately, the Empress Dowager spent the money that should have gone to the forces in rebuilding the Summer Palace. Hence China's defeat by Japan.

It was in the T'aiping Rebellion, too, that Chinese first came to live in the foreign settlement of Shanghai, with incalculable consequences. When in 1843 a space was allocated to foreigners on the banks of the Whangpoo, the nucleus of

what eventually became the teeming wealthy International Settlement and French Concession of Shanghai, only foreigners were allowed to live there.* But during the T'aiping Rebellion thousands of Chinese flocked in for safety. Many left when the rebellion ended, but many stayed, and in the course of time multiplied to a population of a round million. They brought wealth to the landowners who rented them houses and to the Settlements generally. But they were the cause, in later years, of increasing problems, disputes and ill-feeling between Shanghai and the Chinese authorities. It is unnecessary to go into details here, but it is possible that the whole relationships of foreigners and Chinese, in the years between the First World War and Japan's invasion of China, might have been quite different from what they were if Shanghai had remained, as originally designed, for foreign residence only.

Another, and this time very splendid, product of the rebellion was the birth of that majestic and invaluable service the Chinese Maritime Customs. When the local mandarins fled from the rebels and the collection of trade dues collapsed, Mr., afterwards Sir Rutherford, Alcock, the British Consul-General, dissented strongly from the idea that the Government should lose its lawful revenues and at the same time saw an opportunity of putting the collection, for the first time, on a proper footing with a regular scale of fees. Through Alcock's initiative a Board of three foreign administrators was accordingly set up to collect the customs under a Chinese superintendent, to whom they were responsible. The system was copied in Canton and extended to all ports. The Board of three was afterwards reduced to one Inspector-General, first in 1859 Mr. Horatio Nelson Lay, and then in 1863 the immortal Sir Robert Hart. Thus through the storm and stress of the T'aiping Rebellion came into existence one of the greatest organizations in the world, unique in character, internationally staffed, a model of loyal service by foreigners working as officials of the Chinese Government,† the backbone of China's finances, a gift to her by foreign genius which may fairly be said to offset many of her complaints of the West.

The end of the T'aiping Rebellion marked the end of an epoch and a change in the relationships between China and the Western Powers. This is conspicuously illustrated in the difference in character of China's wars with foreign Powers before 1860 and after that date. As will no doubt be remembered, there were two wars before 1860, the miscalled Opium War with Great Britain, 1839–42, and the Anglo-French war with China, which straggled over from 1856 to 1860. In both these wars the fundamental point of principle is plain, namely that China should admit the equal status of foreigners with Chinese. That this demand was made urgent by the British desire for trade and that the result of the wars was the opening up of several new ports to foreign residence and trade does not alter the essential fact that they were in no sense acquisitive wars, designed to rob China of territory, as were the wars after 1860.‡

It seems unfortunately necessary to emphasize once again—for the old libel sticks persistently—that Great Britain did not make war in 1840 to force opium

* Except a few Chinese families who had refused (and on whom, as on others, there was no compulsion) to part with their land to the foreigners.

† It may, perhaps, be worth nothing that there was always a Chinese superintendent (later to become the Shuiwuchu, or Board of Customs) over the Inspector-General. Furthermore, that the I.-G.'s duty where money was concerned was only to collect it and hand it over to the Chinese Government's banks. It was only after Sir Robert Hart's death that his successor, Sir Francis Aglen, having accepted the service of numerous loans secured on the Customs, retained the revenue and handed the surplus, after the claims of the loans had been met, to the Government.

‡ That Hongkong was ceded to Great Britain after the war of 1840–42 is no contradiction of this statement. The British were driven from Canton to take refuge in Hongkong by the violence of the Chinese Commissioner Lin. Hongkong was then a barren malarial spot, inhabited only by a few fisher-folk. At Westminster indignant questions were asked why we had troubled to burden ourselves with such a place. It is doubtful whether Peking was aware of Hongkong's existence. Its cession to Great Britain certainly involved no threat to China's sovereignty.

upon China. Opium is never mentioned in the Treaty of Nanking which closed the war; British merchants were explicitly warned by Sir Henry Pottinger, the British plenipotentiary, that if they were caught smuggling opium they could expect no help from their Government; and when the trade was legalized in 1858 to check the smuggling, for which foreigners (by no means only British) were no more to blame than the Chinese mandarins, Lord Elgin made it quite plain to the Chinese that there was no question of compulsion, but a matter for their decision alone. Opium was undeniably a complicating factor, but the root cause was the humiliations and restrictions put upon the British at Canton; the limitations on trade and the irregularity and growing weight of its taxation due to the mandarins' greed; and, beneath all, the pride of the British and the pride of the Chinese. To remove these grievances, to put the relations of the two peoples on a friendly and equable footing, was the aim of Lord Macartney's mission to Peking in 1793, of Lord Amherst's mission in 1816, of Lord Napier in 1834; but all in vain.

The causes of war in 1856 were very like those of 1839: refusal to implement the principle of equality incorporated in the Treaty of Nanking, refusal to open Canton to foreigners, especially to foreign officials desiring to treat with the Viceroy, trade difficulties. The actual inception of the war was the trumpery and rather questionable affair of the seizure by the Chinese of the lorcha *Arrow*: there was something to be said for the Chinese contention that the flying of the British flag did not confer British nationality on a boat manned entirely by Chinese, whom the Canton officials declared to be pirates. If Yeh Ming-shên, the Viceroy, had not been the violently anti-foreign, intemperate, ill-balanced man that he was, determined from the moment of his arrival at Canton in 1852 to flout the foreigners and to resist in every possible way the Treaty of Nanking, the lorcha *Arrow* affair, even if it had arisen, could have been settled in five minutes. Support for this view is found in the fact that at Shanghai, where the British Consul-General had no difficulty in seeing the Viceroy at Nanking in occasional moments of stress, relationships between British and Chinese had been growing steadily more amicable.

After the Treaty of Tientsin, signed in 1858, the grand provision of which was that a British Minister should reside permanently in Peking, the Chinese Government put itself wholly in the wrong by making a murderous attack, at the mouth of the Tientsin River, on the British ships escorting the Minister, Sir Frederick Bruce, and subsequently by their treacherous seizure of the peace envoys, Parkes, Loch, and their party, some of whom, including four Englishmen, died under the savage treatment inflicted on them.

For which the Summer Palace was first thoroughly sacked by the French and then burnt down by the British. More ports were opened to trade by the Treaty of Tientsin, right to travel in China under passports, certain liberties for missionaries secured, and the two square miles of the Kowloon peninsula opposite Hongkong were ceded to Great Britain. This was, perhaps, the one exception in the policy steadily followed by the British Government in China; for the new territories added to Kowloon in 1899 and the territory of Weihaiwei were only leased, both of them for purposes of defence, at a time when Russia, Germany and France were set on a path of active aggression, which actually threatened the break-up of China. Weihaiwei was spontaneously restored to China in 1930, and the leased territories —how sadly ineffective for Hongkong's defence we all know only too well—are due to be returned in 1968, and in all probability will have been returned long before that date.

On a comprehensive view it can fairly be claimed for British policy towards China that it was founded solely on the principles of fair trade for all and the equality of status recognized by civilized nations. The "Open Door" had been Great Britain's guiding motive for decades before it was enunciated by the

American Secretary of State, John Hay, in 1899; and the declaration of British interests in the Yangtze Valley in 1898 was an assertion of the Open Door intended to retard, if possible to prevent, but most certainly not to partake in, the threatened partitioning of China. The area allotted for foreign residence at Shanghai in 1843 was not taken from China by force but freely agreed upon between Captain Balfour, the British Consul, and the Taotai; and it is very probable that the latter was mainly inspired by the hope of shutting up the foreigners in an enclave as they had been at Canton. As for extraterritoriality, vaguely provided for in connexion with the Treaty of Nanking and explicitly defined in America's treaty with China two years later, there is not the slightest doubt that the Chinese mandarins granted it as a mark not of the foreigner's superiority but of his lowliness, his unfitness to be governed by the same laws as the Chinese.

To decide whether Great Britain was entitled to force China to open her doors to foreign trade and residence would be to embark on a very long discussion. It can at least be said that she tried to achieve this end by every reasonable means, from the Macartney mission onwards, before using force.

But after 1860 China had to face demands of a very different sort from those previously made on her, demands not based on any principle of the normal intercourse between nations, but barefaced aggression by which she was helplessly stripped of large pieces of territory. The ease with which Chinese armies could be defeated by European-trained troops had been fully exposed, and the predatory Powers were not slow to take advantage of the discovery.

France began, in 1884, by taking Annam, which, though it was not actually Chinese territory, had owned China as suzerain since the Emperor K'ang Hsi's reign. Japan, making the first move in her bid for world empire, wrested Korea from China's suzerainty and also took Formosa, the Liu Chius, and a large indemnity. She also took the Liaotung peninsula in South Manchuria, but Russia, backed by Germany and France, forced her to hand it back. Germany, as blood money for the death of two missionaries in Shantung, took Kiaochou, the finest harbour in North China, and the right to build a railway thence to Tsinanfu, the capital of Shantung. Russia, the greatest menace of all to China at the end of the 19th century, got the Liaotung promontory for herself, which she had forced Japan to disgorge; extracted from China the right to build a railway across Manchuria to connect the Trans-Siberian with Vladivostok, with an extension southwards to the great fortress she constructed at Port Arthur; filled Manchuria with troops; appointed a "Viceroy of the Far East"; and was rapidly converting Manchuria into a Russian province when Japan went to war with her and threw her back. But this was no advantage to China; it merely meant that she had two masters in Manchuria instead of one. France improved the shining hour (this was after Germany's seizure of Kiaochou) by adding the Kanchowwan area in South China to Indo-China. This was the time, too, when Great Britain obtained the lease of additional territories at Kowloon. No doubt our action in doing so appeared much the same to Chinese generally as that of other Powers. But from all that was happening, Whitehall might well feel that it must look to the defences of Hongkong; while the lease of Weihaiwei distinctly said that the territory was to be held so long as Russia occupied Port Arthur, on the opposite side to Weihaiwei of the Gulf of Chihli.

This disgraceful record surely goes far to explain, if it does not excuse, the frenzy of the Boxers in 1900. Without any question, it justifies the deep determination of better-educated men that a system of government which had brought China to such pitiable depths must go for good and all. Immediately after the defeat by Japan in 1895, Dr. Sun Yat-sen had raised revolt against the Manchus. He was driven into exile for sixteen years. But the spoliation of China described above added continually to his followers, who may well have been further stimu-

lated by the lunacy of the Court—it is hard to understand how educated men, least of all anyone so intelligent as the Empress Dowager, could have thought to win freedom for China by such means—in setting the Boxers at the Legations and ordering the massacre of all foreigners in the country.

But the Manchu Dynasty had still twelve years of life. One last feature of the T'aiping Rebellion may be mentioned. It brought to the fore the young Yehonala when she used her power over the decrepit Emperor, Hsien Fêng, to appoint Tseng Kuo-fan commander-in-chief against the T'aipings and even to exempt Tseng from the duties of mourning for his dead father, which would, without Yehonala's timely intervention, have compelled him to retire for three years from all public life. For forty-eight years Yehonala was to rule China, to prove that the Manchu stock could still produce one virile sprout, to uphold the tottering House, to keep off the Revolution which, when at last she had "ascended on the Dragon", was so swiftly to engulf it.

Chapter III

THE EMPRESS DOWAGER AND AFTER

"STRANGE THAT THE FEET OF SUCH A WOMAN SHOULD HAVE DANCED OFF THE head of such a man."

A far-distant memory of a sermon on Herodias's daughter by a once-noted preacher comes back to mind as an appropriate apothegm on the Empress Dowager's career. Strange, indeed, it was that she, endowed with graces and abilities a thousand-fold greater than Salome's, beautiful, fascinating, witty, cultured, courageous, resourceful, with skill to choose good servants, charm to bind them to her, and power to dominate all, should not have used—should, apparently, never have seen how she could have used—her great equipment to save China instead of adding to the accumulation of its miseries and certifying the destruction of her own House.

She was thoroughly well read in the Chinese classics, always ready with an apt quotation to best her counsellors, and especially in the Manchu Dynasty's history. Yet she failed to read the moral of the reigns of her predecessors as much as she failed to read the signs of the times in which she lived. In 1860 she strongly opposed the flight to Jehol because she believed that Peking was strong enough to keep the Anglo-French allies out, and in spite of China's obvious inability to stand up to foreign troops, she urged defiance of them.

In the *coup d'état* of 1898, when she swept the Emperor Kuang Hsü from the throne and shut him up for two years, a miserable, brutally treated prisoner, it was, of course, a case of his survival or hers, and she was not the woman to accept defeat. Also she may have thought, not unjustly, that Kuang Hsü's torrent of reforms was too heavy and ill-considered to do China any real good. Yet it is strange that she did not see the significance of China's defeat by Japan and of the rapacity of Russia, Germany and France; and that she could not recognize in Kang Yu-wei, the Emperor's teacher, the representative of a body of public opinion more and more insistent that new ways must be adopted to enable China to survive in a new world. At the end of her life, after the Boxer rising, the Empress Dowager did set about reforms, social, educational, military, and the creation of a Senate as a preliminary towards the institution of popularly elected parliaments. But it was too late.

One explanation of her deficiencies is that she never saw her subjects. In meetings of the Council she was screened from them by a curtain. When she

passed through the city, to and from the Summer Palace, the people had to shut their shops and hide themselves. Even in the Forbidden City, if the Court painters and decorators saw her coming, they had to scurry away. She never escaped from the enervating and, by her time, thoroughly degenerate hothouse of the palace. This must account for much, both in her mistakes and her crimes. But there were none the less weak points in her armour—for instance, the influence which she allowed her Chief Eunuchs to gain over her, first An Te-hai, then Li Lien-ying—and there were dark and horrid patches in her nature.

Yehonala* was born in November 1835, in the Yangtze province of Anhui, as generally, though not certainly, said, daughter of a captain of Manchu bannerman, undistinguished except for his ancient descent. The father died when Yehonala was only three, and her mother moved to Peking to live with a relative, father of the young lady who became Hsien Fêng's consort, Tzu An. At the age of 16, like all Manchu girls of good family, Yehonala's name was entered on the lists of those eligible to become Imperial concubines, and having duly passed the required tests she entered the Forbidden City in 1852. There seems no reason to doubt the tradition that she had been engaged to her cousin, Jung Lu, a captain in the Tartar cavalry, with whom she had played as a child, but such private inclinations, of course, had no standing against the Imperial summons. Certain it is, however, that Jung Lu remained her most faithful friend and servant all through life and twice her saviour in moments of her greatest danger.

Yehonala was an extraordinarily beautiful girl. Chinese standards of beauty, both masculine and feminine, are different from ours, but in any country in the world Yehonala would have shone out, winning instant admiration and homage. Small, dainty, exquisitely proportioned and graceful, she had lustrous dark eyes, a broad forehead, delicately arched eyebrows, and regular features. Throughout her life, even when she was old, her skin remained smooth and soft, "the schoolgirl complexion". Her smile was utterly captivating; no one, however staid, could resist her charm; like John in Hans Andersen's story of "The Travelling Companion",† dazzled by the beauty of the magician princess, they "could not believe that she was a wicked witch". Her mind was on a par with her looks, her conversation was delightful, full of wit and gaiety. And besides being very well read, as already mentioned, Yehonala painted well, wrote verses that would have been praised even if written by a commoner, and sang delightfully.

It is said that this last accomplishment was the means of bringing her to Hsien Fêng's notice; for to be enrolled as a concubine did not necessarily mean that a girl even saw the Emperor. It is said that he heard her singing one day when he happened to pass near her apartments, inquired who she was, sent for her and instantly passed under her thraldom. From that moment she became the dominating influence in his life; and when, in 1856, she bore him a son and heir, she was a factor in the affairs of State never again to be underrated.

It was precisely through underrating Yehonala's cool, resourceful brain that her enemies, Su Shun, the ambitious Minister, and his patrons, the Princes Tsai, Yuan and Tuan Hua, came to grief. Su Shun had had a good deal of influence, chiefly of a disreputable kind, on Hsien Fêng until Yehonala's star rose, which naturally fired his hatred of her; and when the Court fled to Jehol, in 1860, and Hsien Fêng lay dying, he and the Princes concocted a plot to exclude Tzu Hsi and

* Yehonala was her clan name. After she had given Hsien Fêng an heir she was promoted from the rank of concubine and given the title of Empress of the Western Palace, the Emperor's consort being designated Empress of the Eastern Palace. After Hsien Fêng's death, when the two Empresses became co-regents during Tung Chih's minority, Yehonala was given the title of Tzu Hsi, "maternal and auspicious", while her co-regent's title was Tzu An, "maternal and peaceful". To foreigners generally Yehonala was known as the Empress Dowager. Chinese usually spoke of her as the Old Buddha.

† Is this, one of the loveliest of all Hans Andersen's fairy-tales, gone from all the modern editions of his stories? I have seen three or four different ones, but I cannot find "The Travelling Companion", nor "The Wild Swans", nor that terrible but very fine story "The Garden of Paradise", in any of them.

the senior Empress from the regency during the heir Tung Chih's boyhood and get it for themselves. By continually poisoning the mind of the dying Emperor against Yehonala, Su Shun got her excluded from his presence, and eventually managed to induce the Emperor to sign a decree appointing the two Princes and Su Shun regents. But Yehonala, who had been careful not to give the slightest sign that she was aware of the plot, had thoughtfully stolen the Imperial Seal—"The Seal of Legally Transmitted Authority"—without which no decree was valid.

After the Emperor's death Su Shun wished to kill her without delay. But her friends at Jehol, among them the devoted Jung Lu, were more numerous than those of the conspirators, and their courage failed them. Under the protection of Jung Lu the two Empresses escaped from Jehol during the slow progress of the Imperial funeral *cortège* and reached Peking with three days' grace in which to prepare for action with the help of Yehonala's brother-in-law, Prince Kung, a wise and statesmanlike friend, and the two Grand Secretaries.

On the arrival of the *cortège* the conspirators were confronted with an earlier decree of Hsien Fêng's appointing the two Empresses regents; and this decree, unlike the one wrung from the dying Emperor at Jehol, was not lacking in the imprint of the Imperial Seal. The Emperor's funeral was performed with all solemnity and outward calm. But directly it was over the conspirators were arrested, tried and condemned. The two Princes were given silken cords with which to hang themselves, and Su Shun was publicly beheaded. It says much for the sort of man he was, and how detested in Peking, that the executioner did not offer to perform his usual kindly office of stitching the head on to the trunk, so that the dead man should not enter headless into the next world, but left it lying where it had fallen from his sword.

There could be no better illustration of Yehonala's quick intelligence and coolness than the skill with which she met and defeated this formidable conspiracy, which, had it succeeded, would certainly have led to her early death. Probably the worst part of her trial was the last months at Jehol, during which she was shut out from the Emperor's presence. She was utterly alone. From her fellow-Empress she could expect no help. Tzu An was a plump, amiable woman, very good-natured, but of no force of character. Besides, Court etiquette meant that the Empresses were never alone; always there were ladies-in-waiting or eunuchs in close attendance; and no one could say how many spies there were among them. Yet Yehonala could preserve her usual serene and friendly demeanour towards all, never arousing the slightest suspicion that she knew what she knew. The theft of the Imperial Seal was a master-stroke; one would like to know how she carried it out in that dark, sinister palace with watchers behind every curtain; but she never told. She could always, however, produce a master-stroke when her interest required it. Her reward in this crisis was the acclamation of the Peking crowd, with whom she was ever popular; the approval of the foreign Ministers now settled in Peking, who, with diplomacy's normal dislike for the unseemly, would have been much put out by a Court fracas at the beginning of a new reign; and the confiscation for herself of the headless Su Shun's comfortable fortune.

The next act in the drama of the Empress Dowager's life (from which one has only space to pick out the chief scenes) shows her in a far less pleasant light, revealing that dark and cruel streak in her nature which has been mentioned. With all her charm one cannot visualize her as the ideal mother; during his childhood the Emperor Tung Chih had become ever fonder of Tzu An's company than of his mother's; and when, in 1872, he came of age and assumed power, he and Tzu Hsi were thoroughly estranged. He had also angered her by choosing the Lady A-lu-te for his Empress instead of the girl she intended for him. As already told, Tung Chih was indescribably vicious, his misconduct was the scandal of Peking. Gossip says that his mother even encouraged his vices, though in view of their

relationship this is improbable. But she certainly knew all about them and did nothing to check them. Between her and her daughter-in-law there was no love. A-lu-te was a sweet girl, as virtuous as she was beautiful, the one good influence in her wretched husband's life, as some two centuries before the Precious Pearl had been in the life of the last Ming Emperor. She may well have dreamed of weaning her husband from his evil ways, of combining with him against his intimidating aunt, of making him a real Emperor in power and manner worthy of the name. But the contest was too unequal, and Tung Chih's and A-lu-te's undisguised hostility to the Empress Dowager did nothing to improve their chances.

Tung Chih died of smallpox in January 1875. His widow was with child; and what could have been less to Tzu Hsi's taste than that she should give birth to an heir? Within a few days she had followed her husband, and there is very little doubt that Tzu Hsi contrived her ascent to the Western Heaven.

Another sinister death was to follow before many years had passed. For some time relationships between Tzu Hsi and her co-regent had been growing more and more strained. The preference shown by Tung Chih, as afterwards by Kuang Hsü, for the senior Empress's company must have been unpleasant to Tzu Hsi, even if she did not want the children hanging about her. There were quarrels about precedence and other quarrels more serious, but too long to enter into here, the core of which was, however, that Tzu Hsi seems to have concluded that her liberty, and even her life, were endangered by Tzu An's continued existence—the end of it was that Tzu An ate something that disagreed with her, and she died. What that "something" was there is, again, no doubt that Tzu Hsi knew. So she reigned alone, the unrivalled Empress Dowager.

The story of how Tzu Hsi forced the Grand Council to accept Tsai T'ien, better known as Kuang Hsü, infant son of her own sister, as the next Emperor is so well known that only brief details are necessary. There were two other claimants; the best of all the three, in lineage, age and character, was the 17-year-old son of Prince Kung; but he suffered from the same disadvantage as Kuang Hsü—a most serious one in Chinese eyes—that they were both in the same plane of descent as Tung Chih, and thus disqualified from offering to him the necessary ancestral worship so that the deceased Emperor must pass into the shades "unhouselled, disappointed, unaneled". The third claimant, Prince Pu Lun's son, could have performed the ancestral sacrifices and is said to have been nominated for the throne by Tung Chih in a valedictory edict which, however, the Empress Dowager tore up. Her mind was made up and, as usual, her preparations carefully laid. In case of accident she had got Li Hung-chang to send troops to hold the gates of Peking, while the troops of her faithful Jung Lu held the walls of the Forbidden City. But in the end she swung the Grand Council to her wishes by her own powerful personality. Although it was a bitter cold night in January, with a dust-storm blowing—and one must know Peking personally in order to realize what depth of physical misery such a conjunction can inflict—she insisted on sending Jung Lu at once to fetch the child from his father's house in the Western City and have him installed in the palace. Promptitude in action was always a vital ingredient in Tzu Hsi's success.

Nevertheless, the choice of Kuang Hsü and its implicit contempt for Tung Chih's *manes* caused considerable scandal in Peking. One member of that peculiar Chinese institution, the Board of Censors, which throughout history had again and again produced fearless men to do their traditional duty in denouncing the Throne's misdeeds, even at the cost of their lives, wrote a stinging denunciation of the Empress Dowager's action, and then hanged himself near the grave of the forlorn Tung Chih.

But, "fear boys with bugs". Tzu Hsi was not to be intimidated by talk. She got rid of Prince Kung, the strongest figure among those who could pretend to

withstand her, by retiring him full of empty honours, and turned to Li Hung-chang as her principal adviser—unfortunately without taking his advice on questions of reform in which it was most needed for China. A few years later she got rid of her co-regent, Tzu An, as already described, and for the next sixteen years she ruled China *tant bien que mal* single-handed. In February 1889 Kuang Hsü having come of age, was married to a young lady of the Empress Dowager's choice, and her own niece—it is said that when the candidates knelt before the Emperor and his sceptre was wavering towards her who became the Pearl Concubine, and to whom he was always much attached, the old lady seized his hand and directed the sceptre towards her niece—after which the Empress Dowager handed over the Throne to him and withdrew into the Summer Palace.*

Kuang Hsü's reign—that is the nine years from 1889–98, for he never ceased to be Emperor in name, though he was his aunt's prisoner for the last ten years of his life—is memorable for the first war with Japan, which, if the world could have realized it, disclosed her ambitions and her invariable treachery; and for the strong tide for reform, now flowing through some of the best minds of the Empire, as recognized, aimed at, and wrecked in the Emperor's "Hundred Days of Reform".

The details of the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95, centring in the possession of Korea, are far too long and complicated to relate here, but something must be told to show its fatal connexion with the revolution in China.

Korea is a peninsula, about half as big again as England and Wales, jutting down from Eastern Asia just below Vladivostok to within a few miles of Japan. The Japanese were fond of describing it, as in 1931 they described Manchuria, as "a dagger pointed at Japan's heart". What they really meant, as too late discovered by others, was that both countries were the platform, or springboard, according to modern jargon, marked out for the first stages in their scheme of Asiatic conquest. Korea, the Hermit Kingdom, was a shiftless, backward country, presided over (one cannot say ruled) by one of the weakest, most corrupt Courts that could well be imagined. For centuries it had accepted China as its suzerain; and when Japan began to challenge this vassalage, Li Hung-chang advised the Korean Government to strengthen its position by making treaties with Western Powers.

The most important of these was the one concluded with the United States, since it contained the provision that "If other Powers deal unjustly or oppressively with either Government the other will exert its good offices," etc. Alone, too, among the Powers, the United States also sent a Minister to represent them in Seoul (other Governments being content to make their Ministers in Peking responsible for their interests in Korea), a proceeding which benefited nobody but the Japanese, since it was a recognition of Korea's independence, and this it was their aim to assert. The protective clause in the Korean-American Treaty was a dead letter, the American Government refusing to join the other Powers in intervening in Korea, though twice approached by Great Britain, as the prospects of a clash between China and Japan became more and more certain. There were two parties in the Korean Court, one pro-Chinese, the other pro-Japanese, and Japan's business was to keep the country in continual turmoil by sending in her *ronin*† to make trouble and start riots on both sides. China sent troops to restore order, Japan sent more troops, while maintaining the fiction until she was ready for action that China should co-operate in securing reforms in Korea.

* It will be recalled from the note on Ch'ien Lung's abdication, in the previous chapter, that she still retained her seniority to the Emperor and her constitutional right to interfere in affairs of State. Actually, she did not outwardly do so during the next nine years, though every week Kuang Hsü had to go to the Summer Palace to report to her. But the reality of her position greatly helped her in 1898 by inducing public opinion to accept the *coup d'état* by which she dispossessed Kuang Hsü and resumed the government.

† Literally "wave men"—professional bullies habitually employed by the Japanese Government, or by an individual Ministry, or by the police, to break up unwanted political meetings, and to beat up undesirable political critics.

The one courageous, capable character in the Korean Court was the Queen. In July 1894 the Japanese murdered her, carried off the King; and two days later, Togo, that much vaunted specimen of Japanese chivalry, sank without warning or declaration of war the British transport *Kowshing* (which had been chartered to transport Chinese troops to Korea, as China had a perfect right to do) and turned his guns on the struggling Chinese in the sea.

In the ensuing war the Chinese Navy was on paper superior to the Japanese, as it included two battleships, of which Japan had none. But the Japanese ships were faster and better handled, and the Chinese ships, like the Army, were short of ammunition, the money for it having been spent by the Empress Dowager in rebuilding the Summer Palace. By land and sea China was repeatedly defeated, the only bright spot in the war being the brave though hopeless defence of Weihaiwei by Admiral Ting Ju-chang (who committed suicide on being defeated), and the two Generals Chang and Tai.

The Empress Dowager was particularly furious because the disasters of the war made it necessary to cancel the celebration of her sixtieth birthday, for which no less than 10,000,000 taels had been allotted—say £1,250,000. Of course, she blamed anyone but herself, chiefly the Emperor, and Li Hung-chang, who had been responsible for the building up of China's Army and was now accordingly deprived of his Yellow Jacket. Yet the Imperial Government had to call upon Li to negotiate the Treaty of Shimonoseki with Japan. The accident of Li's being shot at and wounded by a Japanese fanatic, which caused world-wide indignation, undoubtedly got easier terms for China than she would otherwise have obtained.

But they were bad enough—the loss of Formosa, the loss of Korea, the virtual loss of Manchuria (which soon afterwards became a Russian province, then a Russo-Japanese one, and finally an appanage of Japan's); an indemnity which with other war expenses saddled China for the first time with a National Debt of about £40,000,000, partly in Franco-Russian, partly in Anglo-German, loans; and the fatal exposure of her weakness to the rapacity of all plunder-seekers.

Japan's duplicity is glaringly revealed in all the story of Korea. She was pledged by treaty to respect Korea's independence and sovereignty: it has been seen how she kept that pledge. In the war with Russia she obtained Korea's permission to pass her troops through that country into Manchuria on a solemn promise that they should be withdrawn after the war. The troops were not withdrawn. And in 1910 she simply annexed Korea, changed its name to Chosen and shut out all foreign traders. But the world was too careless or too preoccupied in other matters to take warning.

One other outcome of the war deserves notice. That it brought Dr. Sun into the open as leader of the revolt that overthrew the dynasty has already been mentioned. But in the person of Yuan Shih-kai the war had momentous consequences. He had been Chinese Resident since 1884 in Seoul (where began his long friendship with Sir John Jordan, then British Consul-General in Korea, afterwards our Minister in Peking), and, as usual, showed considerable ability, though in hopeless circumstances. After the war he was appointed Civil Commandant of the troops in the metropolitan province of Chihli. There he laid the foundations of the army with which, when President, he crushed the so-called Second Revolution in 1913. And the Generals whom he trained and dotted about China to hold the country for him became after his death the Tuchuns who were to drag China through years of civil war. From every point of view the Sino-Japanese War led directly to the revolution.

Meanwhile China had still to experience the bewildering attempts of the Emperor Kuang Hsü to convert her aged institutions into the similitude of a Westernized constitutional monarchy. It must be remembered that while the party of Dr. Sun Yat-sen stood for the total ejection, not only of the Manchus but

of the monarchical system, as the only possible means of salvation for China, the men who inspired, aided and abetted Kuang Hsü were all strict constitutionalists who sought to reform the Government but without detriment to, rather to strengthen the position of, the Son of Heaven. It is also to be remembered that China was not what she had been in the T'aiping Rebellion. Foreign cleverness was giving ample proof of its advantages in other ways than merely the winning of battles. Foreign settlements had arisen at Shanghai, Hankow and elsewhere, clean, commodious, orderly, comfortable and well administered beyond anything China had ever dreamt of. Foreign steamers, the envy (and hatred) of the old-fashioned junkmen, plied along China's coasts and rivers. Telegraphs were being introduced, and China was linked with the world by two cables, the Eastern Extension and (running across Siberia and Russia) the Great Northern Telegraphs. And no less a dignitary than Chang Chih-tung, one of the noblest of the 19th-century Viceroys, had started foreign-style factories at Canton and later had memorialized the Throne on the desirability of a trunk railway from Peking to Hankow.

Of the reformers, although by far the best known was the Cantonese scholar, Kang Yu-wei, there were several other men of high standing who should be remembered, if only to show how wide was the new trend of thought among some of the best men in China. Two of them were Censors, Yang Jen-hsin and Yang Ju-i; three were even members of the Hanlin, the renowned academy which contained the very *crême de la crême* of China's scholars, men who ordinarily might be associated with all that was conservative. Liang Chi-chao, one of the most brilliant scholars and influential writers in the early 20th century, was another. And both the Viceroys Chang Chih-tung and Liu Kun-yi of Nanking gave their blessing to the general scheme of reform, while other officials also sympathized with the reformers, at dire cost to themselves in the end. But very large numbers of the younger gentry and officials were permeated with the passion for reform, and more than one eloquent memorial on the subject, bearing hundreds of signatures, was addressed to the Throne. It is noticeable that the further men were from Peking, the more open (though needless to say not invariably) their minds were to the lessons that foreigners unconsciously were teaching. In Peking, with few exceptions, the diehards and reactionaries to whom everything foreign was anathema reigned supreme.

Among the exceptions was Weng Tung-ho, the Emperor's tutor, esteemed the finest scholar of his age. Although not one of the avowed reformers, his broad and liberal mind found sympathy with their views, he read and was impressed by the writings of Kang Yu-wei, and it was he who brought Kang to the Emperor's notice.

Kang Yu-wei had long established a great reputation in the South (he was by birth a Cantonese). He was a brilliant scholar, an ardent exponent of the modern interpretation of Confucius, whom he regarded as the fountain of all Chinese civilization, and the author of several stirring books on political and social reform. Portraits of Kang Yu-wei show a face of strength, dignity and charm, with singularly large eyes. It is no wonder that he gathered about him a numerous band of enthusiastic disciples. Yet no man was ever more misjudged. The reactionaries in Peking loathed his very name as that of what would now be called an arch-Bolshevist. So hot were they after him that when, after the *coup d'état*, he managed to escape in a British steamer to Hongkong, the Governor of the colony had to keep a guard of police continually about him to save him from assassination. For the rest of his life Kang Yu-wei was a wanderer, for many years in Europe and America. But in 1917, being back in China, he joined General Chang Hsun in his brief attempt to restore the boy Emperor Hsuan Tung to the throne; and now the man who had once been hunted as a dangerous extremist was denounceda s a vicious reactionary.

Both views were equally fantastic. As said above, he was always a loyal

monarchist; and as for his actions in 1917, he was by no means the only Chinese at that time who thought that the notion of a republic for China was absurd and disastrous. He died in March 1927. At his funeral Liang Chi-chao, his young associate in 1898, pronounced a moving oration over him, describing him as the great pioneer of reform who had seen earlier and more clearly than anyone that the choice of China lay between progress on modern lines or hopeless decay and ruin. "Those who will write the history of New China," said Liang Chi-chao, "cannot do otherwise than take the events of 1898 as the first chapter in that history." *

Even in the fœtid and walled-in atmosphere of an oriental Court it seems that a man may be born with the fire of a reformer in his veins. In Kuang Hsü's case it was brought to light by the accident of some foreign toys bought by one of the eunuchs in a Danish shop in Peking; and as he grew older he had a miniature railway track laid by one of the lakes in the palace, with a little steam-engine drawing one carriage in which he used to give rides to the Court ladies.† As a man he read all that he could get hold of about foreign countries; he also read Kang Yu-wei's books; and his mind was thus fully primed for the work of reform when the calamity of the war with Japan and the memorials urging him to put aside "the mercenary, selfish and timid advice" of his Ministers and to "use his own judgement and summon his courage in dealing with the crisis" (as one memorial quoted by the *North China Herald* of April 18, 1898, put it) brought matters to a head.

At this distance of time it is not worth while giving in detail the torrent of Imperial reform edicts which poured out almost daily between June 11 and September 16 of that fatal year.

Broadly speaking, they pronounced a wholesale recasting of the educational system, including the reform of the Hanlin Academy, with the creation of school boards in every city and the founding of new schools and colleges; the abolition of numerous sinecures and superfluous boards in Peking; reform of the law courts; institution of new offices to encourage trade; the building of railways; the formation of a modern army drilled on Western lines; agricultural development; encouragement to journalists to write on political subjects and permission to all and sundry to memorialize the Throne in closed memorials; the institution of annual budgets showing the national receipts and expenditure.

It seems incredible in the present stage of the world that proposals so reasonable and practical should have caused so terrific a palace revolution; and at the beginning even the Empress Dowager appears to have given her consent to the decrees, though she soon gave proof of her power by forcing the Emperor to get rid of the Imperial tutor Weng Tung-ho. But when the Emperor began to abolish sinecures right and left, the reactionaries were roused to fight for their vested interests. Sir Reginald Johnston makes a strong point that the Empress Dowager could not have acted without the backing of the reactionaries, and that they could not have acted without her. Certain it is that by the middle of September Kuang Hsü realized that Tzu Hsi must be put under lock and key, not only for the sake of the reforms, but for his own safety.

There is no disagreement now as to what happened. Believing that he could rely on Yuan Shih-kai, the Emperor sent for him, appointed him to command the Peiyang (Northern) Army, and bade him go to Tientsin, execute Jung Lu (the Empress's faithful friend, it will be remembered, who was now Viceroy in Tientsin) and bring the army to Peking. The arrest of the Empress Dowager and of the chief reactionaries was to follow. But Yuan had become "a blood brother" of Jung Lu several years before, and, perhaps having his own views of the reforms, he betrayed the whole scheme to the Viceroy, who hastened to the Summer Palace to inform Tzu Hsi. It was the Emperor who was now arrested, not his terrible aunt.

* Sir Reginald Johnston's *Twilight in the Forbidden City*.

† *The Last of the Empresses*, by Signor Daniele Vare, formerly Italian Minister in Peking.

That she did not have him killed was undoubtedly due to strong hints by some of the foreign Ministers that their Governments would, in diplomatic language, "view with extreme disfavour" the Emperor's demise; it is said that Queen Victoria herself (in whom Tzu Hsi always took a deep interest) let it be known that she would not tolerate anything happening to the Emperor. But for the rest of his life Kuang Hsü was his aunt's prisoner. After the Boxer year the conditions of his existence were made a little less onerous. But for the first two years he was immured on an island in the Summer Palace, where the eunuchs who hated him (he had once had the great Li Lien-ying flogged) were encouraged to treat him with every indignity. He was deprived of all comforts, even of necessities, of all books and companionship; his food was scanty, coarse and ill-served. Even the windows of his rooms were built across so that he might not have the small consolation of the view across the lake that surrounded his island.

Kang Yu-wei, to whom the Emperor had contrived to send warning before his own seizure, escaped the Empress Dowager's clutches, as we know; but his brother, the two Censors, and the three Hanlins were all summarily decapitated without even the pretence of a trial; and right and left officials were cashiered or exiled to the far north-west. Liu Kun-yi, Viceroy of Nanking, was brave enough to warn the Empress not to have Kuang Hsü destroyed. But Viceroy Chang Chih-tung, less stiff in backbone, recanted the encouragement he had written to the reformers. As for the reforms, they were reversed holus bolus in a single edict, and it is scarcely necessary to say that the sinecures abolished by the Emperor were restored. Jung Lu was rewarded by being appointed Junior Grand Secretary and Minister of War—a fortunate promotion two years later for foreigners: for Jung Lu was one of the few who had the sense to oppose Tzu Hsi's encouragement of the Boxers, and he refused the latter the use of the big guns in his possession. Had the Boxers possessed these, the Legations could never have survived the siege.

Great as is the sympathy to be felt with Kuang Hsü, it is doubtful whether, even if he had succeeded in arresting the Empress Dowager, his reforms could have averted the revolution. Apart from whether they were not too prolific and radical for China to assimilate, the country was seething with passionate feelings, and during 1898–99 explosions took place in eight or nine different provinces, from hot-tempered Canton in the south to the fiery Moslems in the remote north-west. It must be remembered that "the slicing of the Chinese melon" had begun before Kuang Hsü set about his reforms: Russia had extracted from China the right to build her railway across Manchuria and the lease of the Liaotung peninsula (which it will be recalled she had forced Japan to restore to China) in 1896; and in 1897 Germany had taken Kiaochou and Tsingtao as the price of two murdered missionaries. For some years previously there had been widespread anti-foreign, particularly anti-missionary, riots, the worst being those along the Yangtze in 1891, stirred up by a fanatical official named Chou Han; and as the Manchus daily proved their powerlessness to protect China from foreign depredations, the two currents of animosity, anti-foreign and anti-dynastic, flowed together and reinforced each other. For Kuang Hsü's reforms to have had a fair chance it would have been necessary that the Powers should have been so impressed with them as to experience a complete change of heart, and repentantly to hand back to China all they had extracted from her. Even if that miracle had happened, one would not have banked on the result. The stars in their courses had visibly begun to fight against the dynasty.

The Boxer rising was a good example of a movement that was both anti-dynastic and anti-foreign. The popular report that it began by being anti-Manchu and that Tzu Hsi adroitly switched it against the foreigner is only partially correct. The whole of Shantung province, where Boxerism started, had been roused by the German seizure of Kiaochou, and the Governor, the infamous Yu Hsien, had as

good as told the Boxers that they had nothing to fear from him in attacking missionaries. The murder on the last day of 1898 of the Rev. S. M. Brooks, of the Church Missionary Society, was the result.

Other Powers beside Great Britain, notably America, joined in demanding the punishment of Yu Hsien. He was recalled, but was received with honour in Peking, and shortly afterwards was appointed Governor of Shansi, while an Imperial edict was issued enjoining orderly behaviour on the people of Shantung in such equivocal terms that the Boxers cannot be blamed for reading it as a distinct encouragement to them to go on doing likewise. It was this brute Yu Hsien who, while the Legations were being besieged, assembled all the missionaries that he could catch in his *yamên* at Taiyuanfu, capital of Shansi, and personally superintended the beheading of them *en masse*, fifteen men, twenty women, and eleven children of Roman Catholic, English and Scottish missions. Among many mistakes made by the Allies after the relief of the Legations due to jealousies among them, they at least made no mistake in securing the decapitation of Yu Hsien.

The story of the siege of the Legations is too well known to need repetition. It dated from June 19 to August 14, its miseries being intensified by the terrible heat of a Peking summer, the many hundreds of foreigners and Chinese Christians cooped up in the few acres of the British Legation, and by legions of flies attracted by the number of unburied bodies that lay around the walls. In the provinces the Yangtze Viceroys Liu Kun-yi and Chang Chih-tung, in Canton Viceroy Li Hung-chang, with Yuan Shih-Kai, now Governor of Shantung, and Tuan Fang, Governor of Shensi, altered the order received from Peking from "kill all foreigners" to "protect all foreigners". But elsewhere many foreigners and 10,000 Chinese converts were butchered. In Peking a very few men like Jung Lu kept their heads. It was the day-to-day see-saw between their influence with the Empress Dowager and that of the extremists led by Prince Tuan and Duke Lan which prevented the attack on the Legations from being pressed home and thus enabled the besieged to hold out until the arrival of the relief columns on August 14.

The Empress Dowager escaped, taking the Emperor with her, in the early morning of the day that the Allies entered Peking, and made her way to Sianfu, where she remained until September 1901, while the aged Li Hung-chang—once again!—was left to make the best terms he could with the barbarians, and above all to get them out of the capital—his last great service to the Empress, for he died not long afterwards. Tzu Hsi had fled disguised as a peasant woman in wretchedness and even hunger. She returned in triumph to find—wonder of wonders!—that all her sins had seemingly been forgiven her. At Peking a gorgeous pavilion had been prepared at the railway station, with golden thrones, where priests were waiting to conduct a service of thanksgiving for Her Majesty's return. Signor Daniele Vare quotes, in *The Last of the Empresses*, the description of the scene by one of a party of foreigners who went upon the wall to watch.

"As she got out of her chair, the Empress glanced up at the smoke-blackened walls and saw us. . . . At last she condescended to move, but before entering the temple where the bonzes were all ready to begin the ceremony, she stopped once more and, looking up at us, lifted her closed hands under her chin and made a series of little bows.

"The effect of this gesture was astonishing. We had all gone up on to the wall, in the hopes of catching a glimpse as she passed of the terrible Empress, whom the West considered almost an enemy of the human race. But we had been impressed by the magnificence of the swiftly moving pageant and by the beauty of the picturesque group in palanquins and yellow satin flashing with gold. Something told us that the return of the Court to Peking marked a

turning-point in history, and in our breathless interest we forgot our resentment against the woman who was responsible for so much evil. The little bow made to us who were watching her, and the graceful gesture of the closed hands, took us by surprise. From all along the wall there came an answering, spontaneous burst of applause. The Empress appeared pleased. She remained there for a few moments longer, looking up and smiling. Then she disappeared within the temple."

Such was Tzu Hsi's unrivalled power of fascination. And as she had used it towards the foreigners on the wall, so she contrived to scatter it over the ladies of the Legations. Far off were the days when the first representatives of the Powers in Peking had spent eleven years in trying to get permission to present their credentials to the Emperor Tung Chih, and, when at last they succeeded, were received in the hall reserved for audiences granted to envoys of vassal States. Now the Empress gave frequent tea-parties to the foreign ladies, who came away completely hypnotized by the loveliness of the palace chambers, the richness of their decorations and exquisite works of art, and most of all by the gracious smiles of their Imperial hostess. The Empress even allowed her portrait to be painted by an American artist, Miss Carl. The portrait was afterwards shown at the St. Louis Exhibition. When it left the palace everyone had to kneel down as it passed.* Yet a foreign woman had been received familiarly to gaze without ceremony upon the Empress while painting it. Indeed, a turning-point had been reached in the Forbidden City.

In other respects, too, a turning-point had been reached: for the first time the Empress addressed herself seriously to the work of internal reform. The administrative system was recast. By one of the terms of the peace protocol the detested old Tsungli Yamên in an untidy house in a back street was converted into the Waiwupu, or Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with precedence over all other Ministries, and a respectable home. But the Empress Dowager also abolished all the old Ministries and created thirteen new ones in their place.

Edicts were issued promising reform of the national finances, of the Army and Navy, and a promise was given of constitutional government, to be arrived at in nine years' time by gradual stages. To that end a National Assembly was enacted, together with consultative provincial assemblies, and a programme of education in constitutional methods was drafted covering a period of nine years, at the end of which full parliamentary government was to come into force.

The first meeting of the National Assembly was not held till a year after Tzu Hsi's death; and its members at once showed the temper which animated the country by demanding that the nine years should be reduced to two. It would have been interesting to see how the Empress Dowager would have dealt with this demand. Her successors had no sense. The Emperor Hsuan Tung was a baby; his father, Prince Chun, was an amiable idiot; and the new Empress Dowager, the real ruler, widow of Kuang Hsü and niece of Tzu Hsi, had all her aunt's pride, extravagance and autocracy, without an atom of her adroitness in handling difficult questions. The result was a deadlock between Court and Assembly, which ended in the latter being prorogued early in 1911. This was one of the final factors which fixed the date of the Revolution for the following autumn.

One of the Empress Dowager's reforms deserves special attention for its momentous influence in later years. In 1905 the old system of State examinations,

* In his interesting memoirs of *Forty Years in China*, Sir Meyrick Hewlett tells how, in 1901, he found in a lumber room of the British Legation (no one knew how it had got there) a very lovely tablet from the Temple of Heaven. The British Minister, Sir Ernest Satow, told Prince Ching that he wished to return it. But the Prince "begged the Minister not to send it to his home, as if it was placed in the entrance to his residence he could neither leave nor enter his home without kow-towing twenty-seven times every time he passed it".

founded on knowledge of the Chinese classics, was abolished and examinations in Western learning were substituted. At the same time steps were taken to found universities and schools for the new learning; and by the time of the Empress's death in 1908 five of the former and several thousand of the latter were already in operation. That this change was enthusiastically received there is no doubt. Japan's defeat of Russia had caused a profound sensation in China: yellow men had actually beaten white men: obviously they had done it by adopting the white man's learning. What Japan had done, China could do by the same means, and the reformers hastened to throw the classics into the grate and devote themselves to the magic of Western culture.

What, unfortunately, was overlooked was that the Chinese classics, and, through study of them, the Chinese people, were permeated with the finest moral teaching; and when the classics were thrown overboard no comparable instruction was put in their place. The result was that boys grew up with no moral foundation, floating between heaven and earth like Mahomet's coffin, with no anchorage to hold secure nor ethical standards to guide them. In the past seven or eight years there has been a strong national revulsion in favour of the old teachers, whose precepts had provided the ideals of China for so many centuries. But there is no doubt that the wild excuses and reckless falsehoods propagated by the students in the early days of their claim to be national leaders were largely due to the fact that the majority of them had grown up under the ill-conceived educational reforms launched in 1905.

On November 15, 1908, Tzu Hsi passed away, aged 73. The Emperor had died only twenty hours before her, and there were plenty of voices heard that, when she felt death approaching, she took steps to ensure that he should not survive her, but that her prisoner of the past ten years should remain her prisoner even in death, to ascend at her side on the Dragon to the Western Heaven.

What might have become of China if she had had the insight and liberality to inaugurate earlier the reforms which she had left to the last moment of her extraordinary reign is now but guesswork. In any case, the reforms she did undertake did not touch the real evils of the country, over-taxation and the helpless condition of the patient peasantry. But at least Tzu Hsi was strong enough for anything to which she set her mind; and now, not only had death relaxed the grip of her powerful hand but all the great statesmen of her reign were dead: Prince Kung, Jung Lu (whose statesmanship was surely proved in the Boxer year), Li Hung-chang, Tseng Kuo-fan, Liu Kun-yi. There was no-one who could even advise with any prospect of being listened to. The Court, led by the new Empress Dowager, vain, selfish and extravagant, gave itself up to the delights of squandering money on palace decorations, banquets, and lavish entertainments, regardless of the rising tide of popular anger. Within three years it had fallen, though for yet a few more it lingered on in the Forbidden City, going through the old empty gestures, ceremonies and obeisances, but without power, without significance, and as the years passed increasingly even without money. The Manchu Dynasty was finished.

Chapter IV

DR. SUN YAT-SEN

SO WE COME TO THAT CURIOUS, CONTRADICTORY, DOMINEERING, INEXPLICABLE character, Dr. Sun Yat-sen, "Father of the Republic". "The evil that men do lives after them, the good is oft interred with their bones." But of Dr. Sun the exact reverse of Mark Antony's dictum is true. It is blasphemy in China now to

suggest that he was anything but perfect, or that China needs any inspiration but the teaching that he laid down for her guidance. Yet on a dispassionate survey of Dr. Sun's career it cannot be denied that he was as often as not (some would say more often) the cause of failure of the enterprises to which, in justice be it said, he devoted his entire life. "If the trumpet give forth an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for battle?" might again and again have been the distracted cry of Dr. Sun's followers.

A man of high imagination, he was strangely lacking in constructive ability. With all the qualities of a born leader, strong personal magnetism and ability to rouse men to the most excited enthusiasm, he succeeded too often, when firm, clear leadership was needed, only in reducing his followers to sheer bewilderment, and even antagonizing them. As a political thinker he was emotional and vacillating. At one moment he is found speaking with glowing admiration of Great Britain and the fruits of her political wisdom and integrity as displayed in Hongkong; at another he denounces her as the World's Public Enemy No. 1; while his famous "Three Principles of the People" (p. 72), the *San Min Chu I*, contain grains of real inspiration overlaid with childish reasoning, absurd inaccuracies and violent anti-foreignism, surrounded by a farrago of blatant untruths.

Withal the fact remains that Dr. Sun devoted his life unsparingly to the ambition of bettering the lives of the masses of his countrymen, according to his lights. He never feathered his own nest out of the vast sums that passed through his hands—riches that would have made the mouth of a Ho Shen water—but died a poor man, leaving very little beyond one small house in the French Concession at Shanghai. And if he failed as a constructive leader, the fault was as much in the general condition of China as in himself. After the Revolution China was bound to go through some years of dislocation and disorder, especially when presented with so alien and unfamiliar a system of government as a republic, and no power on earth could have hastened the process. It was, perhaps, rather what he stood for than the man himself which remained an inspiration to millions of Chinese, even at the lowest ebb of his career, when he was being execrated in Canton for the tragic slaughter of the Merchant Volunteers; and a little later when the real power in the Nationalist movement had passed into the hands of the Russian agent, Borodin, and the Communists. And it is for this inspiration and for the singleness of his aim, however erratic and unpracticable his methods might be, that Dr. Sun Yat-sen is deified by his countrymen today and supplies to the needs of New China what Old China found in the figure of the Son of Heaven.

Although it will mean some anticipating of events, it may be more convenient in this chapter to give a survey of Dr. Sun's life as a whole. It falls broadly into five periods: his youth; the sixteen years of exile between the Sino-Japanese War, when, as noted in the last chapter, Dr. Sun came out boldly demanding the overthrow of the Manchus, and the Revolution; the restless period in China of increasing distrust of President Yuan Shih-kai, which culminated in the Second Revolution in 1913 and Dr. Sun's further exile; and his return to Canton in 1922, his calling in of the Russians, and death in 1925.

Sun Yat-sen* was born in a village in the district of Hsiangshan in Kwangtung province in November 1866, the son of a poor farmer. The latter is said to have been one of the T'aiping Christians, and according to this story Sun was christened as a baby. But Christianity does not seem to have meant much in his or his family's life, and there is good evidence that he did not actually become a Christian till later, when he was a medical student in Hongkong. There is no reason to doubt that he was a born rebel, scandalizing the villagers by deriding the village

* His real name was Sun Wen, which he commonly used as a signature. "Yat-sen" is the Cantonese form of a courtesy name which he adopted according to custom at adolescence. Later still he was known to the Chinese by the title of Chung-Shan, or leader.

god and asking innumerable daring questions: why his mother and other women must hobble about painfully on bound feet; why little girls should be sold into slavery; why the majority of Chinese had too little to eat and a minority too much; and who was the Son of Heaven and why everyone had to obey whatever he ordered.

When he was thirteen he went to stay with an elder brother who had built up a business in Honolulu. Here he learnt English, but after a few years his brother, fearing that he would become denationalized, sent him home. Village life was too narrow for Sun, however, and his parents sent him, at the age of 18, to Queen's College in Hongkong, having previously seen that he was married to a girl from a neighbouring village. She became the mother of Dr. Sun Fo, afterwards Mayor of Canton and now President of the Executive Yuan (or Council) in the Chinese Government. In 1915, however, Sun divorced her in order to marry Miss Ching-ling Soong, second of the three beautiful sisters of Dr. T. V. Soong, now Chinese Foreign Minister, of whom the eldest, Ayling, is married to Dr. H. H. Kung, the Premier, and the youngest, Mayling, to General Chiang Kai-shek.

Sun studied medicine in Hongkong under Sir Patrick Manson and Sir James Cantlie (they were only "Dr." then), a very lucky association for him, as will be seen later, and graduated as a doctor in 1892. He practised in the adjoining Portuguese colony of Macao for a little time. But revolution was in his blood; with some like-minded friends that he had made in Hongkong he founded his first secret society, and eventually went to Tientsin hoping to see Viceroy Li Hung-chang and to get his interest in his, Sun's, reform schemes, which at that time ran on the lines of a constitutional monarchy. But though he waited in Tientsin for several months, the Viceroy would not see him.

Then came the disaster of the Sino-Japanese War, and Sun returned to the south, resolved that the Manchus must go, to enlarge his secret society and to plot an attack on the Viceroy's *yamên* at Canton. But the plot was discovered, many arrests were made, three of the principal conspirators were swiftly beheaded, and in 1895 Dr. Sun himself escaped to Hongkong and Japan with a price of 200,000 taels (say £30,000) on his head. It was now that he cut off his queue and took to wearing foreign clothes, as thenceforward he almost always did. It was not only a sign of total breach with everything Manchu, but also a convenient disguise, enabling him to pass as a Japanese. From Japan he went to Honolulu, where he was discouraged to find that the bravery of the local revolutionaries was much damped by the failure of the attempt in Canton; and thence to America, where the Chinese community did not seem interested in revolution at all.

Sun pursued his journey to London, and there, in October 1896, he was kidnapped and shut up in the Chinese Legation for eleven days, while an opportunity was awaited to ship him secretly to China. He managed, however, by the help of a footman, to get a note to Sir James Cantlie, whom he had met again in Honolulu, and who had a great affection for him. He, with some difficulty but undeterred persistence, stirred up the Foreign Office to intervene, and Sun was released. The room at the top of the Legation, now Embassy, in Portland Place, in which Sun was incarcerated, is now dedicated as a chapel to his memory, and a service is held there in honour of him on the anniversary of his death.

Dr. Sun stayed on in Europe for two years. There were few Chinese students there then for him to work upon, and he spent his time in observing the different political systems, studying Marxism, and the history of the French Revolution, deciding that none of them contained an exact model for China, and, it is said, evolving his Three People's Principles. In 1898 he returned to Japan, where he made friends with a number of leading Japanese, among them Count Okuma, the Foreign Minister. There were at this time some 10,000 Chinese students in Japan, but they proved poor soil for the propagation of revolution, of which they mostly

seemed afraid. In his *Memoirs* Dr. Sun says of them that "they lacked a conscious purpose; there was little solidarity among them, no sense of discipline; they had no convictions and no deep-rooted beliefs. They might be regarded as passive revolutionary material, but they could not serve as a driving force." Even after the Revolution these strictures would have been applicable for many years to the majority of Dr. Sun's followers.

However, the Boxer rising in 1900 tempted Dr. Sun to have another shot at seizing Canton with the aid of various secret societies in China. He left Japan for Hongkong with some Japanese military officers (then, as always, ready to fish in troubled waters), but was recognized and refused admission. The leadership of the revolt was entrusted to a friend, by name Cheng-Hsi-liang. But Prince Ito, who had become Premier in Japan, stopped the export of the munitions which Dr. Sun had ordered, and again, as in 1895, the revolutionaries were crushed after some successes in the maritime area outside Canton, while an attempt to bomb the Viceroy's *yamên* failed and the ringleader was caught and decapitated. Strangely enough, however, this failure proved rather helpful than otherwise in arousing sympathy with the revolutionary cause, no doubt stimulated by the shocking story of the Boxer rising and the terrible indemnity of 450,000,000 taels imposed upon the Chinese.

Dr. Sun remained in Japan until 1904, inculcating his revolutionary ideas in every possible direction. In the light of recent events and their revelation of Japan's long-cherished dreams of Asiatic conquest, it is easier to understand now than it was then why the Japanese Government gave him asylum, as it must have been perfectly aware of his activities. In 1904 he left for Europe again via Indo-China, where he was cordially received by the French authorities, to gather up some seventy recruits among the Chinese students of Brussels, Berlin and Paris.

Returning to Japan in 1907, he proclaimed his Three People's Principles at a memorable meeting in Tokyo at which 5,000 students * are said to have been present—the Principle of Racial Struggle against foreign domination; the Principle of the People's Sovereignty; and the Principle of the People's Livelihood. This last, by the way, involving wholesale redistribution of land, was destined to provoke no little controversy in later years—particularly among those who owned some land. For the moment, however, the speech "went with a roar".

Dr. Sun proceeded to found a new society, the Tung Mêng Hui, or United League, into which several existing organizations were gathered up. Its members were bound by a stringent oath to overthrow the Manchu Dynasty, establish a republic, free China and "to solve the agrarian question on the basis of an equitable redistribution of land". The League also published two revolutionary journals, the *Min Pao* in Japan, and the *Su Pao* in Shanghai, which found plenty of eager readers. The editor of the *Min Pao* was one destined, in these later times, to become world infamous as the one outstanding Quisling of China, Wang Ching-wei. Others of Dr. Sun's intimates, whom we shall meet again, were the Secretary of the League, Hu Han-min, a scholar of some attainments and an ex-schoolmaster, the "sea-green incorruptible" of the first Nationalist Government at Nanking; and Hwang Hsing, a Hunanese, who led the fighting at Wuchang in 1911 and at Shanghai in 1913.

The Chinese atmosphere was now becoming more and more charged with electricity. En Min, the Manchu Governor of the Yangtze province of Anhui, was assassinated in July 1907; and between that year and 1909 there were six abortive risings in Kwangtung, Kwangsi and Yunnan. Dr. Sun was now a marked man

* It is curious to note that among the revolutionaries of later years, particularly in the student *emeutes* of the early 1920's, the most violent and undisciplined were the students trained in Japan. The best-behaved and aristocratic were those trained in Great Britain. Students from continental countries came about halfway between. Those trained in America produced some very fine men.

elsewhere than in China. He had been expelled from Indo-China for taking part in an attack on the Chenan Pass in Kwangsi, near the Tongking border; he was excluded from British and Dutch territories in the Far East; and the Japanese Government was asked by the Chinese Government, and could not refuse, to suppress the *Min Pao*. The failure in China had a bad effect on the League; dissensions broke out, and some of the leading members in Japan issued a manifesto accusing Dr. Sun of misappropriating revolutionary funds and of recklessly wasting the lives of young Chinese in visionary undertakings.

But elsewhere the enthusiasm of Dr. Sun's followers was undiminished, and he continued to receive large sums from the overseas Chinese. Wang Ching-wei's bold attempt to bomb Prince Chun, the Regent, in Peking in March 1910 (it failed, and Wang was caught and imprisoned, to be released nineteen months later, after the Revolution) also stimulated the flow of money; and in March 1911 Dr. Sun financed yet another attack on the Viceroy's *yamên* at Canton. This, too, failed; seventy-two revolutionaries, always known to the Chinese as the Seventy-two Martyrs, were killed in the fighting or caught and beheaded. Hwang Hsing, who had led the attack, escaped with the loss of two fingers and was smuggled out of Canton in safety. This attempt, as Dr. Sun records in his *Memoirs*, was the revolutionaries' tenth defeat. But the wave of antagonism to the Manchus, swollen by the selfish extravagance of the Court and the railway crisis in Szechuan (of which more elsewhere), was rising too strongly to be checked by local reverses.

As everybody knows, the actual outbreak at Wuchang on October 10, 1911—The Double Tenth—was an accident. The secret operations of the Tung Mêng Hui had been growing more and more active in the middle Yangtze Valley, but the revolutionaries had not meant to rise till some weeks or months later, when the chance explosion of a bomb in one of the League's factories in the Russian Concession at Hankow forced their hands.

Among the papers seized by the Russian police were documents containing a list of the chief revolutionaries and full details of their plans. The conspirators decided that their only hope lay in instant attack. Wuchang, the capital city of Hupeh, fell to them with surprising ease, though there was more bloodshed than generally reported at the time; numbers of Imperial troops joined the revolutionaries, together with their commander, the colourless and amiable Li Yuan-hung, afterwards President (he did not wish to do so, but could not help himself); the Viceroy Jui Cheng, whose nerve was weakened by his suffering from chronic ill-health, fled down the Yangtze; Hanyang, with its great arsenal, fell to the revolutionaries, as did Hankow.

From this amazing success in the Triple Cities revolution flared up all over China. Before the end of November thirteen out of the eighteen provinces had ranged themselves against the Throne, and even the metropolitan province of Chihli and its neighbour Shangtung were shaky. For the most part the revolt was fairly bloodless, the different provinces merely declaring their independence. But there were many ugly incidents. In Taiyuanfu, capital of Shansi, the local Manchu community originally stationed there in the 17th century to hold down the province, but, through want of anything to do, long since grown effete and harmless, were butchered to a man, and a new government set up under Yen Hsi-shan, later to become famous as "The Model Governor". At Canton the Manchu garrison was also slaughtered, and a new Government established under Hu Han-min. And in Szechuan, Viceroy Tuan Fang, a Manchu, but one of the most enlightened officials in China, and one of the few, it will be remembered, who had risked his career in the Boxer rising to protect the foreigners in Shensi, was cruelly murdered.

Dr. Sun was travelling in America when the revolution took place, and instead of returning to China he hastened to England, where he records that he had an

interview with Sir Edward Grey, the Foreign Secretary, and obtained an assurance that Great Britain would not intervene, but would allow matters to take their course. There is a persistent story that Japan wished to intervene on behalf of the Manchus and that Great Britain (her partner in the Anglo-Japanese Alliance at that time) dissuaded her. But I mention this only as not impossible; I cannot verify it. The one tangible fact is that China was left to work out her own destiny.

Dr. Sun arrived in Shanghai on Christmas Eve, 1911. As a journalist it was my duty to interview him, and it may be imagined that I went to do so with considerable curiosity. The interview took place in an upstairs room of a small foreign house in the French Concession, furnished in foreign style and presenting that peculiarly bleak yet garish appearance to which Chinese houses are prone when their owners desert their own beautiful furnishings for foreign modes. Everything was as stiffly arranged as if glued to the floor, while the cretonnes of sofa and chairs were an excruciating mixture of magenta and green.*

More unpromising surroundings for the long-awaited leader of China it would have been hard to imagine. But the personality of Dr. Sun himself was not to be denied. Rather taller than the average Chinese, he gave the impression of considerable physical strength. At that time, having cut his queue, he wore his hair parted on the left and plastered down on his forehead in two semicircles, almost like a quiff. Later in life he cut it quite short, and this suited him much better. He had at all times a marked dignity of manner. His voice was pleasant and could be resonant. He gave the impression of a man who had a great reserve of something beyond what is immediately visible—character, force, magnetism, one does not know what to call it; but it was this quality, no doubt, which enabled him to sway his Chinese audiences as he did. At this, my first meeting with him, he was markedly reserved (on another occasion, as I shall tell later, he showed that he could let himself go with considerable freedom), and beyond saying that China would certainly be a Republic, he would say nothing, of his own plans or of the future.

The fact is that at that moment Dr. Sun must have been very uncertain as to where he stood. When the Revolution broke out the Empress Dowager and Prince Chun, the Regent, in a panic had recalled Yuan Shih-kai, the one powerful figure in the north, from his country home in Honan to which he had been banished after the death of the Emperor Kuang Hsü. It is said that the latter had left a written order that Yuan should be executed for his treachery in 1898. The Empress Dowager contented herself with depriving Yuan of his office of Grand Councillor and sending him home to Honan "to recuperate his health". But that was bad enough, and Yuan showed no particular anxiety to answer the Court's appeal to save it from the Revolutionaries. He refused altogether the appointment of Viceroy of Wuchang to suppress the revolt, and the Court had no alternative but to appoint him Premier with leave to form his own Cabinet, the Manchu princes and officials being pushed out of the way to make room for him.

Yuan entered Peking in November, master of the whole situation. The Northern Army (of which it will be recalled he was virtually creator) was by far the strongest force in the country, and it was loyal to him. Wang Ching-wei, released from prison to placate the revolutionaries, had been trying to make "cells" among the troops, but without success. Before the end of November the Imperialist forces had retaken Hankow and Hanyang, at Yuan's orders, and there is little doubt that they could also have retaken Wuchang if Yuan had wished it. But it was no part of his plan to prolong the Civil War. On December

* It is only fair to say that similar designs could have been seen at that time in any of the cheaper shops of London and the English provinces, and even worse patterns have been produced since furniture-makers became infected with Cubism. The depths of bad taste to which upholsterers and carpet-makers can descend are among the minor miracles of free will.

3 the revolutionaries captured Nanking, which, although it was still half-dead as left by the T'aipings, was the seat of a Viceroy, with historic prestige. This was something to set against their loss of Hanyang and gave Yuan the opportunity to make an amicable proposal for an armistice, which was duly concluded on December 11. Yuan thereupon appointed his friend and previous subordinate, T'ang Shao-yi, to negotiate with the revolutionaries, and on December 17 a peace conference was opened in Shanghai, with T'ang representing Peking and the veteran diplomatist Dr. Wu Ting-fang on the revolutionaries' side.

Dr. T'ang Shao-yi was, perhaps, the noblest of the men of Old China who elected to join the New. Very tall for a Chinese, and broad, he had that ineffable dignity, coupled with perfect simplicity and courtliness, in which the old Confucian scholars were unexcelled by any in the world. He had a first-class brain, and was a most able administrator. When Hsu Shih-chang (afterwards President) was made Viceroy of Manchuria in 1907, T'ang Shao-yi was Governor under him of Fengtien (the southernmost of the three Manchurian provinces), and it was an open secret that he was the real administrator of Manchuria. He was an ardent collector of porcelain, and his collection included a set of K'ang Hsi ruby red vases of a shape and colour I have never seen equalled. Had they ever appeared at Sotheby's auctions the millionaires of Europe and America would have torn each other in pieces for them.

As a young man T'ang Shao-yi had been educated in America, and spoke English well. He was appointed special commissioner in Tibet in 1904, and two years later was chosen to negotiate the Tibetan Convention with Great Britain. He was the first Premier of the Chinese Republic, but during the early 1920's he became disgusted with the futility and dissensions of the Nationalists, and retired to his estate near Macao, where he had been born, to live the life of a country gentleman and scholar, to cultivate the classics and model farming, and to become the fairy godfather of his tenants, his leisure hours being solaced by the ministrations of numerous pretty wives. Later, when the Nationalist Government was well established in Nanking, T'ang re-emerged to live in Shanghai and, though he took no office, to become a sort of Elder Statesman to the Republic. During the Japanese occupation of Shanghai, in 1941, this fine old man was brutally murdered, his head being almost smashed to pieces in circumstances which have never been cleared up.

When Yuan Shih-kai was Resident in Korea, T'ang Shao-yi was his secretary. And in 1900, when Yuan was Governor of Shantung, T'ang was again associated with him. He certainly knew Yuan's mind as well as any man; and it was, therefore, a matter of wide surprise when, on the opening of the peace conference in Shanghai, Peking's intentions being to offer a constitutional monarchy, T'ang Shao-yi publicly came over to the revolutionaries' demand for a Republic and nothing less. T'ang then resigned his position as delegate, but remained in Shanghai as observer and adviser to Yuan.

This was the position when Dr. Sun arrived, further complicated by the discord which had broken out between General Li Yuan-hung (the ex-Imperialist who had been coerced into joining the revolutionaries in the October outbreak at Wuchang) and Hwang Hsing, whom the General roundly accused of cowardice in the fighting in November when the Imperialists retook Hanyang. A Nationalist Council had been set up in Nanking, but there was no real leadership, and the diplomatic work with Peking was being done by Dr. Wu Ting-fang, a former Minister in Washington, and two or three others who were not members of the Tung Mêng Hui at all.

According to an interview given a couple of years later to the *China Press*, the American newspaper in Shanghai, by General Li Yuan-hung, the Revolution was really over when Dr. Sun reached China. "I myself," the General is reported to have said, "had hardly heard about him except in a vague and general way."

But Sun was, at any rate, founder of the Tung Mêng Hui; he had been extraordinarily successful in collecting money from Chinese abroad; and the revolutionaries fell upon him when he reached Shanghai to supply the leadership they so badly needed, and bore him off to Nanking, where on December 29, 1911, he was formally elected President.

He took office two days later with a Cabinet in which Dr. Wu Ting-fang was Minister for Foreign Affairs, Hwang Hsing Minister for War, and Dr. Wang Chung-hui, an American-trained lawyer and very able jurist, who in the 1930's became for some years one of the judges of the Permanent Court of The Hague, Minister of Justice. Hu Han-min resigned the Governorship of Canton to become Chief Secretary to the President.

But it was an unhappy Cabinet and a still more unhappy President. As a Government it really had nothing to govern. It had no archives, no revenues, next to no money, and its army was a very poor affair. Throughout the province of Kiangsu disorder was rampant except in the north, whither the Imperialist General Chang Hsun had retired on being evicted from Nanking with his army of "pigtailed braves",* who restored order in the old-fashioned way by cutting off several heads and making it clear that he was ready to cut off several more. Meetings of the National Assembly in Nanking were a perfect bear garden. The members treated their President with no respect and quarrelled violently among themselves.

> "Sun felt [says Tang Leang-li †] that the majority of the Party comrades, immediately victory was in sight, had forgotten the implications of their revolutionary oath and were no longer willing to submit to his guidance. There was no centralized command, no central organization, no Party discipline; members also protested against the immediate application of the oath of allegiance. He felt that he was being made use of by careerists, and that it was impossible for him, as President, to carry out his task of revolutionary reconstruction."

One dramatic gesture Dr. Sun allowed himself. Going out from Nanking through the long avenue of huge heraldic stone monsters and warriors which winds in the curves of the Chinese dragon over the countryside to the great brown mound against the mountains which contains the tombs of Ming Emperors, he cried aloud to the Imperial Ghosts that China had ejected the foreign conquerors and had returned to Chinese rule. It was as yet a large assumption of the attitude of the country as a whole; and considering that the revolutionaries had declared against Emperors of any kind, there seemed no reason why compliments should be paid to the Mings (whose record for beneficent rule is by no means pretty) more than to any other dynasty. But there was the tomb nice and handy of the last Chinese Emperor, and the gesture certainly had an impressive effect—though for several years to come plenty of Chinese in the interior thought that "Republic" was merely another kind of Emperor.

This done, Dr. Sun resigned the Presidency to Yuan Shih-kai. As the result of much in-and-out bargaining Yuan had convinced the Empress Dowager that nothing but a Republic would serve, and on February 12, 1912, she put out this lamentable edict in the name of the baby Hsuan Tung:

> "The whole nation is now inclined towards a republican form of government. The Southern and Central provinces first gave clear evidence of this inclination,

* Popularly so-called because, with Chang Hsun, they always remained faithful to the Manchus, and never cut off their queues as all the revolutionaries did.

† A historian of the Chinese revolution down to about 1930, a fluent though prejudiced writer, who, in recent years, has become one of China's few quislings.

and the military leaders of the Northern provinces have since promised their support to the same cause. By observing the nature of the people's aspirations We learn the Will of Heaven. It is not fitting that We should withstand the desires of the nation merely for the sake of glorification of Our Own House. We recognize the signs of the age and We have tested the trend of popular opinion; and We now, with the Emperor at Our side, invest the nation with the sovereign power and decree the establishment of a constitutional government on a republican basis. In coming to this decision We are actuated not only by a hope to bring solace to Our subjects, who long for the cessation of political tumult, but also by a desire to follow the precepts of the sages of old who taught that political sovereignty rests ultimately with the people." *

The form of this edict, in which it was made to appear that the authority of the Throne was preserved to present the republic to the people as a free gift, did not please the revolutionaries, and Dr. Sun telegraphed to Yuan that the edict was a perversion of the facts. Nothing, however, was done about it, and on February 15 Yuan was elected Provisional President with the stipulation that he must come to Nanking to be inaugurated. But a providential mutiny took place among the troops in Peking—undoubtedly an adroit piece of stage management by Yuan himself—which enabled him to plead that he dared not leave the capital; and on March 12 he duly took the oath of office.

Meanwhile a document of "Articles for the Favourable Treatment of the Ta Ch'ing (Manchu) Emperor after his Abdication" had been drawn up and agreed to by the Republicans. His title was to be retained and he was to be treated with the courtesy due to foreign monarchs. He was to receive an annual pension of 4,000,000 taels, and to be allowed to live undisturbed in the Forbidden City, the Summer Palace also being secured to him, and to retain all his servants, though no more eunuchs were to be engaged. Other articles deal with the maintenance of the Imperial tombs, the security of the Emperor's private property and the provision of military guards.

In 1924, during the wars of the Tuchuns, by which time the payment of the pension was already much in arrears, the "Christian General", Feng Yu-hsiang, scrapped this document and the Emperor took refuge in the Japanese Legation, where he remained for several months, and thence he removed later to a house in Tientsin, and eventually, in 1931, to Manchuria to become Japan's Emperor.

Perhaps the only real happiness this unhappy monarch has ever known was the five years or so that he spent with his tutor, Sir Reginald Johnston, studying English history, drinking in stories of the lives of British boys and the surprising freedoms, disciplines and responsibilities of British public schools, and dreaming hopeless dreams of how he might one day escape from the empty glitter of a dignity which his subjects had rejected and the tedious ceremonies of a palace that had become his prison.

Having resigned the Presidency, Dr. Sun was appointed Director-General of Railways, with powers to reorganize and develop the national system; for which he drew up a map of China criss-crossed with railway lines regardless of mountains, rivers and other natural barriers. It was a task for which it is no discompliment to say that he had neither training nor aptitude, and, it need hardly be said, it came to nothing.

He also spent some time in amalgamating his own party, the Tung Mêng Hui, and four or five other revolutionary societies in one system since familiar to all the world as the Kuomintang. In August he visited Peking, where he was warmly received by President Yuan, and made a tour of the north before returning to

* Translation in Sir Reginald Johnston's *Twilight in the Forbidden City*.

Shanghai. Early in 1913 he visited Japan, where he was received with great honour, and then returned to Shanghai in anticipation of the opening of Parliament, which had been fixed for April.

The meeting of Parliament brought matters to a climax. For some time the Republicans' suspicions of Yuan had been rising steadily, as he appointed his own henchmen as military governors in the chief provinces, and in a variety of ways showed that he had no intention of being bossed by the Republicans. On March 21, as a large party of Parliamentarians were leaving Shanghai by rail for the north, the leader of the Kuomintang, a very able and pertinacious critic of Yuan named Sung Chiao-jen, whom the Kuomintang had meant to put up for the Premiership in order to have some hold on the President, was assassinated on the platform. The murderer was caught but died mysteriously in prison.

It was not surprising that everyone said that Yuan had arranged the assassination of Sung. Naturally, Parliament met in a hot, mutinous temper, and at once began to quarrel with Yuan over the formation of a Cabinet and his powers as President. In this state of the political atmosphere the discovery that Yuan was negotiating with foreign bankers for a loan of £25,000,000—the well-known Reorganization Loan of 1913—raised a tempest. Parliament protested vehemently against this "unlawful" action—for by the Provisional Constitution no foreign loan could be negotiated without Parliament's authority—and Dr. Sung issued an appeal to the foreign Powers, not to lend money to Yuan, and warning them that civil war would be the result.

It was. The loan agreement was duly signed, and Dr. Sun, despairing of any effective action by Parliament and deciding that force alone would avail with Yuan, telegraphed to his followers in Canton and Shanghai to rise. They temporized, however; and it was not until Yuan, taking time by the forelock, had begun to purge the chief provincial officers of their Republican tenants, that war broke out in several directions.

It was now Shanghai's turn to be the centre of the storm as Hankow had been in 1911, and for a week the northern troops in the Arsenal that lies southwards of the foreign Settlements were rather hard pressed. But on this occasion Yuan was fighting for himself, not for a decayed dynasty which had affronted him before all China; speedy reinforcements arrived at Shanghai and the Republicans fled; Nanking was recaptured by Chang Hsun's pigtailed braves, who were rewarded in time-honoured style with three days' looting of the unfortunate city; and within two months the Revolution was stamped out everywhere, and Dr. Sun was again in exile in Japan.

He remained there until after Yuan's death, on June 6, 1916, endeavouring to work up a new party (for the Kuomintang had been split from top to bottom by the failure of the Second Revolution, several of its members standing in with Yuan) and to obtain arms for further risings in China. But he had no success. He was out of sight and certainly for many people out of mind. He had friends in Japan who were kind to him. The Japanese Government, intent on its own schemes for forcing Yuan Shih-kai to accept the famous Twenty-one Demands and thereby make China a vassal of Japan, seems to have regarded Sun as a spent force. No doubt the ubiquitous police kept themselves well posted on what he was doing, but they did not interfere with him.

Everyone who has ever taken any interest in Far Eastern affairs remembers how, at the close of 1915, Yuan tried to make himself Emperor; how he assumed the Imperial style and actually offered the Imperial Sacrifices at the Altar of Heaven on the Winter Solstice; how the unnoticed Governor of the remote southwestern province of Yunnan, Tsai A-o by name, led the revolt against Yuan's ambition; how province after province joined in Tsai A-o's lead; how Yuan was forced by this outburst of provincial antagonism—surely an extraordinary

phenomenon considering how strong Yuan's hold was on the essential provincial offices and how disorganized the Republicans were—to abandon his Imperial visions; and how he died soon afterwards of an internal complaint aggravated by rage and his loss of "face".

The Second Revolution had served to define the struggle in China as war between North and South, and this character, which in the main it was to bear for the next fifteen years (though with infinite kaleidoscopic variations of North *v.* North and South divided against South), was further underlined by Yuan's attempt to make himself Emperor.

Since 1913 Canton and the province of Kwangtung had been in the hands of a buccaneering general named Lu Yung-ting, who had been on Yuan's side in the Second Revolution. But when Tsai A-o in Yunnan declared against Yuan's Empire, Lu Yung-ting followed suit by proclaiming the independence of Kwangtung and allowed the Republicans to establish a provincial government in Canton, which passed a resolution expelling Yuan from the Presidency for his treason to the Republic, and proclaimed the timid General Li Yuan-hung President in his stead, an honour which he was quite powerless and far too cautious to accept.

It is worth noticing that the Republicans do not seem to have thought it worth while to re-elect their first President, although they must have known that General Li, in Peking, would be no more use to them than Dr. Sun still in Japan; and that when the latter came back to China after Yuan's death he did not go straight to Canton, but stayed in Shanghai for several months.

In February 1917 the United States broke off diplomatic relations with Germany and sent a note to China as well as to other neutrals inviting her to do the same. Then ensued much confused wrangling in Peking over what China should do. General Li Yuan-hung, who had become President on Yuan's death and under the insistence of the provinces had reconvened Parliament, advised the latter to take America's advice, which it duly did. But when, a month later, America declared war on Germany, Parliament flatly declined to follow suit. The Premier,* Marshal Tuan Chi-jui, who was the strongest advocate of war upon Germany, tried coercion, but Parliament held its ground. Most of the Cabinet resigned, and President Li desperately dismissed Tuan. This brought the distracted President face to face with the threat of a military revolt—and Li had no army of his own.

In this dilemma he invited Chang Hsun and his pigtailed braves to come to Peking to mediate, even at the cost of dissolving Parliament, the price exacted by Chang. Then followed the sensation of Chang Hsun's attempt to restore the terrified boy Emperor, Hsüan Tung, to the throne and the "Empire of a Fortnight". But Marshal Tuan, on whose support Chang had reckoned, turned upon him; Chang was defeated on July 12, 1917, and took refuge in the Netherlands Legation. Li Yuan-hung, who had also got out of the storm into the tranquil shelter of Legation Quarter, was not on any account to be induced to face the trials of the Presidency again, and resigned office to the Vice-President, Feng Kuo-chang. Marshal Tuan was reappointed Premier, and, as all the world knows, in August 1917 China joined in the war on Germany.

Meanwhile, many members of the dissolved Parliament had made their way to Shanghai to join Dr. Sun. While the question of war with Germany was being wrangled over in Peking, the latter had sent a telegram to Mr. Lloyd George protesting against the efforts which he asserted were being made by British officials in China to bring her into the war, and warning him that the only result would be to stir up an anti-foreign outburst in China; and he now decided that the time had

* Marshal Tuan and other leaders will be dealt with more fully in another chapter. Here they can only be mentioned in passing as a part of the background of Dr. Sun Yat-sen's career.

come to go to Canton, accompanied by the dispossessed parliamentarians, and start a new campaign from there against the northern militarists.

In the confusing history of these and the next few years the one clear fact is that a leader without an army of his own was helpless.

General Li Yuan-hung had had no army, it will be remembered; neither had Dr. Sun. He travelled to Canton, where he arrived on July 25 in a man-of-war commanded by Admiral Chen Pi-kuang, and was immediately elected Generalissimo. But all power in the south was in the hands of Lu Yung-ting, who commanded the troops in Kwangtung and Kwangsi, and of Tang Chi-yao (another typical war lord), who had succeeded, on the death of Tsai A-o, to the control of Yunnan and of Kweichow. In October Dr. Sun proclaimed a "punitive expedition" against Peking to expel the traitor, President Feng, and the southern troops marched into the neighbouring provinces of Hunan and Fukien, where they claimed various successes and did much damage to harmless people. But there was no real purpose in the campaign; indeed, Lu Yung-ting was actually intriguing secretly with Feng, with a view to making common cause with him against the Premier, Marshal Tuan Chi-jui; while the Republicans in Canton were divided and quarrelsome, some for Lu, some for Sun, and the corruption and incompetence in official circles were unbounded.

> "There is no vestige of constitutional government here [wrote a correspondent in Kwangtung of the *North China Daily News*]. The country is under the control of the military, whose leaders are bleeding it systematically, but with no show of justice, to find pay for the troops. Still worse, however, the sinews of war are largely raised by the legalization of gambling. The old idealism of 1911–12 has been cynically abandoned."

There is no doubt that Sun was thoroughly unhappy. Wang Ching-wei and Hu Han-min remained faithful. Admiral Chen Pi-kuang was loyal to him; but that meant little against the armies of Lu Yung-ting and Tang Chi-yao; and Admiral Chen was murdered early in 1918, as generally believed by the agents of Lu Yung-ting. The rank and file of the Republicans swayed now this way, now that.

Lu Yung-ting now induced the Canton Parliament to pass a resolution for the reorganizing of the Southern Government, and on January 17, 1918, the establishment of a South-western Federation was announced—all provinces south of the Yangtze except Kiangsi, *plus* Szechuan; to be administered by a Directorate of Seven, including the veterans Tang Shao-yi and Dr. Wu Ting-fang, but otherwise composed mostly of generals. The latter would not accept Dr. Sun as Generalissimo; he was to rank only as one of the seven and the office of Generalissimo was abolished. No one could blame Dr. Sun for refusing to swallow such an insult, and at the beginning of May he resigned office and departed once more to Shanghai. There was a recasting of the Southern Government in August, when Dr. Sun was invited to join its members. But he did not think it worth while at that time to return to Canton, and accordingly stayed on in Shanghai, writing books on national reconstruction and the stages in revolution by which it was to be reached. But most of the manuscript was destroyed during the fighting in Canton, which we shall come to presently.

In November 1918 an armistice was patched up between Canton and Peking, where the ex-Viceroy of Manchuria, Hsu Shih-chang, had succeeded the unpopular Feng Kuo-chang as President. It had no more intrinsic stability than any of the agreements of these bad days. But it enabled China, as an ostensibly united country, to send a delegation selected from both parties to the Paris Peace Conference. The story of how China discovered that her Allies had secretly agreed

to Japan's retaining the former German possessions in Shantung belongs to another chapter. But one result of it is worth noting here. The violent explosion that it provoked in China led to the expulsion from Peking of the notoriously pro-Japanese clique, the so-called Anfu Party. From that day to this Japan has never found any group of Chinese possessed of real power on whom she could play for the furtherance of her aims in China.*

Meanwhile fresh fighting had broken out in the south between Kwangtung and Kwangsi, the upshot of which was that in August 1920 General Lu Yung-ting was driven from Canton by General Chen Chiung-ming, who had been prominent in the abortive attempt to seize Canton in March 1911 and was, for a short time, Governor of Kwangtung in the early days of the Revolution. Chen's memory is not popular with Dr. Sun's adherents for reasons which will presently be seen, but he was undoubtedly an able man, a revolutionist from the first days of the revolt, with a strong sense of, at any rate, provincial patriotism. Now uttering a "Kwangtung for the Kwangtungese" rallying-cry, he won such support that by October he had cleared the Kwangsi and Yunnan rabble from the tormented province and was loudly acclaimed Civil Governor and Commander-in-Chief of the Kwangtung forces.

This opened the way for the return of Dr. Sun Yat-sen, accompanied by Dr. Wu Ting-fang and T'ang Shao-yi, who had left Canton during the fighting to join Sun in Shanghai. He arrived in Canton in November 1920 and proceeded to reconvene the old Parliament, of which, however, fewer than half the original 580 members assembled; and in April 1921 Sun was re-elected President of the Southern Republic. But relations between him and Chen Chiung-ming were not good and rapidly grew worse. Chen was still Commander-in-Chief of the Army and he was all for leaving other provinces, at any rate for the time being, to stew in their own juice, while Kwangtung concentrated on putting its own affairs in order after the devastating misrule of the Yunnan-Kwangsi armies. Dr. Sun, on the other hand, was insistent on a "punitive expedition" against Peking. If the Peking Government had had the sense to let Kwangtung alone, much misery might have been avoided. But, in its own turn, it pronounced a punitive expedition—or action to that effect—against Kwangtung; and in June 1921 Chen Chiang-ming agreed to the invasion of Kwangsi, on the principle of the horse that "blew first", to forestall any attempt by Lu Yung-ting to invade Kwangtung. Beyond this, however, Chen was not willing to go, and in 1922 Dr. Sun put himself at the head of the Cantonese troops in Kwangsi.

China was now in the full tide of its most miserable years, when Peking had lost all semblance of authority and become, as someone has justly put it, a mere letterbox for the Diplomatic Body to drop their futile complaints in, when wars succeeded each other in north, centre and south, and the Tuchuns continually grouped and regrouped themselves in bewildering complications, while all pretence of constructive work, or even any pattern of coherent policy, vanished in the general uproar.

In Canton itself there was a good deal of house-cleaning. Many of the old narrow streets, with their dark mysterious shops hidden at the back of courtyards behind high protecting walls, in which treasure-seekers of the past chaffered endlessly over the purchase of silk embroideries, cloisonné and carved ivory, were swept away. Wide boulevards flanked by tall stores of reinforced concrete were driven through the city and spruce policemen armed with white batons stood at the

* Marshal Chang Tso-lin, the dictator of Manchuria, was obliged, for obvious reasons, to keep in with the Japanese, much as a pair of hedge-sparrows are forced to work for the cuckoo in their nest. Later, when he began to take too independent an attitude, there is no doubt that the Japanese connived at, if they did not actually contrive, the blowing-up of his train as he was retreating from Peking to Mukden in 1928. Today Wang Ching-wei "co-operates" with Japan, but he, of course, is a mere figure of straw, not to be compared with the once mighty Anfu Party.

street corners to control traffic with immense gesture. A beginning, too, was made in the abolition of the licensing of fantan houses for revenue.

Another step which excited wide attention throughout China was the suppression and expropriation of numerous Buddhist monasteries and convents in Kwangtung. It is extremely difficult to decide as to the rights and wrongs of this action. In respect of some of the religious houses there was probably as good a case for their suppression as for that of some of the smaller English monasteries by Henry VIII. On the other hand, the Buddhist monks were large landowners and, in the main, good landlords, dwelling among their tenants, knowing them personally, and coming to their succour with ready paternalism in bad times. There were doubtless abuses in the monastic system as there had been in bygone centuries, when from time to time persecution descended on the monks. But there were, of course, plenty who said that the monasteries' chief offence was that they possessed revenues which Dr. Sun wanted for the campaign in Kwangsi.

And while Canton spruced itself up this campaign went from bad to worse. Kweilin and Nanning, the two principal cities of Kwangsi, were occupied within a few weeks, but thereafter matters stuck, Chen Chinng-ming being satisfied with what he had done for Kwangtung's protection, while Dr. Sun was bent upon his punitive expedition to Peking. Dr. Sun accordingly put himself at the head of the troops. At this time he was in treaty with the old Anfu leader in the north, Marshal Tuan Chi-jui, and had visions of combining with him to crush Tuan's chief antagonist, Wu Pei-fu in Central China. He also sent Dr. C. C. Wu (son of the veteran Wu Ting-fang) to Mukden to win over the assistance of Marshal Chang Tso-lin, dictator of Manchuria.

The scheme may be noted (though it had no permanent results) partly as a typical sample of the various groupings and regroupings of rival forces in China which were mentioned above; partly as an illustration of a curious weakness in Dr. Sun's character. He never seems to have stopped to consider the nature of the men of whom he sought to make use. Tuan, the typical northern war lord, former henchman of Yuan Shih-kai, the General who had recaptured Hanyang from the revolutionists in 1911, was the last man likely to have any sympathy with Dr. Sun's ideas. The normal antagonism between Northerners and Southerners had been heightened by the whole course of the Revolution. It was a curious experience at this time to go from Peking to Canton. The difference in feeling between the two, the remoteness which each assumed when thought of from the other, were so immense that it seemed hardly possible that they could belong to the same country. The only imaginable tie between Tuan and Sun was that they were both antagonists to Wu Pei-fu.* But it is extremely unlikely that Tuan ever thought of Sun except (in the words of the Dictator in Stevenson's story of "The Rajah's Diamond") "with an indifference bordering closely on aversion"; or that Chang Tso-lin's feelings for the President of the Southern Republic were different from Tuan's.

The Kwangsi campaign resulted in a heavy deficit in Kwangtung's finances at the end of 1921, and by April 1922 Dr. Sun's resources were at an end. There are two versions of what happened then. One is that Chen Chiung-ming refused to allow Sun to return to Canton to raise more money; that Sun dismissed him from the post of Commander-in-Chief; and that Chen was then persuaded to take the lead of a "Kwangtung for the Kwangtungese" Party to drive Sun out of the south. The other, the version of Dr. Sun's friends, is that Chen had for some time

* Wu Pei-fu had defeated Chang Tso-lin, got rid of President Hsu Shih-chang, and got General Li in again as President. Li immediately summoned a meeting of the old 1913 Parliament (in passing, it may be said there never was but the one Parliament, meeting now here, now there, as fortune might seem to smile on it), with the result stated.

been intriguing for the formation of a Southern Confederacy with himself at the head, the expulsion of Dr. Sun being also part of the plot.

There may well have been some truth in this story. The certain fact is that Chen was dismissed and that this caused a mutiny among the officers of the army in Kwangsi. Dr. Sun thereupon hurried back to Canton, where, on the night of June 16, 1922, his Presidential House was attacked. He managed to escape to the gunboat *Yung Feng*, but the Presidential House was burnt down and with it went the manuscripts of the political works which he had composed in Shanghai during the two dreary years after his previous departure from Canton. Mme Sun bravely refused to accompany her husband when he slipped out of Presidential House lest her presence should cause him to be identified, but she managed to rejoin him later.

One would not dwell too long on the next two days (June 17 and 18), which are a blot on the memory of the man who has been almost deified since his death by his countrymen. Let it be remembered that his once-confident hopes of the expedition against Peking had been utterly frustrated, and that he had been deserted by the bulk of the Parliament who had gone to Peking anticipating a larger supply of the loaves and fishes than was forthcoming in Canton; he must have been beside himself with passion and disappointment as he steamed up and down the river bombarding Canton, until the American Consul-General protested against so ruthless an attack on the defenceless city.

Until August Dr. Sun remained in his gunboat, unable to leave the Canton river, for the local Admiral had repudiated him in a scorching letter. Then by the arrangement of the British Consul-General he was taken to Hongkong in H.M. gunboat *Moorhen*, whence he travelled again to Shanghai.

Dr. Wu Ting-fang had died on June 23. A little earlier T'ang Shao-yi, disgusted with the deplorable course of events, retired to his country estate near Macao, not to be heard of again in the political world for six years.

"Paradoxically," says Tang Leang-li, "Sun Yat-sen's defeat by Chen Chiung-ming only raised his stock among the people." In contrast with this Nathaniel Peffer, an American at one time on the staff of the *China Press* of Shanghai, by no means unsympathetic with Sun or the Revolution, wrote in *Asia Magazine* after Dr. Sun's flight from Canton:

> "That he has outlived his usefulness even to the cause to which he has dedicated his life I believe to be indisputable. . . . In Canton now is the best single group of men in China. They are paralysed by Dr. Sun. Whenever they make a beginning to what may be called reconstruction, Sun enters, reasserts his leadership—because of his historical position and really powerful personality—and diverts the movement to some mad political adventure of conquest on which it spends its energy and dies."

Both these opinions have truth in them. The Cantonese group to which Nathaniel Peffer refers were primarily interested in Canton and Kwangtung: if they could make them prosperous, they were willing for the time being to let the rest of China alone. The Cantonese, though undoubtedly the liveliest people in China, are also the most sectional, and Kwangtung, being about twice the size of Great Britain, was certainly enough to keep the reformer busy for a good many years. Dr. Sun's vision, however, was too large to be satisfied with one province; he could think only in terms of China as a whole, the long years he had spent in exile among foreign influences had put him, to some extent, out of touch with Chinese thought and methods; he was too impatient, too convinced of the feasibility of his visions, to allow for the obstacles which so slowly changing a country as China must impose on their realization.

THE EMPEROR KUANG HSU

(*Kindly lent by Dr. Thomas Cochrane*)

PRESIDENT YUAN SHIH-KAI

On the other hand, Tang Leang-li does not exaggerate the growth of Dr. Sun's prestige among Chinese generally. When he arrived in Shanghai in August 1922 the Chinese employed in factories and offices were so excited that it was difficult to get them to work with their usual steady patience; and among millions who never saw, would never see, him, Sun's name had begun to stand for something definitely national which contrasted brilliantly with the ruthless, selfish oppression of the Tuchuns. Quite apart from that "really powerful personality" which no one could be five minutes with Dr. Sun without feeling, I am convinced that his greatest appeal to the masses of his countrymen was that he was clean-handed, that none of the vast sums entrusted to him stuck to his fingers; and this, combined with the obvious fact of his life's devotion to the redemption of China from the degradation to which she had sunk in the 19th century, intensified the brilliance of his figure and obscured the faults of his career and his deficiencies in political wisdom.

By 1922, moreover, a new generation was growing up, continually refreshed by passionate students returned from abroad, while the earlier revolutionaries and most of the Parliamentarians (except for a few outstanding figures), wavering between this allegiance and that, had lost their faith and whatever hold they had ever had on public support, and even the Kuomintang, Dr. Sun's own creation, had largely gone to pieces. Beneath all the political chaos the intellectual and social ferment connoted by the mass education movement and Dr. Hu Shih's Literary Renaissance was gathering force and form, and in Dr. Sun its youthful exponents found the embodiment of their ideas.

In that attractive book, *The House of Exile*, Mrs. Nora Waln gives a vivid picture of Dr. Sun in Canton in 1923, arriving unexpectedly at a tea-party of the younger Chinese:

> "As he was recognized, talk ceased, cups and plates were put down. . . . These young people held him in the deepest veneration. With his hand resting on the back of Su-ling's exotic cubist-painted chair, he asked for three minutes of silence, for self-examination, for consideration of the doctrine of republicanism and for self-determination. The silence was emotional, yet peaceful and profound. At the end of it he made the finest call to leadership of the masses that it has ever been my privilege to hear. One felt his spirit steady, true and undaunted. His eyes were bright, his cheeks flushed, his countenance illuminated, his body straight and vigorous. I found it impossible to believe longer the rumour that he was afflicted with a fatal organic malady. . . . His speech was conversational, yet it rang a louder call to unselfish service than any dramatic orator could have done."

The rumour which Mrs. Waln could not believe was none the less true. When Dr. Sun left Canton in 1922 he had little more than two and a half years to live. But during that short time he rose to a greater prominence both in and outside China than ever before, and although these years were chequered with reprehensible incidents, and the events which contributed to Dr. Sun's publicity were more the doings of others than his own, it was now that he really acquired the prestige which has caused him to be called the Father of the Republic. Looking back over the course of the Revolution, one may say that until 1919 Peking still retained its position as the generally recognized seat of government. From then onwards the centre of gravity moved slowly, but with increasing attraction, towards Canton, and, whatever may be said of him in dispassionate criticism or harsh reprobation, the centre of that centre was Dr. Sun.

Chapter V

DR. SUN AND THE RUSSIANS

DR. SUN'S RETURN TO CANTON IN FEBRUARY 1923 WAS MADE IN CIRCUMSTANCES which gave his opponents plenty of cause to blaspheme. Although he had been enabled to return in 1920 by Chen Chiung-ming's expulsion of Lu Yung-ting and the Kwangsi troops, he now called in the help of Yunnanese and Kwangsi troops to eliminate Chen Chiung-ming and his Kwangtung supporters. They drove Chen back to Waichow on the East River, but there he held out, immovable. But Dr. Sun had only exchanged King Log for King Stork. Yang Hsi-min and Liu Chen-huan (respectively commanders of the Yunnan and Kwangsi forces) were the worst possible characters, no better than brigands, and their troops were as bad. Sun on his return found not only that all the power was in their hands, but that they had to be placated with continual bribes. The gambling monopoly was revived and made over to them, new land taxes imposed, a poll tax, shop taxes, forced loans and other exactions. Even thus the behaviour of the Yunnanese troops was outrageous. Mrs. Nora Waln describes how she herself saw a Yunnanese enter a shop (where she was buying something), pull out a revolver, shoot and wound the shopman because he demurred to handing over the contents of the till. Such incidents were a commonplace among the soldiers of the Tuchans' armies almost everywhere; another habit of theirs being to compel shopkeepers to give them silver for the face value of the worthless paper in which they were usually paid.* The huge sums thus wrung from the Cantonese were supposed to go to financing the punitive expedition against Peking; but Yang and Lin took the money and did nothing for it.

> No wonder then that sober men
> Should kick against the pricks.

To tell the story now of the kicking is to run ahead of events, but as it was the direct outcome of the Yunnanese tyranny in Canton it must be dealt with here. The advent of the Russian advisers and the dominance of the Kuomintang by the Communist Party had added to the Yunnanese incubus the burden of numerous Labour Unions whose lawless and aggressive behaviour increased the unhappiness of the Cantonese citizens. By 1924 conditions of life had become so unbearable that the business men decided to resuscitate the Merchants Volunteer Corps, an organization of long standing, of no political colour whatever, but employed only like police for the maintenance of public order, and for protection against the military riff-raff. The movement, which was supported by large numbers of towns and villages all over the province, was headed by the compradore of the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank, Mr. Cheng Li-po. The merchants were careful to issue a manifesto emphasizing that they had no political or subversive aims, and that the Volunteers had "no other outside object or purpose than to be a non-partisan military unit for local self-defence against lawlessness, to preserve peace and order and to suppress piracy and brigandage". Rather imprudently, however, the manifesto ended:

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* It is to the credit of Wu Pei-fu and the "Christian General" Feng Yu-hsiang that they kept their troops in order and did not allow them to fleece civilians. Even Chang Tso-lin, who for several years ruled his fief of Manchuria with great ability, ended by depreciating the currency, with disastrous results. Yen Hsi-shan, Governor of Shansi, paid his troops. But he, engaged in making Shansi the "Model Province", studiously kept out of the quarrels elsewhere.

"We are today inaugurating a movement for the salvation of China through direct action on the part of the Chinese themselves instead of through the action of the governing few."

Whether Dr. Sun took this statement as an affront to his leadership we do not know; it is not unlikely that he did, although political wisdom would surely have suggested that he should hail the Volunteers as friends, not antagonists. What happened was that when the arms and ammunition, of which the merchants had ordered a large supply from Europe and for which they had obtained in advance a permit from the Generalissimo's Military Office, arrived in Canton, Dr. Sun cancelled the permit and ordered the arms to be seized.

The merchants instantly resorted to the familiar device of closing their shops and offices and declaring a strike. From time immemorial this had been a recognized sign that the situation was serious and that the public meant business, and no official had ever dared disregard it. Dr. Sun threatened to bombard Canton. But at this tense moment he received a letter from the late Mr. Bertram Giles, then British Consul-General at Canton, acting on behalf of all the local Consuls, to the effect that orders had been received from the British Commodore in Hongkong that "in the event of the Chinese authorities firing upon the city, immediate action is to be taken against them by all British Naval Forces available".

In his fury at this letter Dr. Sun telegraphed to Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, then Prime Minister, denouncing the Merchant Volunteers as rebels "whose aim has now been revealed to be the overthrow of my Government", and protesting in violent terms against "this latest act of Imperialist intervention in the internal affairs of China", the real object of which, wrote Dr. Sun, "I am forced to conclude is the destruction of my Government".

But the Kwangtung Provincial Assembly took a different view of this act of Imperialist intervention and through its Speaker telegraphed to the Diplomatic Corps in Peking its heartfelt thanks for the timely action of the Consuls in Canton, which had saved the city from bombardment.

Dr. Sun went off to the war on the East River in the middle of September, leaving the arms locked up. But in October, during Sun's absence, an arrangement was come to between the merchants and the Commander in Canton by which the arms were released. Half of them, however, were missing, and while the remainder were being taken over, a procession of Labour Volunteers (for whom it was suspected the missing arms had been abstracted) came by, a quarrel broke out; firing ensued and several men on both sides were killed. Four days later the Merchant Volunteers were attacked in their headquarters in Saikuan, a district of Canton, with the whole strength of the Government's forces in the city using heavy artillery; there is no doubt that orders for the attack came from Dr. Sun, that is admitted by Tang Leang-li, though he justifies it by calling the Merchant Volunteers a rebellion: the Volunteers were utterly worsted; numbers of non-combatants were killed or wounded; and in the fires started by the bombardment some hundreds of shops and houses were destroyed.

There are details in this tragic story which will never be cleared up—for example, who it was who began the fight when the arms were being returned to the Merchants, they or the Labour Volunteers. But two facts stand out—the original manifesto of the merchants emphasizing that they were merely doing the same thing as had often been done before, to protect themselves in a state of lawlessness which irked Dr. Sun as much as anyone else; and secondly, the high indignation excited by the onslaught on Saikuan among Cantonese in other parts of China. Indeed, in Shanghai the Cantonese Associations circularized a telegram through China condemning Dr. Sun in unsparing terms and declaring that October is

must never be forgotten as the day of his "burning and destroying our market and tyrannously killing the Kwangtung people".

For the moment we may leave the tragedy of the Merchant Volunteers at that, while we turn to the political side of Dr. Sun's last years. There is surely no doubt that the most momentous event in Sun's life was his meeting with Adolf Joffe, the Soviet envoy to China, and the connexion with Russia that grew out of it. For from that sprang the first organization of the Kuomintang as an effective driving force that it had ever known, the march to the Yangtze in 1926 and the establishment of the Revolutionary Government at Hankow; and then, by a repulsion which changed the direction without destroying the impetus of the movement, the foundation of the Nationalist Government in Nanking and in due course the Japanese onslaught and the birth of a new China.

M. Joffe had been sent by Moscow to Peking at the end of 1922 to try to negotiate a treaty with China, in which he failed because the Peking Government stipulated that the Soviet must first withdraw the troops it had sent into Outer Mongolia the year before to suppress a White Russian rising led by a romantic buccaneer, the Ataman Semeonov, who dreamed of making himself King of Mongolia. Joffe came on to Shanghai in January 1923, where Dr. Sun was still living in the French Concession, and had several talks with him, the result of which was a declaration issued by them jointly on January 26th. It is hardly worth while now giving this document again, it has often been published in full, but the essential matter was that:

"(1) Dr. Sun holds, and M. Joffe agrees, that neither Communism nor Sovietism is suitable for China, but Russia sympathizes warmly with China's aim of national independence and China 'can count on Russia's support'.

"(2) Russia is ready and willing to enter into treaty negotiations with China 'on the basis of the renunciation of all the treaties and exactions which the Tsardom imposed on China'.

"(3) M. Joffe categorically declares that 'it is not and never has been the intention or purpose of the present Russian Government to pursue an Imperialist policy in Outer Mongolia or to cause it to secede from China, and Dr. Sun therefore considers that the evacuation of the Soviet troops 'is neither imperative nor in the real interest of China', as it would merely lead to a recrudescence of the White Russian disorders.*

So Dr. Sun went off to Canton and Joffe back to Moscow, both of them no doubt very pleased with the result of their confab. And in the following autumn came the episode of the Customs surplus—that is the balance of revenue remaining to Peking after the interest on loans and the instalment of the Boxer Indemnity had been met—which was to make the joint manifesto of January 26 merely a museum piece.

In the autumn of 1923 it occurred to Dr. Sun, perpetually plagued for want of money, or to one of his advisers, that it was an iniquitous thing that Customs money collected in Canton should be given to his antagonists in Peking. Looked at dispassionately, there was certainly excuse for this contention. He therefore announced that he would pay to Peking the quota due from Canton for the service of China's foreign dues, but the surplus he meant to keep. Now the integrity of the Customs, the only financial institution except the Salt Gabelle (and that, too, was much disorganized in the subsequent civil wars) which had remained un-

* The question of Chinese interests in the Chinese Eastern Railway was the subject of a separate clause. But as the C.E.R. was eventually sold to Japan in 1934, in flat disregard of the right of repurchase secured to China when the concession for the railway was extorted from Li Hung-chang in 1896, this clause meant nothing. Outer Mongolia, though not a part of the U.S.S.R., remains to this day a Russian protectorate.

impaired by the breakdown of government in China, was a cardinal point of policy with all the Powers, the one principle on which the Diplomatic Body could be relied on to agree promptly. It was accordingly decided to make an international naval demonstration at Canton to overawe the audacious Southern President.

I was in Canton at the time, and the assembled gunboats certainly made an imposing display, thirteen or fourteen altogether, British, French, American, Japanese, even one flying the Portuguese flag, an ancient vessel which had been lent to the Portuguese for the occasion (ask not by whom) in order to make the demonstration as widely international as possible. The late Admiral Leveson, then Commander-in-Chief of the British Fleet in the Far East, also came up to superintend. What they would all have done if Dr. Sun had defied them and seized the Custom House one cannot imagine. But for the moment he bowed to the storm he had raised.

The day after this gathering together of the eagles upon the Customs' carcase, the late Dr. C. C. Wu, son of Dr. Wu Ting-fang, and then Foreign Minister in Canton,* took me up the river to the cement works where Dr. Sun was living, to interview him. He was dressed in semi-military khaki uniform which made him look considerably taller than in the civilian clothes that he wore when I first met him in Shanghai in 1912. He bore himself with considerable command, and though he spoke with icy hauteur he was evidently full of anger, and the words flowed from him unceasingly for nearly forty minutes.

What he said can be boiled down to this: that he had looked for sympathy and help from England and America (he had, in fact, tried unsuccessfully to get from them some of the arms and munitions left over from the First World War); that not only had they failed him, but now they had made this naval display to deprive him of his just rights; that it was, of course, impossible for him to resist such a gathering of foreign power (to do him justice he did not use the word "imperialist"), but that—and here was the grand climax—"since Europe and America are against me, I turn to Russia for help".

With that the interview was over and I took my leave. When we were outside, C. C. Wu begged me not to report all that Dr. Sun had said—for in fact he had not minced his expressions—and I promised in my report to leave out the more lurid phrases. But the essential "meat" of the interview had to be made known, and Dr. Sun had certainly meant that it should be. It struck me, however, that subordinates were decidedly nervous at any time as to what he might say or do next.

For the moment the Kwangtung Customs money was saved and the gunboats steamed away, though within a few years the Diplomatic Body were tamely submitting to half-a-dozen different provinces doing precisely what Sun was not allowed to do—paying their quota of the War Service and keeping the rest of the Customs revenue collected within their borders. It is, by the way, a remarkable fact, and a tribute to Chinese punctiliousness in the matter of debts, that through all the Tuchun wars and the Communist upheaval in 1926–27 the money needed for the service of the loans and Indemnity was always forthcoming. The turbulence of China caused the loans to depreciate heavily on foreign stock markets; but this only meant that people who had the confidence to buy them (and I knew one man who bought Reorganization Loan at half its face value) got so much higher interest on their money.

* Dr. C. C. Wu's early death, when he was not much above 40, was regretted by many friends, foreign and Chinese. He was a charming fellow, with a manner reminiscent of Prince Florizel of Bohemia. He was, unlike most of the revolutionaries, profoundly read in the Chinese classics. Having been to college in America, he was also widely read in English literature. He spoke faultless English, and could write a despatch in nervous, terse, expressive English which the best of our diplomatists might have envied. Fate forced him into politics. By nature and predilection he was the literary artist, and perfect host to preside at a dinner of scholars.

The only loans which the Republicans flatly refused to honour were those which the Japanese bagman Nishihara had lavished on the Anfu Party in Peking in 1918–19. There were, I think, twelve or thirteen of these in eighteen months amounting to many millions of dollars, all of it squandered on enterprises which never materialized (a huge wireless station outside Peking, for instance, which was derelict as soon as it was completed) or on entertainments, singing girls and jewellery. The Nishihara loans were Japan's device for buying an obedient, submissive China, but she miscalculated badly. The Anfu Party was expelled, as already told, after the Paris Conference, and the Republicans stuck to their resolve not to pay the debts which the Anfuites had never had any kind of popular mandate to incur.

Meanwhile, Dr. Sun's decision to turn to Russia for help was easily gratified. On October 6, only a few weeks before the flare-up over the Customs, that extraordinary personality Michael Borodin had arrived in Canton recommended to Dr. Sun to assist in the reorganization of the Kuomintang by Karakhan, the Soviet Ambassador.* That Dr. Sun intended to commit himself so far to Russia as he ultimately did when he sent for Borodin is, I think, unlikely. As has been seen, he was ready to turn to anyone whom he thought likely to help him in attaining his ends, confident in his own ability to use them as he pleased. Conditions were such in Canton that he must have realized the need of some new agency to evolve order out of chaos. The Yunnanese and Kwangsi commanders were still the dominant power in Canton—it was not till after Sun's death that General Chiang Kai-shek succeeded in driving them from the province. The Kuomintang was riven with quarrels and hopelessly disorganized; many of its members had no particular enthusiasm for the principles on which the Party was founded and were ready to take any side, Sun's, Yuan's, Li Yuan-hung's, which seemed likely to offer a regular salary. And the attitude of Canton's citizens was that of Mercutio, "A plague on both your houses," with little inclination towards Sun's doctrines, which seemed able only to perpetuate the discomforts of life.

In these circumstances Dr. Sun was easily persuaded by Borodin that the first thing to do was to summon a National Congress of the Kuomintang. After the affair of the Customs surplus, Dr. Sun, who could hardly be expected to forgive the combined loss of face and loss of revenue he had suffered, did in fact lean more and more towards Russia, and though he was never a Communist he became an easy prey to the astute Borodin. The latter pretended to Dr. Sun that Russia's only desire was to assist the Chinese Revolution: "Your aim is to fight foreign imperialism," he said; "that is our aim. As for Communism, China is not in a condition to discuss it as conditions are not suitable." But to the Chinese Communists he is reported to have said, "In the Press I spoke of the Kuomintang, but to us that means that I was speaking of the ultimate influence of the Communist Party."

The First National Congress of the Kuomintang was formally opened by Dr. Sun on January 20, 1924, when 199 delegates were present, some having come from overseas. The Party Organization scheme, drafted by Sun and his intimates, is too long and complicated to quote fully. Briefly, it was prescribed that the supreme authority lies in the National Congress. But as this meets only once a year its powers are exercised in its absence by a Central Executive Committee, which in turn, being large and unwieldy, is represented by a Standing Committee for every-day matters. The whole C.E.C., however, must meet at least once in six months to decide important matters of policy. There are also provincial and district Party branches and innumerable local nuclei (as few as five persons can form a nucleus) which take their guidance from the C.E.C.

* Karakhan was not yet actually Ambassador. He had come to Peking to take up the negotiations in which Joffe had failed, and became Ambassador on the conclusion of the Sino-Russian Treaty, by which Russia gave up her extraterritoriality, and was recognized by China on May 31, 1924.

But now came the far more important matter of the Communist Party's admission to the Kuomintang. The "C.P.", as it was commonly called, was undoubtedly an offspring of the Russian Revolution, started in 1921 at Shanghai by Chinese students trained in Moscow (where at this time there was a college specially devoted to the educating of Asiatic students in Communist principles), who found plenty of eager adherents among young men in China nauseated and furious at the general chaos and distress in their country. In the North the Communists were anathema to the Peking Government; not a few of them could only re-enter China from Russia disguised as railway workers and coolies. But several of them had joined the Kuomintang, headed by Li Ta-chao, a Professor of the Peking National University, before the National Congress; and now it was the triumph of Borodin's quiet diplomacy that he got the whole of the C.P. admitted to the Kuomintang without surrender of their membership of the Communist organization, on which some of the Kuomintang had tried to insist.

Borodin's achievements as High Political Adviser (to which office he had been appointed by Dr. Sun) are the more extraordinary in that he never learnt to speak Chinese, nor did he ever thrust himself forward. He attended all the meetings of Dr. Sun's directorate, but very rarely took part in the discussions. Yet in some manner known only to himself he swayed the doings of the Party exactly as he pleased. General Chiang Kai-shek, who was now coming to the front as head of the Whampoa Academy for military cadets, never trusted the man, and once, during a temporary absence of Dr. Sun, tried to arrest him. Chiang had been sent to Moscow early in 1923 by Dr. Sun for military training. He certainly got as much of that as he could. But one conjectures (from his subsequent actions; there is no direct evidence on the point so far as I know) that he did not take to Soviet ideas of government. Much, however, was to happen before Chiang could get rid of Borodin, who in the meantime became really the uncrowned king of the Nationalist movement.

If Moscow had been willing to listen to Borodin, it is possible that he might have succeeded in bringing China completely under Russian control, at least for a time. His correspondence with Moscow shows that he had learnt two all-important facts—that Sovietism *à la* Moscow must be modified to suit Chinese tastes; and that you cannot hurry the East. Moscow could not be brought to acknowledge either of these points, and Borodin had earned the displeasure of his own Government some months before Chiang Kai-shek evicted him in 1927, an event which naturally confirmed Moscow's belief that he had made a mess of things.

The reorganization of the Kuomintang in January, 1924 and the Communist Party's inclusion in it only led to fresh confusion of authority in Canton. Mrs. Nora Waln, after the description of Dr. Sun's address to a crowd of foreign-trained students which I quoted earlier in this chapter, adds in comment: "It is so easy to become interested in one group to the exclusion of all others. When I had poured tea at Su-ling's" (the friend who gave the party at which Dr. Sun spoke) "I was quite certain that the Kuomintang was the only active party in Canton." But her own record of events shows how speedily she was undeceived.

The younger Chinese gathered enthusiastically round Dr. Sun, producing every day some new society—"Youth Movement", "League for the Freedom of the Race", "Republican Wives", etc., etc.—designed to help on the cause of revolution. But material power in the city remained, as already shown, with the uncouth insatiable Yunnanese soldiers. In the newly organized Kuomintang the Communist Party were rapidly becoming the dominant power. Borodin had been joined by numerous Russians and the organization of the Kuomintang, with its branches and nuclei, gave them ample scope in spreading their hypnotic instruction; when the time came for the Nationalist march to the Yangtze in the autumn of 1926, the political agents, Russian and Chinese, who preceded and spread out around the

Nationalist troops, were far more the cause of their victory than the army's fighting power.

As the Communists gathered strength their position was reinforced by the numbers of Dr. Sun's young disciples, whom Borodin, who neglected nothing, had recommended for secretarial posts of importance in the Kuomintang organization, thereby attaching them to himself and making them tools of his policy. Proportionately, the dislike of the less-extreme Kuomintang for the Communists grew daily hotter. The Party split into Right and Left Wings, and finally the issue between them became so sharp that Dr. Sun—or, rather, Borodin, acting through him—set up a political council of six members plus himself as chairman, which was to be the only body entitled to aid him in making political decisions. The Council included one Communist, intimate friends of Sun's, such as Wang Ching-wei, Hu Han-min and Dr. C. C. Wu, but no Right Wing men at all. Henceforward for many months the Right Wing were powerless.

Meanwhile, the business men of Canton were working up to the tragic attempt to organize their own body of unofficial police to protect them against Yunnanese and the Red Labour Unions. And a little way off General Chiang Kai-shek, at the Whampoa Academy, was training his cadets. As the first, and undoubtedly very smart, corps of officers trained as such on Western lines that China had seen, the Whampoa cadets attracted attention both at home and abroad. Chiang was assisted by that remarkable and mysterious man, Marshal Blücher (in China always known by his Chinese name, Galens), who, after the Japanese seizure of Manchuria, was entrusted with the building up of the Russian Army in the Far East. With Blücher (or Galens) Moscow sent several other officers to instruct in the Whampoa Academy. It also supplied necessary funds and sent arms and ammunition in ships which went direct from Vladivostok to Canton. Russia was laying herself out very thoroughly and sparing no expense to Sovietize China.

As one tries to visualize the figure of Dr. Sun Yat-sen in these last days of his life at Canton, one cannot but be struck by the pathos of it. It cannot be too strongly impressed that he was wholly sincere in his devotion to the renaissance of China. To himself, to his host of young admirers, to the world outside China, he was an imposing figure. His name was by now a talisman to myriads of his countrymen—outside the province of Canton. Yet he was in fact no more than (in Bismarck's rude phrase about Lord Salisbury) "a lath painted to look like iron", and the lath was entirely in the hands of Borodin. His imperceptions were remarkable, considering for how many long years he had mixed with "all sorts and conditions of men" all over the world. Borodin, in a letter to Moscow which was found when Chang Tso-lin raided the Russian Embassy in Peking in April 1927, described him as "very backward. He judges badly in political matters . . . often reasons in a simple way like a man in the street . . . the Chinese politicians are judged from the standpoint of his personal sympathy or antipathy, without considering the motives which influence their attitude towards him." He had no real power, while believing himself to be omnipotent. Borodin did with him what he pleased. His nearest friends were perpetually on thorns as to what he would do next. And the majority of Cantonese citizens detested him.

During 1924, at Borodin's instigation, Dr. Sun gave a series of lectures on his political theories and instructions, which, taken down in shorthand, were republished under the title of the *San Min Chu I* ("The Three Principles of the People") and for some years were religiously taught in Nationalist schools as an all-satisfying equipment for life.

The lectures, divided into three series, each of which deals with one of the Three Principles—Racial Struggle, People's Sovereignty and People's Livelihood—are an astonishing mixture of mis-statements, puerile economics and rabid anti-foreignism. One can admit that the privileged position built up by foreigners

during the 19th century, the Foreign Settlements and Concessions, their immunity and, one must add, the excellence of their government in contrast with the chaos elsewhere, must have been intolerable to Dr. Sun. But his description of the "foreign economic oppression" of China is so recklessly untrue that it is hard to believe it can have come from any man claiming to be a serious statesman.

For example, China's adverse balance of trade is described as "paying tribute" to foreigners; the transportation of Chinese goods abroad is "economic oppression"; so too are the operations of foreign banks in China, which are asserted to make a profit of at least 100,000,000 dollars a year by taking silver from the Chinese and giving them paper notes in exchange—although Dr. Sun is obliged to confess that the general attitude of the Chinese is "distrust towards native banks and extraordinary confidence in foreign banks". He estimates "that the invasion of foreign goods" means an annual loss to China of 500,000,000 dollars; taxes, land rent and land prices in the Concessions "take from us 400 to 500 million dollars"; freight charges on exports and imports "rob us of tens to hundreds of millions of dollars"; while another 10 to 100 million dollars is filched from China "through privileged and private enterprises of foreigners". What the Chinese may have got in return for all these enormous sums alleged to have been taken from their pockets Dr. Sun studiously ignored. As regards taxation in Foreign Concessions it may be worth mentioning that Chinese paid exactly the same to the Municipal Council of Shanghai as foreigners, namely a percentage on house rent, for many years about 15 per cent.* No other tax was levelled by the wicked foreigners; and the millions of Chinese who crowded into the foreign areas proved that they were satisfied with their bargain.

The lectures on the People's Livelihood contain the curious assertion that foreigners are to blame for the decline in the Chinese silk and cotton industry; did he never, one wonders, hear of the almost tearful entreaties perpetually made by the foreign and Chinese mill-owners to the Chinese Government to check the adulteration of cotton by the farmers and to rouse itself to the improvement of Chinese silk in face of the formidable competition of Japanese silk? In respect of taxation, Dr. Sun concentrated on land as the chief source of revenue, with special provisions for relieving landowners of unearned increment, i.e. the rise in the value of their property not due to their own efforts. State capital and national industries must be increased while private capital is restricted, and agriculture must be developed and the transportation and distribution of food improved. This section of the lectures contains some of Dr. Sun's best ideas, though defaced by some unwarrantable attacks on foreigners.

But the section which Dr. Sun himself seems to have regarded as that embodying his greatest discovery was the lectures on the People's Sovereignty. In these he criticized the systems of government in Great Britain and America with far more penetration than that shown in his discussion of economics. All men, he says, are equal and must have equal rights, but all have not the same capacity for governing; the ultimate power rests with the people as a whole, but only a limited section of them possess the necessary talent for administration; thus a distinction must be drawn between power over the Government (which is the heritage of all alike) and the power of the Government exercised by a qualified minority. The power of the people over the Government will be exercised through the usual devices of suffrage, recall, initiative and referendum. The power of the administration will be vested in five departments: judicial, legislative, executive, examination and censorship.

These prescriptions of Dr. Sun's had a powerful and by no means happy influence on the framing of the instrument of government in 1928 when the National-

* In the years before the war this had risen to 22 per cent., chiefly due to the drop in exchange, which was beyond the Council's control.

ists were established in Nanking. The distinction between the general power of the people and that of a class peculiarly qualified to govern led straight to the one party dictatorship of the Kuomintang, which proved anything but popular before the war and of which the elimination is likely to be one of China's most delicate problems after the war. The five departments, with the names that Dr. Sun gave them, appear in the five Yuan, or Councils, which, with the Central Executive Committee and the Central Political Council, are the principal organs of the Nationalist Government, the actual Ministries being subordinate to them.

Here one sees how the Nationalists improved on Dr. Sun's system by borrowing freely from Russia. In justice to them it is to be remembered that with their recent recollections of the evils of Tuchun-dom they were deadly afraid of allowing any member to acquire autocratic power through office. The result was, however, that every Minister found his actions at every step liable to be pawed over and pulled to pieces by interminable committees with inevitable obstruction and delay in the practical work of government. Committees are a curse anywhere. In China one wants a stronger word for them, for a reason peculiar to the country; however much the great majority of a committee might favour some useful recommendation by a Minister, if the minority, or even one member, against it were sufficiently vocal, the majority could not insist on their own view because that would be to make the opposition lose "face".

Between the Japanese seizure of Manchuria and the invasion of Manchuria much had been done to simplify the machinery of government, and, as will be shown later, the war has pointed the way to the solution of many old political problems. In those same six years, too, from 1931–37, there was a welcome subsidence of the wave of anti-foreignism which surged over the Nationalist movement in the 1920's and which Dr. Sun's lectures did much to enhance. Every public speaker in China is in duty-bound to begin by stressing the fidelity due to the teaching of Dr. Sun Yat-sen, but how much of that teaching will actually be accomplished in the new China is another matter.

In November 1924 General Feng Yu-hsiang, being at the moment in power in Peking with Marshal Tuan Chi-Jui as Chief Executive (the title to which that of "President" had degenerated), sent an invitation to Dr. Sun to come North; there was a vague triple alliance between the three dating from 1922. Probably Sun was glad of an excuse to leave Canton after the horrid affair of the Merchant Volunteers. Also he may have felt secretly that the situation in the south was getting beyond him, and, as he had called in the Russians to help him against the North, so now he looked to the North to redress the balance against the too-domineering Russians. Dr. Sun was never a Communist, though for a time he could be swayed by the Communist vitality as he was swayed at different times by many impulses.

Having appointed Hu Han-min Acting Generalissimo in his absence, Sun left Canton for Shanghai on November 11 accompanied by Wang Ching-wei. From Shanghai he went to Japan and delivered lectures at Osaka on the Pan-Asiatic ideal—a project on which, one may reflect, the Japanese needed no instruction from anyone. But the Japanese Government now definitely frowned upon him, and abandoning his intention to visit Tokyo, he crossed to Tientsin, was informed by the French Consul-General that his presence in the French Concession would not be welcome, and accordingly went to the Japanese Concession, and to bed, where he was obliged to stay for a month, a very sick man.

Meanwhile, there had been another upset for Dr. Sun's plans in Peking; Feng Yu-hsiang had fallen out with Marshal Chang Tso-lin and had retreated from the capital, leaving Tuan still Chief Executive, but Chang with his powerful Manchurian Army the dominant figure, between whom and Sun there was little prospect of agreement.

On December 31, however, Sun dragged himself out of bed to go to Peking with Wang Ching-wei and several other friends. What he hoped to achieve it is hard to say. In Peking he scarcely saw anyone except the Russian Ambassador Karakhan. Marshal Chang Tso-lin he saw once, for the first and last time. Marshal Tuan Chi-jui was in no manner whatever sympathetic, and indeed in an interview with the Eastern News Agency (given while Sun was still in bed in Tientsin) was reported to have said bluntly that "China differs fundamentally from Soviet Russia" and that "Dr. Sun ought to know the difference between Peking and Canton".

On January 26 Dr. Sun had to be removed to the Peking Medical Union Hospital, where he was operated upon, one of the surgeons being the well-known German, Dr. Krieg, of Shanghai, a man whom one takes pleasure in recalling as being as little like the monsters of Hitler's Germany as could be. The operation disclosed cancer of the liver in the last stage. Of recovery there could be no hope.

Dr. Sun was accordingly taken to a friend's house in Peking and there the famous Political Will, afterwards to be read at every ceremony and meeting of the Nationalists, was drafted and signed. According to popular report, the will was actually written by Wang Ching-wei, and from Tang Leang-li's account of things this seems to be confirmed. The news of Dr. Sun's fatal malady had provoked an instant and most unseemly outbreak of dissension among the Kuomintang, each in the usual fashion contending "which should be the greatest", with the Russian alliance as an additional cause for quarrelling. In these circumstances, says Tang Leang-li, Wang Ching-wei went to Dr. Sun, saying that the comrades were most anxious to act according to his ideals and desired guidance, and he continued:

> " 'By giving them your instructions, you will greatly add to their courage. Since you are ill, and since it will take at least a year or so for you to recover, your instructions are urgently necessary at this moment.'
>
> "Sun asked, 'What do you want me to say?'
>
> "Wang: 'We have written out the ideas you so often spoke about; here they are.' "

Then the draft will was read to the dying man, who approved and signed it, with a final admonition that there were many dangers ahead and that Sun's friends, whom enemies were plotting to demoralize, must indeed be strong and very courageous. Here is the will:

> "For forty years I have devoted myself to the cause of the People's Revolution, whose aim is to win for China national liberty and international equality. From the gathered experience of these forty years I have come to the realization that the only way to attain this object is by awakening the masses of the people and by joining hands with those nations of the world which treat us as equals in our struggle for the common cause. The Revolution is as yet unfinished. I thus exhort the comrades in the Party to continue, until victory is attained, the fight for the realization of our goal, in accordance with the *Plans for National Reconstruction*, the *Programme of National Reconstruction*, the *Three Principles of the People*, and the *Manifesto of the First National Congress*.* Especially my reasoned designs for the convening of the National People's Assembly and for the abolition of the Unequal Treaties, should be fulfilled within the shortest possible time. This is my last will."

The will was signed on March 11. Next morning Dr. Sun died. A statement issued by Dr. Krieg announced that he had expressed a wish to be embalmed

* Issued after the assembly of the Kuomintang, at Canton, in January 1924.

and buried on Tiger Hill, Nanking. It is particularly interesting to recall that on his death-bed Dr. Sun affirmed his faith as a Christian and desired to be buried according to Christian rites. This caused an uproar among the extreme members of the Party, and they actually tried to prevent the body from being removed to the chapel of the hospital for the desired service. But in this they were defeated by Dr. Sun's family (Mme Sun, like all the Soongs, is a Christian), and the Christian funeral service duly took place.

A favourite saying of Sun Yat-sen's was that "action is easy, understanding is difficult". How hard he found it to understand the world he sought to guide, and consequently how often his actions failed to achieve what he desired, this survey of his life must surely have shown. From the moment of his return to China in 1911 he was in conflict with forces beyond his control; for the Revolution was not only premature in point of the date fixed for its outbreak, but in the far more important particular that no preparation whatever had been made for what was to come after it; and thus, in a time when the only argument that availed was to have a bigger army than your opponent, Sun tried to bend the stormy elements to his will by mere words, which, where they were not misunderstood by his countrymen, were actively resented.

In a word, Sun Yat-sen was a visionary, with all the unpractical qualities which that word habitually suggests. But it is to his credit that he always remained true to his visions. A smaller man would have given in under the bitter disappointments which befell him. And in this sense Sun deserves to be called great and the Father of the Republic. He had that sublime faith in himself which, as in the case of other visionaries, has often ended by moving mountains, though long after the dreamers themselves are dead.

Sun Yat-sen is of more value now to his countrymen than when he was alive. His embalmed body lies in a magnificent mausoleum of marble and bronze on the beautiful slopes of Tiger Hill outside Nanking, unseen except by the privileged few on rare occasions. But his visions have become the emblem of all that China hopes for, and his name the standard under which she marches.

Chapter VI

REPUBLICANS AND TUCHUNS

THE FAILURE OF DR. SUN YAT-SEN'S HOPES OF THE REVOLUTION CAN EASILY BE traced to two main causes—the difference of character between Northern and Southern Chinese, which is almost as great as that between northern and southern Europeans; and the incompatibility of the ideals of government which they each represented.

Lying near the borders of the wild tracts of northern and central Asia, North China has been continually subject to invasion by barbarian tribes—Tartars, Mongols and Manchus—hardly less since Chin Shih Huang Ti built the Great Wall than before it, with a resultant admixture of blood that has produced a very different type of Chinese from those in the South—bigger, slower, more military, and for the last 2,000 years the ruling class. Moreover, as Mr. Owen Lattimore has pointed out, the policy of the Northern rulers was always a landward-looking, not a seaward, policy; and as on the mainland they saw no peoples whose civilization could compare with China's they became more and more conservative, more contemptuous of everything outside the Middle Kingdom, less apt to suggestions that anything foreign could be to their advantage.

The Southerners, however, had been familiar with foreign modes since the

Arab dhows began to come to Canton in the 8th century. The Southerners too have always been navigators—no better sailors anywhere than the men of Swatow, Amoy and Foochow—and in pursuit of trade (in which they much excel the Northerners) had pushed abroad in their junks to Malaya, India and the South Sea islands. The huge colonies of Chinese overseas, in the Straits Settlements and Netherlands East Indies particularly, were built up almost entirely on emigration from the South; and from them came by far the greater part of the money collected by Dr. Sun. The first outrush of Chinese students to foreign universities was from the South. And, in general, Southerners (certainly the Cantonese, who constitute the most important item in the mosaic of South China) are livelier, more inventive, more interested in new ideas, and at the same time more emotional and precipitate than Northerners.

Another very important factor in the dislocation of government after 1911 was that there was no tradition whatever for rulership by the South. That had always been the prerogative of the North, which was thus instinctively prejudiced against whatever political ideals the South might propound. This antipathy was sharpened by the fact that Sun Yat-sen's proposals ran counter to Chinese custom even more deeply than in the substituting of a Republic for a Throne. Under the Empire, China had been more a federation of independent States or provinces than a united kingdom. The Viceroys and subordinate officials were certainly appointed by the Emperor to form a framework that held the country together. But so long as they sent in the required revenue and governed with sufficient moderation not to excite riots or strikes, which might oblige the Emperor to intervene, Peking did not care what they did. Not only each province, but every *hsien* or county, remained complete in itself and self-sufficient, and, as was pointed out in an earlier chapter, the real government of China was performed by families, village elders and guilds.

For this easy, flexible form of administration, which everyone understood, the Republicans wished to substitute a centralized government, with a parliament to dictate at every point to the President and the whole country. From the time of its first quarrels with Yuan Shih-kai, whenever Parliament was reconvened it at once began to wrangle with whoever might be President over this question of control. And in 1929, only a year after China had been nominally unified under the Kuomintang, civil war broke out again between the generals in Central China and Nanking over the latter's claim to centralize all authority in its hands and to dictate the doings of the provinces.

The best men in the North after Yuan Shih-kai's death, such as Tuan Chi-jui, Wu Pei-fu, Chang Tso-lin and Hsu Shih-chang (ex-Viceroy of Manchuria), probably believed that the solution for China was a constitutional monarchy. They were, however, ready enough for a Republic if the South would have modified its extreme ideas. What they would not endure was a dictatorship by a body of men who had no experience in government and for most of whom they had the Northerner's instinctive contempt for the Southerner. Then to make confusion worse confounded the Northern generals split into two Parties, the Anfu and the Chihli, and China became a cockpit with each Party claiming the right for its own specific to unify China by force.

It is proof of the utter feebleness of the Manchu Dynasty and the detestation in which it was held that the Revolution succeeded in 1911 so far and so easily as it did. For in looking back one can find no coherent pattern in it, no single directive force with a concerted plan. Sun Yat-sen's Party was by no means the only one—there were secret societies everywhere, but the connexion between them was of a shadowy description and their uprising in 1911 was like the explosion in a powder-magazine, where one barrel after another goes up because of the bursting of its neighbour.

It would be wasting time to attempt to enumerate all the men who at one time or another came into the public eye. But a few of the Old Guard most closely associated with Dr. Sun are worth recalling as more intense, more dramatic and colourful than their fellows.

The two most prominent in the early days were Huang Hsing and Chen Chi-mei. Huang Hsing was a Hunanese born in 1874 and educated at one of the modern schools founded by Chang Chih-tung, Viceroy of the "Two Hu" provinces Hunan and Hupeh,* where the contrast between Chinese and foreign history made him a revolutionary, and he founded a secret society in Hunan, started a rising in 1905 in the provincial capital Changsha, which failed; and fled to Japan to join Dr. Sun in founding the Tung Mêng Hui, in which Sun appointed him president of the Executive Committee and deputy for himself when he, Sun, went off to Europe.

Huang was one of the leaders in the abortive attack on the Viceroy's *yamên* at Canton on March 29, 1911 which was badly bungled and ended in failure and the death of "the 72 Martyrs". He lost two fingers in the fight, but found a wife, Miss Hsu Chung-han, who nursed him and helped to smuggle him out of Canton to Hongkong. He was in Shanghai in October 1911 when the Revolution broke out at Hankow, and by the time Wuchang and Hanyang had been captured, Li Yüan-hung had been forced by the revolutionaries to take command (it is popularly believed that they dragged him out from under his wife's bed). Afterwards Huang Hsing managed to lose Hanyang to the Imperialist troops, which Tang Leang-li describes as an example of Huang's "supreme genius as a military commander", for "by sacrificing Hanyang at the right moment" he was enabled to gain the much greater prize of Nanking. Tang Leang-li is particularly enthusiastic about Huang Hsing, describing him as the greatest military commander in China, the practical man of action, the Chinese Trotzky to Dr. Sun's Lenin. But that was not the general Chinese view of Huang. Li Yuan-hung openly accused him of cowardice at Hanyang. And in the Second Revolution at Shanghai in 1913 a Chinese friend said to me, "Huang always runs away when the fighting begins."

Huang was appointed Minister for War in Sun Yat-sen's first Cabinet at Nanking, but resigned when Sun gave up the Presidency to Yuan Shih-kai. Later on he quarrelled with Sun when the latter accepted the railway directorship under Yuan; and after the defeat of the Second Revolution in 1913, when the Party was all to pieces and Dr. Sun tried to exact a signed oath of loyalty to himself with their finger-prints appended, Huang Hsing (like many others) found this more than he could stomach, and betook himself to America for two and a half years. He returned to Canton in 1916 to join in the general revolt against Yuan's attempt to make himself Emperor, but, on the eve of taking charge of one of Dr. Sun's famous "punitive expeditions", died at the age of only forty-one. Perhaps my Chinese friend's judgement of him was harsh. Huang was a highly strung man whose health was not good, and his nerve may have been weakened by the attack on the Viceroy's *yamên* in March 1911, which must have been a pretty ghastly affair, started too late, when the Viceroy knew what was coming, and with a mere handful of desperate fanatics. Yet Huang persisted in spite of discouragements. He was thoroughly in earnest, a personality that impressed itself both on foreigners and Chinese and, in the first stages of the Revolution, much better known than Sun Yat-sen.

Chen Chi-mei was a very different type from Huang: tall and thin, not given to talking, a hard fighter, hard in every way. A native of Chêkiang, it is interesting

* These names merely mean "South of the Lake" (i.e. the Tungting) and "North of the Lake". Several Chinese provinces are named in this way, thus Shansi and Shantung, "West Mountains", "East Mountains"; Kwangsi and Kwangtung, "West Broad", "East Broad", though for some inscrutable reason English papers persist in printing "Kwangsi" and "Kwantung"—the latter being, in fact, the peninsula of South Manchuria (also called Liaotung), about 1,500 miles from the province of Kwangtung.

to recall that, under Chen Chi-mei, General Chiang Kai-shek, who is also a Chêkiangese, first served in the revolutionary force at Shanghai in 1911. Chen, after having fought in the taking of Wuchang and Hanyang, came down the river and captured Shanghai—"captured" is a big word to use. On the morning of November 3 a little cloud of revolutionists crossed the river firing wildly in the air, whereupon the Imperialist commanders in the Kiangnan Arsenal (which lies south of the Foreign Settlements) incontinently gave in, and the revolutionists proceeded to sack the Arsenal, serving out rifles and cartridges indiscriminately to anyone who proved his good faith by cutting off his queue and putting on a white armlet. It was all comic opera, except for the police of Shanghai, who well knew where most of those rifles would go—to give much future trouble among the outlaws of the district.

The 1913 Revolution was a much more serious matter. The Arsenal was stoutly held by Admiral Tseng Ju-cheng, an ally of Yuan Shih-kai, who had been trained at Greenwich; and with Chen Chi-mei (who had been appointed Governor of Shanghai by Dr. Sun after 1911) attacking from Chapei on the north of the Foreign Settlements the latter found themselves between two fires and for a week of continuous banging had a very uncomfortable time.

Then it was that the Municipal Council repeated the technique of their predecessors nearly seventy years before, who had valiantly sallied out and in the famous Battle of Muddy Flats had driven off the Imperialist troops operating against the T'aipings, but much more a nuisance to the Settlement than to the rebels. The Council decided that Chapei must be taken over. The volunteer force of about 800 men was marched into Chapei and Chen Chi-mei was told that he must go. He was in a towering passion. But it was not the revolutionists' policy at that time to quarrel with foreigners, and Chen removed still farther north to the village of Kiangwan, where, reinforcements having arrived for the Northern troops, he was presently defeated and left the neighbourhood.

No one was better pleased than the Chinese merchants of Shanghai. They had subscribed readily enough to the Revolution in 1911. But in 1913, after experiencing the futilities of the Parliament, they preferred Yuan Shih-kai, who bade fair to give them peace and order; and they closed their purses. Chen Chi-mei, however, knew how to loosen the strings. He would call a meeting of the merchants, and sitting at the head of the table with a drawn sword before him would ask each in turn how much he proposed to subscribe. If the answer was not satisfactory, Chen would knock peremptorily on the table till the amount was raised to what he thought proper.

After the collapse of this revolt, Chen Chi-mei took the post of chief of the Executive Department of the Kuomintang vacated by Huang Hsing (presumably he did not boggle at the oath of allegiance to Sun Yat-sen and the finger-prints). But the revolutionists' fortunes were at their lowest ebb, with Parliament thoroughly cowed and Yuan firmly in power; and the ex-Governor of Shanghai was little heard of again until he was assassinated in 1916—of course it was said by an agent of Yuan's.

And then we come to that curious and interesting character Hu Han-min, provincial graduate (the equivalent of our M.A.), ex-schoolmaster, and then a student in Japan, where in 1905 he met Dr. Sun, joined him in the formation of the Tung Mêng Hui, and wrote coldly incisive articles for the League's paper the *Min Pao*. He took part in the unsuccessful rising at Canton on March 29, 1911. But soldiering was never his line; one might perhaps say of Hu that once a schoolmaster always a schoolmaster; and having been one of Dr. Sun's closest associates from 1905, sharing with him all the ups and downs of fortune, he remained to the end of his life, at least in his own opinion, the one perfect exponent of Sun Yat-senism: and no one might differ from his pronouncements by a hair's-breadth.

Hu was a small man with an extraordinarily high but rather narrow forehead,

a cold formal manner, extremely secretive even to his intimate friends. To follow his career in detail would be unnecessarily long and tedious. He held at different times high posts in which he might have well feathered his nest. But it was to his credit that, having been born in a poor family, he remained poor to the end of his life (some of his relations, whom on the doubtful evidence of his opponents he had pushed into profitable billets, were much less scrupulous). He supported Dr. Sun Yat-sen's turning to Russia in 1924. But his instincts were all for the Right Wing; and having allowed his disapproval of the Communist control of the Kuomintang to become too apparent, he found it advisable to leave Canton in 1925—the more so that Liao Chung-kai, treasurer of the Party, who was an extreme Red, was assassinated and Hu Han-min was accused of complicity in the crime. Borodin persuaded him to go to Russia "on a mission of investigation",* perhaps with some idea of converting him. Which was the last sort of mental experience likely to affect Hu Han-min. From Russia Hu went on to Europe and returned to China in 1928, when, the moderate members of the Kuomintang under General Chiang Kai-shek having broken with the Reds, and Borodin and his Russian satellites being well out of China, Hu was appointed President of the Legislative Yuan in the newly established Nationalist Government at Nanking.

Those were the days when the reform fever was at its highest and new measures for the uplifting of the Sons of Han poured from Nanking like a Niagara. This sort of thing was meat and drink to Hu Han-min. He was always an indefatigable worker, and all day and every day he was flying from one committee meeting to another to ensure that nothing was done without his approval. Mention has been made of the unwieldy nature of the first Nationalist Government, and it must be said of the over-attentive Hu that :

> Mr. Parker made much darker
> What was dark enough without.

In the end, in 1931, General Chiang Kai-shek lost patience and put Hu Hanmin under house arrest, whence he was subsequently allowed to retire to Hongkong, where he continued to pour forth manifestos denouncing Nanking's shortcomings till his death a few years later. Once a British diplomatist passing through Hongking visited him and asked roundly whether he were not ashamed to be doing nothing but try to crab the work of men who were striving to get the country on its legs. For once Hu had no answer; the notion that his own view of things could be questioned was too much. There is no question but that he was a high-minded man, a real patriot according to his lights, in many respects the finest of the early revolutionists. He earned his countrymen's reverence and infuriated them. One remembers the curious narrowness of his forehead.

Wang Ching-wei, the friend in whom Sun Yat-sen placed his greatest trust, who has betrayed that trust and all his countrymen by becoming the one quisling of China, must be left to a later chapter while we turn to the Northerners. It was always the bitter complaint of the Republicans that foreign Powers, even the American Government, which was the first to recognize the Republic, favoured the men of the North more than themselves and their leader Dr. Sun. Yet on the whole this was hardly surprising. Peking had always been the seat of Government since (and long before) China had begun to have international relations; many of its officials were the intimate friends of the foreign diplomatists; and Legation Quarter was a little self-contained world, most of whose inmates rarely stirred beyond Peking except for a picnic to the Western Hills or the summer

* This sort of "face-saving" phrase became the stock-in-trade of politicians and generals under a cloud. More than one Tuchun, when momentarily worsted, went abroad "to study the political conditions of Europe".

GENERALISSIMO CHIANG KAI-SHEK

SOME OF CHINA'S SOLDIERS

holiday at Peitaiho; and while it was thus extremely difficult for them to gauge the nature of the forces which the Revolution let loose, the conduct of the Southerners for some years did nothing to convince the diplomatists of their fitness to rule China. With this also must be recognized a perfectly honest doubt on their part whether the violent changes and foreign innovations demanded by Dr. Sun and his fellows could by any stretch of imagination be workable in so conservative a country as China, so rooted and grounded in her own immemorial usages.

As for the business community, their sympathies inevitably went with the side that seemed most likely to provide the peace and order that favours trade, and in this the Chinese merchants were mostly at one with the foreign. In China, too, foreigners insensibly grow as conservative as the Chinese, and to them the old-fashioned Chinese of the North, with their solid figures and dignified bearing, typified all that they associated with government in China, while the eager, highly strung Southern revolutionists, with their queueless polls and ill-fitting foreign clothes, seemed an impossible disharmony in the proper order of life. It is a curious fact that during the wars of the Tuchuns, foreigners of the different provinces were invariably ready to swear by the excellence of their own particular Tuchun, who was never so black in their eyes as he was painted elsewhere.

As a body the Chinese Viceroys, product of severe scholarship and no less severe testing in lesser official positions, were worthy of the impressive title they bore; and among them none stands out more vividly than Yuan Shih-kai. The revolutionists hated him for, as they said, betraying the Republic; the Imperialists for betraying the Throne; and both together denounced him for betraying the Emperor Kuang Hsü in 1898. But such charges cannot be passed without reference to the circumstances surrounding them.

Yuan Shih-kai was without question a great administrator. If his thought was directed chiefly to his own interest, he thought also for his country's, as proved in 1900, when, as Governor of Shantung, he deliberately reversed the Empress Dowager's orders to kill all foreigners and assiduously protected them. In the *coup d'état* of 1898 it is to be remembered that the allegiance he owed to the Empress Dowager was much older than that he owed to the Emperor; and as an experienced official who understood his countrymen thoroughly he may well have thought that Kuang Hsü was setting the pace of reform dangerously fast, as others thought, including so far-sighted a man and friend of China's as Sir Robert Hart. The same explanation would certainly serve for his treatment of the Republicans.

As for his alleged betrayal of the Throne, there was no particular reason why Yuan should have had much consideration for the Manchu Court, which had cashiered him after the Empress Dowager's death and only called him in to save them because there was no one else. Added to which was the practical consideration that if, at the cost of much sanguinary fighting, Yuan had bolstered up the dynasty in 1911, it could not have survived for long. Everyone knew that it had exhausted the Mandate of Heaven. Its demise was certain.

The main facts of Yuan's life have already appeared in these pages. He was born in Hunan in 1860 and first became prominent as Chinese Resident in Korea from 1884 to 1903, where, young as he was, he showed conspicuous ability. There it was that he formed a lifelong friendship with Sir John Jordan, who was then British Consul-General in Korea. From Korea, Yuan was appointed Provincial Judge of Chihli, and after the Sino-Japanese war was made Civil Commandant in Tientsin to build up a foreign-trained army. These troops, by the way, made no little impression upon the foreign military attachés in Peking and were a distinct asset to China in one or two diplomatic passages in the early 20th century. Then came the Governorship of Shantung, and in 1901 Yuan, on the death of the veteran Li Hung-chang, succeeded him as Viceroy of Chihli, the metropolitan province. In 1907 he was elevated to the sublime rank of Grand Councillor, only to be driven

into retirement a year later by the vengeance of the Manchu Court for his share in the *coup d'état* of 1898. The steps by which he became President of the new Republic were traced in the last chapter.

Directly Parliament* assembled in Peking, on April 8, 1913, it set to work to force Yuan to accept the Provisional Constitution previously drafted in Nanking, which would have put all the power in its own hands and reduced Yuan to the figurehead status of the French President. It is very unlikely that Dr. Sun Yat-sen would have accepted such a position had he remained President; it was quite certain that Yuan would not. While deadlock prevailed it became known that Yuan was negotiating with a group of British, German, French, Russian and Japanese bankers for a loan of £25,000,000 (the well-known Reorganization Loan). This roused a storm of protest; Dr. Sun sent an impassioned telegram of protest to London; and the loan agreement, duly signed on April 27, 1913, added to the bitterness engendered by Yuan's refusal to submit to parliamentary dictation, led directly to the Second Revolution.† There is no doubt, however, that the Reorganization Loan was badly needed. The country was full of unpaid troops and worthless currency and the loan proved extremely valuable in placating the one and restoring the other. It also resulted in the great benefit to China of bringing in the late Sir Richard Dave to reorganize the Salt Gabelle on which the loan was secured. In Sir Richard's hands the Gabelle revenues were increased to at least three times their best previous total and a service was built up comparable to the Customs in its efficiency and value to the country.

After the Second Revolution, Parliament was in no spirit to continue the struggle with Yuan, and with little ado it elected him President (his post had previously been only "Provisional") for five years and passed the portions of the Constitution which suited him. In November Yuan proscribed all the Kuomintang members, and in January he dissolved the remnant of Parliament.

The tide was now fairly set for back to the old order. The worship of Confucius, which the revolutionists had abolished, was reintroduced, as well as the annual State worship in the Temple of Heaven—a lovely old ceremony held at the winter solstice when the Emperors, after spending the night at the temple in prayer and fasting, sacrificed to Heaven and their ancestors in the clear stinging dawn and reported on the discharge of their guardianship of China during the past year. Yuan's Ministers were men of the old *régime*, among them as Foreign Minister Liang Ch'i-ch'ao, who will be remembered as one of the leading constitutional monarchy reformers in 1898. And in the chief posts in the provinces Yuan placed his own men, who kept order and behaved themselves well enough while Yuan's strong hand was upon them but were to prove, after his death, a terrible sowing of dragon's teeth.

It is an interesting speculation what might have happened if Yuan had been content to wait a little longer before trying to make himself Emperor; though if we believe, as doubtless many do, that the length of a man's life is irrevocably fixed, the result would have been the same in any case. But he would not wait. He had reason to believe that the majority of his countrymen were well pleased with the firm rule he had introduced; and quite possibly he believed that imperial splendour would strengthen his hands against the Japanese, always alert to wreck any prospect of peace prosperity and power in China. Japan had shown her hand

* There were 586 members of the Chamber of Deputies and 274 senators. How they were elected is a mystery. In some provinces a genuine attempt at popular election was held. Most of the members simply elected themselves. The Kuomintang easily held the predominating vote in both Chambers.

† Just as the Hukuang Railway Loan agreement, with British, French, American and German banks, designed to complete the unfinished Canton-Hankow Railway and extend it into Szechuan, was the last straw that brought about the Revolution in 1911. The point of view of the revolutionists was: (*a*) that the Throne would squander the money on its own delights; (*b*) that the railway would be used to transport troops quickly to crush risings in the provinces; and (*c*) that, anyway, the provincials meant to build their own railways.

plainly in the presentation of the iniquitous Twenty-one Demands in May 1915, and although Yuan had managed to evade surrender on the worst of these demands, Japan had only consented to postpone their discussion. If and when that discussion was renewed, Emperor Yuan would surely be in a much better position than President Yuan to face it, especially if the war in Europe were over, whichever side won.

All this, of course, is mere speculation as to what may have been in Yuan's mind. All we know is what he did. And so, although Great Britain and Japan both warned him against his project, we have the farce of mass meetings in the provinces to create a semblance of popular demand, and the Council of State presenting a request that the President would declare himself Emperor; and the President with suitable reluctance acceding to the people's will; and the coronation fixed for February 9, 1916.

And then a revolt broke out in the far-off South-western province of Yunnan and swelled through all the provinces; even such men as Liang Ch'i-ch'ao and Tuan Chi-jui, on whom Yuan had counted, turned against him; and the coronation was "off". It is said that Yuan's rage was past belief; I will not repeat the frightful legend of how he vented it in his own household. But one can hardly doubt that the crushing disappointment aggravated the internal complaint from which he was suffering. So the strong ruler, the sagacious and experienced statesman, had suddenly proved blind and improvident in the greatest crisis of his life; and on June 16, 1916, he died.

The ten years after Yuan's death are a gloomy waste of jealousies, intrigue and strife, of perpetual grouping and regrouping of suspicious office-seekers in which no trace of any conception of the public welfare can be seen, nor any motive but self-enrichment. Wu Pei-fu stands out as the one honest, honourable man actuated by a real sense of patriotism; but his dream of unifying the country by force was obviously to build on a rotten foundation; besides which, at the supreme moment of his career he was betrayed by Feng Yu-hsiang and driven into obscurity. While Yuan lived, the military commandants and civil governors whom he had planted about the country were kept in good order, and the general administration was better than it had been for several years. But when his control was removed his subordinates quickly degenerated into military barons who built up great sprawling armies and preyed ruthlessly upon the people. Taxes were collected years ahead, in Szechuan even as much as twenty years ahead; and the cultivation of opium, which had nearly been stamped out under the Empire, sprang up again luxuriantly, providing the Tuchuns with a double source of revenue, first from the sale of licences to grow the poppy, which they compelled the farmer to buy, and secondly from the sale of the drug.

Meanwhile, the common soldiers, their wages often months in arrear and then probably paid in worthless paper, became little better than bandits. Wu Pei-fu kept his troops in order and would not let them plunder the people, and it is to the credit of the "Christian General" Fen Yu-hsiang that he did the same. But the armies of many Tuchuns were as bad as locusts. During the governorship of Shantung by the infamous Tsang Chung-chang—a huge brigand of a fellow, with the manners of a savage and the conscience of a Gestapo chief, who travelled about with a harem of thirty concubines—it was estimated that 3,000,000 people emigrated to Manchuria to escape the unparalleled oppression of Tsang and his soldiers.

Vice-President Li Yuan-hung succeeded to the Presidency on Yuan's death. He was a stout, kindly man and a sincere Republican, who immediately revived the Constitution of Nanking and recalled the Parliament. But he was not a strong nor a particularly clever man, and he had committed the imprudence of having no army at his back. Now he found himself between two fires. For

while Parliament at once dug up the old bone of the President's powers, Tuan Chi-jui, the Prime Minister, was equally hostile to Parliament and Constitution. Tuan was the commander of the First Army of the so-called Peiyang forces built up by Yuan Shih-kai, and could not be expected to have any sympathy with Southern political ideals. It is true that after Yuan's death he ordered the arrest of officials who had supported the monarchist movement. But he was careful not to do this until they had been given time to remove themselves to a safe distance. As Lao Tzu, the philosopher, said, "The inspired man, when a creditor, does not exact his claim." The Tuchuns, with an eye to the caprices of Fortune, always kept that principle in view for self-insurance.

Matters came to a head early in 1917 over Tuan's wish to declare war upon Germany. Li and Parliament agreed to break off diplomatic relations, but would go no further, and as Tuan still insisted, Li dismissed him and desperately called in Chang Hsun and his army of pigtailed braves to support him. This was out of the frying-pan into the fire. Chang Hsun, as already told, began by insisting that Parliament must be dismissed, and having got the whip hand in Peking he brought out the boy Emperor, and on July 1, 1917, proclaimed the restoration of the Empire.

Many stories are told about Chang Hsun—one, for instance, that he was originally a barber who had performed an act of service to the Empress Dowager during her flight to Sianfu in the Boxer year. This tale seems to owe a good deal to the Chinese sense of the dramatic, emphasizing the subsequent greatness of Chang Hsun's rise, since barbers (and actors) were the very lowest grade in Chinese society. As a matter of fact, he was the son of a decent family in Kiangsi who took to the Army for a career when his father died penniless, served under Yuan Shih-kai and under Viceroy Hsu Chih-chang in Manchuria, and by the time of the Revolution had risen by his abilities to be Governor of Kiangsu. It may be recalled that in the Second Revolution of 1913 he retook Nanking from the revolutionaries. Chang Hsun did not quarrel with Yuan when the latter became President, but he was always entirely loyal to the Throne and never pretended otherwise.

The interesting question is whether he had reason to expect support from Tuan and other Northern leaders for his monarchical restoration. Sir Reginald Johnston in *Twilight in the Forbidden City* quotes much evidence for believing that he had. Also Chang was joined by Kang Yu-wei, the old reformer of 1898, and by a very able and courtly official, Liang Tun-yen, as Foreign Minister. The story is too long and obscure to follow in detail. What really seems to have happened is that Chang Hsun, like the sons of Levi, took too much upon himself, and offended Tuan's susceptibilities. At any rate, the latter marched upon him from Tientsin with his army and defeated him at Machang outside the capital. The bubble "Empire of a Fortnight" burst, Chang took sanctuary in Legation Quarter, the Emperor got off the Dragon Throne, and Li Yuan-hung, who had been a prisoner in his house in the Forbidden City* during the restoration, slipped away to Tientsin and firmly refused to have anything more to do with the Presidency.

So General Feng Kuo-chang the Vice-President became President, and Tuan again Premier, and on August 14, 1917, China declared war upon Germany. Feng Kuo-chang had commanded the Second Peiyang Army and had retaken Hanyang from the revolutionists in 1911. Of his qualities as a general I have no knowledge (Hanyang, with the well-equipped Northern troops at his back, was no great victory), but he had a reputation for being a slippery, unscrupulous politician. Between him and Tuan there was no love lost, and from their enmity arose the long strife, which was to cost China so dear, between the Chihli Party (Feng was of

* He occupied the same quarters on an island in the lake in which the wretched Kuang Hsü had been imprisoned by the Empress Dowager—not, perhaps, a very good omen.

the province of Chihli) and the Anfu Club led by Tuan—an Anhui man supported by various notabilities from Fukien, hence the Club's name. Tuan was by far the stronger character of the two, and had a better hold on the troops. In order to get rid of his antagonist Tuan in 1918 organized an electoral assembly consisting chiefly of his military friends and known as "the Tuchuns' Parliament", which voted Feng out of the Presidency and put in Viceroy Hsu Shih-chang of Manchuria. Not long afterwards Tuan died, leaving the leadership of the Chihli Party to General Tsao K'un, at that time Military Governor of Chihli.

Hsu Shih-chang was a typical scholar-official of the old school, kindly, courteous, dignified, and with that instinct for adjustment and compromise which is so characteristic of the Chinese as a natural outcome of their broad philosophy. He had been fortunate in his rulership in Manchuria, for first he had under him T'ang Shao-yi, Governor of Fengtien, who, as remarked in a previous chapter, was the real power in the land; and secondly the famous Chang Tso-lin, "the Old Marshal". (His son, Chang Hsueh-liang, of whom more will be heard later, was known as "the young Marshal").

Chang Tso-lin was the sort of man who in earlier centuries had founded a new dynasty when its predecessor had exhausted the mandate of Heaven and collapsed. As a youth he fought in the war against Japan; later, during the Russian domination of Manchuria, he organized a band of brigands (the *hunghutze*, or banditti, were for ages a recognized part of Manchurian society), and, proving too much of a nuisance to be endured and too capable to be suppressed, he was invited to join the Emperor's forces once more and bring his men with him—a normal and effective way of dealing with irrepressible outlaws, far simpler and cheaper than sending out costly and futile military expeditions against them.

By the time of the Revolution (for which, it need hardly be said, a man of Chang Tso-lin's antecedents would have less use than most Northerners) he was commander-in-chief under Hsu Shih-chang, and had no difficulty in persuading the Viceroy to declare Manchuria's independence—or, as it would be called in the modern jargon, "non-belligerency". After Viceroy Hsu had been elected President Chang Tso-lin became Military Governor, or Tuchun, in Mukden and ruled Manchuria much as if it were his own kingdom—with conspicuous strength and ability. Naturally he created for himself a formidable army provided with an abundance of artillery manufactured in Chang's great arsenal at Mukden (the first thing seized by the Japanese on their rape of Manchuria in 1931) under the direction of the celebrated "one-armed Sutton". In the end Chang Tso-lin's ambitions got the better of him. He made himself Chief Executive (as Presidents ultimately came to be called) in Peking; perhaps he dreamed of becoming Emperor, like Yuan Shih-kai), and to meet the enormous expenses of carrying out a double policy both inside and outside the Great Wall he depreciated the Manchurian currency, at the same time forcing the people of Manchuria to take it at an artificial rate, which caused great confusion and misery.

Perhaps the most curious thing about Chang Tso-lin was his physical appearance, which was the very reverse of the big bold figure that might be imagined from his career. Sir Meyrick Hewlett, who knew more Tuchuns intimately than most people, remarks in his *Forty Years in China*, "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." Tsang Chung-chang of Shantung must be objected as an exception to this; and Chang Tso-lin was by no means delightful to meet when in one of his black rages: everyone kept out of his way. But in the main he was of a mild, almost deprecating manner; a small, delicately built man with exquisitely fine hands, far more like a college professor in appearance than a warrior and dictator. In his youth he had had little education, but

later in life he did all that he could to remedy this and to acquire scholarship.

It was due to Tuan Chi-jui's machinations that Chang Tso-lin was brought into the politics of Peking. Tsao Kun, the new chief of the Chihli Party, was too strong a figure for the head of the Anfu Club, who accordingly tried in 1920 to evict him from the Governorship of Chihli. But Wu Pei-fu, an adherent of Tsao Kun's, hastened from Hunan to his assistance; Feng Yu-hsiang, the "Christian General", supported Wu Pei-fu; Chang Tso-lin threw his weight on the Chihli Party's side; in July the Anfuites were hopelessly defeated near Paotingfu; and for two years the Chihli Party ruled the roost in North China.

The Versailles Treaty had contributed indirectly to the overthrow of the Anfu Party. Soon after Hsu Shih-chang became President he issued an appeal to all parties to join in a conference, sink their differences and combine peacefully for China's good. The only result of this hopeful attempt was that North and South were enabled to show some sort of united front at the Paris Peace Conference, where the North was represented by Lu Cheng-hsiang, formerly Foreign Minister to Yuan Shih-kai, Dr. Alfred Sze (afterwards Minister in London and Washington, and one of the kindest-natured men I ever knew), and Dr. Wellington Koo; and the South by Dr. C. T. Wang, subsequently the able and energetic Foreign Minister during the first years of the Nationalist Government in Nanking.

"C.T.", as he was commonly known (Wang Cheng-ting to give his full name, but he preferred the foreign style), is a Christian, son of a Christian pastor, born at Fenghua (Chiang Kai-shek's birthplace) in 1882, and at the time of the Paris Conference was looked upon as one of the coming men of China. He took his degree at Yale, speaks English perfectly, plays a first-class game of bridge, and is a most charming and lively companion. He did brilliantly as Nanking's Foreign Minister, successfully jockeying the foreign Powers out of one position and another in the controversy over the "unequal treaties". Yet somehow he has not fulfilled the promise of earlier years. He was Ambassador in Washington from 1936–38; but—perhaps he sickened of politics—has for many years been chiefly interested in social movements, and especially in the promotion of athletics through the National Amateur Athletic Association, of which he is chairman. There are many who will say that that is better work than politics or diplomacy.

In Paris, Dr. Wellington Koo, as so often when the League of Nations was hunting miserably for excuses to do nothing about Japan's seizure of Manchuria, was the chief spokesman, with "C.T.". The Chinese indignation at the discovery that the Allies had secretly agreed to Japan's retaining the German possessions in North-west China, Kiaochou and the railway to Tsinanfu, which she had captured in August 1914, as the price of her help in the war, and that President Wilson concurred, can be imagined. Undoubtedly the Allies were hard pressed when Japan drove them to this hard bargain, and the wrong was righted two years later at the Washington Conference; but it was a shabby business that one cannot recall without shame.

Yet the Chinese bore themselves with becoming dignity. First they asked that their protest should be appended to the Treaty; then that the word "protest" should be modified to "reservation"; lastly, that nothing should be put in writing, but that their reservation regarding Shantung should be verbally expressed at the signing of the Treaty: all their arguments were refused, and all the Chinese could do was to leave France without signing. When the League of Nations had at last nerved itself to censure Japan's rape of Manchuria, the inflated Matsuoka pompously led the Japanese delegation out of the Assembly. At Versailles the Chinese quietly stayed away from the ceremony of signing the Treaty. The difference between Chinese and Japanese manners is worth notice.

But in China the explosion was terrific. A fierce boycott of Japan set in in all

the principal trading cities. The Anfu Party had notoriously sold itself to Japan for the Nishihara loans mentioned in the last chapter; and three Ministers, who were conspicuous for their subservience to Japan, had their houses wrecked and burned down, while they themselves were lucky to escape from Peking with their lives. Now too, for the first time since the Revolution,* the students came to the front as a body, by claiming the mantle of leadership traditionally worn by the *literati*. It is true that the great majority of the students were merely half-educated, excitable youths, by no means *literati* in the classical sense. But they developed into a force which in contrast with militarists and politicians showed remarkable solidarity and had considerable influence in rousing public opinion.

The Washington Conference is best left for another chapter while we return to the intrigues and alarums of Peking—an arid story, it is true, but necessarily to be sketched in as a part of the whole story of the Revolution. For until Borodin, first, took charge in Canton, and after his expulsion Chiang Kai-shek set himself doggedly to the moulding of the Nationalist forces, the South really counted for nothing. Dr. Sun's various "punitive expeditions" could never have succeeded against the vastly greater power of the North, which extended well down to the Yangtze Valley and for some distance south of it; and in 1920 the question in many minds was whether the North would have statesmanship enough to evolve a system workable for the whole country. Mr. P. H. P. Kent in *The Twentieth Century in China* thinks that this might have been possible

> "if Chang Tso-lin had been big enough to treat Wu Pei-fu as something more than a subordinate commander . . . the people believed in Wu. He had no desire to be a political chief. . . . Military opposition everywhere could have been suppressed, while a liberal and conciliatory policy towards Canton might have been formulated. The arrogance of Chang Tso-lin lost China this opportunity."

Whether it really was an opportunity is open to doubt in view of the other forces obscurely working in China (of which the students were one manifestation), forces that have made the real Revolution. Any such movement as Mr. Kent imagines would surely have been no more than the useless experiment of patching new cloth on an old garment.

At any rate, no such attempt was made. In 1922 Chang Tso-lin and Wu Pei-fu fell out; Chang tried to eliminate Wu (as Tuan Chi-jui had tried to eliminate Tsao Kun), got the worst of it, and retreated to his stronghold in Manchuria, where he declared his independence, leaving Wu Pei-fu master of the situation in Peking.

In these sordid years, when it is hardly possible to find any prominent man whose career was not stained with greedy self-seeking and dishonourable tergiversations, the character of Wu Pei-fu stands out alone in clear light unshadowed by reproach. Born in 1878, a native of Shantung, he graduated in the Peiyang Military Academy in 1898 (under Yuan Shih-kai) and quickly rose to distinction in the Northern Army. A small man of lively energy, he was a fine soldier, an inspiring leader and absolutely fearless. The 3rd Division which he commanded for many years became famous for its discipline, its fighting power and its devotion to Wu Pei-fu, who shared all his soldiers' hardships and was ever in the thick of the fight with them. Between 1920–27 he held a variety of high posts in the North, ending with that of High Inspecting Commissioner of Chihli, Shantung and Honan. His faithfulness to his chiefs was sufficiently proved by his loyalty in 1920 to the worthless Tsao Kun, when he certainly could have done well for himself

* In 1905 the students had taken an active part in rousing public opinion against opium.

by joining Tuan Chi-jui. In the end he was defeated by the Nationalists in their march to the Yangtze in 1926, not so much in open fighting as by the underground disruptive work of Communist propaganda; and he retired into private life in Peking to study Buddhism and write poetry.

But to the end of his life Wu Pei-fu remained loyal to China. In 1938 the Japanese, having occupied most of North China, Nanking and Shanghai, did everything they could to persuade Wu Pei-fu to become head of a puppet government for them. Doubtless with their usual obtuseness they thought that Wu, having been finally worsted by the Nationalists, would be glad to have his revenge on them. Then was seen the most amusing encounter of wits. Again and again the Japanese tried to force Wu's hand by announcements that he was about to join them. Wu replied to all their importunities with beautiful dissertations on the blessings of peace and the desirability of Sino-Japanese friendship. But his terms remained fixed: Japan must give him an army of his own with the means of equipping it and full independence. So the baffled Japs had to let him alone and fall back on Wang Ching-wei. Wu Pei-fu died in 1941 honoured by all his countrymen.

Very different from the clear-cut, sincere figure of Wu Pei-fu is that enigma Feng Yu-hsiang, who combined with Wu in the ousting of Chang Tso-lin. A peasant born in Anhui in 1880, and always a peasant in his tastes and habits, he has chopped and changed both in his loyalties and opinions with bewildering eccentricity, very unlike the normal conservatism of men of the soil and in a manner which defies explanation. Feng first came into prominence as Military Governor of Honan, where he built up an excellent army—it won the admiration of several foreign military officers—and became the darling of some of the missionaries by embracing Christianity. It is but fair to say that his rule in Loyang, the provincial capital, was beneficial to the city; his taxation was fairly distributed to make the rich pay more than the poor; he built hospitals and parks in Loyang; and he kept his troops rigidly from preying upon the people, taught them trades, and converted such numbers of them to Christianity that it was said that he baptized them with a hose.

Then having supported Tsao Kun against Tuan Chi-jui in 1920 and Wu Pei-fu against Chang Tso-lin in 1922, he betrayed Wu in 1924, as will be seen presently, and in conjunction with Chang Tso-lin called back Tuan Chi-jui to the Presidential palace; quarrelled with Chang and went off to Moscow; came back in 1927 to side with the Nationalists in the final overthrowing of Chang Tso-lin; fell out with them because, it was generally said, Chiang Kai-shek checkmated his schemes to get the Governorship of Shantung, and in 1930 joined with Yen Hsi-shan, Tuchun of Shansi, in a revolt against Nanking, in which they were worsted; forswore his Christianity in 1931 because the Western (presumably Christian) Powers failed to stop Japan's seizure of Manchuria, and took up Buddhism; made it up with Nanking and became vice-chairman of the National Military Council in 1936. In the present war with Japan he has been little heard of; China's successes have been won by other younger commanders. There is no doubt whatever of his loyalty now to the common cause, but what line he may take after the war one would not, in the light of his chameleonic career, venture to predict.

With the disappearance of Chang Tso-Lin, President Hsu Shih-chang resigned from a hopeless job of which he had had more than enough, and Li Yuan-hung for the third time was persuaded to become President, and once more recalled the old Parliament. But Li was getting on in life, and had neither the ability nor inclination to cope with the ambitions of Tsao Kun and the Chihli Party; he was, moreover, infatuated with a new concubine, whom he called his "little singing bird"; and within a year he had quitted Peking for the peace of Tientsin and the soothing companionship of the singing bird. One thinks of Li Yuan-hung with respect and

regret. He was a harmless, kindly man, possessed of a considerable measure of conscience, who might have been a useful servant of a real Republic with an effective Government to tell him what to do. But when the revolutionists at Hankow dragged him out from under his wife's bed and forced him to become their leader he was projected into a series of high responsibilities which were wholly beyond his calibre.

After Li's departure occurred one of the most shameless and certainly the most sordid episodes in the record of Peking's last years as capital. Tsao Kun wanted the Presidency, and got it by the simple expedient of bribing the Parliamentarians wholesale to elect him. According to the common report, the bribes amounted to the equivalent of over £2,000,000.

China was pretty well inured to corruption, but Tsao Kun's cynicism and Parliament's venality caused an amazement throughout the country that one will not forget. It finished the old Rump Parliament, remnant of the body of men who had assembled in Peking in April 1912 with such high intentions, for good and all. Tsao Kun became President in October 1923 and held office for just one year. It can hardly have been long enough for him to get back his £2,000,000.

The year 1924 was fuller of dramatic events than any since Chang Hsun's abortive attempt to restore the Emperor in 1917. For two years Chang Tso-lin had been nursing his grievances and building up his army in his Manchurian stronghold, and now in the summer he moved southwards in full force to destroy Wu Pei-fu and regain control of Peking. Nothing daunted, Wu Pei-fu sped to Shanhaikuan, where the Great Wall descends from the mountains to the sea (Wu Pei-fu's swiftness in movement was a notable part of his generalship), while Feng Yu-hsiang was detailed to guard the pass farther inland from Jehol.

The terrain around Shanhaikuan is something of what is now called by that overworked word a bottleneck, and was considerably congested with Wu Pei-fu's train, when Feng shamelessly betrayed his colleague by returning to the capital, seizing it and declaring against Wu. Thus taken on both sides, Wu was compelled to retreat to Tangku, where, with the handful of men that was all he could save, he took ship for Shanghai.

Feng's reign in Peking was brief but eventful. He began by imprisoning Tsao Kun (who remained in prison till 1926, when Chang Tso-lin, one of whose daughters had married a son of Tsao's, released him), and recalled the old Anfu chieftain Tuan Chi-jui to the Presidency, but with the title now only of Provisional Chief Executive. Tsao, so far as I recall, was the only war lord who was actually made by an antagonist to pay the penalty for his evil deeds: always, as I have already pointed out, a way of escape, under not too onerous conditions, was carefully allowed to the fallen.

But, still more sensationally, Feng fell upon the unfortunate and wholly blameless young Emperor, cancelled the Abdication Treaty and the Articles of Favourable Treatment,* declared himself guardian in the name of the State of the palace treasures (a very hollow guardianship, judging by the quantities of Imperial loot on sale in Peking during the next few months), and carried off Hsuan T'ung to a house in Peking away from the Forbidden City. Whether the Emperor would long have survived captivity in Feng's hands is a dubious question. He was rescued by a daring and skilful trick by his devoted tutor, the late Sir Reginald Johnston, and landed safely in the Japanese Legation, whence later on he went to live in Tientsin until the day of his return to Manchuria under the Japanese, seven years afterwards.

The whole story, intensely dramatic but far too long to detail here, is fully told

* The annual payment of 4,000,000 taels promised to the Emperor in these Articles had, in fact long fallen into abeyance.

by the only trustworthy authority, Sir Reginald Johnston, in his book *Twilight in the Forbidden City*, to which the reader must be referred. Here, too, one may find much curious evidence of Feng's secret plotting against Chang Tso-lin, who arrived in the capital shortly after Wu Pei-fu's downfall. But one thing may be said. Feng's assault on the Emperor was as unnecessary as it was brutal. There was not a shred of evidence to support the story put about by the pro-Feng Party that Wu Pei-fu and others were planning a monarchical restoration with the Emperor's connivance. No more stinging condemnation of Feng's action could be found than that in an authorized statement by T'ang Shao-yi published in the *North China Herald* of November 8, 1924. (It will be recalled that T'ang had taken a leading part in 1912 in bringing about the abdication.)

> "We agreed to the Articles (said T'ang Shao-yi) because, by abdicating, the Manchus made it unnecessary to prolong the period of the revolution, saved human life and gave us an opportunity to settle down to reconstruction. . . . No matter what our personal opinions may have been, we, the representatives of the Chinese people, entered into a solemn agreement with the Ch'ing Emperor by which we have to abide until a new arrangement is made . . . But perhaps General Feng is no longer conscious of the ethical foundations of the Chinese race . . . This is not a political question; it is a moral question. This is not a matter of the form of government for China; it is a question whether there is any sense of decency left in the land. You can tell all the foreigners, through your newspaper, that the events which are happening in these days are not examples of China's attitude towards political and ethical problems. We are faced by an ugly situation, but the ethical character of the Chinese people will reassert itself as it has always done in the face of even uglier situations."

A colourful sideline of the conflict in the North was the semi-private war between Tuchun Lu Yung-hsiang of Chêkiang* and his neighbour Chih Hsieh-yuan, Tuchun of Kiangsu, with Shanghai as the prize. Lu was an Anfu man, Chih was from Chihli; but the real cause of strife was the possession of the wealthy district of Shanghai. This was under Lu Yung-hsiang's control; but as Shanghai lies in Kiangsu, Chih Hsieh-yuan naturally thought that it ought to be his. So after a prolonged period of mutual bombardments by manifestos, without which no fight between Tuchuns could ever properly be begun, they set to. Lu was beaten back to Shanghai, ringed round, and departed for Japan, leaving some thousands of troops leaderless on the borders of the Foreign Settlements. It caused a good deal of scandal that he did not issue the usual valedictory to Chih begging him to take charge of his deserted army. This, it was agreed by all, was not the way a Tuchun should behave.

Then was witnessed the extraordinary scene of the Municipal Council of the International Settlement sending out the Volunteer Force to round up the forsaken soldiers, disarm, and march them into shelters in the Foreign Settlement. Others of the soldiers invaded the French Concession and parked themselves on a vacant piece of land, whence after a few days they were transferred to join their comrades in the more commodious quarters provided in the International Settlement until the whole army could be shipped away to the North where they belonged. Throughout the whole episode these troops, fully armed and with plenty of ammunition, never gave the slightest trouble. It was a vivid illustration of the indifference of the Chinese soldier for which side he fought. Lu Yung-hsiang had gone, the Foreign Council was ready to look after them, they had a warm dwelling in the cold bleak Shanghai winter, plenty of food and nothing to do: what more could any

* At the mouth of the Yangtze, familiarized in these latter times to British readers as the "bomb Tokyo" province.

man wish for? And if the Council had invited the men to enrol themselves as its own soldiers, every man jack would have accepted joyfully.

But in due course they were shipped off to Tsingtao, whence a few months later they returned under a new master, when Sun Chuan-fang, an adherent of Chang Tso-lin, evicted Chih Hsieh-yuan and established himself the last of the Tuchuns in Nanking.

Nobody expected that the alliance between Feng Yu-hsiang and Chang Tso-lin, who is said to have taken a violent dislike to Feng at their first meeting in Tientsin after Wu Pei-fu's retreat, would last long. In 1926 Chang made friends with Wu Pei-fu, who was now established in some strength again on the Yangtze, and Feng deemed it prudent to withdraw into North-west China, whence he went to Moscow and did not return to China until 1927. That Moscow meant to use him in conjunction with the Southern forces for the Bolshevizing of China seems pretty clear from a note of hand signed by Feng while he was in Moscow acknowledging a debt of 6,395,642 roubles for arms supplied by the Soviet; this document was found in the Russian Embassy at Peking when it was raided by Chang Tso-lin in April 1927.

Tuan Chi-jui resigned the post of Chief Executive in May 1926; a Regency Cabinet took charge for a little while with Dr. W. W. Yen, the well-known diplomat, as Premier; and then Chang Tso-lin became Chief Executive, the last single ruler to reign in Peking.

Never had the ancient city sunk so low. Still, its great palaces, with their yellow- or blue-tiled roofs, its wide leafy streets and charming shops with their carved and gaily painted fronts, its narrow mysterious alleys, its massive surrounding walls on which four carriages might have driven abreast, were as lovely, as dignified, as suggestive of regal power as ever. But the power had gone, the men who claimed to exercise it had disgraced themselves in the nation's eyes beyond redemption, their authority scarcely stretched beyond the city walls, while throughout the country everyone who could command a few thousand troops was a law to himself. Sad and beautiful under the ineffably blue skies of Northern China, Peking was not even a symbol, still less a seat of government, but a mere hollow shell, ignored, derided, detested.

The Chinese people's state was utterly miserable. When Dr. Yen became Premier in the Regency Cabinet he circularized the country with a telegram describing the condition to which China had been reduced by fifteen years of civil war, "the blood of fighters staining the land, the crowds of fugitives fleeing along the roads, our people pitifully crying aloud for some way to be found to bring strife to an end and save their lives". Apart from the ruin caused by war and the Tuchuns' insatiable taxation, the normal economy of China was completely upset. For example, it frequently happens that one province may have a bumper harvest while its neighbour suffers from dearth. In times of ordered government the prosperous province came to the rescue by exporting grain to the afflicted one. In the civil wars this arrangement broke down, though in fact no province could boast of much prosperity, and even in Kiangsu, normally a rich rice-growing province, rice began to be regularly imported from Indo-China.

The ruin to which the railways were reduced is almost unbelievable. Every Tuchun in making war lost no time in grabbing a railway, or as much of it and its rolling-stock as he could, partly to facilitate his movements, partly to house his troops. While locomotives by scores were reduced to mere rusty heaps of scrap by mismanagement and lack of oil and cleaning, innumerable box-cars were totally ruined by being used as barracks; the soldiers lighted their cooking-fires on the floor of the car, and when the floor burnt through in one corner they lighted the fire in another. For fuel they thought nothing of tearing out the doors and seats of any passenger-cars that might be handy on an adjacent siding.

The tragedy of so much destruction was all the sadder because, after her entry into the World War in 1917, China was presented with a matchless chance to put her finances on a sound basis. While she had neither the expense of armies nor navy to contribute to the common cause, the tens of thousands of coolies whom she supplied for a Labour Corps in France preferred to have the bulk of their wages paid to their families, which meant a large monthly flow of solid silver into China. At the same time, silver rose in value to unheard-of heights. By 1920, when the tael was exchanging at around 9*s*. and even more, one was paying about 6*s*. 6*d*. to have one's hair cut and 7*d*. or 8*d*. for the daily paper. High silver usually reacted injuriously on exports, but all China produce was in great demand, wolfram, hides, eggs, tea and many other things, and was not affected. Meanwhile, all the Boxer Indemnity payments were suspended for five years, and this, coupled with the high value of silver, might with wise management have enabled China greatly to reduce, perhaps even to liquidate altogether, her foreign debt. Instead, the Anfu Party piled up fresh debts by unprofitable loans from Japan.

Another evil consequence of the universal militarism was the multiplication of armies in every province. At the time of the Revolution, China's soldiers numbered about 500,000, of whom perhaps half were the modern army founded by Yuan Shih-kai after the war with Japan. The Revolution quickly added another 300,000 to these, and by 1926–27 there were, at a moderate estimate, 1,600,000 men under arms in China, and many observers would put the number nearer 2,000,000. Apart from the cost of maintenance, which in those days was estimated at about £36* a year per man, the majority of these troops preyed upon civilians like locusts.

In all, China had a heavy bill to pay for experimenting in a Republic, and there was all the misery of the Communist upheaval still to be borne, and the years of warfare between Nanking and the Communists, and lastly the unequalled devastation and slaughter perpetrated by Japan, compared with which the damage done in the civil wars is hardly to be mentioned. But between this last trial and the earlier ones there is a world of difference. Under the Tuchuns all government fell to pieces, the name of China never stood so low, and all hope of redemption seemed extinct. Now, in compensation for what she has suffered from Japan, China has gained national unity, world-wide honour and the sure promise of a bright future.

Chapter VII

THE COMMUNISTS TAKE CHARGE

DR. SUN YAT-SEN'S DEATH LEFT BORODIN VIRTUALLY DICTATOR IN CANTON. FAR as Sun had gone in surrender to the Russians, he was never, as has been pointed out, a Communist, and although his power was limited to that of his own personality, it was enough to enable the Right Wing members of the Kuomintang, who had no more intention than he had of allowing themselves to be snuffed out, to keep up their end against the rapid encroachment of the Communist Party. While Dr. Sun lived it was still possible to say that the Kuomintang had allowed the "C.P." to join them; after his death it was for a time a question whether the "C.P." would even permit the Kuomintang to exist.

For the past four or five years the Communist virus had been seeping virulently through the veins of the working classes, and many of the young intelligentsia. How far the students who had led the revolt against the Versailles Treaty and the

* This sounds a very small sum by Western standards. But it must be remembered that a Chinese farmer who could be certain of an income of £3 a month would be regarded as reasonably prosperous.

boycott of Japan were at first infected with Communism is not certain. Their attitude would probably best be described as "anti" everything—foreigners, landlords, factory owners, capitalists generally. But this was obviously easy material for manipulation by the Russian advisers, and while for a time the fever of agitation expressed itself in Shanghai chiefly in incessant strikes, in which the students' efforts were principally aimed at inciting the mill hands to demand better conditions for themselves, in Canton were formed a series of Red Labour Unions inflamed by the most violent slogans, ready for any mischief, and constituting an instrument in the Russians' hands which was alike the terror of peaceable citizens and of the more sober-minded members of the Kuomintang.

The spring and summer of 1925 were largely occupied in at last expelling the Yunnanese and Kweichow tyrants Yang Hsi-min and Liu Chen-huan, who had battened on Canton since Dr. Sun Yat-sen in one of his most misguided moments had called them in to help him overthrow Chen Chiung-ming at the end of 1922. In these operations General Chiang Kai-shek first distinguished himself by his able leadership: also it is interesting to note that for the first time Russian guns were used under the direction of Russian officers with deadly effect on the Kweichow and Yunnanese troops. An expedition was also sent against Chen Chiung-ming, a motley crew by all accounts; but its political agents, as often in months to come, were the decisive factor, and Swatow fell to the Communists. It was to prove one of the worst centres in China for unbridled anti-foreignism and attacks on British property, missions, and even on the Consul himself.

No one had been elected to fill Dr. Sun's place as Generalissimo. The obvious claimant was Wang Ching-wei, always the closest of the dead leader's friends and regarded by him with more affection than any of them; moreover, he was actually Chairman of the Central Executive Committee when Dr. Sun died. But Wang was always an unaccountable character on whom his colleagues could not rely. He was one of the original members of the Kuomintang and posed as a staunch upholder of Dr. Sun's principles. Although he was closely associated with Borodin, he was never a Communist; but he was certainly at one time leader of the extreme Left Wing of the Kuomintang, and in the eventual overthrow of the Communist Government at Hankow the Communists accused him of playing the Judas. Probably in 1925 Wang had no wish to wear the mantle of Dr. Sun, seeing what a state Canton was in, and Borodin is said to have advised him not to put himself forward. The committee form of government modelled on Russian patterns suited Borodin's purpose best.

Before proceeding further with the story of the Communist army's march from Canton to the Yangtze it will be best to deal with the unsavoury outburst of anti-British passion which followed on the regrettable "affair of May 30" in Shanghai. Since the revelation at the Paris Conference of the Allies' surrender of the German territory in Shantung to Japan, feeling against all foreigners had become more and more bitter; and Dr. Sun Yat-sen's lectures, with their wild accusations of foreign exploitation of China, had certainly done nothing to mollify public animus. It was a basic and quite natural principle in the Nationalist programme that the many and peculiar privileges of foreigners must go and that China must become mistress in her own house. But there is no doubt whatever that Borodin and his agents were responsible for focusing this feeling wholly against Great Britain; and he had no difficulty in persuading the Chinese that if they could overthrow the British, whose wealth and manifold interests in China so far exceeded those of any other nation, the remaining Powers could be easily undermined and evicted.

The first step was to organize the labour agitation in Shanghai on lines suitable

to this purpose; and accordingly a Moscow-trained labour leader named Li Lih-san was sent to Shanghai to gather the students and workers into one coherent machine ready for action.

It is an ironic circumstance that the spark which fired the explosion came from a strike—or, rather, series of strikes—not against the British, but in the great Japanese Nagai Wata Kaisha mills, which employed 30,000 Chinese. At the end of May these strikes culminated in an attack on the mills, in which a Chinese workman was killed. A monster procession was organized to march through the International Settlement in protest against the iniquities of foreigners, and of course there were numerous students among the marchers. As the procession moved down the Nanking Road (Shanghai's principal thoroughfare—sometimes called its Bond Street, from the rich shops with which it is lined), with the students waving flags, scattering handbills and screaming themselves into a state of veritable hysteria with denunciations of foreigners, some of the most violent demonstrators were arrested and taken into Louza police station, which lies just off the middle of Nanking Road. Other students thronged into the station demanding their comrades' release; a big and very ugly crowd assembled, and the British Inspector Everson in charge of the station found himself compelled to order his constables —Indians and Chinese—to fire. Four students were killed on the spot and several wounded, of whom some died later. It is an important factor in this tragedy that Louza police station always contained a quantity of arms and ammunition which, if the station had been captured by the rioters in their then mood, might well have been used for far more deaths than actually occurred. Everson's first words to the Senior Officer who arrived after the shooting were, "I had to do it, sir, or they would have had my station."

In view of the uproar caused over the deaths of the students, the Diplomatic Body in Peking sent down a commission of inquiry, which did nothing that satisfied anyone. Subsequently a full judicial inquiry was held by an American, a British and a Japanese judge, of whose findings after a prolonged and searching public examination it will be enough to quote that of the American Judge Ginley Johnson of Manila, who acted as chairman:

> "After reading and re-reading the evidence several times, including the exhibits, I am fully persuaded that with a much larger force of policemen on duty at the scene of disturbances before 3.15 p.m. the necessity for the firing might have been avoided. I am equally persuaded that due to the absence of a larger number of policemen at 3.30 p.m. it was impossible."

At this distance of time there is no need to re-try the affair of May 30, but one or two points must be mentioned. Considering the state of high feeling among the Chinese, which must have been better known to the police than to anyone, it is an extraordinary thing that more police were not on duty. It was, moreover, known in the morning that a procession was being organized on the borders of the Settlement near the Nagai Wata Kaisha mills, and it should have been possible, if not to prevent their entering the foreign area, at least to deflect them from the Nanking Road, which, with Louza, was always the focal point for rioters in any time of excitement.* Yet not only were no preparations made to nip the riot in the bud, but none of the commanding officers of the police was on duty and Everson was left alone to face the trouble.

Another important point was that Shanghai (apart from the French Concession) is an International Settlement and, although British influence predominated, the government is an internationally composed Municipal Council, of which the

* In the so-called Mixed Court Riots in 1905 Louza police station was burned down. Any reader who has the curiosity will find the story in my book *The Foreigner in China.*

chairman in 1930 was an American, Mr. Stirling Fessenden; and it might as easily have been an American in charge at Louza as an Englishman. The injustice of concentrating revenge on the British alone is manifest. But the Chinese in 1930 had forgotten the principles of justice and fair play which are inherent in their culture; and they were tools in the hands of foreigners who at that time were bent on the destruction of the British Empire as the best prelude to a world revolution of the proletariat.

"We did not make May 30," said Borodin, "it was made for us." Oddly enough, Canton was curiously slow to catch fire from what had happened in Shanghai, and it was over three weeks before any public demonstration took place. Ultimately the Russians had to make an "incident" for themselves. It should be explained that at Canton there is an Anglo-French Concession situated on a little island, Shameen, about a mile round, which is separated from Canton city by a narrow canal. On or about June 22 information reached Sir James Jamieson, British Consul-General, that a big demonstration against Shameen was being prepared; and he immediately wrote to Dr. C. C. Wu, then Foreign Minister of the Canton junta, telling him what he knew and warning him that if any disaster occurred the responsibility would be entirely on the Canton Government.

On June 23 the demonstration took place, the usual long procession scattering handbills and shouting slogans, with labourers in front, a crowd of men and girl students in the middle, and Whampoa cadets and soldiers in the rear. The Shameen border of the canal had been sandbagged, and British and French marines stood on guard together with most of the men of the Concession. Nothing happened until the students were opposite Shameen; then suddenly fire was opened from the roofs of buildings on the Chinese side of the canal. One Frenchman was killed; Mr. Edwardes, the Commissioner of Customs, and three or four more foreigners were wounded. The fire was at once returned from Shameen: and more dead students were added to those killed in Shanghai.

It was widely reported that the men who started the shooting were Russians. This cannot be verified, though it is by no means improbable. They had promoted the demonstration because in over three weeks the Cantonese mob had done nothing on its own account; and when half the procession had passed Shameen without catastrophe the Russians may well have felt that they were not going to let all their trouble go for nothing. But whether it was Russians or some of their Chinese dupes, there is no doubt whatever that the shooting began on the Chinese side. Later, when a joint inquiry was proposed, Sir James Jamieson said that he would be quite ready to help by procuring evidence. "But," he added, "I will not permit any Chinese official or Commission to impugn the veracity of my statement as to what I actually saw with my own eyes—namely, that the firing was opened from the Chinese side." He was not the only one who saw.

So much for what became known to Chinese writers as "the Shakee massacre", Shakee being the part of Canton opposite Shameen. To add to the bitterness of the British, the American professors of the Canton Christian College, which is remote from Shameen, issued in the evening of the fatal day a statement protesting vehemently against the shooting by the British, although, as they afterwards admitted, they had only heard the Chinese version.

Meanwhile, a deadly strike and boycott of the British had set in all up and down the China coast. It was slightly less violent in the north, where Chang Tso-lin could see no advantage in quarrelling with the British—though Feng Yu-hsiang called wildly for war upon Great Britain—and at Amoy, where the personal friendship of Sir Meyrick Hewlett, the British Consul-General, with the Chinese officials secured protection for the British and their property. But in Hongkong the whole Chinese community, repeating what had happened three years before in a shipping

strike, were called out by the agitators and left the colony for Canton. In Shanghai, mills, shops and offices were deserted and ships lay idly at the wharves. In most foreign offices a very few Chinese remained faithful to their employers, at great peril to themselves and their families, even in the well-policed foreign area; but no Chinese who lived in the native city dared come to work. It was vastly to the credit of the Council's Chinese police, some 5,000 men, that their loyalty never failed: had it done so, the situation would have been very serious. Also there was no interruption of food supplies from the surrounding country, but many foreigners whose boys had been called out by the agitators had for the first time in their lives to go to the markets to forage for themselves.

Sir Meyrick Hewlett in his *Forty Years in China* gives a vivid description of the students' hysterical agitations in Szechuan in 1921 (where he was then Consul-General) which is worth quoting as a true picture of what happened everywhere, only more violently, in 1925:

> "The student harangues in the teashops were specially striking or perhaps to the foreign mind poisonous. Students stood on tables weeping copiously, feverishly theatrical, declaring that China, after 5,000 years of existence, was now doomed by the Powers and her sons were to become beasts of burden. Thousands took part in the processions and some of the largest shops in the city hung out flags to show their sympathy with the movement. 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 to Japan, Tibet to Great Britain . . ." The French School said, "The Chinese executive and financial powers are to be handed over to the foreign Powers. The Eastern Provinces (i.e. Manchuria) are to go to Japan. The Western Provinces, such as Szechuan, Tibet, Yunnan and Kweichow, go to Great Britain; the South and Central go to France, America and Russia. This is an out-and-out division of China."

But these were the screams of semi-educated boys who had never been outside their native porvinces. What was so extraordinary was the support that the agitators got from men who ought to have known better—bankers, merchants and British and American returned students; money poured into the strike fund from them all. They were to learn before long that they were preparing rods for their own backs.

After two or three months the strike died down. While some of the students were inspired by a genuine if misguided sense of patriotism, others were out to make all they could by helping themselves largely from the strike fund. One method which naturally proved particularly obnoxious to Chinese shopkeepers was for a party of agitators to ransack shops for "enemy goods", confiscate, and sell them for their own behalf or exact a large payment for their return. Labourers, who for weeks had been receiving cents in strike pay where they received dollars for working, found that even this pittance was beginning to fail. The Canton Administration found that the support of the hundreds of thousands of Hongkong Chinese was too great a luxury to be afforded. Worst of all, perhaps, the foreigners displayed a disconcerting ability to run their various enterprises by themselves. Ships sailed again with crews of White Russians; factories got going somehow, largely with Russian labour; foreign shops were as busy as if there were no strike; newspapers, which had never ceased publication, though on reduced

lines, expanded to their normal size. The Chinese were dumbfounded. They had been sure that the foreigner could not manage without them. The discovery that he could did as much as anything to break the strike.

But the boycott dragged on for the best part of two years, doing incalculable harm to British trade, while every nation hastened to profit by British misfortunes, especially the Japanese. What more than anything betrayed the alien-inspired nature of the onslaught was that it was the first of the kind from which the British had suffered. Americans and Japanese had been boycotted, but not the British. In the occasional riots during the 19th century British missionaries had suffered, but in common with those of other countries. The wars of 1840–41 and 1856–60 had left no permanent bitterness. And while the prestige of British merchants and bankers for honourable dealing has always stood in China far above that of any rivals, it can be said that the relations of British and Chinese Governments had been amicable and British policy in China based on the "Open Door" and the preservation of China's integrity was well understood.

To return to Canton. The murder in August 1925 of Liao Chung-kai, the extreme Red Finance Minister, brought to a head the struggle between Communists and anti-Communists. Hu Han-min, it will be remembered, left the country and a new administration was formed. General Chiang Kai-shek became head of the Kuomintang and now for the first time Mr. T. V. Soong came to the front as Finance Minister. This brilliant member of a family exceptionally gifted both with looks and brains was born in 1891 at Shanghai. His eldest sister, Ai-ling, is the wife of Dr. H. H. Kung, 75th descendant of Confucius and Prime Minister of China; his second sister, Ching-ling, is the widow of Dr. Sun Yat-sen; and his youngest, the famous May-ling, is wife of General Chiang Kai-shek. From their connexions and paramount influence in China's affairs they are jokingly known as "the Soong dynasty". The father of the family was a sailor who landed in San Francisco, became a Christian and returned to Shanghai to set up as a printer of Bibles in Chinese, from which he developed a flourishing business as general publisher. The mother, too, was a Christian, a strict Baptist. Dr. Kung is a Christian and, as is well known, so is General Chiang, having been converted by his wife, whom he married in 1927.

"T.V.", as all the world calls him (his name in Chinese style is Soong Tzu-ven, but he prefers the English form), was educated at Harvard and then worked for a time in a New York bank, from which he returned to Canton in 1924 to become president of the Central Bank of Canton, where he had done remarkably good work in pulling the Government's much-disordered finances together before he became Minister of Finance. He is tall, well built, athletic, delights in riding when he can spare time, may justly be described as a financial genius, and has an extraordinarily quick brain and a habit of cutting through unessentials to dispose of "the meat" of any question with a directness which old-fashioned Chinese are apt to find disconcerting. And, while he is a thorough Liberal, he has never been in the slightest respect a Communist.

Neither "T.V." nor General Chiang, however, was yet strong enough to challenge Borodin, High Political Adviser by office and dictator in fact. "T.V.", indeed, was never a politician; and Chiang, though head of the Whampoa Military Academy, was surrounded by Russian advisers, and half his cadets were Communists. Soon after the reshuffling of the Canton Government, 125 of the orthodox anti-Communist Kuomintang, commonly known as "the Old Comrades" (among them the late, much-respected President Lin Sen), left Canton for Peking, where, meeting before the coffin of Dr. Sun Yat-sen, which was lying in a temple in the Western Hills, they formed themselves into the "Western Hills Group", which played an important part in the ultimate establishment of the Nationalist Government at Nanking.

The Western Hills Group were not the only faction in the Kuomintang Right Wing. There were also the Sunyatsenists, who were almost as much opposed to the Western Hills Group as to the Reds. And there were the "Crown Prince's" Party, chief of whom was Dr. C. C. Wu, the Foreign Minister, so named because they gathered round Dr. Sun Fo, Dr. Sun Yat-sen's son, who had been Mayor of Canton in 1924. Sun Fo's politics are somewhat difficult to follow. When the Western Hills Group broke away he appeared to be an ally of Borodin's, but there is little doubt that his secret preference was always for the anti-Communists.

But the intrigues, jealousies and perpetual grouping and re-grouping of the different politicians between the formation of the Western Hills Group and the final establishment of the Nanking Government were so complicated and bewildering that it is out of the question to attempt to trace them; and for anyone but a Chinese with a turn for archaeology it is really unnecessary. There were two men who knew their own minds, Borodin and General Chiang; and one may well believe that Chiang's conspicuous gift for seeing the essential thing to be done and sticking to it was considerably developed in the months in which he watched the inane jealousies and futile vacillations of the Canton politicians.

It is only conjecture, yet I have always believed that General Chiang's antipathy for Communism dates from 1923, when Dr. Sun Yat-sen sent him to Moscow for some additional military training. At that time, it will be recalled, every regiment in the Soviet Army had a political commissar attached to it, and officers were liable to be hauled over the coals by committees of their own men—a system which must have been disgusting to Chiang's soldierly instincts. Whether he admired the committee form of government we do not know; but later on in Nanking he certainly took steps to cut down its cumbrousness. In any case, it is clear that the Russian dictatorship in South China aroused in him profound misgiving; and the results of it, as seen in the anti-British strike and boycott, may well have set him thinking of what would happen if it suited Borodin to set his rabble at other Chinese.

Leaving the realm of speculation, one finds, by early in 1926, that the Communists in Canton were growing more and more hostile to General Chiang, and a plot was concocted with the aid of a Red named Li Chi-lung, head of the political department of the Navy Bureau, to use Dr. Sun's old gunboat the *Yung Feng* (now renamed after the departed leader the *Chung Shan*) to overawe Chiang at the Whampoa Academy and drive him out of Canton. But "the horse blew first". On March 20 Chiang declared a state of martial law in Canton, disarmed the strike pickets, who were the mainstay of the Communists, arrested the Russian military advisers (who had been proving a particular thorn in his side) and shut them up on board the *Chung Shan* preparatory to deporting them to Vladivostok. He also arrested all the Party Commissioners attached to the Second Divison which he commanded, and he sat heavily upon a specially obnoxious Communist organization called the Union of Military Youth.

Borodin was away in North China during these dramatic events, having gone to visit Feng Yu-hsiang, doubtless to decide for himself what he might be worth to the Russian cause. He did not return to Canton till the end of April, when rather surprisingly he and Chiang met on ostensibly good terms, no doubt for the reason that the Russian still needed Chiang as obviously the most forceful personality in Canton, and Chiang still needed Russian assistance in building up the army. Other advisers were appointed in place of those whom Chiang had deported. But Wang Ching-wei, as leader of the extreme Left Wing of the Kuomintang, found it advisable to retire from Canton to a country house. His health was not good, and in May he went to Paris, to be operated upon in the autumn.

Matters were growing too serious, militarily speaking, for discords to be tolerated in Canton. In May, Wu Pei-fu, who since his betrayal by Feng Yu-hsiang in

1924 had withdrawn to the Yangtze and had now built up a fresh army, swept into Hunan, captured the capital of Changsha and drove out the pro-Canton General Tang Sheng-chi. Hunan is the next province north of Kwangtung, divided from it by an awkward chain of mountains, and from Changsha to Canton is a distance of some 400 miles. But in view of Wu Pei-fu's personal prestige and popularity the danger that, if left undisturbed, he might build up a strong anti-Kuomintang *bloc* in Central China was too serious to be ignored, especially as the lower Yangtze provinces Kiangsu, Kiangsi, Anhui, and Chêkiang were now held by another extremely able Northern general, Sun Chuan-fang. It was decided that Canton's expedition against the North must start without delay.

To understand the extraordinary success of the Communist army—one cannot call it Nationalist at this period—which, starting in July, had captured Wuchang, Hanyang and Hankow, the proud Triple Cities of the Middle Yangtze, by September, together with Nanchang, capital of Kiangsi (General Sun Chuan-fang's military headquarters) and Kiukiang, Yangtze gateway of Kiangsi, some special explanation is needed. It is true that the Communist force was well equipped and assisted by numerous Russian officers. But this alone would not have been enough to cause the armies of two such commanders as Wu Pei-fu and Sun Chuan-fang to melt away as they did before the Communists.

The explanation lies in the skill of the Communist propaganda department, whose agents preceded and spread out all round the troops; and in the misery of the country people. For years they had been ground down, taxed and over-taxed by militarists, plundered by the militarists' soldiers, their crops trodden down by marching troops, their animals seized for transport, their sons pressed into the military labour corps. Farmers were dragged from their fields and forced to carry equipment for troops, only to be cast adrift many leagues from home with perhaps a few cents, if even that, in their pockets and no means of returning to their villages, where their wives and daughters had been forced into an even worse servitude. Never were people better prepared for the seductions of Communist agents, never could any have listened more eagerly to the glowing promises of deliverance from rapacious landlords and military tyranny and of freedom to enjoy the fruit of their labour in peace and security.

In their march to the Yangtze the Communist army left behind it a wide swathe of death and destruction. To say this is no exaggeration due to prejudice, for in his book, *China's Problems and Their Solution*, Wang Ching-wei wrote that "the Communists have perpetrated in the bandit areas cruel outrages of which their comrades in Europe, America, Japan or Russia are incapable". Landlords and missionaries were the Communists' special target. Many of the former who had not escaped in time were slain; the lands of all were confiscated for division among their tenants. Mission property everywhere was looted and burnt. The missionaries managed to escape, but many of them were only saved by the devotion of their converts—one of whom I knew was bricked up in the back of a Chinese farmer's house, which was searched by Communists, for several days before he could be smuggled away. It would have been certain death for the Chinese Christians and almost certainly for the missionaries if the Reds had caught them out.

By December the Reds had set up a government at Wuchang, known as the Wuhan Government (from a combination of the names of the three cities Wuchang, Hankow and Hanyang), with Borodin in control assisted by Mme Sun Yat-sen, the only one of her family who turned out-and-out Communist, and the late Eugene Chen as Foreign Minister, a post to which he had been appointed in Canton in the previous summer after Hu Han-min's departure for Europe.

Eugene Chen was one of the most curious personalities of these disordered times. A Cantonese by descent, he was born in Trinidad in 1878 and educated in England,

where he was called to the Bar. For some years he practised in the West Indies, but returned to China in 1912 and first became prominent as editor of the *Peking Gazette* from 1914–16. Although he spoke Chinese very imperfectly he wielded, in English, about the most vitriolic pen I can recall; he had an amazing command of English. His attacks on Yuan Shih-kai landed him in gaol, from which he appealed loudly to the British Legation, claiming British citizenship. Through the Legation's help Chen was released and went south to join Dr. Sun and become a member of the Kuomintang. Subsequently he edited the *Shanghai Gazette* for a couple of years, and in 1925 he founded the *Minkuopao* in Peking. Again he got into trouble with Chang Tso-lin, but escaped to Canton to become Foreign Minister, as already mentioned.

To bring the story of his life up to date, after the collapse of the Wuhan Government in 1927 he went to Europe viâ Russia with Borodin and Mme Sun, for several years, but in 1933 was in China again taking part in an abortive revolt at Foochow against General Chiang, who crushed it very easily. Again Chen was an exile, but in 1938 he returned to China, made his peace with the Generalissimo and was reinstated in the Kuomintang. I only met Eugene Chen once when mutual friends tried to bring us together, but we were too much on opposite sides of the fence for the party to be very successful. There must have been something in his life (another case, perhaps, of "The Broken Road"?) to account for his extreme bitterness against Great Britain. He owed her his education, his professional knowledge and his salvation from Yuan Shih-kai's clutches in 1916. Yet his enmity towards everything British appeared insatiable, and as Foreign Minister in the Wuhan he was now to obtain full opportunity of gratifying it.

The Wuhan Government had scarcely been installed when the late Sir Austen Chamberlain electrified the world by a Note to all the Powers signatory to the Treaties concluded at the Washington Conference, recalling the promises of treaty revision given to China and expressing regret that owing to the disorders in China it had not been possible to fulfil them. From a very long memorandum this sentence may be quoted:

> "The political disintegration in China has, however, been accompanied by the growth of a powerful Nationalist Government which aimed at gaining for China an equal place among the nations, and any failure to meet this movement with sympathy and understanding would not respond to the real intentions of the Powers towards China."

Sir Austen went on to propose that the Washington Powers should immediately issue an announcement of "their readiness to negotiate on treaty revision and all other outstanding questions" as soon as the Chinese could produce a Government with authority to negotiate, and meanwhile should make it clear that they, the Powers, "desire to go as far as possible towards meeting the legitimate aspirations of the Chinese nation".

Be it remembered that the "powerful Nationalist movement" was at this time doing its utmost to insult, injure, and if possible expel the British and all their works from China: the very children were being taught to sing hymns of hatred of Britain. Looking back, it occurs to one that Sir Austen Chamberlain's Note was regarded by the Powers as another machination of *perfide Albion* designed to avert the Chinese animosity from herself or, if that was impossible, to entangle others in the sharing of it with her. The response to Sir Austen's note was chilling. In fact, there was none.

Nothing daunted, however, Sir Austen Chamberlain sent the new Minister, Mr. Miles Lampson (now Lord Lampson), who had arrived in Shanghai in December, to Hankow to see Eugene Chen and explain to him the disinterested desires

for China's benefit cherished by the British Foreign Secretary. Here there was no failure on Wuhan's part in response, which was swift and characteristic.

In view of the dangerous passions aroused by a series of public meetings presided over by Borodin, who sought by every means to stir up hatred against Britain, the community of the British Concession at Hankow had appealed to their Government for protection, but without result. On January 3 a huge demonstration took place outside the Concession and bluejackets were landed from the one gunboat in the river to guard the Concession's entrances, but with strict orders not to fire. Then was seen the amazing spectacle of British sailors standing on guard, jeered at, spat at and stoned by the foulest mob of the Middle Yangtze, barring their passage, but offering no retaliation. It was as superb, indeed as heroic, an example of disciplined self-restraint as has ever been seen.

The sailors, who were but a handful, could not be expected to endure such an ordeal twice. In the evening they were withdrawn. Next day, January 4, the mob overran the Concession; Eugene Chen and Borodin took possession; and the beautiful spick and span Concession was quickly reduced to a state of indescribable filth and disorder.

Even now Sir Austen Chamberlain was not to be deterred from exhibiting the "Locarno Spirit", which determined the pattern of the appeasement policy that became so conspicuous later in the hands of another Chamberlain. In February Mr. Owen O'Malley, Counsellor of the Legation in Peking, was sent to Hankow to hand over the Concession to the Wuhan Government—the word "negotiate" cannot be used in connexion with what was in fact unconditional surrender signed on February 19. At the same time a promise was given that other British Concessions should be similarly surrendered, and in the next few weeks those at Kiukiang, Chinkiang and Amoy were given up.

The dismay caused among the British throughout China by this humiliating surrender can easily be imagined; it was scarcely less felt by other foreigners, who foresaw what was likely to be their own fate if Great Britain gave in all along the line. Sir Eric Teichman, then Chinese Counsellor in the British Legation, who had been sent to Hankow to help Mr. O'Malley, defends the surrender in his book *Affairs of China* as follows:

> "The affair was absurdly exaggerated in the British Press, as though some vital keypoint of the British Empire had been cynically betrayed. Few could have realized, reading the lurid newspaper descriptions of the implications of the Hankow incident, that the question only concerned rights of administration over an area not much larger than the racecourse at Shanghai, the retention of which was, in the circumstances of time and place, only an embarrassment to British policy and of no material advantage to British trading interests."

It would be difficult to find any statement which in so few words comprises so much fogging of the true issues and obscuration of the principle at stake. However "legitimate" the Chinese "aspirations" (to use Sir Austen Chamberlain's phrase) may have been, the Wuhan Government's methods were in the highest degree illegitimate; and to surrender the Concession to them in the circumstances prevailing was to acquiesce in the forcible tearing up by one party of a perfectly legal treaty—a very bad precedent for the British Government.

As one looks back on those days, certain facts stand out clearly. It was cruel to leave the British community at Hankow with so little protection, in spite of their urgent appeals. But as they were so left, it was wise to order the sailors not to retaliate on the mob. Unquestionably the Russians had hoped to provoke another "Shakee massacre", which would probably have lighted a flame from one end of the Yangtze to the other and might even have driven Great Britain into war with

China. But it was wrong, morally and politically, to surrender the Concession under the conditions of the times. It taught the Chinese that they need not stop to consider questions of right and wrong, but could get what they wanted by force. And it earned no gratitude. Even Sir Eric Teichman has to admit that "the British Government seemed to be on the run, and Nationalist China pressed with redoubled energy their drive against the treaties". And Sir Meyrick Hewlett, surely one of the greatest friends China ever had, picks out for one of his few criticisms the grudging slowness of the Nationalist Government to show any acknowledgment of Great Britain's unparalleled forbearance during the years of the boycott and Communist assault. The Hankow Concession could not, as things were, be held against Borodin's and Eugene Chen's mob. But they should have been told plainly that Great Britain would not tolerate their lawless act, and they should have been required to restore the Concession before it was finally given back—not to a posse of Russian-led Communists in open revolt against the Government recognized by Great Britain, but to China.

Meanwhile, the Communist armies were moving down the river, and on March 24 General Sun Chuan-fang, Tuchun of Kiangsu, was finally driven from Nanking across the Yangtze, where, however, he remained, keeping up the struggle, a continual danger to the Nationalist Government until July, when he was finally defeated and retired to Peking.

Many foreigners who knew Sun Chuan-fang have regretted that no place could have been found for him in the ranks of Nationalism. He was far and away the best of all the Tuchuns—Lord Willingdon, on his mission to China in 1926 to inquire how the British share of the Boxer Indemnity which was being returned to China should be laid out, formed a very high opinion of him—and he was not only a skilful soldier but a sincere and able administrator. From the time of his succeeding to the Governorship of the five provinces Kiangsu, Kiangsi, Anhui, Chêkiang, and Fukien, Sun Chuan-fang spent a large part of his time travelling about his huge domain, where the missionaries (always the best authority on conditions in the interior) were loud in praise of the reforms he effected in local administration. General Sun was frequently seen in Shanghai, where he had appointed Dr. V. K. Ting as Mayor of Greater Shanghai, the vast Chinese area that stretches north and south of the Foreign Settlements with a population of some 3,000,000 people, in the development of which on modern municipal lines Sun was much interested.

Dr. Ting, accounted at Glasgow University one of the ablest men they had ever taught, afterwards for some time a student in Germany, was a profound geological expert, who compiled a monumental record of China's mineral resources. He was a tall man, slightly stooping, with large round spectacles and an appearance of mooning through life like the conventional college professor, though in fact he was particularly shrewd and practical and always of singular personal charm. Although not one of Dr. Sun Yat-sen's adherents, still less of the Kuomintang, he was a convinced revolutionary in the sense that he desired a real revolution in China; in fact he was, like Dr. Hu Shih, the "Sage of Modern China", a perfect type of the cultured scholarly reformer between whom and the futile quarrelsome politicians of the first two decades of the Revolution there could be no possible alliance, but who are now beginning to take their proper place in the reconstruction of China. The fact that such a man as Dr. Ting could go into partnership with General Sun Chuan-fang is sufficient testimonial to the latter's character. After the Nationalists took Nanking, Ting retired to Newchwang, where he died a few years later, to the universal regret.

The capture of Nanking was the occasion for one of the worst outrages against foreigners since the Boxer year. General Chiang Kai-shek was away south in Kiangsi at the time and had no responsibility for it, the Red troops being commanded by a general named Chang Chien. On entering Nanking this man let his

troops loose in a systematic attack on all foreigners in the city. Several were killed; the late Mr. Bertram Giles, British Consul, was seriously wounded; women were assaulted, foreign homes, schools and hospitals ransacked and destroyed. What more would have happened one can only speculate. Fortunately, the British gunboat *Emerald* and the two United States destroyers *Noa* and *Preston* were lying in the river, and they put down a heavy barrage under cover of which the foreigners were rescued over the city wall. This outrage has never been explained. It may have been instigated by the Russians, in view of their failure at Hankow to precipitate an open breach between Great Britain and China. But the more generally accepted theory is that it was deliberately planned by the Communists in order to discredit General Chiang Kai-shek, of whom they were thoroughly suspicious, in the eyes of foreign Powers.

Meanwhile, General Chiang had hastened to Shanghai, where he arrived on April 1. The foreign area was by now an armed camp ringed round with wire entanglements and sandbags, thanks to the foresight of Admiral Sir Reginald Tyrwhitt, Commander-in-Chief of the China Fleet, who had demanded, and got (with the support in the British Government of Lord Birkenhead and Mr. Winston Churchill, who overbore Sir Austen Chamberlain's objections), 20,000 British troops—Guards, county regiments and Indian troops. Later on, the Americans brought some thousands of troops from Manila and the French called up a number of Annamites from Indo-China, so that all in all the foreign area was sufficiently protected.

It was well that it was. Throughout Greater Shanghai, since Sun Chuan-fang's expulsion, anarchy prevailed. It is impossible to say how many of the rioters were genuine Communists, how many just the normal bad characters who gather on such occasions like pariah dogs on a piece of carrion; but night after night the horizon round Shanghai was lit with the flames of looted houses, while the streets of the International Settlement were crowded with pitiful refugees, and Chinese householders made a rich harvest from the high prices paid for accommodation by wealthier fugitives.

It is no exaggeration to say that "The Shaforce", as the foreign defence troops were called, saved far more than the thirteen-odd square miles of the Foreign Settlements of Shanghai. For by this time the orthodox revolutionists of the Kuomintang counted for nothing, and from Hankow downwards the Yangtze Valley was the prey of the Communists, who had cast all restraint to the winds and whose nominal representatives were themselves helpless against the excesses of strike leaders, agitators and the scum of the Valley. Tang Leang-li, in his *Inner History of the Chinese Revolution*, paints a vivid picture of conditions in the Wuhan cities at this time:

> "Owing to the activities of the Communists, practically all the factories in Wuhan had been closed. An atmosphere of tension existed between the employers and employees; conflicts between the shopkeepers and their assistants took place practically daily. The Labour Movement in Wuhan was virtually dead as all the 300,000 workers had turned strikers. The Hanyang District Party Branch of Hupeh, which was entirely under Communist control, had confiscated fifteen private factories and had organized workmen's councils to manage them—a move which turned out to be a complete failure and which put the Government in serious financial difficulties. In spite of this, they proposed that the Government should nationalize all the factories, which would have had the effect of further embarrassing the Government and exposing its weaknesses. . . . The Communists had already given out in the countryside such slogans as 'Down with the Landlords', 'All Landowners are Rowdies and all Gentry Criminals'; and had instigated bands of vagabonds and vagrants to

seize any land they could get hold of, erroneously calling their policy, 'Give land to the cultivators'.

In fact, says Tang Leang-li, this meant that the land went to the agitators, not to the decent tenant-farmers, who, being unable to read, could not understand the meaning of the Communist agitation. This wholesale land confiscation, which was largely instigated by the Russians and by M. N. Roy, the Indian representative of the Communist International, who was now in Hankow, led to considerable disorder among the army officers, many of whom were sons of the land-owning class, and in May there was an open revolt at Changsha which compelled the Wuhan Government to modify the land seizure.

In Hankow, where the British were openly molested, their property robbed, conditions became so insupportable that in April Admiral Tyrwhitt wished to reoccupy the British Concession, but this was vetoed by Sir Miles Lampson and Sir Austen Chamberlain. It is easy to take a detached view of the misfortunes of people on the other side of the world. How the unhappy British residents in what was now known as "Special Administrative District No. 3"* won through those dread early months of 1927 one can hardly imagine. The first Chinese magistrate who was put in to administer the new S.A.D. was a decent fellow who tried to treat the British fairly and restore friendly relations with them. But the Communists denounced him as a "running dog of the Imperialists" and hounded him out.

In Kiukiang (where it will be remembered the British Concession was given back to the Communists shortly after that at Hankow) British properties were reduced to such a state of ruin and filth as cannot decently be described in print. To give but one example, the hospital of a doctor who had worked for thirty years among the Chinese of the city, doing them untold good, was seized without notice by the military (probably some of Chang Chien's ruffians, authors of the Nanking outrage), the operating theatre and the slope by which patients were wheeled into it were used as stables and the main building as barracks, the patients being simply dumped into the courtyard; and the doctor himself was told to get out and shift for himself.

Amid this sea of lawlessness and the supremacy of the worst elements in the population Shanghai was an island of security in which it was now possible for the better class of revolutionists, aghast at the excesses which Russian teaching had let loose, to rally their forces against the riff-raff of the Wuhan Government. The Chinese merchants of the Shanghai district, who must by now have been bitterly regretting the help they gave in 1925 to the anti-British boycott and strike, were ready to support General Chiang Kai-shek, who was thus in a position to take action against the Communists of Hankow. He had an interview early in April with Wang Ching-wei, who had returned from Paris at the end of March at which he stated bluntly that incorporation of Communists in the Kuomintang must cease and Borodin must go.

The line taken by Wang Ching-wei in the following weeks before the final expulsion of Borodin was extremely difficult to understand. He was the leader of the extreme Left Wing of the Kuomintang and had voted for the inclusion of the Communists in the Party at Canton. At the same time, as the intimate friend of Dr. Sun Yat-sen, he had no wish to see the Kuomintang swamped by the Reds; and in the Central Executive Committee of the Wuhan Government the Kuomintang group were still the majority with twelve members, including Dr. Sun Fo, against the five Communists, though, as will have been realized, the Kuomintang had no power. From the conference with General Chiang, Wang went to Wuhan, apparently with the idea of effecting some compromise. But his colleagues

* *The German and Russian Concessions at Hankow, which reverted to China in the First World* War, became Special Administrative Districts Nos. 1 and 2. So the British Concession became S.A.D. 3.

were already finding out that Wang was an awkward person to work with, one who could not be ignored owing to his long association with Dr. Sun, but on whom it was impossible to place any reliance. It is noteworthy that the Western Hills Group had long distrusted Wang and that their policy was to back Chiang against him. And in the final overthrow of Wuhan, the Communists, as has already been mentioned, complained loudly that Wang had betrayed them.

Chiang Kai-shek had no time to lose. Borodin had received orders from Moscow to go full steam ahead with the creation of an exclusively Communist army to overawe the troops of Tang Sheng-chi (whose expulsion from Changsha by Wu Pei-fu in the previous July, it will be remembered, was the signal for the march to the Yangtze, and who was loyal to the Kuomintang) and to put an end to Kuomintang influence. The Communists in Wuhan were preparing to strike suddenly at Chiang, who was still threatened from across the Yangtze by the Northern commanders. And meanwhile the Chinese merchants at Shanghai (and, for that matter the foreign authorities too) were pressing urgently for order to be restored in the district, where a general rising against Chiang had been planned to coincide with the blow from Wuhan.

Suddenly, on April 12, Chiang ordered all the Communist leaders at Shanghai to be arrested, and at the same time General Pai Chung-hsi (now well known in the war with Japan as the able Chief of Staff) moved his forces into the Shanghai area. A shocking massacre of Communists and suspected Communists followed, for which neither Chiang nor Pai is so much to be held responsible as various secret societies which saw their own position threatened by the larger organization of the Reds. But life is cheap in China, and on such occasions of public disorder what was politely called "the purification of the Party" was accepted by all (except the victims) as necessarily entailing a holocaust. To speak frankly, anarchy had reached such a pitch that, without copious blood-letting, order could not have been restored. But there was wide regret at the burning of the Commercial Press building in Chapei (just north of the Foreign Settlements), which the Communists had turned into a fort. Huge quantities of valuable plant, thousands of educational works, and many unique ancient books, manuscripts and pictures perished in the flames.

Chiang now moved to Nanking, and there organized a new Nationalist Government with a new Central Executive Committee, which came into existence on April 18. He was supported by Hu Han-min, Ts'ai Yuan-p'ei, a Hanlin scholar and once a compiler of the Imperial examinations, Li Shih-tseng, formerly a student in France (these two men, now described as "Elder Statesmen" of the Kuomintang, are among the most respected in China), and by the Western Hills Group. He also had the support of Pai Chung-hsi and Li Tsung-jen, the Kwangsi generals, then, as now, among the best soldiers in China. And he had full control of Kiangsu south of the Yangtze (the richest part of that wealthy province) and of all the big clans in his native Chêkiang. He also claimed control of the provinces of Anhui and Fukien, though this was a more shadowy overlordship. But the important point is that the Government set up in Nanking in April 1927 was the beginning of the Chinese Government of today.

As a matter of course, the Wuhan Government retaliated by expelling Chiang and his associates from the Party and by stripping them of all their offices. But the members of the Kuomintang at Wuhan, terrified by the dominance of Borodin and the Communists, were by no means wholehearted in their antipathy towards Nanking. There followed a period of wrangling as to where the seat of Government should be; would the Wuhan Mahomet go to the Nanking mountain or *vice versa*? And on what possible terms could a reconciliation be effected, without which it was obviously impossible to make an effective attack on Marshal Chang Tso-lin in Peking, the last bulwark of Tuchunism?

The issue was decided for the controversialists by a sensational event entirely unexpected by either of them. On April 6, Chang Tso-lin, who had discovered that the Soviet Embassy was being used for Communist propaganda, raided the building. Since the Embassy stood in the sacred Legation Quarter, this in itself was an event without parallel. But Soviet Russia was not then recognized by the Powers and the Diplomatic Body were for once prompt and united in giving their consent. The Russians made all haste to burn as many incriminating documents as they could; but Chang Tso-lin's men resourcefully got upon the roof and poured water down the chimneys, which partly spoiled the Russian game.

Although many documents were burnt or too much charred to be intelligible, enough were retrieved to show the completeness of Moscow's plans to enmesh China in the Communist net. Borodin was to see that Kuomintang vanity was soothed and the Party used as a cat's-paw for the overthrowing of Chang Tso-lin and the expulsion of all foreigners from China; care was to be taken, however, not to antagonize Japanese, who, being so near, were easily able to make themselves nasty. (It may here be noted that since the affair of May 30, 1925, the Japanese had been laying themselves out to prove to the Wuhan Government that they were China's only real friends in order to capture the British trade.) At the right moment, of course, the Communists were to unmask their guns and the Kuomintang were to be liquidated. Many wounding comments by Russians in Canton on their Chinese friends were also revealed, the Chinese generals in particular being described as entirely ignorant of the arts of war and in other respects wanting in ability.

The Nationalists have always maintained that they intended to use the Russians only so long as the latter were of service to them. But it is open to doubt whether they would have been able to do so without the revelation of the papers seized in Peking. It coincided with the discovery of the telegram from Moscow to Borodin instructing him to form a purely Communist army, which Roy the Indian had shown privately to Wang Ching-wei.

This double exposure of the Communists' designs roused the Kuomintang to take action, and at a secret meeting of Wang Ching-wei, Dr. Sun Fo, and General Chang Fa-kuei (one of those who had marched from Canton in 1926 and who gained some celebrity as leader of a redoubtable army known as "The Ironsides") it was decided to expel the Communists from the Government, and, what was still more important, to weed out the Red officers from the army. Mme Sun Yat-sen and Eugene Chen objected, but their association with Borodin was so close that they were overruled. Some weeks elapsed before anything was done publicly. But news came that Chiang Kai-shek, having gained a success over the Northern troops across the Yangtze, was preparing to march against Wuhan; and Feng Yu-hsiang, performing another of his remarkable somersaults in spite of his previous affiliations to Russia, telegraphed that Borodin must go; and ultimately, on July 12, Borodin quitted Hankow, and on the 15th the expulsion of the Communists was formally announced.

With characteristic Chinese courtesy, Borodin's departure was made as easy for him as possible. He travelled as comfortably as such travelling could be accomplished, going out through Loyang in Honan, where he was entertained by Feng Yu-hsiang, and so along the old Silk Road through Shensi to Russian territory, down which in recent years so many supplies have been sent to aid China against Japan. And the Central Executive Committee at Wuhan, with due regard for "face" on both sides, wrote him a letter dwelling on the friendly relations that had existed between him and them and the great services he had rendered. The compliment was far from being ill-deserved. Whatever may have been Borodin's ultimate intentions, the obvious fact is that he had raised the Kuomintang from the futile, quarrelsome incompetence in which it was languishing when

he first went to Canton in 1923 and had given it coherence and driving power, which was solidified by the Party's subsequent breach with the Communists. As one looks back on those days it seems even conceivable that without Borodin's unique influence and organizing power there might still be two Governments in China, one in Canton and one in Peking, with perhaps Japan playing off one against the other for her own behoof.

Mme Sun Yat-sen and Eugene Chen accompanied Borodin and several of his Russian advisers. Others were less fortunate. In Canton there were still several Russians, and the Red Labour leaders were still the predominant power. In the December after Borodin's expulsion the Russians in Canton, led by their Consul, decided to make another bid for the Communizing of the South, and with the aid of some 2,000 troops whom they had seduced the Communists rose and captured Canton. But the insurrection which broke out on December 11 did not last long. On the 14th, Chang Fa-kuei and another general, Chen Kung-po, attacked and took the city, and there followed an appalling massacre of Communists. Many citizens joined the troops in the onslaught on the now detested Reds. Since the main armies had marched away to the Yangtze eighteen months before, Canton had begun to enjoy a little long-unknown tranquillity, and the Communist insurrection had infuriated everyone. The Russian Consul was arrested, but on pleading diplomatic immunity was allowed to go to Vladivostok. But not a few Russians met their deaths in the general *battue*.

Already in August there had been a terrible slaughter of Communists and suspected Communists at Nanchang in Kiangsi. When Borodin left China and the Reds were expelled from the Kuomintang the 20th Army, which was entirely composed of Communists under the command of a redoubtable leader named Ho Lung—a huge fellow of powerful personality and a very able leader, who was to become famous in the subsequent wars with Nanking—hastened from Wuchang to Nanchang, where on August 1 they raised the flag of revolt, declared their independence and war upon the Kuomintang. But they were no match for the forces of Chang Fa-kuei and Tang Sheng-chih. Ho Lung escaped in disguise to Hongkong, but his troops were fearfully cut up.

And not only the troops. The Communist revolt had been accompanied by the usual confiscation of lands, and this brought numbers of peasants into the common condemnation. Many students too, girls as well as young men, were swept up and sent to the executioner's strangling-post, though one may well doubt whether they were guilty of anything worse than the natural ebullience and generosity of youth excited by the widespread distress of the common people. But now to be known as a Communist was tantamount to a death warrant. Both at Nanchang and Canton many innocent suffered with the guilty. The recollection of the Red risings of August and December 1927 in these two cities is dark with the stain of fearful cruelties.

Meanwhile Borodin's departure had been the signal for the exchange of pretty telegrams between Nanking and Wuhan, each congratulating the other on their firm dealing with the Communists and expressing contrition for their many shortcomings. Such exchanges of compliments are the common coin of political warfare in China, which do not necessarily imply any real community of feeling. So it was to prove now. It was urgently necessary that a Plenary Session of the Central Executive Committee should be held in order to bring the Party together and proceed to action against Chang Tso-lin. But where the meeting was to be held, and whether it was to be a continuation of the Third Plenary Session held in Canton in 1924 (which some of the Conservative members of the Kuomintang refused to recognize owing to its connexion with the Communists), or an entirely new session of a new C.E.C., was what no one could agree about.

Another stumbling-block was the antipathy of the Wuhan group for General

Chiang Kai-shek, due to the strong line he had taken against Borodin, Eugene Chen and Co. Even some of the Conservatives objected that Eugene Chen was the only Chinese who had yet scored a redoubtable triumph over the foreigner in the surrender of the Hankow British Concession. Feeling against Chiang became so high that in September he resigned his post as Commander-in-Chief of the Nationalist forces and went away to Japan, leaving the Kwangsi generals Li Tsung-jen and Pai Chung-hsi in control of Nanking, with whom Tang Sheng-chih now threw in his lot.

The old members of the Central Executive Committee now came to Nanking, and on the proposal of Wang Ching-wei a Special Committee was set up to carry on the Government until the quarrel with Chang Tso-lin had been disposed of and there should be time to organize a more orthodox administration. But this expedient roused an instant storm among members of the Kuomintang in many directions and very nearly led to a renewal of fighting, this time between the Kwangsi generals and Tang Sheng-chih, whom the two former leaders disliked and distrusted.

It would be wearisome to attempt to describe the prolonged wranglings of the autumn of 1927, the flying about of Wang Ching-wei between Nanking, Shanghai and Canton; the numbers of different parties engaged in the wrangle and what each of them wanted, if indeed they really knew what they did want.

The upshot, however, was clear. General Chiang, as the one person apparently able to think clearly and assert a firm leadership, must return. On November 15 he came back from Japan and immediately in co-operation with Wang abolished the Special Committee. He was also reinstated as Commander-in-Chief and proceeded to restore amicable relations between the chief contestants, the generals and the old members of the Central Executive Committee, with such good effect that in February 1928 the long-debated Plenary Session of the C.E.C. was duly held.

So the Nationalist Government at Nanking was fairly launched at last. But Wang Ching-wei was not present at the launching. He had had enough for the time being of the thorny path of politics, and in December had again left for France to take a rest-cure.

Chapter VIII

NANKING CAPITAL

THE YEARS 1928–31 WERE A COMPLEXITY OF CROSS PURPOSES AND OLD JEALOUSIES twice leading to civil war, of grandiose schemes and small results, and of certain outstanding events which have made history—the death of Marshal Chang Tso-lin, the attachment of Manchuria under his son the young Marshal Chang Hsueh-liang to the Kuomintang, the transfer of the capital to Nanking, and, through all, the increasing signs of the Japanese military men's determination to have their way with China, in which they were doubly stimulated by the growing authority of the Kuomintang, and above all by the character and forcefulness of Chiang Kai-shek.

The Nationalist march upon Peking began in April 1928, and from three different directions. In the spring of 1927 Chang Tso-lin, alarmed by the success, both political and military, of Wuhan, sent an army down the Peking-Hankow railway to attack Wuhan; but it was defeated by Tang Sheng-chih, with some assistance from Feng Yu-hsiang, about 100 miles north of Hankow, and had to retreat to Peking. Chang's position was made worse by the fact of Yen Hsi-shan,

Governor of Shansi, declaring himself on the Nationalists' side and moving his troops down to the neighbourhood of the Peking-Hankow railway.

Yen was one of the star performers of the revolutionary upheaval. Born in 1882, a graduate of the Tokyo Military Staff College, he was an early adherent of Sun Yat-sen's and member of the Kuomintang. But being sent to his native province of Shansi in 1912 to stamp out the embers of Imperialism, he decided to stay there, and until 1928 he took no part in the politics of the rest of China but devoted himself to the welfare of his domain, with singular success. Shansi became known as "the Model Province". Its army was well equipped, regularly paid and well behaved. Its people were moderately taxed. Order was preserved, and every man could dwell secure under his own vine and fig tree, while schools and hospitals sprang up in all directions. Yen is said to have made an enormous fortune during his governorship of Shansi. But who could expect him to do otherwise? Such had always been the way of officials, from *hsien* magistrates to viceroys, and the only point in which the people were interested was that the mandarins should not clip the public fleece so close that the hungry sheep felt an excessive draught. From Shansi's point of view, Yen Hsi-shan was cheap at any price. Yen is a Northerner, and but for the Southerners' meteoric capture of the Yangtze Valley he would probably have continued to remain aloof from the ruinous politics of either. But he is also a shrewd man who was clever enough to remember that he was a member of the Kuomintang and to spot the winner. He now called upon Chang Tso-lin to accept the Three Principles of Dr. Sun, which the old Marshal refused to do and declared himself dictator of the North.

Meanwhile (we are still in 1927) Chiang Kai-shek had crossed the Yangtze and captured Hsuchowfu from the Northerners. But he was beaten out of it by Sun Chuan-fang and Chang Tsung-chang (the ruffian Tuchun of Shantung). In the autumn, however, Feng Yu-hsiang came over from Honan and recaptured Hsuchowfu, Sun and Chang being forced to retreat to Tsinanfu, the capital of Shantung. The importance of this for the Nationalists is summed up in the one word: railways. In North China these form a capital "A", with Peking at the apex, the right-hand stroke running to Pukow on the Yangtze opposite Nanking; the left-hand stroke to Hankow, and the bar being formed by the Lung-Hai, which cuts the two north and south lines at Hsuchowfu and Shihchiachuang. Thus nearly the whole of the railways from Yangtze to Peking, with their connecting line the Lung-Hai, was in Nationalist hands.

The plan of campaign was that Yen Hsi-shan should advance on Peking from the north-west, Feng Yu-hsiang along the Peking-Hankow railway and Chiang Kai-shek from Nanking.

But now the Japanese showed their teeth, mobilizing troops and sending them to Tsinanfu on April 20, ostensibly to protect the Japanese colony, about 2,000 people in that city. On the record of the Nationalist armies since they had left Canton, the Japanese could show some excuse. But Japanese excuses never represent the real motive. In 1927 a typical swashbuckling militarist, General Baron Tanaka—his name adorns the famous memorial to the Emperor describing how Japan must proceed to conquer all Asia, though it is doubtful whether he personally had wit enough to write it—had become Premier. Whether in sending troops to Tsinanfu he meant to start the invasion of China which began four years later in Manchuria cannot be said. Probably he was only playing Japan's usual game of promoting chaos in China until she was ready to strike. Whatever the motive, when Chiang Kai-shek reached Tsinanfu on May 2, whence Sun Chuan-fang and Chang Tsung-chang had fled to Peking, his way was blocked by the Japanese.

At first it seemed that matters might be arranged amicably. At a meeting between Chiang and the Japanese commander Chiang gave his word that his

troops should cause no trouble, and the Japanese undertook to remove the barbed-wire barricades. But Japanese faith, Punic faith. On the 6th the Japanese asserted that Chinese troops had been looting—which, as Chiang had perfect control of his men and certainly did not want any trouble with Japan, is wholly unlikely—and without more ado they began bombarding the city. Fighting continued for four days; a large hole was blown in the city wall, much of the city destroyed and about 2,000 Chinese were killed against twenty-seven Japanese soldiers and a few civilians. It was, on a small scale, as wanton an act of treacherous cruelty as Japan has ever committed.

Perhaps the most curious part of the whole story is that while Japanese troops sent by Tokyo were holding back General Chiang from reaching Peking, the Japanese Command in Manchuria were refusing trains southward to the reinforcement for which Marshal Chang Tso-lin had sent to strengthen himself in Peking. On the face of it, this would seem to be an example of the Kuantung Army (the Japanese Command in Manchuria) acting without regard for Tokyo, as it became famous for doing in the seizure of Manchuria. But again one must take into account the hidden motives of Japan, which on this occasion may have been limited to making trouble for both sides.

Chiang Kai-shek withdrew his troops, marched them over the country round Tsinanfu, and so eventually reached Peking, where, however, he found Yen Hsi-shan and Feng Yu-hsiang already installed. Yen had got in first, to the considerable relief of all foreigners in the city, whose recollection of Feng's boorish behaviour when in control of Peking after his betrayal of Wu Pei-fu in 1924 did not increase their appetite for any further taste of his company unalloyed by other influences.

But the old Marshal had gone. Menaced by the triple advance of his enemies and disappointed of his reinforcements from Manchuria, he had left Peking on June 3, and next morning as his train was approaching Mukden a bomb, perfectly placed and timed, blew up under his carriage, and in a few hours he was dead. Although there was no direct evidence, there has never been the slightest doubt that the Japanese contrived his death. It is very unlikely that Chinese could have carried out the elaborate preparations needed for such an explosion without Japanese direction, and utterly unlikely that they would have been allowed to do so on a railway so carefully guarded and patrolled by the Japanese as the South Manchuria, unless Japan had desired Chang's death. There was reason too why Japan should wish the Old Marshal out of the way, for he was a strong and able man who had ruled Manchuria for twenty years with success, managing to keep Japanese encroachments in check without coming to loggerheads with them, in fact the hardest obstacle to the control of Manchuria for which the Japanese soldiers were already manœuvring. So the Old Marshal was disposed of and his son the Young Marshal reigned in his stead.

The exchange did not at first promise well for Japanese schemes. Chang Hsueh-liang, born in 1898, is a very different man from his father, adroit where the father had been judicious, quick and eager where the other was cautious and methodical, gay and charming where Chang Tso-lin was dour and undemonstrative. Young Chang liked foreign fashions, had his sons educated at Brighton College, played a good game of tennis and is an enthusiast for bridge. At one time he was reported to be an opium-smoker, but he certainly conquered the habit. He lost no time after his accession to his father's throne in declaring his allegiance to the Kuomintang and in flying the Nationalist flag throughout Manchuria.

A lurid incident, too, at the outset of his reign showed both that Young Chang had no leanings towards Japan and that he could in an emergency act with all his father's ruthlessness. The most powerful man in Manchuria was the Chief of Staff General Yang Yu-ting, who was known to be pro-Japanese. In conjunction

with the head of the Peking-Mukden railway, one Chang Ying-huai, he was suspected of plotting with the Japanese to declare Manchuria an "independent" Republic with himself as President. The Young Marshal invited the two conspirators to a party and had them arrested and incontinently shot. After which, in true Chinese style, he gave them a handsome funeral, and to Yang Yu-ting's family a comfortable pension.

For the moment Japan indignantly denied the conspiracy, but did nothing more. It is to be remembered that all this was happening less than five years after the terrible earthquake of September 1, 1923, which had undoubtedly thrown back Japan's military preparations besides doing her further untold harm. Also during the 1920's Liberal thought was active in Japan; and Chang Tso-lin's death had caused such a scandal that the Tanaka Government was forced to resign. Not long afterwards General Tanaka died of a surfeit of wine combined with other delights which need not be specified. His administration had been a byword for corruption. His invasion of Tsinanfu had run up a huge bill with no result but to ensure the ascendancy of the Kuomintang as the strongest Party in China. But he left us the Tanaka Memorial, a straight, unvarnished revelation of what the Japanese Army was planning to do. It is a pity that this, the one solid achievement of Baron Tanaka's Premiership, was not so carefully noticed as his shortcomings.

It is time to return to Peking, where the generals, the armies, the politicians gathered in a great memorial service at the Temple of Azure Cloud in the Western Hills, where lay the remains of Dr. Sun Yat-sen, to inform his shade, as he some sixteen years before had reported the Revolution to the spirits of the Ming Emperors, that the first of his Three Periods* had been accomplished and that China was at last unified under the Kuomintang.

And then came the great work of transferring the capital to Peking. There were not a few who lamented the change—romantic foreigners steeped in dreams of the imperial glories of the lovely old city; owners of house property who foresaw a heavy slump in their values; bureaucrats out of a job; shopkeepers who had grown fat on the trade that the presence of the Court and even of the Presidents had brought them, not forgetting crowds of uninstructed and gullible tourists. But there can be no question that the Nationalists were right in moving to Nanking. Not only was Peking geographically remote from the centre of China (for that matter, so is Nanking, though its position at the mouth of the Yangtze goes far to redeem its distance from the interior) but it was permeated with the associations of ancient intrigue; as the Bolsheviks shifted their capital from Leningrad to Moscow, so did the Nationalists mark the completeness of the break with the past by going to Nanking. And in the upshot Peking lost nothing. Instead of being the throne of Emperors it became the seat of learning, the Oxford and Cambridge of China, with its dignified university and superb hospital and medical school, of the Rockefeller Foundation: and as a museum piece it attracted more moneyed foreigners than ever.

Meanwhile, Nanking was in a parlous state, a capital in name but without a vestige of the appurtenances of a capital. Apart from the Viceroy's *yamên* and the old naval college founded in 1907 by Viceroy Tuan Fang, there were hardly any buildings capable of accommodating Government departments. There were swarms of hungry office-seekers, but no offices to put them in and scarcely any houses for them to live in. Nanking, in fact, was still the half-ruined city left by the T'aipings, while every train from the north brought mountains of archives, office paraphernalia and artistic treasures for the new capital's adornment, which

* Sun Yat-sen prescribed three stages for the fulfilment of the Revolution: period of military conquest; period of political tutelage of the people; and, when this should have been accomplished, the period of full constitutional government.

for want of storage room had to be dumped in the goods yard at Pukou or on the river front at Hsiakuan.*

A start was made to convert the dreamy old city into a modern metropolis by driving a wide boulevard seven miles long from Hsiakuan to the gate beneath the Purple Mountain where Sun Yat-sen's tomb was to be built, to be called the Chung Shan Road, after the Master. Land was seized, houses torn down, occupants evicted without any compensation except the vague promise of added trade when the road should be completed. The official who carried through this job so notoriously lined his pockets that when General Feng Yu-hsiang, who had been appointed Minister for War, visited Nanking in 1929 he is said to have hunted for the man all round the city with his revolver. But the delinquent escaped to Shanghai. New buildings in semi-foreign style, gay with paint but cheap in workmanship, were run up along the road. But between and behind them remained the ruins of torn-down houses and accumulations of wretched hovels and matsheds in which ragged, penniless folk herded like microbes in a wound. In course of time the development of Nanking, planned on American lines, with a great civic centre from which the principal roads radiated, made remarkable strides, and some fine Government buildings were erected, which cleverly combined modern accommodation with an exterior in the classical Chinese design. But for the first two or three years conditions were so uncomfortable, with confusion in the city aptly reflecting the confusion in high places, with everything promised and nothing done, that many of the ardent young revolutionaries became utterly disgusted and disheartened.

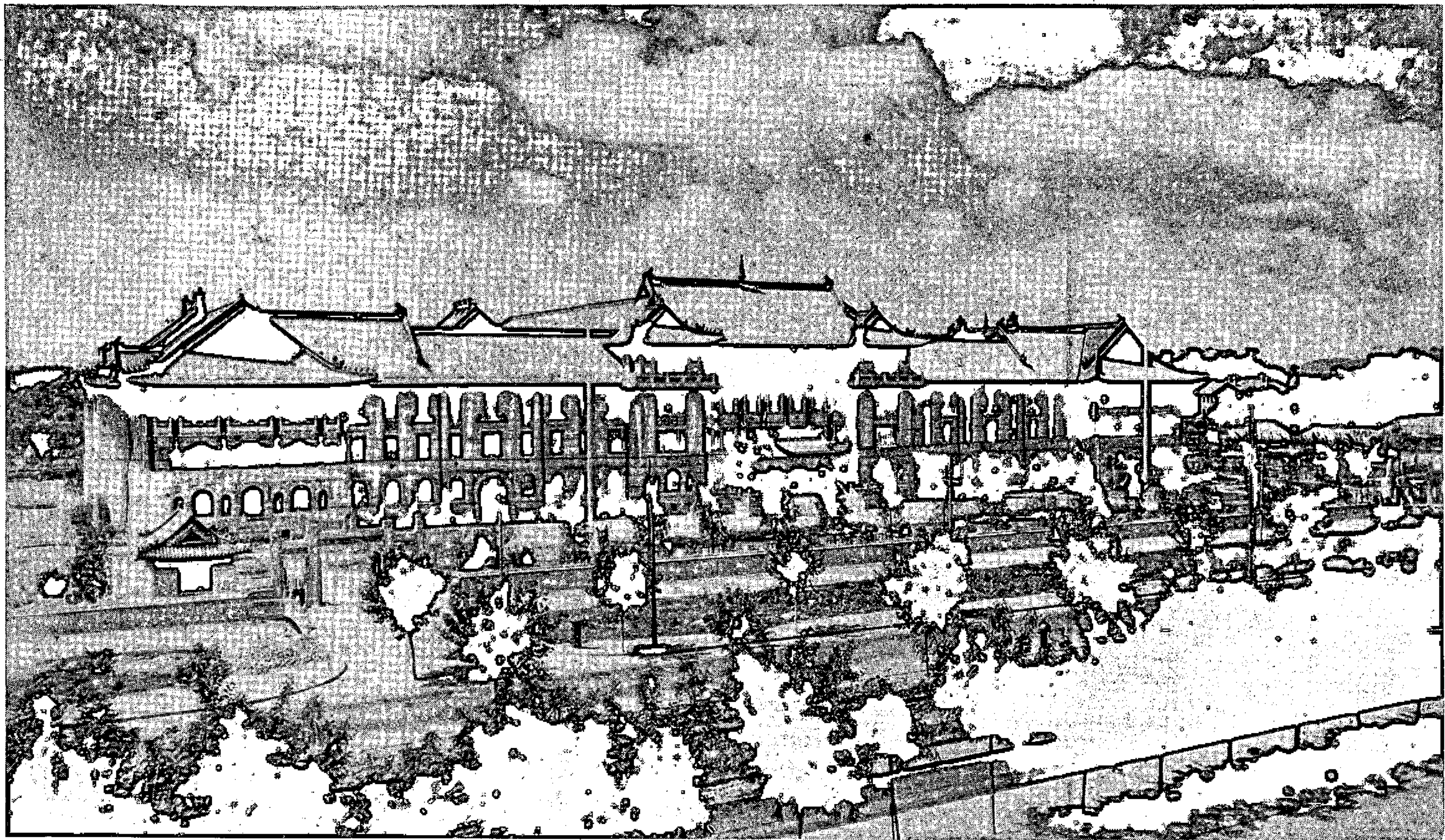
Readers of Mrs. Pearl Buck's *A House Divided* will remember the scene in which the revolutionary Captain Meng conducts his cousin Yuan through Nanking. Only a year or two before the mere sight of a beggar had moved Meng to generous indignation. Now the hopeless muddle in Nanking, with its hordes of starveling people at every turn, had bred in him a very different spirit.

> " 'Next year they are not to be allowed, these huts,' he exclaimed. 'It is a shame for us to have folk like that about. It is necessary that the great of foreign parts should come to our new capital, and such sights are shameful. Oh, it is these people who hold back our country. I wish we could sweep the country clean and build it only for the young—these people they understand nothing. . . . The chief hindrance against all we do are these very poor for whom we do it. There are too many, who can teach them anything? There is no hope for them. So I say, let famine take them and flood and war. Let us keep only their children and shape them in the ways of revolution.' "

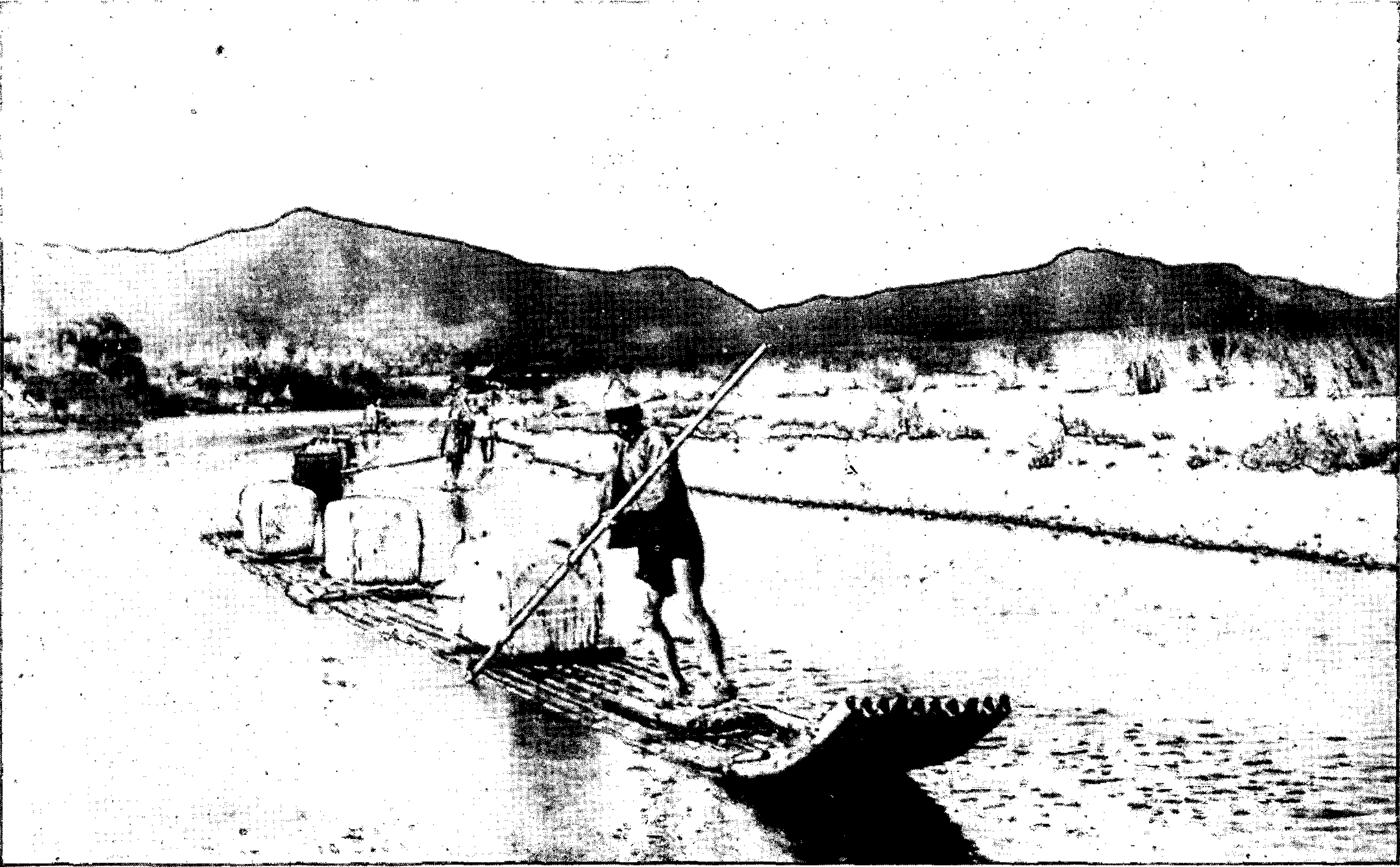
Such a speech, of course, is not historical; but Mrs. Buck knows the people she writes about very thoroughly, and Meng's outburst is typical of what must have been the emotion of reformers in all countries baulked of the fulfilment of their dreams and not humble enough to admit that the fault is their own for keying their ambitions impracticably high.

That was the fault of the Nanking Government in its first three years. The Kuomintang were intoxicated with success; they would remake all China; every day some new fantastic reform was announced, "to be accomplished within three months". But the real evils—taxation, local government, restoration of railways, public works, which would only yield to dull, slogging work, that afforded no opportunity for striking gestures and proclaiming sensational programmes—for these there appeared to be no enthusiasm. It was much more agreeable to slip away by train to the pleasures of Shanghai, which, from the well-managed home of

* The port of Nanking between the city wall and the river.



MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS, NANKING: CLASSICAL CHINESE ARCHITECTURE ADAPTED TO MODERN OFFICE NEEDS



ANCIENT METHODS OF TRANSPORT SERVE WELL IN CHINA'S WAR TODAY

solid business men, a perfect sample of British colonizing genius that it had been before the First World War, was degenerating into an international pleasure city, a magnet for adventurers from all the world, full of dance-halls, Lucullan restaurants, night-clubs, greyhound racecourses and gambling-hells.

One reform imposed by Nanking was the substitution of the Western for the old Chinese Calendar, which is reckoned by the moon. At the same time, it was ordained that the New Year holiday, the only holiday in the year enjoyed by myriads of Chinese, must be kept on and from January 1 instead of at whatever date in January or February the changes of the moon (as with Easter) might prescribe.* The old-fashioned Chinese New Year is mingled with observances of a religious nature, feasts for the spirits of ancestors and so forth; and no reform has seemed less acceptable to China than the substitution of January 1. At the first attempt the change was virtually ignored. Next year a stringent order went out that the old holiday must on no account be taken. When the prohibited date arrived, General Chiang made a round of the Government offices in Nanking and found not a soul at work. He delivered a stinging speech at the next fortnightly meeting of the Central Executive Committee. "How can we expect order in the country," he demanded, "when we have no sense of order ourselves? How can our people be expected to obey the laws when we do not obey them?"

It was the first of many speeches by which General Chiang strove to awaken a sense of discipline, of responsibility and of practical realities. Throughout China the Kuomintang's authority was vested in local committees, known as *tangpu*, composed of youths whose average age was about eighteen. In a very few cities, for instance the great silk centre Wusih, about 100 miles from Shanghai, governed from time immemorial by the heads of the big silk families, where the young men were wise enough to be guided by their elders, the *tangpu* made no difference to the established order of things. The vast majority of the committees at best were infected with a craze to alter things merely for the sake of altering them; too often they were composed of young scallywags bent only on enriching themselves at the public expense.

In 1930 General Chiang paid a visit to North China. It opened his eyes to many things, not least the general detestation in which the Kuomintang were held. He made another speech when he got back to Nanking even sterner than the one already quoted, in which he told the Kuomintang in what abhorrence they were held and how richly, considering the Chinese people's wretched conditions, they deserved it. But it needed something sharper than General Chiang's winged words to bring the politicians to their senses. I remember it being said by an old Chinese merchant, during the height of the wars of North and South, "The Japanese will eventually put things right for us." In a sense he was right, though certainly not as he meant it.

The scheme of government known as the Organic Law, which was finally adopted in May 1928, was Dr. Sun Yat-sen's Five Power system, with embellishments introduced by the Kuomintang to ensure their own undisputed autocracy. The fundamental source of power is the National Assembly, composed of one delegate from each prefecture enjoying four rights, those of election, revocation, initiative and referendum. This National Assembly has never met, and during the period of political tutelage its place is taken by the Congress of the Kuomintang.

The Five Powers which direct the general machinery of government—Yuan, or Councils, as they are called—are the Control, Judicial, Executive, Legislative and Examination. The Executive Yuan controls the different Ministries—War, Finance, Interior (which is concerned with all the machinery of provincial administration), Foreign Affairs and Education. The Examination Yuan occupies itself

* The Chinese New Year holiday lasts from three days to a fortnight, the length depending on the wealth of the holiday-maker.

with the testing and appointment of candidates for office. The names of the Judicial and Legislative Yuans sufficiently explain themselves. But the Control Yuan is a curious and uniquely Chinese institution. It is, in fact, a carry-over into Republican times of the ancient and honourable Board of Censors, whose duty it was to impeach even the Emperor himself—as they often and bravely did, though at the cost of their heads—on occasions of public wrong or imperial backsliding.

This is what the Control Yuan was created to do; and by its creation one supposes that Dr. Sun meant to compensate for the one immediately obvious weakness of his system—namely, that the Judicial Yuan is a part of the Government with which accordingly its interests are identical, instead of being above and independent of it as the British judicature is.* In China—as, for that matter, in most countries—judges and magistrates exist to do what the Government desires done; and it is curious that Dr. Sun, who lived for so many years abroad and studied foreign systems of government very closely, did not see the supreme importance for the protection of popular freedom of establishing an independent and unassailable judicature. Presumably he looked to the Control Yuan to keep the Government in the strait and narrow way, but one cannot recall any instances of its trying to do so.

Meanwhile, between the National Assembly (which, it will be remembered, has been replaced by the Congress of the Kuomintang) and the Five Yuan is an organ known as the Central Government, of twelve to sixteen members, including the presidents of the five Yuan; this functions through a State Council, which is in effect the National Government.

But yet another organ was introduced by the Kuomintang between the State Council and the Yuan, in the shape of two Kuomintang Committees, the Central Executive and the Central Advisory, which together form the Central Political Council. The Kuomintang had taken very great pains to assure its grip on every function of the State; and in the promulgation of the Organic Law it was laid down that the Party was the source of all authority, above challenge or question, inviolable, and, as the length of the period of political tutelage depended upon its decision alone, to all appearances eternal.

It may well be asked: How did this enormously involved system of checks and balances ever manage to function? The answer is that until after the Japanese seizure of Manchuria, which beat some sense into the politicians' jealous skulls and led to some simplification of the system, it didn't. Mr. Lionel Curtis, a sincere friend of the Chinese, wrote in his book *The Capital Question of China* that "the wit of man has seldom devised a more effective mechanism for fomenting intrigue, hampering decisions and obscuring responsibility". It is easily understandable that the Chinese, with their recent experience of Tuchun rule, were almost morbidly afraid of allowing any individual too much independence in office. But what practical reform could a wretched Minister hope to achieve with two Committees of the Kuomintang, five Yuan and a State Council sitting on his head, of which overriding organs he might be a member by belonging to the Kuomintang but not by virtue of his office alone? Dr. Lin Yu-tang's biting and witty book, *My Country and My People*, gives a damning description of the functioning of the Government in its early days and the behaviour of too many of the politicians; and matters must have been pretty bad to induce General Chiang Kai-shek, strong man as he is, to brave the scandal he excited by putting the litigious and

* Among his many sins of omission and commission as Prime Minister, it is doubtful whether Earl Baldwin ever did anything more full of danger to the rights of the British people than when he cut down the salaries of the judges, thus implicitly claiming that they are the servants of the Government instead of being what, for practical purposes, they are, its masters and the guardians of the people's liberties against wrong-doing by the executive.

obstructive Hu Han-min under house arrest as the indispensable preliminary to the better functioning of Government.

China indeed had to go through the common experience of all young revolutionary governments when enthusiasm has to serve for experience, when a few men of ability find their efforts continually blocked by callow theorists, and when the "bums, soaks and grafters" from every quarter cluster round like flies on a sugar-bowl for whatever they can snatch.

The Government certainly did not lack talent, with General Chiang chairman of the State Council, T. V. Soong as Finance Minister, Dr. C. T. Wang Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Sun Fo State Councillor and vice-chairman of the Examination Yuan, Dr. H. H. Kung (today the Premier of China) also a State Councillor and Minister of Industries, and, perhaps most brilliant of all in his own line, Dr. Wang Chung-hui chairman of the Judicial Yuan. The last-named is one of the men whom only China seems able to produce. Born in 1882 in Kwangtung, and already profoundly read in the Chinese classics before going to Yale, where he took his D.C.L., he then studied in Germany and England and was called to the Bar at the Middle Temple. He was one of the judges of the Permanent Court of The Hague from 1930–35, when he resigned to become for a while Foreign Minister. The great work of his life, however, has been the codification of all the Chinese laws in preparation for the abolition of extraterritoriality, together with which he has done much good work in the reform of Chinese law courts. With all his enormous learning, Dr. Wang is one of the simplest, most unassuming of men, who loves English roast beef and a good glass of wine, is pleasant and merry, liked by everyone, and yet for all his easiness is capable when necessary of showing himself as hard as nails.

In spite of the inherent difficulties of its composition and the "cussedness" of some of its members, the new Nanking Government achieved something. In Shanghai "T.V." was labouring to get the country's finances in order; and in this, although sadly hampered by the continual necessity of having to raise loans for the wars in which Nanking too soon again was involved, he succeeded so well that within three years he had been able to produce a balanced budget, a thing China had never seen before. Also between 1930–32 he arranged a settlement of the arrears of interest on certain loans—the 1912, and the Hukuang, Lung-Hai and Tientsin-Pukow railways—which at once satisfied foreign bondholders, relieved China of some intolerable debts and did much to restore her credit abroad.

In Nanking Dr. C. T. Wang, by combined adroitness and audacity, succeeded in jockeying the Powers into such admissions regarding extraterritoriality that but for Japan's invasion of Manchuria in 1931 it would certainly have come to an end several years before it actually did.

And one particularly remembers two pieces of legislation in the year 1929, directed to assist in the general emancipation of women. There is perhaps nothing more shameful in Japan's record than the way in which she treats her women. Japanese girls and married women have no rights of any kind whatsoever, and are the mere chattels of their fathers and husbands, to be disposed of in any way, however shameful, that the latter may think fit. And nothing, on the other hand, is more full of promise for China than the liberal measures adopted in recent years for the freeing of women from the restrictions that previously bound them.

In 1929, however, it was still in the main the practice—though more and more girls were rebelling against it violently—that a girl's marriage was arranged for her by her parents and an engagement once formed was virtually as irrefragable as the marriage tie. The new enactment cancelled this, permitting a girl to break off a distasteful engagement at her own will. No less a person than Miss Butterfly Woo, a noted Chinese film star, quickly took advantage of this innovation to break

the engagement made for her by her parents and to marry the man of her choice—in one of the biggest weddings ever seen in Shanghai.

The other law mentioned enacted that a daughter should share equally with her brothers in whatever estate was left by her parents. Previously she had no legal claim to any patrimony. And here again, within a few weeks of the law being promulgated, the case was reported of a girl in Shantung (which is a notably conservative province) successfully suing her brothers for her share in their dead parents' property.

In education, too, considerable improvement took place, particularly in the regularizing of colleges and elimination of bogus colleges, which had sometimes meant no more than an association of youths who hired a teacher, gave their association a high-sounding name and awarded themselves worthless degrees, and which had produced the most riotous and insubordinate members of the student body. Here also full consideration was given to the girls, and while some of them had colleges of their own, all the principal colleges were co-educational. As I look back on my early days in China, when the only women seen in the streets were serving-women going about with bundles or pails of water, or singing girls in rickshas taken by their *amahs* from tea-house to tea-house, and compare them with the free and happy Chinese girls of today, delighting in their studies, their sports, their music, entering whatever career they desire, forming their own friendships, mingling freely with the opposite sex, marrying the men they approve and choose for themselves, I feel that the Republic, even in its most dubious and difficult years, did one great thing. And all the history of the war with Japan has proved in a hundred ways how keenly the Chinese girls appreciate their new freedom and how, with no thought of self, they have shown their gratitude.

The National Government (as distinct from the previous Nationalist) formally came into existence according to the Organic Law, under General Chiang Kai-shek, in October 1928, and was recognized by the foreign Powers. But it was not long before it was actually fighting for its existence. The unification of China had been proudly proclaimed by the Kuomintang after the capture of Peking. But China was indeed very far from being unified.

The Kuomintang itself was still split in several directions. Tang Leang-li puts the position well when he says that "the unity of the Kuomintang had always been more formal than substantial, being in its origin a more or less loose federation of political interests kept together only by the force of Sun Yat-sen's personality". In the Reorganization of January 1924 Dr. Sun tried to introduce unity on the basis of his Three Principles of the People and discipline; but the movement was swamped by the Communists.

Even after their expulsion and the break with Russia there remained the Right and Left Wings of the Party in bitter opposition. The Right Wing, composed of the so-called "Old Comrades", some of the original members of the Party, the Western Hills Group and the Elder Statesmen—such noted scholars as Tsai Yuan-pei, Li Shih-tseng and Wu Chih-hui, favoured on the whole a compromise with the chief militarists and a federation on the basis of local autonomy. This policy certainly did not accord with the strict principles of Sun Yat-senism, and, furthermore, while the Elder Statesmen were universally respected as men of high integrity and disinterested motives, the Right Wing in general were accused of being reactionaries, chiefly out for their own interests.

The Left Wing, of which Wang Ching-wei was head, was not as extremist as the name commonly implies. Its association with the Communists was transient and involuntary. The chief "planks" of its political programme were abolition of the "unequal treaties", abolition of militarism, and agrarian reform. General Chiang, his brothers-in-law T. V. Soong and H. H. Kung, and the chief members of the National Government were Left Wing on general principles, although the

support of the Right Wing had helped considerably in the overthrowing of the Communists. In fact, Nanking was a composite of men of all views, except the Reds. But Wang Ching-wei was not among them, and this caused much dissatisfaction in the country, for, after all, Wang had been chairman of the Central Executive Committee for two years after Dr. Sun's death.

There was, too, at this time much distrust of General Chiang, who was accused of trying to make himself dictator. At Hankow the so-called Wuhan Branch Political Council was in the hands of the Kwangsi generals Li Tsung-jen and Pai Chung-hsi (of whom the former was chairman of the Council), who, although they had sided with Chiang against the Communists, were now jealous of his rise to power.

In the North General Feng Yu-hsiang, commanding in Shensi, who could never be relied on for anything but political somersaults whenever fancy seized him, was plainly turning against Nanking. In the adjoining province, the "Model Governor", Yen Hsi-shan, though he would have preferred personally to be left to run Shansi as he had done since the Revolution, was inevitably being drawn into the political whirligig, and not, as events proved, on Nanking's side. In Manchuria the "Young Marshal", Chang Hsueh-liang, had declared for the Kuomintang, but it was not yet clear which section of it he was for. And in Kiangsi in Southern China there were the Communists gradually gathering strength after being chased from Hankow. But their story belongs to a separate chapter.

The first explosion came in March 1929. The National Government had summoned a National Congress of the Kuomintang, and by adroit manipulation of the register had secured that 285 out of 360 delegates were nominees of the Government or personal adherents of Chiang's. This is Tang Leang-li's statement, and as he was violently "anti-Chang" it is only quoted as an indication of what Chiang's antagonists were saying. Wang Ching-wei, with other well-known Leftists, denounced the Congress as illegal; Wuhan and Feng Yu-hsiang protested, the latter resigned from the Ministry for War and withdrew his representatives from Nanking.

What, however, was probably a much more real grievance than an irregular Congress was T. V. Soong's financial policy. In his anxiety to centralize the control of national finance, which was indeed a practical necessity, he tried to ordain that all provincial revenues should be credited to the Central Treasury, which would then allocate to each province what it could show that it needed for its administration. But from time immemorial the provinces had paid to the Government a stipulated sum and kept the rest for themselves, as much as they could collect—the exact amount, as they saw it, being no concern of the Government's. The Kwangsi generals certainly had no idea of submitting to "T.V."s breach with "olo custom", and in March 1929 they raised the flag of revolt against Nanking and marched into Hunan to expel the local government, which was "pro-Nanking".

It happened that just before this revolt, Colonel Bauer,* formerly Chief of Staff to Ludendorff, and several other retired German officers had arrived in Nanking. They were the first of a large number of German officers whom General Chiang engaged to train and organize his army; and their influence in the campaign against Wuhan was very visible. The Kwangsi generals evidently expected that General Chiang would advance against them up the Yangtze and along the southern bank of the river. So he did; but his more formidable advance was made in a line considerably north of the river and down the Peking-Hankow railway. Thus surprised and taken on two sides, the Kwangsi forces were quickly routed and fled south. The whole campaign was over in three months, and General Chiang had won a conspicuous victory.

* Bauer died of smallpox at Hankow shortly after the defeat of the Kwangsi generals. He was succeeded by General von Falkenhauser, who remained in China, working for General Chiang, until Hitler called him and the other German officers (about 100) home, in July 1938, at Japan's request.

The sequel to this success, however, was the complete alienation from Nanking of Feng Yu-hsiang. In May the Japanese Government, whose foreign policy was now directed by the far-sighted and liberal-minded Baron Shidehara, had finally withdrawn her troops from the Tsingtao-Tsinanfu railway in Shantung and handed it back to China with mutual expressions of regret that the natural friendship of the two countries had been disturbed and resolves that it must not again be broken. Feng wanted the governorship of Shantung. But it would not have suited Nanking very well to have so uncertain a man with his powerful army seated on a railway leading straight to the capital, and General Chiang foiled the design by giving Shantung to Feng's chief lieutenant, Han Fu-chu, who had deserted Feng for Nanking.

This same Han Fu-chu ruled Shantung with marked ability. But he was a thorough Tuchun, regarding Shantung as his own fief, paying no more than lip-service to the Central Government. At the close of 1937, when the Japanese were marching south after overrunning North China, he made no serious effort to resist them, if he did not actually try to strike a bargain with them; for which General Chiang had him executed at Hankow, to the great satisfaction and surprise of all China, who since the Revolution had never seen so big a militarist dealt with in so big a way.

Enraged by his failure to get Shantung, Feng Yu-hsiang issued a heavy denunciation of Nanking and declared himself Commander-in-Chief of a Revolutionary Army to save China from General Chiang. But he was weakened by the defection of Han Fu-chu and another able lieutenant, Shih Yu-san; and an attempted attack on Canton by the Kwangsi generals which was to have coincided with his own revolt was defeated. So for the moment Feng's latest somersault came to nothing but his own ejection from the Kuomintang.

An interlude must be mentioned here which has nothing to do with internal politics, of a nature that curiously illustrates the want of practical wisdom in Nanking. As will be remembered, after the Bolshevik revolution the Soviet had renounced all its rights and concessions in China, and a new treaty was concluded in 1924. The Soviet, however, had no intention of giving up the Chinese Eastern Railway, which crosses Manchuria uniting the Trans-Siberian line with Vladivostok; and a special arrangement was made* whereby the C.E.R. was to be managed jointly and equally by Chinese and Russians.

In June 1929 the Nanking Government declared that Russia was not observing this agreement but was filching the whole management of the railway; the head offices in Harbin were entered, all the Russian staff arrested, including the manager, and the line was occupied by Chinese troops. Russia gave Nanking three days in which to repent and restore the *status quo*, and then dispatched troops to do the job. The quarrel dragged on for some weeks, the Russian forces making a number of inroads into North Manchuria but nowhere deeply, the object evidently being to convince Nanking of the uselessness of resistance; and in the end the Chinese had to give in.

Presumably the seizure of the C.E.R. was an attempt to make "face" for Nanking, beset as it was by enemies inside China, before the country. Abolition of the "unequal treaties" was the cardinal point in Dr. C. T. Wang's policy; and Nanking, encouraged by Great Britain's tame submission to violence at Hankow, evidently thought that the same method would work with other countries. Its humiliating failure may suggest to some that Great Britain's surrender of Hankow, in the circumstances in which it was made, was no real kindness to the Chinese, encouraging them as it did in ill-founded confidence in their own powers.

* As an indication of Marshal Chang Tso-lin's autocracy in Manchuria, it may be mentioned that he refused to recognize the treaty concluded in Peking, and insisted on the Russians making a separate one with himself.

Meanwhile, if there ever was any danger of the Young Marshal's throwing in his lot with Feng Yu-hsiang, it was effectively blocked through his troops being deeply engaged with the Russians. One does not suggest that this was in the mind of Nanking, but it was remarked by many at the time that Chang Hsueh-liang had been left entirely alone to bear the brunt of the Russian attacks.

In June 1930 General Chiang went to Peking for a conference with Yen Hsi-shan and Chang Hsueh-liang in the hope of bringing the North into harmony with Nanking. It was a courageous movement, for he was going into what was virtually enemy country and there was always an excellent chance of his being assassinated.

The visit resulted in nothing except, as already remarked, to open Chiang's eyes to the unpopularity of the Nanking Government. Yen proposed to Feng Yu-hsiang that he should go abroad to study Western constitutions after the time-honoured device of all momentarily worsted and inconvenient Tuchuns. Feng refused unless Yen would go too. Yen proposed to Chiang that all three of them should go abroad. It is hardly surprising that Chiang failed to see the point. The conference broke up inconclusively, Yen returning to his beloved Shansi, Chang to take up the unequal duel with the Russians, and Chiang to prepare in Nanking for the trial with Yen and Feng which he saw was inevitable.

Yet another campaign had to be fought in the autumn. In the war in 1929 with the Kwangsi generals Chiang had had the support of General Chang Fa-kuei and his "Ironsides", whom he had appointed Governor of Ichang, 400 miles up the Yangtze above Hankow. But in September Chang declared himself on the side of Wang Ching-wei, whose adherents now called themselves the Reorganizationists (a name which explains itself in their relation to Nanking), and declared war on General Chiang. At the same time the North-western Army* marched from Shensi into Honan, got astride the Peking-Hankow railway, and prepared to march upon Hankow. Chiang Kai-shek, however, defeated it, drove it back to Shensi and then turned to deal with Chang Fa-kuei and his Ironsides. The latter was making an epic march across country with the object of seizing Canton as a new capital for Wang Ching-wei and the Reorganizationists. He was a skilful leader, and the cleverness with which he led his troops, evading battles in unfavourable conditions and winning considerable applause wherever he passed by the discipline he kept, attracted much attention in the newspapers of the time. Chang escaped all right to the South, but the attempted capture of Canton failed. The upshot of this war was that in March 1930 Wang Ching-wei joined Feng Yu-hsiang in being expelled from the Party by a plenary session of the Central Executive Committee in Nanking.

This was the signal for a final grand attempt by Chiang Kai-shek's enemies to bring him down. In the South the Kwangsi generals Li Tsung-jen and Pai Chung-hsi marched north and occupied Changsha, capital of Hunan. In the North Yen Hsi-shan at last openly joined Feng Yu-hsiang against Nanking; and while Yen's army occupied Tsinanfu on the railway to Nanking, Feng with the North-western Army again moved into Honan and established himself on the railway to Hankow.

Chiang's position was undoubtedly dangerous. For ease of understanding by those not familiar with Chinese geography, the similarity of the capital letter "A" may be recalled, though in this instance the cross stroke is the Yangtze; with Nanking at the right hand and Hankow at the left hand.

Thus Yen Hsi-shan's army was on the right-hand stroke threatening Nanking; on the left-hand stroke were Feng's troops threatening Hankow from above the cross-bar and the Kwangsi generals menacing it from below.

* Its commander, it may be recalled, was Feng Yu-hsiang. But on this occasion the army acted "on its own", and Feng took no direct part in its action.

While three armies thus moved into position for the crushing of Chiang Kai-shek, Yen Hsi-shan and Feng occupied Peking, turned out the branch Government set up by Nanking, and, being joined by Wang Ching-wei and the Reorganizationists, proclaimed a new government with Yen Hsi-shan as Chairman of the State Council. Among its members they included the Young Marshal Chang Hsueh-liang. But in this their calculations were premature.

They seized the Customs at Tientsin and appointed the late Bertie Lenox Simpson, who had previously served in the Customs but will be better remembered by his pen-name Putnam Weale and for his account of the siege of the Legations, "Indiscreet Letters from Peking", as Inspector-General. It was an ill-omened promotion for him, as he was shot just before the Reorganizationist revolt collapsed and died of his wounds.

The war dragged on for six months and is said to have cost 150,000 lives. Chiang Kai-shek's strategy and leadership were too good for his enemies. At the beginning he remained strictly on the defensive in the north while he broke the Kwangsi generals' attack. Then he turned upon the Shansi troops at Tsinanfu—Shansi has no reputation for producing good fighters like, for instance, Honan, Hunan and the south-western provinces—and dealt them a crushing blow. Even then there were Feng Yu-hsiang's forces to be met. But at this moment the Young Marshal, having come to terms with the Russians over the Chinese Eastern Railway, decided to support Chiang Kai-shek and marched his army to Peking. That was the end of the Reorganizationists. Wang Ching-wei got off as fast as he could to Canton to reiterate his independence of Nanking. Yen Hsi-shan slipped away to Shansi accompanied by Feng Yu-hsiang, who announced his determination to forswear politics and to perfect his penmanship. Chang Hsueh-liang took charge in the north with the title of Deputy Commander-in-Chief of the National Armies and a domain that stretched from northern Manchuria to the Yellow River.

In all this scene of jealousy, intrigue and strife, one looks in vain for any redeeming touch in Chiang Kai-shek's antagonists of patriotism or sense of public welfare. Their only motive appears to have been envy of Chiang and fear of his strong personality, and none of the high-sounding denunciations with which they prefaced their attacks on him really serves to conceal that hard fact. It is difficult not to allow one's judgment of those days to be influenced by the prestige, unapproached by any Chinese before him, which Chiang has since won among his countrymen and throughout the world. It may be conceded that Chiang was hard, adroit, ruthless. But it cannot be doubted that he was a patriot and that he knew both what ought to be done and what he meant to do.

And what has history to say of the other principal persons in the drama? Wang Ching-wei has justified his countrymen's doubts of him by sinking into puppetry under Japan. Yen Hsi-shan, admirable administrator as he was in Shansi, was obviously careful to keep out of national politics until he thought he had spotted the winner; in the war with Japan he has proved a disappointment to his friends. Feng Yu-hsiang probably holds the record for cat-jumping from one side to the other; and although he has not disgraced himself like Wang Ching-wei, for all his much-advertised army he appears to have done nothing worth notice in the war with Japan. Han Fu-chu, having deserted his master Feng and got the prize of Shantung, betrayed his country and was deservedly shot. Chang Fa-kuei is found now on the Kwangsi generals' side, now against them, now a supporter of Chiang Kai-shek and six months later proclaiming a sort of holy war upon him. There is nothing in these records that claims from one much respect for the moral indignation at General Chiang's conduct paraded from time to time by the persons concerned.

The only two who stand out worthy of respect are the Kwangsi generals Li Tsung-jen and Pai Chung-hsi. After their defeat in 1930 they retired to their

mountainous home in the south, which they governed on the old-fashioned paternal lines with conspicuous fairness and success.

And although they were again at loggerheads with Chiang in 1936, as will be shown in due course, they have proved in the war with Japan his able, loyal and ardent coadjutors.

One event must be mentioned in these first three years of the National Government, before the Japanese seizure of Manchuria, in which all could join in seeming harmony—the funeral of Dr. Sun Yat-sen. However much the factions and fighters might quarrel, they all alike professed unwavering loyalty to the Three Principles of the People and their revered author. His body was brought from the north in a cruiser to Hsiakuan, the port of Nanking, and thence on June 1, 1929, it was carried in a vast procession over the seven miles of the new Chungshan Road to the great mausoleum prepared for it on the slopes of Purple Mountain within sight of the Ming tombs. The greater the man to be buried in China, the heavier and more elaborate his coffin. Dr. Sun's coffin was so heavy that the weight of it had to be distributed by an intricate series of cross-pieces on the shoulders of fully 150 bearers. The mausoleum, approached by long flights of marble steps up the mountain-side, is an imposing structure of white stone with huge bronze doors; and the Father of the Republic lies locked in a chamber lined with beautiful mosaics.

All the Diplomatic Body walked in their stiff uniforms through the sweltering summer heat of the Yangtze Valley behind the coffin, with all who claimed allegiance to the dead man's memory, long lines of troops, mournful bands of music, troops of students.

In his lifetime Sun Yat-sen failed of his purpose again and again. But in death he has triumphed.

Chapter IX

FOREIGN RELATIONS

THE LAST TWO CHAPTERS HAVE LED US THROUGH STORMY DAYS IN WHICH FOREIGNERS generally, British in particular, suffered abuse, hatred and injury. But it would be a great mistake to imagine that these displays of anti-foreign passion were inherent in the revolutionary movement. On the contrary, for several years after the Revolution the general feeling of friendliness for foreigners, diplomatists, missionaries and merchants was very marked. America, where many of the leading revolutionists had been trained and in which there was an extraordinary outburst of enthusiasm for China's declaration of republicanism, was the first to recognize President Yuan Shih-kai's Government in May 1912, an example quickly followed by others. And although Great Britain was less demonstrative, the Chinese were grateful to her for standing aloof and leaving the Revolution to take its course, and especially on account of the widely believed report that she had restrained Japan from intervening on behalf of the Manchus.

There seemed to be among the revolutionists an accepted understanding that the past discords between China and foreign Powers were chiefly due to the Manchu Court and its mandarins: now a new era was beginning; old misunderstandings would be swept away; and the Western garments in which the Republicans hastened to array themselves were a symbol of the new interest in things foreign. Mr. E. R. Hughes, Reader in Chinese at Oxford, then a missionary in China, says in *The Invasion of China by the Western World*:

"All over the country there was a wave of interest in foreign customs and foreign articles of all descriptions. Wherever men congregated in their leisure moments, in tea-shop or wine-shop, in town or village, one of the main topics of conversation was the foreigner and his ways. And this was not done in the old spirit of curiosity which is exemplified in the old Chinese books on the barbarians and their astounding habits, but with a sober feeling that the nation was embarked on a new course and this outside world was part of their world."

Even after the discovery at the Paris Conference of how Chinese territory had been yielded, by China's allies, to Japan, the explosion of wrath was directed at Japan and the pro-Japanese Ministers in Peking, not at foreigners in general. I cannot recall that the demand for the abolition of the "unequal treaties", though it was implicit in the first of Dr. Sun's "Three Principles of the People", became a popular cry with a pronounced anti-foreign colouring until the 1920's. And I think it would be fairly correct to say that Nationalism did not become identified with anti-foreignism until Borodin and his Russian agents took charge of it.

Apart from China's relations with Japan, which are dealt with in a separate chapter, there were several important incidents between the young Republic and foreign Powers, nearly all of which have marked a definite stage in China's progress towards independence. Foremost among these is the prickly question of foreign loans, beginning with the negotiations in 1909 with the Four-Power Consortium, Great Britain, France, Germany and the United States,* for a loan for the completion of the Canton-Hankow (the Hukuang) railway and its extension into Szechuan. The negotiations, long and complicated, were concluded early in 1911, and at once aroused a storm of protest. The Szechuanese declared that neither Peking nor foreigners should build railways in their province, that they would build them themselves; and indeed they constructed some twenty-seven miles of railway line very badly made and with a waste of money into the details of which it is kinder not to inquire.

The important point is that this loan agreement had a decisive influence on the launching of the Revolution in the autumn of the same year—precisely as the conclusion of the Reorganization Loan to Yuan Shih-kai in 1913 fired the Second Revolution in the summer of that year.

The story of these two loans may seem at first sight to contradict what was previously said of the early attitude of the Republicans towards foreigners. But there is no real contradiction. The intensity of hatred for the Manchu Court in 1911 has already been fully shown: the revolutionists generally, the Szechuanese in particular, regarded the proposed loan as a device by the Manchus to strengthen their hold on West China. Again, in 1913, the revolutionists' suspicions of Yuan Shih-kai had already been deeply stirred before the loan negotiations came to light. In both instances the opposition was certainly based on the standing principle that China must be freed from, and not add to, her foreign obligations; but far more potent were the fear and mistrust of a hated Government and the determination if possible to baulk its refreshing its strength with draughts of foreign gold.

Oddly enough, there was no particular outcry against the Birch Crisp loan of £5,000,000 in 1912, which was a first security on the Salt Gabelle. The late Dr. G. E. Morrison, the famous Peking correspondent of *The Times* and afterwards

* In the autumn of 1907 the late President Taft, at the conclusion of his Governorship of the Philippines, visited Shanghai. It was due to his desire for the expansion of American interests in the Far East that the United States insisted on participating in this loan. President Wilson, however, discovered that loans to China were immoral, and informed the American bankers that they would get no official support in taking part in them, with the natural result that the bankers forswore the attractions of moneylending in China.

Adviser to President Yuan Shih-kai, had a considerable part in the negotiation of this loan, which, he said openly, would prove that China could raise money where she liked without going cap in hand to the Consortium. That is probably why the Crisp Loan passed off without opposition in China.

Mention has been made of the orgy of Japanese loans indulged in by Peking through the agent Nishihara at the end of the First World War. They were not the only unsecured loans. The Vickers Company supplied Peking with aeroplanes in exchange for 8 per cent. notes which were taken up by the British public and proved as infructuous as the aeroplanes. The Marconi Co. made a loan to Peking for the purchase of wireless-apparatus which was as ill-fated as the Vickers loan. The American Pacific Development Co. (in spite of President Wilson's warning to the bankers in 1913) burnt their fingers with a loan secured on uncollectable wine and tobacco revenues. And there was an Italian loan to consolidate debts due to Austria for armament which had never been received.

All this waste of China's resources by the Anfu Party became such a scandal that in 1920 the American Government, reversing its previous attitude, proposed the formation of a Consortium of groups of British, American, French and Japanese banks which, with their respective Governments' support, should have the handling of all public loans to China. The implication that other leaders of adventurous tendencies should not be allowed to approach the Western public for money for the Sons of Han was obvious, and it was precisely on this point that a really well-meant scheme broke down. It was in vain to point out to the Chinese that the express purpose of the Consortium was to prevent their resources from being pawned by war lords for the purchase of concubines and big houses. They said that the Powers were trying to exercise a stranglehold on China's finances, and the Consortium came to nothing. After the establishment of the National Government in Nanking, Mr. T. V. Soong found that he could get all the money he wanted by internal borrowing on the security of the Customs surplus. These silver loans were managed by an independent committee of Chinese bankers, interest and amortization were punctually met, and, except for the disadvantage of variations in the value of silver, they were a very attractive investment.

It is interesting to notice the difference in the Nationalists' attitude towards one class of loans and the other. Strongly as they had protested against the Reorganization Loan of 1913 to Yuan Shih-kai, they have never failed to pay the interest on it, even continuing for some months of the war with Japan, until the loss of practically all their Customs and Salt stations forced them to stop. Towards other loans which had been floated under what for want of a better term one may call national agreement—the 1898, 1908, 1912, etc.—their attitude has been the same. It is true that during the civil wars payment on the Anglo-French loan of 1908, the Crisp loan of 1912 and various railway loans fell into arrears. But beginning in 1929, Mr. Soong set himself to resume payment on all these, although in respect of the railway loans some arrears were cancelled out of respect for the Chinese Government's difficulties—and on these loans too payment was continued until well into the war.

But towards the mountain of debt piled up by the Anfu Government during 1918–19 the Nationalists' attitude has been that of the deaf adder "which pushes one ear against the dust and stops the other with the end of her tail". They do not recognize these debts, in which they say China, as a nation, had no part.

From the dry and narrow paths of high finance let us turn to the "great open spaces" of the North and North-west—the three provinces of Chahar, Suiyuan and Ninghsia which make up Inner Mongolia lying all along China's northern boundary; northwards again of them the colossal territory of Outer Mongolia; and westwards the huge rainless province of Sinkiang, or Chinese Turkestan, endless deserts and mountains dotted by the world's most fruitful oases.

Of Inner Mongolia the tale is soon told. Between the seizure of Manchuria and their invasion of North China in 1937 the Japanese gradually occupied the whole of Chahar (which lies next to Manchuria), and since then have extended their hold to Paotou in Suiyuan, the end of the railway from Peking. But in spite of several attempts they have not been able to get farther than that. The country is too big and arid, highly suitable for the light, semi-guerrilla tactics of the Chinese, who are helped by the Mongols.

Here as everywhere one may note the total failure of the Japanese to win the friendship of any people whose country they overrun. Before 1937 there was a remarkable rise of nationalist feeling among the Mongols, who dreamed of reviving the glories of Genghiz Khan. They were embittered against China, whose administration was oppressive, while the incursion of Chinese farmers, ploughing up the steppe, had pushed the Mongols back from large stretches of grassland on which for ages they had grazed their herds. Since it was obvious that the Mongols could not stand alone—in all there are not many more than 4,000,000 of them—the question of whether they would incline towards China or Japan was weighted by the fact of about 1,000,000 of their race actually living inside north-western Manchuria. Not long after the invasion of North China it was announced that Japan was assisting the Mongol princes to establish an autonomous government. If the Japanese had the slightest talent for colonizing they might have attached the Inner Mongols as strongly to themselves as Russia has attached the Outer Mongols to herself. But their arrogance and conceit towards those whom they consider subject peoples are fatal to their chances of winning the latter's goodwill. The Mongols soon found out that a specially long spoon is needed in supping with the Japanese, and if China plays her cards wisely after the war there is reason to think that the Mongols will hail with joy the day of deliverance from their Japanese "liberator".

In Outer Mongolia and Sinkiang, Russia has been the dominating influence for many years. After the fall of the Manchu Dynasty in 1912, the Hutuktu, or Living Buddha at Urga,* who was the virtual ruler of Outer Mongolia, declared the country an independent republic. The Chinese version is that he was instigated to do this by the Russians. But in fact the Mongol allegiance had always been, not to China, but to the Manchu Dynasty, to which they were bound by tradition and sentiment and which, at least in the reigns of the early Emperors, had flattered them by paying court to the Lama Church and bestowing honours on their princes. In 1913 China was obliged to make a pact with Russia by which her suzerainty over Outer Mongolia was acknowledged, but at the price of recognizing Outer Mongolia's independence and granting special privileges to Russia in the country.

After the Bolshevik revolution, Outer Mongolia's new *régime* fell to pieces. But with the discords prevailing in their own country the Chinese were in no position to take advantage of the chance offered. Then came the dramatic interlude of Ataman Semeonoff's attempt, aided by White Russians who had fled into Outer Mongolia, to make himself king of the country. Semeonoff is, or was,† a Cossack, as much like a marauding baron of mediaeval Europe as you would find outside a history book. The Outer Mongols appealed to Russia for help, and in 1922 Red troops quickly made an end of Semeonoff; after which the Soviet took Outer Mongolia entirely under its wing and shut its doors against all outsiders.

Outer Mongolia is not a part of the U.S.S.R., as erroneously stated by some. Furthermore, there is a good deal of evidence, from information which inevitably

* Now called Uliassutai.

† Whether he is still alive, I do not know. After his defeat in Outer Mongolia, he went to Paris for some time, but returned to the Far East and joined the Japanese, to whom (according to Mr. Hallett Abend, formerly correspondent of the *New York Times* in China) he propounded a plan for conquering all Mongolia and Sinkiang, and thus gaining a position in Central Asia to attack India. This plan the Kuantung Army is said to have approved and filed for future use.

crosses so huge a frontier, that the Russians, far wiser than the Japanese, have not attempted to "boss" the Mongols but rather to guide and educate them to manage their own affairs, at the same time introducing many improvements, schools, health instruction and new roads. Mr. Owen Lattimore, the well-known traveller in Mongolia and Sinkiang, is emphatic that the Russians have treated the Outer Mongols very well and have greatly raised their standard of living. It is significant that in 1934 (the year after Japan's seizure of Manchuria had been completed and acquiesced in by China in the Tangku Truce) an agreement was concluded between the Soviet and Outer Mongolia by which each is pledged if the other is attacked to come to its assistance.

In Sinkiang Russia's predominant influence is an unalterable fact of geography. Not only is Sinkiang cut off from China by the Gobi Desert and two thirds surrounded by Russian and Russianized territory, but with the completion of the Turk-Sib railway branching down from the Trans-Siberian the wealthiest parts of Sinkiang, the west and north-west, are but 200 miles from the Russian railway, with good motor-roads to reach it by; while they are 1,200 from the head of the Peking-Suiyuan railway, a distance which it takes the desert caravans eighty or ninety days to reach. There are Indian merchants in Sinkiang, in whom the British Government has occasionally taken a languid interest. But nothing can well stop the bulk of Sinkiang's trade going to Russia.

Yet the latter has not taken Sinkiang, like Outer Mongolia, under its wing, although, as will be seen, it had a golden opportunity to do so in 1930; and the province is still governed by the Chinese in spite of a passionate revolt which for a time seemed likely to be the end of Chinese rule.

After the Revolution, Sinkiang, like Shansi, was blessed with an extremely wise and able Chinese Governor, Yang Tseng-hsin, who ruled the province from 1911–28. He was a tall, dignified, scholarly man who held the balance fairly between the many conflicting peoples of the North-west—Tungans, Turkis, Kalmucks and Chinese. Yang was an autocrat, but he understood and was understood by his subjects, who respected and trusted him, and he kept peace and security in Sinkiang. He was murdered in 1928 by a jealous subordinate and was succeeded by a very different type, Chin Shu-ren, of whom Miss Mildred Cable, who knew both Governors, says, in her beautiful book *The Gobi Desert*, that he was "alternately too feeble or too harsh, dealing out leniency to the rich and severity to the poor, and showing that combination of tyranny and vacillation which is the most fatal characteristic that an autocrat can possess".

Revolt broke out in 1930 at Hami among the Moslems—a name connected with so many fearful rebellions in Chinese history—and quickly spread. It joined hands with the terrible "Baby General" Ma Chung-ying of Kansu, who had actually started life as a war lord at the age of fifteen and within twelve months had become famous for his daring and ferocious leadership. Towns that submitted to him were stripped bare of food and valuables; towns that dared resist were obliterated, every male over fourteen being slaughtered and boys under that age carried off to be trained for his army. Ma had apparently no idea of founding an empire, he simply rode forth to conquer, to plunder and to destroy, and the trail of his armies was all death and ruin. In terror Chin Shu-ren, the Chinese Governor, called on the Russians; but he played them false and eventually they turned upon him. Chin escaped in disguise, fled from the country and was sentenced by the Nanking Government in 1933 to imprisonment. Meanwhile the Chinese troops aided by the Russians had gradually suppressed the revolt, and the Baby General was captured and carried off to Russia.

Had the Russians pleased, they could undoubtedly have added Sinkiang to the U.S.S.R. That they did not do so is probably due to the fact of Japan's having seized Manchuria at this time. The men in Moscow were much more far-sighted in

1933 than they had been in 1923. Japan was without question their ultimate enemy, and they preferred to have China on their side than against them. They withdrew their troops and Sinkiang reverted to Chinese rule, to heal its wounds as best it could and recover from the awful years of warfare. Miss Cable has a vivid passage on the fearful sufferings of the humble Chinese people, who as pig-eaters are anathema to the Moslems and among whom she was travelling during all the rebellion:

> "Among these people of the undistinguished names we moved and saw the cruelty of the war-lord system spend itself on them. Like reeds in the blast they bowed before superior physical force, but like reeds they stood again when the blast had passed by, and by reason of their superior moral fibre were able to carry on and endure long after the brutal conqueror was destroyed. Finally it was the meek, not the violent, who inherited the earth."

That is truly an allegory of all China under countless tribulations from the totalitarian despot Chin Shih Hwang Ti 2,100 years ago.

It is very noteworthy that even in the stress of war with Japan the Chinese Government have been able, in conjunction with their remarkable development of West China, to turn a busy eye to the North-west. A strong commission was appointed in 1942 to plan and inaugurate improvements, and in the following year General Chiang himself found time for a flying tour of Kansu, Sinkiang and Ningsia to inspect the work. As a picturesque illustration of what is being done, a hundred and fifty pedigree sheep were bought in New Zealand in 1941 to improve the flocks of China's North-west. Japan was in the war by the time they started, so they were shipped to Calcutta instead of Rangoon. Here they were delayed by the birth of several lambs, but eventually were sent by train to Darjeeling, whence they were herded carefully across Tibet to reach their destination eighteen months from the start of their adventurous journey, all very well and indeed a much larger flock than when they left their native shores.

Now that motor lorries and aeroplanes make nothing of distances that the patient caravans once crawled over for many weeks, China's North-west, so remote, so mysteriously fascinating, will soon be open to every tourist and be in touch with all the marts of the world. Miss Mildred Cable, who travelled up and down the Gobi and among the oases of Sinkiang for over twenty years, and whose book breathes the atmosphere of the desert in every page, looks back with regret to the quiet thought and meditation of the night marches, when she learnt how to set a course by the stars, to mark the night's progress by their wheeling, and came to understand that "the desert is not an adventure but a spiritual experience the end of which is perfect simplicity". So do many young people now think wistfully of Victorian days when there were no motor-cars, no aeroplanes, no radio, and very few telephones, but a serene stability and evenness of life which seem almost unbelievable in their contrast with this feverish age. But no doubt the changes on which the Chinese are benevolently set will be all for the good of China's far North-west. Or will they? It all depends on what we mean by progress.

Another former dependency of China's was lost to her by the Revolution as Outer Mongolia was, namely Tibet. During the last two years of the Manchu Dynasty a very forceful and efficient General, Chao Erh-sun, Governor of Western Szechuan, had gradually pushed his way into Tibet and finally occupied Lhasa. The Chinese Government's intention at that time was undoubtedly to undermine the Anglo-Tibetan treaty made by the Younghusband expedition to Lhasa in 1904 and subsequently recognized by Peking. But on the downfall of the Manchus in 1912 Chao Erh-sun's rule in Lhasa collapsed too; the Tibetans declared their

independence; the Chinese troops in Lhasa were shipped away via India; and the Dalai Lama, who had fled from Chao Erh-sun, returned to take up his sceptre.

There followed a long desultory warfare on the borders of Tibet and Szechuan, the Chinese trying to reconquer the land of the Lamas, but with no success; and in 1913 the Indian Government proposed a triple conference at Simla. But the parties could not agree and the conference ended fruitlessly; only Tibet has retained her independence; though China has never ceased to claim suzerainty over her.

The Paris Conference had been a cruel disillusionment for the Chinese in other respects than the discovery that Japan was to keep the ex-German possessions in Shantung. They had attempted to raise several matters injurious to China's sovereignty—extraterritoriality, the recovery of Customs autonomy, leased territories, etc.—on all of which they considered that as one of the Allies they were entitled to satisfaction. But all their desires were ruled out as irrelevant. Certainly China's internal condition in 1919 was a serious stumbling-block to the gratification of her wishes. But since it had suited the Powers in 1917 to bring China into the war against the wishes of a considerable number of her people, one cannot but feel that they treated her badly in Paris.

At Washington the Chinese were determined not to be put down. The way was opened for them by the fact that, while President Harding had originally suggested a naval disarmament conference, it was enlarged at Great Britain's suggestion to include affairs of the Far East. Sir Frederick Whyte, in his admirable little treatise on "China and Foreign Powers" written for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, says that the British Government was casting about for some ground on which to discontinue the Anglo-Japanese Alliance (due to expire in 1922), which was disliked by the United States, but did not wish to drop it until some adequate substitute had been found. Hence the British suggestion for the enlargement of the Washington Conference.

The Conference assembled in November 1921 and lasted until March 1922. The Chinese delegates were Dr. Wellington Koo, Dr. Alfred Sze, and Dr. C. T. Wang; and throughout the proceedings they made an admirable impression, courteous, smiling, imperturbable, but very insistent.

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The Chinese came prepared with a statement of ten points on which they demanded satisfaction. Of these it will be enough to quote the first, fourth and fifth, on which all the others hang. They were as follows:

> "1. (*a*) The Powers engage to respect and observe the territorial integrity and political and administrative independence of the Chinese Republic.
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> "(*b*) China upon her part is prepared to give an undertaking not to alienate or lease any portion of her territory or littoral to any Power.
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> "4. All special rights, privileges, immunities or commitments, whatever their character or contractual basis, claimed by any of the Powers in or relating to China, are to be declared, and all such or future claims not so made known are to be deemed null and void. The rights, privileges, immunities, commitments, now known or to be declared, are to be examined with a view to

determining their scope and validity, and, if valid, to harmonizing them one another and with the principles declared by this conference.

"5. Immediately, or as soon as circumstances will permit, existing limitations upon China's political, jurisdictional and administrative freedom of action are to be removed."

Put in simple language, these demands meant that everything which restricted China's full sovereignty within her borders, all the great fabric of concessions, privileges and immunities on which foreign independence had been built up since the granting of extraterritoriality in 1842, was to go.

The Powers could not be brought so far as this. They agreed to the abolition of foreign post offices in China, seeing that she now had a first-rate post office of her own, and this was done in 1923. They indirectly secured the cancelling of such of the Twenty-one Demands as Japan had secured and Japan's pledge to restore the German possessions to China.* Lord Balfour, too, announced that the British Leased Territory of Weihaiwei would be given back to China. But on the vital questions of extraterritoriality and Customs autonomy the Conference would go no further than to promise to set up two Commissions—the one to examine China's fitness for exercising jurisdiction over foreigners; the other to consider how much everyone was prepared to allow his exports to China to be taxed.

On the other hand, if the Chinese did not immediately get what they had asked for, they scored in one important way, namely—that the Powers, if they did not exactly stand in white sheets, at any rate showed that repentance for the past and amendment in the future should be their guide in dealings with China. Putting it bluntly, the old so-called "gunboat policy" was abjured once and for all. This comes out plainly in Sir Austen Chamberlain's Note to the Powers of December 18, 1926, recalling that at Washington they had

"agreed among themselves, in conjunction with the representatives of the Chinese Government, that their future policy should be guided by certain general principles designed to safeguard the integrity and independence of China, to promote her political and economic development and the rehabilitation of her finances".

Still more strongly do the good intentions of the Powers stand out in the famous Nine-Power Treaty, subscribed to by the British Empire, United States of America, Belgium, China, France, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands and Portugal. In this document the Powers unequivocably pledged themselves

"to respect the sovereignty, the independence and the territorial and administrative integrity of China" and "to provide the fullest and most unembarrassed opportunity to China to develop and maintain for herself an effective and stable government".

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independence; the Chinese troops in Lhasa were shipped away via India; and the Dalai Lama, who had fled from Chao Erh-sun, returned to take up his sceptre.

There followed a long desultory warfare on the borders of Tibet and Szechuan, the Chinese trying to reconquer the land of the Lamas, but with no success; and in 1913 the Indian Government proposed a triple conference at Simla. But the parties could not agree and the conference ended fruitlessly; only Tibet has retained her independence; though China has never ceased to claim suzerainty over her.

The Paris Conference had been a cruel disillusionment for the Chinese in other respects than the discovery that Japan was to keep the ex-German possessions in Shantung. They had attempted to raise several matters injurious to China's sovereignty—extraterritoriality, the recovery of Customs autonomy, leased territories, etc.—on all of which they considered that as one of the Allies they were entitled to satisfaction. But all their desires were ruled out as irrelevant. Certainly China's internal condition in 1919 was a serious stumbling-block to the gratification of her wishes. But since it had suited the Powers in 1917 to bring China into the war against the wishes of a considerable number of her people, one cannot but feel that they treated her badly in Paris.

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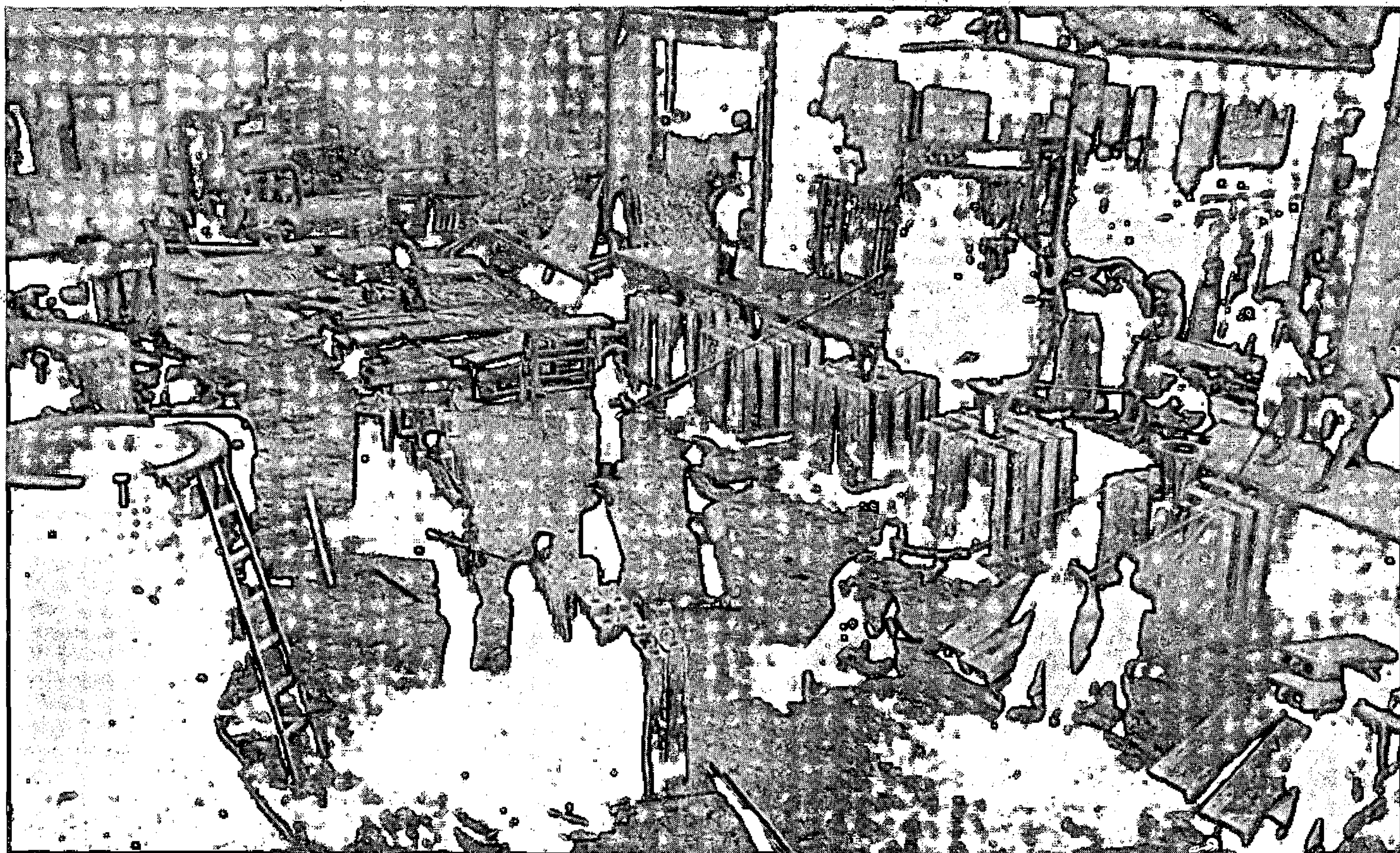
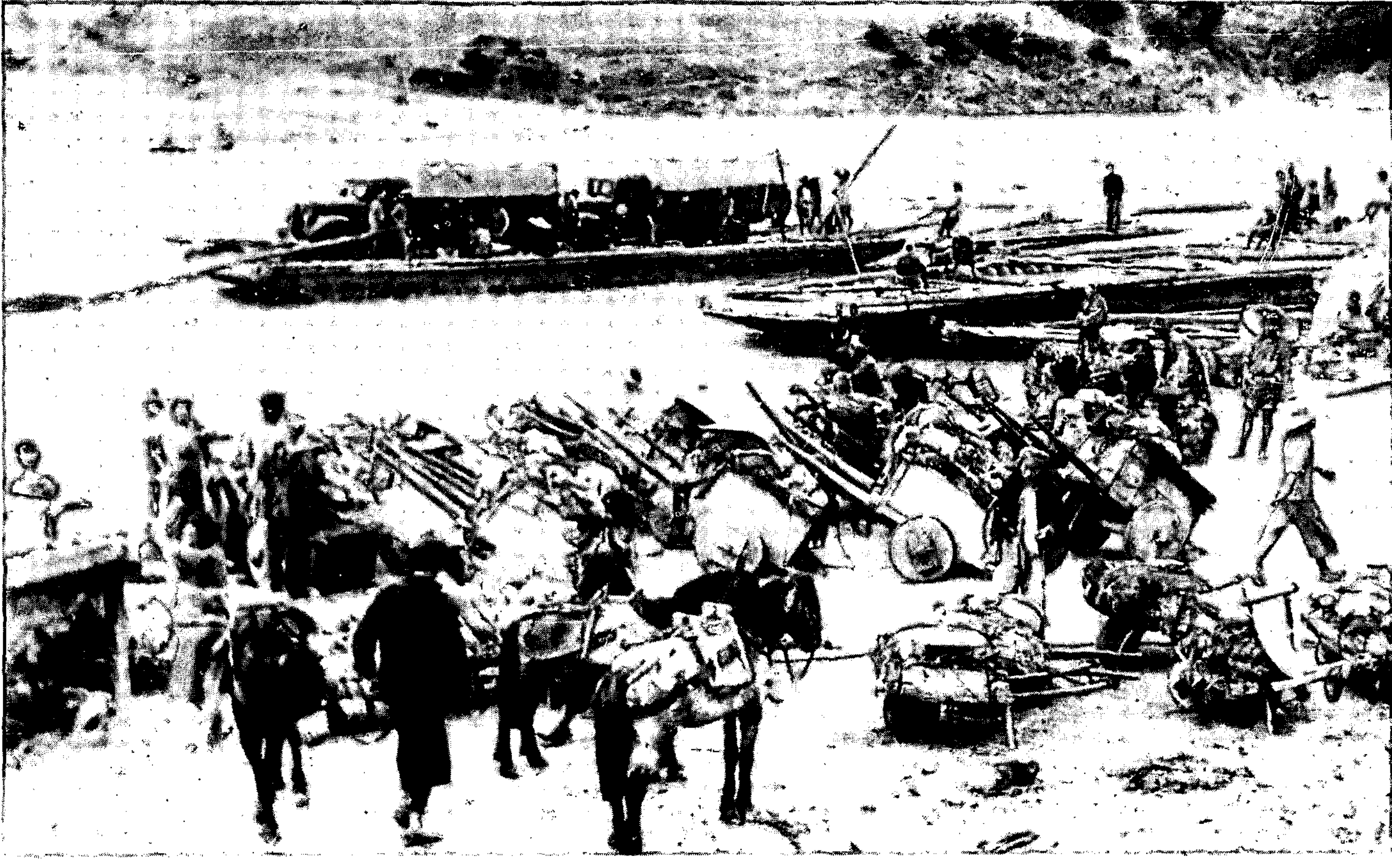


A CHINESE WAR FACTORY: WORKERS ON AND OFF DUTY



A FORESHORE SCENE NEAR CHUNGKING

Powers—was considered a more than ample substitute for the Anglo-Japanese Alliance.

There has been endless discussion as to whether that Alliance, if renewed, would have availed to keep Japan from taking the bit between her teeth and bolting down the path of indiscriminate aggression as she has done. Canada and the United States wanted the Alliance dissolved; Australia and New Zealand were urgent for its renewal; and the behaviour of Whitehall in this crux reminds one of Æsop's fable of the old man, his son and the donkey, feebly trying to satisfy everybody. We know that the Japanese had been proud of the Alliance and were deeply hurt that it was not renewed. But whether it would have stopped them from invading Manchuria and China is a different matter, simply because in those aggressions the military had taken charge; and the mind of the Japanese military man is something outside the range of human calculation. So far from considering himself bound by the pledges given at an international conference, he regards it as disgraceful to Japan to partake in such a conference. There were, for example, grave doubts in Tokyo as to whether it was compatible with the reverence due to the Emperor for Japan to join the League of Nations. When the time came, according to the soldiers' calculations, to seize Manchuria, they simply went ahead; and when the pledges to China contained in the Nine-Power Treaty were called to Japan's attention she replied with brazen effrontery that the Treaty was no longer applicable to the circumstances of the case. It is very unlikely that, by men who can behave in so utterly faithless a manner, the Alliance with Great Britain would have been deemed any more applicable. One remembers that it had not prevented Japan from presenting her Twenty-one Demands to China in 1915.

Washington's promise of Commissions to examine the abolition of extra-territoriality and Customs autonomy was regrettably long in taking effect. The fault was not altogether that of the Powers, at least not all of them, France in respect of the Customs conference being the stumbling-block.

It will be remembered that when China entered the war in 1917 payments of the Boxer Indemnity were suspended for five years. At the end of that time Great Britain renounced hers altogether, a total still of some £11,000,000; and, he result of a mission sent to China under the late Lord Willingdon, it was ed that part of the money should be spent on scholarships for Chinese students England and the balance be used for railway construction, these advances, ever, being regarded as loans, the interest and repayment of which would be oted to education in China. This arrangement was working admirably when an invaded China in 1937. A large number of students, men of excellent en had come to England, completed their education and gone back to do good China's development. And of the extensive railway expansion prior to ne conspicuous achievement was the completion in 1935 of the unfinished es in the middle of the Canton-Hankow railway, thus making it literally (with the aid of the Channel train-ferry) to travel the whole way by train ongkong to London.

French, however, demanded resumption of the payments, and, what is emanded it at the rate for the franc prevailing in 1900, namely 25 francs to nstead of the post-war rate of 125 francs. It may be recalled that the Government insisted on exactly the same scale in repaying British bond-who had lent money to France, with the result that the bondholders only fth of what was due to them. China kicked strongly. France retaliated sing to ratify the agreement made at Washington for the meeting of the s Conference. As Sir Frederick Whyte pithily puts it, "the French con- was correct, the French diplomacy indefensible". This wretched question, ...ad nothing whatever to do with the Washington agreements, was wrangled for three years until China gave in and the Customs Conference met in 1925.

By this time fresh civil wars were working up in the North, China was in a boil over the *shooting* of the students at Shanghai—the "May 30 incident"—and the Conference sat in as unfavourable an atmosphere as could well be imagined.

It is not worth going minutely into the long and complicated discussions which the Conference evoked. The foreign delegates proposed a revision of the 5 per cent. import duty to make it fully effective (low as the rate imposed on China was, it did not in all cases amount to the full 5 per cent.) and surtaxes to a limit of 12½ per cent. to be levied as soon as China should have abolished *likin*.

This celebrated and abhorred tax had been the bugbear of foreign merchants for more than half a century. Originally invented to pay for the damage done by the T'aiping Rebellion, it had become the mainstay of Chinese tax-collectors in the interior wherever a *likin* barrier could be set up, on the borders of provinces, at every junction of rivers and canals, at every pass between hills. According to treaty, foreign goods were supposed to be exempt by payment of an additional 2½ per cent. at the port of entry, in return for which they were given transit passes which in theory permitted them to pass to their destination without further payment. But the Chinese tax-collectors merely changed the name of the tax and continued merrily to collect it as before. The Western delegates were quite clear that *likin, ya* or destination taxes, whatever the name of the obnoxious impost might be, must really go before the surtaxes, still less tariff autonomy, could be permitted.

The Chinese were equally clear that the surtaxes must be enforced forthwith; that tariff autonomy must come into effect within three years; and as for *likin*, they were agreeable to the abolishing of it when they should get tariff autonomy.

Matters were still further hung up by the attempt of some of the delegates to link payment by China of interest on loans in default with any concessions in the tariff. But this was defeated by Great Britain declaring that she would not consent to the Conference being used as a debt-collecting agency. Meanwhile the rumbling quarrels of Wu Pei-fu and Chang Tso-lin inspired a strong feeling in many of the Chinese delegates that the atmosphere of Peking was not good for their health, and they melted away. With no effective Government in Peking and nobody to negotiate with, the Conference petered out without anything bei achieved.

Yet in the end, once the National Government was firmly established Nanking, China recovered her tariff autonomy without any further conferenc Under Mr. T. V. Soong's *régime* internal taxation was actually abolished over la areas, and, beginning with the imposition of surtaxes, matters proceeded by end of 1930 to tariff autonomy and the introduction of a scientific tariff w surprised everyone by its moderation. Further increases were made as the y passed; the "good old days" when whisky out of bond cost no more than bottle were gone for ever and the substitution of Hongkew whisky* was fa being generally acceptable. But although the cost of imported foreign g all kinds rose considerably, China herself provided many very good alter (and, in respect of food, a variety of cheap and excellent commodities—fo fin and fruits of the earth unknown in Europe), and although the foreig munity wept and lamented, they still seemed able to live quite adeq comfortable and well-provided lives.

The Commission on Extraterritoriality did not get going for nearly a yea the Customs Conference—for which the internal discords of China must rea held responsible; but when it did it tackled its work much more seriously

* Hongkew is the northern district of Shanghai, before the war chiefly inhabited by Japanese synonymous for the manufacture of cheap articles, some of them in human shape. As imported w increased in price, some concoction calling itself whisky emanated from the Japanese purlie Hongkew. I never tasted it. By all accounts I was fortunate.

the other Conference. With representatives of thirteen nations present it first met in Peking on January 12, 1926, and appointed a Commission, which, presided over by the late Sir Skinner Turner, judge of the British Supreme Court in Shanghai, travelled extensively, visiting law courts and prisons, and studying the legal code. Its report was of the familiar "curate's egg" type. Much improvement was noted and applauded in some directions; but there were several important deficiencies with a serious lack of trained judges, and the prisons were with few exceptions far below Western standards, while the courts were almost invariably under the dictation of the ruling Power. The independent rule of law was conspicuously lacking.

The findings of the Commission could not have been otherwise. The Chinese have never cared much for written laws, preferring to regulate their lives by the maxims of reason as laid down by their Sages and approved by the practice of centuries; and the mandarins, to whom the administration of justice fell (when the matter was beyond arbitration by village elders), were both judge and executioner and decided each case according to the circumstances of it—which commonly meant which litigant paid them most. Even if organized government had not broken down as badly as it had by 1926, the lapse of time since the old *régime* collapsed had been far too short for any general growth of a different conception of law. And as late as 1929 the National Government itself was found sending out an order that the property of the family of the deceased Sheng Kung-pao (an immensely wealthy merchant in the last days of the Empire) must be confiscated "in order to be returned to the people" on the ground that it had been amassed "corruptly", all without any process of legal investigation. In Shanghai the senior judge of the Mixed Court, to his credit, refused to carry out this order, and lost his job for it. But elsewhere the Sheng family's property was ruthlessly seized.

The point, however, to notice is that there was no public opinion against an act which, to English minds, seemed monstrous. Such things had happened re and were to be expected; the Emperor Ch'ia Ching had seized the vast ıne of his father's favourite Minister Ho Shun; the Empress Dowager had done ame when she bested the Princes who tried to put her down after the Emperor n Fêng's death. The pretext that the Sheng fortunes were to be "returned to eople" from whom they had been "corruptly extracted" was merely a matter ace-saving", which neither deceived not scandalized anyone. But the foreign cial Commission could not be expected to see such aberrations from justice e same light.*

f this was the common view of the matter, that of enlightened Chinese, rding the Commission's findings, should no less be noted. It was well put by veteran statesman T'ang Shao-yi, writing in the *North China Daily News*.

> "The sanctity of the law courts is an elementary condition to the develop-nt of good government" (he wrote). "In China, unfortunately, a system has ne into existence of certain individuals regarding themselves as superior the courts. . . . They insist upon the appointment of their henchmen as iges and order such judges to obey their dictates. They even hold courts their own and throw men into prison without due process of law. . . . The diciary has to be reorganized. Trained judges have to be appointed. As iggested, the judges have to be made absolutely independent and the body f the law must be respected by all officials of the Government. . . . Our point

*Actually, of course, the affair of the Sheng family's fortune did not occur until some three years he Commission had reported. But it is worth noting that, while they were making their investi-s, the ex-President Tsao Kun, clapped into prison by Feng Yu-hsiang, had been there for a untried, and without any precise charge brought against him.

of view should not be to satisfy any commissions appointed under the Washington Treaties but to benefit the Chinese people. It is absurd for the Ministry of Justice to ignore our people and their needs and then to rush mandates and telegraphic messages about the country ordering sudden and not well-planned improvements to impress the Commissioners. What we need is a thoroughly considered plan which will give the Chinese people a judicial system and a law which shall protect them and their property. . . . No system can be suitable for the Chinese people which is not good enough for the foreigners living in China."

In their report to the Powers the representatives in Peking offered a screed of good advice to the Chinese Government and suggested to their respective Governments that they might agree with China on some guarded scheme for the gradual relinquishment of extraterritoriality. Nobody on the foreign side could conceive of any process by which the abolition of extraterritoriality (which had cost Japan many years of industrious work and the proving of real reforms) could be accomplished except slowly and cautiously. This, however, was not at all the view of the Kuomintang Government; its best-advertised claim to public support was a promise to get rid of the "unequal treaties" without delay; and as soon as the capital had been removed to Nanking, Dr. C. T. Wang, the Foreign Minister, set about getting rid of them with energy and skill.

In all the treaties there was a clause providing for revision every ten years, and this gave Nanking a pretext for arguing that it was entitled to denounce each treaty as the ten years expired. Belgium was the first country to have to meet this thrust; and in 1928, when concluding a new treaty, she was coerced into agreeing that Belgian extraterritorial rights should be surrendered when those of other Powers were abolished. Between that date and 1931 Denmark, Italy, Portugal, Mexico, Spain, Norway and Holland followed suit. Germany and Austria had lost their rights in the war. Russia had given up hers after her revolution. Thus only Great Britain, the United States, France, Japan, Brazil, Switzerland ar Sweden remained unencumbered by awkward undertakings.* Dr. Wang pr ceeded to hasten the wheels of their chariots by audacious prodding. As usu Great Britain was the goat. The negotiations with America were understood keep pace with the British. The rest waited to see what Great Britain would d except Japan, who, it was generally recognized, would do exactly what she thoug best for herself.

The ensuing verbal, or rather scriptural, duel between Dr. Wang and British Whitehall contains the most stimulating display of pertinacity in pur and ingenuity in evasion that a student of dialectic could desire. It reminds of a stoat pursuing a rabbit—the stoat with one eye continually on the spect applauding the chase; the rabbit, twisting and turning with considerable dex but knowing that it must eventually be caught and not much caring whe was. It will be remembered that between 1929–31 a Labour Government power in Great Britain, which had little interest in the Empire and none w in the British merchant in China, who was commonly presented by the S press as a bloodsucker and slavedriver.

Dr. Wang began in April 1929 with dulcet Notes to those Powers who h given any undertaking on the subject of extraterritoriality, expressing C desire to have it abolished. Whitehall replied with a lengthy survey of the cir stances in which extraterritoriality had been born and its subsequent history logic of which really allowed of only one conclusion; but after referring to

* Sir Austen Chamberlain's promise to China to surrender British rights in China is not forgo But no specific date was attached to it, and there was nothing in the offer to suggest that Bri extraterritoriality should go at one fell swoop without proper negotiation.

Austen Chamberlain's offer, the British Note proposed to examine with Nanking what, if any, further steps could be taken.

Dr. Wang's answer was an elaborate refutation of each of Great Britain's points. More correspondence ensued. As this obviously was leading nowhere the Chinese Government bluntly announced by mandate of December 28, 1929, that all extraterritorial rights would be abolished as from January 1, 1930.

There was now considerable excitement in China as to what would happen on the fatal date. Would Chinese troops invade the Foreign Concessions and evict the judges and consuls from their courts? Would there perhaps be another strike and boycott? Would Whitehall at last be roused to face this audacious declaration with becoming firmness? None of these things happened. The mandate was a gesture, for the benefit of the spectators at the stoat-and-rabbit comedy, followed by an invitation from Dr. Wang to open negotiations forthwith. Whitehall feebly replied by consenting to regard January 1, 1930, as the date from which the abolition of extraterritoriality might be considered to have begun. After which, of course, the game was up, the chase was over, the rabbit had manifestly lain down prepared to be devoured.

Further proceedings, however, were held up while Nanking turned to the much more urgent business of grappling with the revolt of the Reorganizationists described in the last chapter, and it was not until early in 1931 that Sir Miles Lampson, the British Minister, and Dr. Wang began to negotiate in earnest. By July they had initialled a draft agreement for the surrender of British extraterritorial rights which they referred to their respective Governments. But by now a new war was blowing up between Canton and Nanking; and within a few weeks the Japanese had started on the rape of Manchuria. The draft agreement was pigeon-holed.

The anxiety with which the correspondence and negotiations between China and Great Britain had been watched by the foreign community in China was very eat. Sir Eric Teichman, in *Affairs of China*, makes light of this anxiety, just as had done in respect of the surrender of Hankow. But it is easy to assume a ilosophic detachment towards the troubles of others by which there is no inger of being ourselves affected. In fact at that time foreigners had just cause be anxious. In two years, notwithstanding the supposed unification of China, anking had been obliged to fight three campaigns for its existence. The Comnists, too, since their expulsion from the Wu-Han cities in 1927, had established nselves in Kiangsi and, rapidly regaining strength, had extended their power up into the Yangtze Valley within measurable reach of Nanking itself. There e appalling floods in the middle Yangtze in 1931; the water flowed six feet deep ugh the streets of Hankow; an area as big as England became one huge lake; when Sir John Hope Simpson went out to China on behalf of the League of ions to supervise relief work he came to a point on the Yangtze where a signrd announced "The Soviet Republic of China", and above that he had to work ough the Communists as the only ruling Power.

The Nanking Government, too, was not acting in a way to inspire confidence. seizure of the Sheng family's property had naturally made a very bad pression. Worse still was the case of John Hay Thorburn, a Shanghai boy of neteen. In June 1931 he left Shanghai by train, got out near Quinsan (Gordon's d battlefield) and began walking up the railway towards Soochow. What actly happened then has never been cleared up. Apparently he got into an tercation with the police; he had a revolver and may have fired it. What is certain that he was seized and executed and his body was made away with in order to de his death. When inquiry was made for Thorburn the Nanking Government ofessed to be unable to learn anything about him: in a country like China, where is a common saying, "If you do not want a thing known, do not do it", and where

a foreigner away from a Foreign Concession is as conspicuous as the Eiffel Tower, this was preposterous. Independent investigations by the police of Shanghai established beyond question the fact and general circumstances of Thorburn's death and disappearance. Confronted with this revelation, Nanking was forced to change its attitude; but not till four months after the crime was an official admission of it sent to the British Minister.

No doubt it was felt in Nanking that the action of one of its officials in thus rushing to death a young Englishman—who after all was only a lad, for whom allowance should have been made even if he lost his temper and acted violently—and then making away with his body would have an injurious influence on the negotiations in progress on extraterritoriality. But nothing could have been more injurious to the Chinese Government's claim to have jurisdiction over foreigners than the course it took.

Above all else was the question of the International Settlement of Shanghai, which from the few acres allotted for foreign residence and management ninety years before had developed into one of the richest cities in Asia, home of a million and a half people representing thirty different nationalities, and focus of all the most important commerce, industry and finance of China. It is easy to understand that Shanghai was peculiarly obnoxious to the Chinese. Its growth, prosperity and good administration were entirely due to foreign qualities which they themselves had not yet learnt to emulate. It was wholly outside their control; no Chinese official could function in it nor even have his proclamations posted on its walls without the foreign Council's leave. And within its protective circle lived a million Chinese, beyond reach of their own Government and whom, on any illicit attempt to seize them, the Municipal Council was always alert to protect.

On the other hand, Shanghai represented the rule of law as no other town in the country. Its Government, the Municipal Council, was elected by the rate-payers, and annually gave a full account to them of all it had done and every penny it had spent; and if any resident, Chinese or foreign, considered himself unjustly used by the Council, he could take action against it in a special Court set up by the Consular Body. Although some of the Council's actions—for example, the rigid embargo on any functioning by Chinese officials within the Settlement borders—stretched the principle of extraterritoriality far and were certainly ne foreseen when the Settlement was founded, it must be remembered that suc government, always responsible to its electors and subject to an independent co of law, was compelled, in the disordered state of China, to be perpetually on gu against encroachment by arbitrary authorities who admitted responsibility nobody and nothing but their own pleasure. In taking this stand, moreover Council had to remember that they were guardians not only of foreign, but vast volume of Chinese, interests and even of the finance of China herself, wh stability depended on the protection enjoyed under foreign rule. In this res the incident of the attempted seizure of the Sheng family's property, if I r quote it once more, was of the first importance as a warning to every Chines the perils of undermining the rule of law established in Shanghai.

All this huge fabric orderly administration and secure operation of business a finance rested like an inverted pyramid poised upon its apex on the principle extraterritoriality. It is not wonderful, therefore, in the still chaotic conditi of government and amid the unchecked licence of *tangpu* and local officials, t foreigners watched with the gravest misgivings while Whitehall indifferen whittled away the basis of independent law which meant so much to themsel and to China.

To complete the story of extraterritoriality, it was in very different circu stances that on October 10, 1942, the British and American Governme

announced their surrender of this right, just a century after it had been formally accorded them. How great the changes are that have been brought about by the past six—in reality twelve—years of war with Japan, especially in the development of new political and social understandings, must be discussed more fully in another chapter. All one need say here is that, while it was perfectly obvious that the "unequal treaties" would have to be rewritten after the war, there are very few people now who do not feel that they can be with fair-mindedness and security of interests on both sides.

It may be remarked, however, that while Great Britain's territorial Concessions are her own to give back to China as she pleases, and America never had any, Shanghai is an International Settlement which belongs to the people who own the land in it, not to their Governments, and is not covered by the renunciation of extraterritoriality in 1942. Its future will have to be decided jointly by China and the old Treaty Powers, or those of them who are China's friends. But one does not doubt for a moment that this can be amicably arranged. Possibly Shanghai will hereafter be administered, like the ex-British Concession at Hankow, by a joint Chinese and foreign council under a Chinese mayor or chairman.

Two other incidents in China's foreign relations prior to Japan's seizure of Manchuria, which was the great turning-point in the history of the Far East, namely the Kellogg Pact and the restoration of Weihaiwei, remain to be mentioned.

Both China and Japan signed the Kellogg Pact, that fine flower of idealism, which pledged its signatories to renounce war as a means of settling disputes, oblivious to the fact that certain Governments regarded war as the natural occupation of their people and peace as merely an interlude to be spent in preparing for the next war. Was it not Clausewitz who said "Peace is only a dream, and not a pleasant dream"? That also was the Japanese soldiers' view. However, liberal tendencies were having a brief fling in Japan, and the Kellogg Pact was signed. But it is interesting to recall that in 1929, when China and Russia were actually fighting in a small way over the Chinese Eastern Railway, and America proposed the invoking of the Kellogg Pact to get the disputants to refer their quarrel to arbitration, Japan objected on the ground that the proposal might be offensive to both parties. Two years later, when Japan seized Manchuria, she rejected every suggestion of intervention in any form by a third Power. Behind the conciliatory policy of Baron Shidehara the soldiers were already working up for action.

It was in 1929, too, that Mr. Saburi, one of the best, most liberal-minded Japanese who ever breathed, died suddenly and mysteriously before he could take up his appointment as Minister to China. The Black Dragon Society (always closely linked with the extreme militarists) was generally accused of his murder. Political assassination is so normal a feature in Japan that the charge is quite likely to be true, especially as Saburi had been in perfect health a day or two before his death.

The restoration of Weihaiwei to China, promised at the Washington Conference by Lord Balfour (who said that he felt as if he were murdering his own child), did not come off until 1930, chiefly because the British Government could not find anyone in China in a sufficiently collected frame of mind to take it. The story of this lonely, lovely little fragment of the Empire dates from 1898, when, on a broad hint from China, who needed someone to play off against Russia's rising power, Great Britain, who also wanted an outpost against Russia, obtained the lease of it. Fortifications were begun, the foundations of a naval hospital were laid, and the British fleet in the Far East reinforced—as still evidenced by the name "Four-Funnel Bay" given to one deep-water nook in which the four-funnel cruisers of those days could anchor. Then Russia was defeated by Japan, Port Arthur passed from the hands of a potential enemy to those of an ally, and all work at Weihaiwei

stopped; the big cruisers steamed away to some new centre of apprehension, the naval hospital was represented by barrels of concrete on the foreshore solidified by sea-water, and the jagged elements of incipient fortifications became the summer holiday playground of white children.

From this time onwards Weihaiwei's chief function was as a summer resort, for which its delicate and sparkling climate, blue sea and picturesque countryside had richly endowed it. There was a small trade in ground-nuts, marine products and silk; but uncertainty as to what the British Government would ultimately do with the territory forbade any large capital development. Weihaiwei was fortunate in the Commissioners who ruled it: the late Sir James Stewart Lockhart and afterwards the late Sir Reginald Johnston, both of them fine Chinese scholars who understood the Chinese people thoroughly. Relations between Chinese and British in Weihaiwei were of the friendliest kind, and such an Eden was the territory in contrast with the disorders outside it that the inhabitants petitioned earnestly that they might not be handed back to their own officials. But this could not be granted, and with the reservation that the British fleet might continue to use the island of Liukung, which stretches across the mouth of the harbour, as a summer health resort, Weihaiwei was duly handed back to the National Government.

At Washington, when the subject of the return of leased territories to China was broached, France undertook to do the same with Kanchowwan on the borders of Annam when other leased territories were restored. She had not done so by 1940. Since then Japan has taken it.

Chapter X

COMMUNISM

IT IS PERHAPS TOO SOON TO PASS JUDGMENT ON THE WORK OF COMMUNISM IN China, because we have still to see what it will do when peace returns—whether it will cause more civil war, which I do not believe, partly because I think the Chinese will have had enough fighting to last them for a century, partly because the political apprehensions alike of Reds and of Rights have developed so markedly in the past six years, or whether it will become the normal Left Wing in the constitutional government that will be established after the war.

What it has done so far stands out clearly enough in three broad stages. It has caused the most tremendous upheaval since the T'aipings, and directly or indirectly —between those whom the Reds slew, and the Reds and the luckless peasantry suspected of siding with them whom the Nationalists slew—the most prolific slaughter seen in all the story of the Revolution. Then, having begun by completely dominating the Kuomintang, after the breach between the two in 1927 it succeeded in creating a State within a State in Southern China, which for six years defied all the efforts of Nanking to suppress it and, for one brief period, even looked as if it might overthrow Nanking. Lastly, when driven from its mountain stronghold in Kiangsi, it established itself in North-west China, and there, with the most meagre resources, it has proved a thorn in the Japanese side and (with all necessary allowance for the enthusiasm of its admirers) has undoubtedly given the peasantry new life and many benefits. There could be no better evidence on that point than the success with which the Reds have foiled and survived the many expensive Japanese expeditions sent against them, a success that they never could have managed without the country people's active support.

The violence of the Communists in their early years, both in doctrine and doings, was almost past belief. A Chinese crowd, composed of normally the most peaceable, kindly creatures on earth, is indescribably terrible when roused, and the terrorism exercised by the unions of workers in Canton and Shanghai and of the peasants was justly to be dreaded. Miss Anna Louise Strong, a warm sympathizer with the Communists, gives an idyllic picture of their doings in Hunan and Hupeh between 1926–27 in her lively book *China's Millions*, but she cannot conceal that for anyone not a Red or a unionist life was very grim. "Week by week" (she writes) "the power of the unions grew, until at last, in the words of a German in Southern Hunan, 'the power of the magistrates existed no longer, except to sign the resolutions issued by the People's Power'." The dividing line between orthodox Communists and bad characters out for whatever they could get and not caring how they got it was as narrow as that between Communism and just a plain *jacquerie*.

The storm subsided, as storms always do in China, and when the Communist armies were properly organized in Kiangsi (from 1928) the bad characters were weeded out or brought under control and very strict discipline was kept among them, particularly in respect of paying for anything they commandeered, and treating decently farms and their owners on whom they might be billeted. And it is only fair to say that excesses committed in the name of Communism in 1926–27 were fully equalled, even more so, by the Nationalists when they turned upon the Reds. In May 1927, when the Communists at Changsha, in defiance of Wuhan's policy, started evicting landlords and nationalizing the land, the revolt was crushed by the Wuhan forces with a ruthlessness that wiped out hundreds of innocent peasants. And the Communist mutiny at Nanchang in the following August was stamped out by Generals Chu Pei-teh and Ho Chien with awful ferocity.

Of more permanent interest—for life is as regrettably cheap as it is prolific in China—is whether Communism of the early Moscow order could ever be acceptable to China; and even in the darkest hours, when the Communists wholly dominated the Nationalist movement and the troops of such tried and trusted Generals as Wu Pei-fu and Sun Chuan-fang were corrupted and hamstrung by Red propaganda, those who knew the Chinese people best were unanimous that it never could be. Sir Eric Teichman puts the case in a nutshell when he says that "the Chinese as a race are individualists and hard-headed materialists, with an agricultural society founded on village, clan and family; and lack in their national character that strain of emotion and imagination which breeds religious or Communistic fervour". The wild-fire enthusiasm with which the Communist doctrines at first flew through South and Central China was due, among students, to their disillusionment at the failure of the Revolution and their indignation at China's lowly and helpless state, bound hand and foot, as it seemed, by iniquitous treaties; and among peasants, to the misery and hunger in which the war lords' misrule had ground them down. To them the Communists, with their slogans "Down with landlords, down with taxation; the good earth and its fruits for those who work it", were like angels from heaven.

In the course of time, however, these extreme doctrines inevitably became modified to harmonize with Chinese instincts and customs, yet one may agree with Mr. Edgar Snow when he argues, in his remarkable book *Red Star Over China*, that the violence of the Communists (unlike, say, the violence of the T'aipings or the usual chaos intervening in bygone days between one dynasty and another) has had certain permanent value for China.

"You can think of the whole history of the Communist movement in China" (he writes) "as a grand propaganda tour, and the defence, not so much of the

absolute right of certain ideas, perhaps, as of their right to exist. I'm not sure that it may not prove to have been the most permanent service of the Reds. . . . For millions of young peasants who have heard the Marxist gospel preached by those beardless youths, thousands of whom are now dead, the old exorcisms of Chinese culture will never again be quite as effective. Wherever in their incredible migrations destiny has moved these Reds, they have vigorously demanded deep social changes—of which the peasants could have learnt in no other way—and have brought new faith in action to the poor and oppressed.

"However badly they have erred at times, however tragic have been their excesses . . . it has been their sincere and sharply felt propagandist aim to shake, to arouse, the millions of rural China to their responsibilities in society, to awaken them to a belief in human rights . . . and coerce them to fight . . . for a life of justice, equality, freedom and human dignity."

If this was true when Mr. Snow wrote in 1937, it is doubly true now that the peasants' wits have been sharpened by six years of war and they have learned through mass migration, fleeing from the Japanese, and by army service to think of themselves as citizens not just of the little village in which they were born, but of the whole of China, in which they have a definite stake.

The students, too, have undergone a similar awakening. Their attraction to Communism is no longer based on anti-foreignism but expresses itself in an earnest desire for agrarian reform. The expulsion of the thousands of students from the colleges of Eastern China has resulted in a remarkable outpouring of novels and poems of a new, realistic character, strongly contrasting with the smooth conventional style approved in Peking's sheltered academic atmosphere. For the first time the students have been driven out to face misfortune, to see the life of the common people of China in all its hard realities. And although much of their new writing may be worthless as literature, it reveals the ferment working in their minds. Whether they call themselves Communists or not, it is clear that these young writers (and numbers more who cannot write) have been brought into line with the principle of a better life for the farmer on which the Communists most strongly stand. One can see the growth of a force in public opinion, the fruits of which ought to be of high value in the new China.

The birth of Communism in China was haphazard. Like Topsy, "it just growed" among the students of Peking, infuriated by the Versailles Treaty and fired by stories of the Russian Revolution. The two leaders who presently emerged, Chen Tu-shiu and Li Ta-chao, were two of the most brilliant of the younger scholars in the capital. Li Ta-chao was eventually executed by Marshal Chang Tso-lin. But Chen Tu-shiu in 1921 went to Shanghai, where the Communist Party was first formally organized, and became its general secretary.

For the next six years Chen was the dominant personality in the "C.P.", but he was too much of the fastidious scholar for the extreme members. Confronted with the violence of the unions in Wuhan in 1927, he veered more and more towards the Kuomintang. He strongly dissented from the seizure of land at Changsha, and when the split came between Nanking and Wuhan he was in favour of making terms with General Chiang Kai-shek. In the Red rising at Nanchang in August 1927 Chen was deposed from the secretaryship of the "C.P." and disappeared from view. Might one call him the Kerensky of the Communist movement? He was full of fine ideals and had great powers of inspiring others—Mao Tse-tung, of whom more presently, in his early days was one of his pupils—and his name was at one time invested with peculiar dread in anti-Communist circles. But one feels that fundamentally his instincts were for the old *régime*. The noise and reek of the common folk nauseated him. "Everything for the people but nothing by the

people" might have expressed his feelings. He was not the stuff of which the true anarch is made.

Meanwhile from the "C.P.'s" inaugural meeting in 1921 representatives had been sent to the Congress of Far Eastern Proletarians in Moscow, whither since 1919 a number of Chinese students had been going to study Communism and propaganda. Communist groups had also been formed among the students in France and Germany—it is worth notice that none was started among Chinese students in Great Britain, not one of whom has ever been associated with extremist movements in China—and by 1923, when the "C.P." was admitted to membership of the Kuomintang, it was a large and virile body.

The Communists' exploits at Canton, Hankow and Shanghai have already been sufficiently described, and one may pass on to the Nanchang rising in August 1927, which, although it was a sanguinary failure, was really the beginning of the great independent power built up by the Reds during the next six years. For it was there that those three remarkable leaders, Mao Tse-tung, Chu Teh and Ho Lung, were brought into active partnership. Of Ho Lung some details have already been given. There seems no doubt that he began life as a bandit before being enrolled with his followers among the Reds, although his Communist friends denied it. But banditry has always been a recognized, if not an honourable, profession in China; and there is no doubt that Ho Lung became not only an ardent Communist but a brilliant military leader, especially in the excruciating Long March from Kiangsi to Shensi.

Mao Tse-tung also did his share of fighting at one time, but his true talent has been shown as a political organizer. He was born in Hunan, the son of a peasant *Kulak* (to borrow a well-known Russian phrase), the hard, grasping type familiar among the peasantry of all countries, who adds house to house and field to field and shows no mercy, least of all to his own family, in the pursuit of wealth. Son and father appear to have been violently at odds from the boy's childhood. But young Mao had talent and succeeded in getting an education chiefly because his father was persuaded that it would increase his money-getting powers.

The story of his life down to the time of his joining the "C.P." at Shanghai in 1921 (after which he had regular employment organizing unions and fomenting strikes in Hunan and Shanghai) is much like that of hundreds of other young revolutionaries, alternative periods of desperate want and obscure jobs at starvation wages. But his education progressed somehow.

At one time he was assistant librarian under Li Ta-chao in the Peking National Library; Mao's duties there were of the dullest sort, but they gave him the opportunity to read all the books he wanted. He has always been an insatiable reader with a brain that can analyse and retain all that it receives—in short, a scholar, a politician with a clear-cut unwavering aim in life, an orator of magnetic power; and yet in habits, appearance and physical tastes as much a peasant as when in childhood he toiled in his father's fields.

Mao Tse-tung's opposite number, Chu Teh—together they are the Great Twin Brethren of Communism, out of all comparison with other by-no-means-insignificant leaders—is as different from Mao in all but political faith as he can be. Descended from a wealthy family of scholars and officials in Szechuan, he passed through the Yunnan Military Academy as a young man, fought with distinction on the revolutionary side in 1911–12, and eventually secured a lucrative official post in Yunnan, where he smoked opium and collected a harem.

He had, however, two weaknesses—that is, according to the standards of the orthodox mandarin: he read largely of foreign books, and he evidently had a conscience. The upshot was that when nearing middle life he pensioned off his harem and its offspring, and joined the revolutionaries in Shanghai. The next step, even more difficult, was to break off the opium habit—which he is said to

have done by taking passage on board one of the Shanghai-Hankow British steamers, in which opium could not be had—and travelling up and down the Yangtze, not daring to leave the ship until he felt he had mastered his craving for the drug. After that he went to Germany to study for three years. On his return to China Chu Teh joined the Nationalist Army at Canton, but his sympathies inclined more and more to the Reds, and the upshot was that he took the final plunge and threw in his lot with the Communists at the Nanchang rising in August 1927.

As Mao was pre-eminently the political leader, so Chu has been first and foremost the soldier. As an organizer and captain of guerrillas he probably has no superior. He was the author of the four maxims of the Red army—"When the enemy advances, retreat; when he stands still, harass him; when he avoids battle, attack; when he retreats, pursue"; and these tactics the Communist troops, officially styled the Eighth Route Army since 1937, have practised with as much success against the Japanese as they did earlier when fighting against General Chiang Kai-shek.

In so huge a country as China, where apart from rivers and the scanty railroads the lines of communication are hardly more than mule-tracks,* and with every peasant eager to help by passing on information of the enemy's movements, such methods of fighting are almost invincible. Like clouds of flies the guerrillas disperse as the enemy strikes out, only to reappear when the enemy tires, and buzz stingingly about his head. Nor are aeroplanes more effective, since the guerrillas' headquarters are set up in any convenient farm building and move from place to place as the circumstances may require.

After the suppression of the Nanchang rising the Communists were for some months in a bad way, their forces scattered, numbers of them dead and their leaders fleeing in different directions. But during the winter of 1927–28 they gradually got together again and established themselves on a precipitous, well-nigh impregnable, mountain called Chingkanshan on the borders of Hunan and Kiangsi, and here Chu Teh was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the army and Mao Tse-tung political leader.

> "*And everyone that was in distress, and everyone that was in debt, and everyone that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them.*"

From all quarters recruits flocked in to this Cave Adullam, some seasoned troops of the Communist armies of 1926–27, bandits ready enough to embrace Communism in return for regular food, many mutineers from the White forces, eager young students with soft muscles panting up the mountain paths, horny peasants driven from their homes by the Wuhan soldiers. Such crowds of adherents were certainly encouraging, but there were really too many of them. Weapons were scanty, food scarce; there were factions noisily shouting for different panaceas; there were traitors secretly looking for means of selling the Reds to their enemies. It was a problem enough to drive the most experienced leader to distraction.

The Chinese are commonly said to have no talent for organization. It would probably be truer to say that their ideas and ours of organization are not the same. They have not hitherto been successful with limited liability companies on Western

* Or were. During 1931–37 the National Government constructed some 30,000 miles of motor roads in Eastern China, and since its retreat to Chungking, in 1938, it has made many more than this in Western China. But these roads did not exist when the Communists were fighting Nanking during 1930–34, nor do they, to any great extent, exist in North-west China to cramp the style of the Reds in fighting Japan.

lines, but on the other hand their own guilds of immemorial antiquity, in which practically all Chinese trades and industries are grouped, are as efficiently organized, disciplined and flexible as any association could be. And undoubtedly the Red leaders on Chingkanshan showed extraordinary ability in moulding their motley herd of followers into efficient shape.

Before the end of 1928 two armies had been formed, the 4th, under Chu Teh, which became famous, and the 5th under another able commander named P'eng Teh-huai, which beat off two attacks by White troops. And in 1929 a move was made from the crowded quarters on Chingkanshan into southern Kiangsi, which was successfully occupied, together with a strip of western Fukien. Most of this country is mountainous, the home of tigers, wild boar, deer and rare birds; but between the mountains are warm fertile valleys, and thus the food problem was solved while the general lie of the land was admirable for defence and for the Communists' guerrilla tactics.

Other Red nuclei had come into existence in Hunan and west Hupeh, and by now the Communists, with several hundreds of square miles of country well under their control, had announced themselves as the Soviet Republic of China, with their capital at Juichin. At the end of 1929 the Ninth Party Conference was held (the "C.P." had succeeded in holding a formal conference every year since their formation in Shanghai), at which differences of view were ironed out and the Soviet was purged of disloyal and treacherous elements. There is no record of what became of the latter, but their fate was probably pretty grim. Men who had seen their comrades mown down by hundreds at Changsha and Nanchang were not likely to have much mercy on those of their own fellowship whom they suspected of treachery.

Another conference was held in February 1930, when the headquarters of the Chinese Soviet were fixed in Kiangsi and a programme was mapped out of general expansion, Soviets to be formed in each new area and thoroughly consolidated before a further move was made, and the land everywhere to be nationalized. During this year the Red armies went on to the offensive on a considerable scale. They occupied a large part of northern Kiangsi and increased their hold in Hunan. Two attacks were made on Changsha, capital of Hunan, but the city was strongly held and they were beaten off.

These attacks perhaps first aroused the general public, certainly the foreign community, to the strength which the Reds had achieved. Great cities are few in China, and Changsha is one of the most famous and historic, the stronghold of a peculiarly proud coterie of gentry and scholars, and the birthplace of many famous men. So long as the Communists kept to Kiangsi they attracted comparatively little attention. But that they should dare to attack such a city as Changsha brought them sharply into the public eye and sent an unpleasant chill through most hearts. There is (or was) in Changsha a very notable girls' college—"the Girton of China"—founded and managed by a grand-daughter of Viceroy Tseng Kuo-fan, who after being educated at Westfield in England returned to China to devote her fortune and life to the education of women. As the Communists drew near there was great alarm on behalf of the girls of this college and they were hurriedly carried off to safety by a British gunboat.

Whether the Reds would have molested them is open to question. But with the recollection of the lurid doings of 1926–27 fresh in every mind, when missionary schools were sacked and burned as hotbeds of reaction and the homes of "running dogs of the imperialists", it is not surprising that no one was taking any chances. Communism was in the worst repute at that time in China, as in Europe; and as the Communists' power expanded and Soviets were formed on both sides of the Yangtze and in Anhui to within a hundred miles of Nanking itself, the dread aroused by their name became very real. So much so was this that when the

Japanese seized Manchuria in 1931, one of the chief causes of alarm was that it might enable the Communists to bring down the National Government and impose themselves on China.

But there is a complete lack of first-hand evidence on the internal conditions of this Chinese Soviet Republic between 1930, when it was fairly established, and 1934, when at last the Communists were forced to quit South China for the North-west. Nobody visited their headquarters—it was not thought safe to do so—though it is probable that any foreigner who could have convinced the Reds that he came as a genuine inquirer, not a spy, would have been welcomed. But the country was full of fighting and the journey to the Communists' headquarters would have been as dangerous as difficult. There were reports that the Reds were subventioned by Russia and had among them several Russian agents. But at a later date the Communists emphatically denied these reports; what they did, they did by their own efforts.

This raises one of the most interesting aspects of their success. Mao Tse-tung, in the story of his life recorded by Edgar Snow in *Red Star Over China*, has much to say about battles, military tactics, and initial differences between different leaders on the strategy to be pursued. But he says nothing about the things one really wants to know.

It was less wonderful perhaps that the Communists should have maintained themselves for four years against Chiang Kai-shek's troops, many of whom had little desire to fight them, and thousands of whom deserted to them,* than that they were able to produce so much of the paraphernalia of an organized State. They issued their own currency and their own stamps, printed newspapers and books, made their own clothing, manufactured arms and ammunition. The results were crude but sufficiently effective. All the articles mentioned need machinery of some sort, not likely to be found in large quantities in the towns which the Reds occupied. Yet we know that the Communists owned a quantity of machinery, for they actually transported it on the Long March to Shensi, where it has formed the nucleus of quite a considerable manufacturing plant. A curious story, which I believe to be true, reached me in 1939 of two Communist agents coming from Shensi to Tientsin to order from a Belgian merchant certain machinery. They knew exactly what they required, all about it, what it ought to cost, and were thoroughly businesslike; and they paid in gold bars. The story is an interesting illustration of the ease with which the Reds could pass through the Japanese lines. But it is utterly unlikely that what they could do in this way in 1939 they could have done in the earlier years in Kiangsi.

During 1930 General Chiang Kai-shek set himself determinedly to stamp out the Chinese Soviet, making his headquarters at Nanchang, which the Reds had never occupied since the disastrous rising in 1927. Huge forces were mobilized, roads were made for them to move upon, aeroplanes were employed. But it has to be confessed that for four years the Government forces achieved nothing but failure and even humiliating defeats, due to the ruggedness of the country, the Communists' elusive tactics, and the rapidity with which they could concentrate their forces against the enemy's weak points. Chinese soldiers, lightly armed and apparently able to keep in flourishing condition on no more than a couple of bowls of rice a day, can perform the most amazing marches, thirty miles in a night, and turn up fresh at the end. With these qualities, they have frequently baffled the Japanese and turned what looked like certain defeat into victory.

In the autumn of 1933 General Chiang decided to starve the Communists out instead of trying to defeat them, and with this purpose (as Lord Kitchener finally

* In December 1931, Mao Tse-tung told Edgar Snow, 20,000 Kuomintang soldiers in one body deserted to the Reds, who largely replenished their arms and munitions by what deserters brought over to them as well as what they captured in battle.

crippled the Boer guerrillas in the South African War) he constructed lines of block-houses and barbed wire to keep supplies from reaching the Reds. In this Canton co-operated on the southern side. Curiously enough, it was the want of salt which the Communists felt most. They held out for several months longer, but in October 1934, their position having become intolerable, they quitted the mountain *en masse*, unperceived at first by the Whites and thus getting a good start.

"And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, beside children. And a mixed multitude went up also with them; and flocks and herds, even very much cattle."

Such a migration as that of the children of Israel from Egypt was the flight of the Communists on the famous Long March, which is the epochal date in their history, every event being recorded as before or after the Long March.

In any other country than China it would nowadays have been frankly impossible. How many took part in it cannot be said exactly. By 1934 the regular Red army is said to have numbered 180,000 men, with another 200,000 partisans. Probably only a portion of the latter joined in the migration. But with women and children the number that went up out of Kiangsi, if smaller than that of the children of Israel, must have run to well over a hundred thousand. All the contents of their factories, arsenals and printing works were loaded on mules and ponies, and so they set forth.

Their route took them westwards at first through Hunan, Kweichow and Yunnan. But they did a great deal of doubling and backing in order to baffle their pursuers. If there had been any real co-operation between the officials of the different provinces, the Communists must have been surrounded and crushed. But the officials seemed more anxious to push the invaders on to the next province (as from time immemorial the professional trains of beggars had been pushed on from county to county) than to fight them; and the Reds turned northwards through the western marches of the great province of Szechuan (which is bigger than France), among dangerous aboriginal tribes such as the notorious Lolos, whom "no man hath tamed"; across endless grasslands where there was nothing to eat; and so via south-eastern Kansu into Shensi, the Promised Land at last.

The Long March was over. It had lasted just one year, and in that time the Communists had marched over 5,000 miles, crossing many mountain ranges and great rivers and continually having to fight battles. Many, many thousands had perished; only 20,000 of the fighting men who had started from Kiangsi arrived in Shensi. But nothing could quench the ardour of the Reds. That they got through as they did proves great ability in their leaders.

But even more one may be impressed by the tenacity with which men will stick together and endure all perils just for an idea. There was nothing else to unite and stimulate the Reds. Shensi is not a land flowing with milk and honey such as the Israelites had before their eyes; there was no prospect of wealth to lure the Communists on—in fact nothing but fresh labour; they knew that all the organization and construction would have to begin again as in the first weary days on far-off Chingkunshan six years before. But they welcomed the prospect and braved the trial because they believed that in Shensi the idea which sustained them might be made to take root permanently and bear fruit without danger of further deracination. One may not sympathize with Communism as a political creed, but one can hardly withhold one's admiration for the tenacity and courage of these rugged battalions whose only comfort through the Long March was the hope and determination to fulfil their dreams.

Their faith was justified by the results. The autonomous State which they had created in South China they transferred to the North, and there for all practical

purposes it still is. The Communist Army no longer bears that name, but is called the Eighth Route Army, an integral part of all China's united forces against Japan. A working pact exists between Yenan, the capital of the Communist State, and Chungking; in general the Reds take orders from the Chinese Government, and Mao Tse-tung and Chou En-lai (who since the Government withdrew to Chungking has been the Communists' accredited representative in the capital) are members of the National People's Political Council—"China's embryo Parliament"—elected in the autumn of 1942.*

But the fact remains that the Communists' territory in Shensi continues to be governed according to their views and by them; they, not Chungking, appoint its administrators and direct and arm its forces from their own arsenals and what they capture from the Japanese.

Sensational events, however, were to be seen before the unity outlined in the last paragraph was to come about—nothing less, in fact, than the kidnapping of General Chiang Kai-shek himself. At the time that this occurred, in December 1936, causing world-wide excitement, although the Generalissimo was still far less known abroad than he is now, news from North-west China was so imperfect and, owing to the strictness of the censorship, the whole position was so little apprehended, even in other parts of China, that the full circumstances of General Chiang's being kidnapped were wholly misunderstood. The common explanation, of course, was that the Communists had got him and might be expected to shoot him forthwith. Now, however, apart from personal complications, which need not detain us, the whole chain of events is clear. The Communists were only a part of the danger that the Generalissimo had to face.

The crux of the whole affair is that while General Chiang, in the autumn of 1936, was still rigidly set on crushing the Communists, others were aflame to fight Japan. Since the Japanese seizure of Manchuria, and the Tangku Truce of April 1933 by which Nanking had recognized it, the Japanese had occupied the whole of Chahar (eastern province, of Inner Manchuria), had unsuccessfully attempted to invade the next province Suiyuan, had carved out of China herself the so-called "Autonomous State of East Hopei" on the sea coast just inside the Great Wall, and were dictating to the administration of North China in Peking as if they owned it.

The indignation, the hatred, the flame of outraged patriotic feeling that the intolerable behaviour of the Japanese aroused were exacerbated by Nanking's apparent readiness to submit without resistance to whatever the detested islanders might do. In June 1936 there was a revolt by the Kwangsi generals Pai Chung-hsi and Li Tsung-jen on the basis that Nanking must be forced to lead China against Japan. This rising was swiftly overawed by General Chiang's concentrating an overwhelming force on the borders of Kwangsi. Most people at the time thought that the revolt was merely another exhibition of the jealousy of distant war lords for General Chiang; but events have surely proved that their cry, "Lead us all against Japan", was sincere.

As early as 1932, when the Japanese were attacking Shanghai (and having a much hotter reception than they ever expected), the Communists had appealed to Nanking to drop the quarrel with them and allow them to join in a united resistance to Japan. They renewed this appeal in 1936, but it fell upon deaf ears.

What China did not appreciate, but what General Chiang knew only too well, was that the Chinese armies were in no condition to meet Japan's. The 300,000 men at Nanking, known as "the Generalissimo's Own", whom Chiang's German military advisers had trained, were as efficient personally as soldiers could be; they proved that afterwards in their heroic defence of Shanghai in the autumn of

* A People's Council had been started in Hankow in 1938. But the system was revised and a new Council elected in 1942.

1937. But their equipment, compared with Japan's, was poor indeed, especially in artillery, which has always been China's chief weakness. There were some aeroplanes: on General Chiang's birthday in 1936 the nation subscribed to give him fifty 'planes for a birthday present. But the total number cannot have been large, and the Chinese pilots, who have since turned out very good under training in America, were inexperienced and impetuous and were soon shot down in the war. Apart from the Nanking troops, the provincial levies were no better than the old Tuchun armies, equally lacking in armament, training, and all the services needed by a modern army.

Under these conditions Chiang's policy was to do everything possible to avoid the war with Japan which he knew must come, while he built up China's strength. "Give me only ten years" was his prayer. But that was just what Japan, already alarmed by the growth of Nanking's authority and prestige, would not give him.

What one may question in General Chiang's procedure was the obstinacy with which he persisted in his war upon the Reds. He has proved himself such a statesman and leader that it is hard to understand the narrowness of his view in 1936, the only result of which was to waste enormous sums of money and masses of munitions that would obviously have been better saved for use against Japan, and which kept China in a state of weak division most suitable to the Japanese aim. The Communists had sufficiently proved that they were tough and clever fighters, and (at least to an onlooker) it seems that it would have been worth while to ascertain whether on political lines an agreement could not have been managed with them, and especially what was the value of their repeated appeal to be allowed to join the Government in fighting Nanking.

The forces assembled in the North-west "to exterminate the Communist-bandits" (the conventional phrase in Nanking-controlled newspapers) consisted of a couple of Government divisions in Kansu commanded by one of Nanking's best officers, General Hu Tsung-nan and in southern Shensi the Tungpei, or North-eastern Army, which had been driven out of Manchuria by the Japanese in 1931. They were commanded by the "Young Marshal" Chang Hsueh-liang, who had been given charge of the war against the Communists in order to regain the "face" he had lost in Manchuria.

In November General Hu Tsung-nan pushed into Shensi and was trapped by the Communists. Adepts in propaganda, they had undermined the morale of his troops with the unanswerable question, "Why fight your brother Chinese when we ought together to be fighting Japan?" Hu was badly defeated and for the time being could do no more.

This left the Tungpei to carry on the war, and the one thing obvious to everyone in Sianfu (capital of Shensi) was that they did not mean to fight the Communists. Exiles far from their homes and families in Manchuria, disgraced, dispirited and bitter, they had only one wish, the same as that of the men they were supposed to be fighting—namely, to go for all they were worth for Japan and to get back home. Even if Chang Hsueh-liang had been a great general—and soldiering was not really his line—he could have done nothing with troops in such a mood. In fact he understood their feelings very well and sympathized with them. Twice in the autumn of 1936 he appealed to General Chiang to drop the war and let all combine against the Japanese, and was sharply rebuked. Chang Hsueh-liang was not alone in this attitude; the Pacification Commissioner of Shensi, Yang Hu-cheng, although a Nanking man, was equally lukewarm about fighting the Communists.

On December 9th Chiang arrived by aeroplane in Sianfu to inquire into the whole situation and to prepare for a more vigorous attack on the Reds.

It seems probable that in the grand *dénouement* of the kidnapping the Young Marshal's hands were forced by the commanders of the Tungpei, who, there is reason to believe, were always more bitter against the Generalissimo than the

Communists were. Various interviews took place in the next two days, but General Chiang stuck to his determination that the war upon the Reds must go forward. On December 12 the troops in Sianfu rose and disarmed General Chiang's bodyguard. He himself was staying at a house a little way out of the city; in trying to escape he fell from a window and hurt his back rather badly, but was caught and taken back to the Young Marshal's house in Sianfu.

No one has ever impugned General Chiang's courage, and it was never more finely displayed than during the days of his imprisonment. Completely indifferent, to all outward appearances, to the imminent peril of death that hung over him, he remained not only master of himself but of the Young Marshal. The latter had sent out a circular telegram to all provincial governors asking for their support, but he received none, not even from the Kwangsi generals, who had so recently risen against Chiang. Thus thrown back on his own resources, the Young Marshal's nerve deserted him, and in his daily visits to the Generalissimo to try to persuade him to change his mind he appeared like a beaten dog.

It might have been thought that the Young Marshal was the captive, Chiang the captor, as the latter lectured him long and severely on the impropriety of his conduct, and especially for imagining that he, Chiang, would yield under threat of death what he had refused to suasion. General Chiang's diary of the days of his incarceration is a truly remarkable revelation of his mind. "The true scholar and the man of true virtue will never seek to save himself at the cost of moral integrity", says Confucius; "in its defence he will be ready to sacrifice life itself." That was the principle on which the Generalissimo took his stand; and he rated the Young Marshal soundly for his inability to see the point. When one considers that Chang Hsueh-liang was undoubtedly protecting the Generalissimo from men who hungered for his life, one sympathizes with his awkward predicament. For never did gaoler have a more intractable prisoner.

Meanwhile Nanking had announced the instant launching of a "punitive expedition" to save Chiang and to punish the men who had kidnapped him. No more certain way of ensuring his death could have been devised; so plain was this that it was widely believed that the punitive expedition had been ordered by secret enemies in the capital to get rid of the Generalissimo. But as the provinces had refused to support the Young Marshal, so they now made it plain that they would not support Nanking in precipitating a war with the North-west. This gave Mme Chiang, who throughout her husband's captivity acted with the greatest courage and presence of mind, together with Chiang's friends in Nanking, the necessary leverage to get the expedition stopped. How Mme Chiang, regardless of her own danger, flew to Sianfu to be with her husband is known to all the world.

Negotiations, however, were now under way. The first to join the Generalissimo was the veteran Australian journalist Mr. W. H. Donald, whose career is one of the curiosities of modern China. From the outset of the Revolution he flung himself into its affairs with zest and sympathy. Within a little time he appeared to know all the revolutionists (as we should say) by their Christian names. He was for some years adviser to the Young Marshal and accompanied him to England on the visit he paid between the loss of Manchuria and the kidnapping at Sianfu. Afterwards Donald became a sort of unofficial adviser to General and Mme Chiang and stayed with them into the days at Chungking until 1941, when, being well over sixty, he retired to Australia. All the Chinese liked and trusted Donald (as indeed did everyone who knew him), yet he never learnt to speak more than a few phrases of Chinese; he disliked Chinese food and always insisted on having Western-style food; and in spite of his encyclopædic knowledge of the tortuous complications of Chinese politics, he never became in the least sinaized as so many foreigners become who live long in the interior, but remained himself, the lively interested Australian throughout.

Donald, the friend of both parties, went to Sianfu at the Young Marshal's invitation three days after the kidnapping, and could thus report to Nanking that the Generalissimo was alive and well treated—a point on which wild rumours had been circulating and no certainty. This paved the way for the sending of an emissary from Nanking to Sianfu, for which task T. V. Soong was chosen, a man well liked by the Communists for his Liberalism and strong anti-Japanese views. And now the Communists took a direct part in the negotiations, being represented by Chou En-lai, vice-chairman of the Military Council.

One of the curiosities of this strange imbroglio was that the Communists had no part in the kidnapping of General Chiang. Mme Chiang herself wrote afterwards that the Reds "were not interested in detaining the Generalissimo". Edgar Snow implies that they were even a little horrified at his being kidnapped. However, since he was there, the opportunity was obviously a good one for bringing about an agreement on the desires that the Communists had at heart; and these they proceeded to express in a programme of eight points.

The chief of these points were that the Nanking Government should be "reorganized"—which meant getting rid of those suspected of pro-Japanese views—and all parties should be admitted to share the joint responsibility of national salvation; that all civil war should end immediately and a policy of armed resistance to Japan be adopted; that all political prisoners should be pardoned; and that in accordance with the will of Dr. Sun Yat-sen the people's political rights and liberties should be guaranteed.

On the basis of these demands discussion went on all day and every day. Chou En-lai had now taken the place of the agitated Young Marshal as chief counsel; a man of great ability, scholarship and personal charm, he was not embarrassed by guilty conscience as the Young Marshal was, and he was, of course, much better primed in his brief. It was the first time for several years that the Generalissimo had been brought into personal contact with a Communist leader, and it is clear from what happened afterwards that he was impressed by Chou's arguments. But to give way while in captivity was impossible for him; it would have been equally worthless, from the Reds' point of view, that he should; his loss of prestige, if he had yielded under duress, would have been so severe that his value as a leader would have gone completely. In this dilemma is it too irreverent to speculate that Mme Chiang may have said privately to Chou and the Young Marshal, "You let him go and I'll see that he does the right thing afterwards"?

At any rate it was decided that the Generalissimo must be getting back to Nanking. His departure had to be contrived quietly, for the Tungpei (the Manchurian soldiers) hated him, and if they had known that he was to slip through their hands they would certainly have torn him out of Chang Hsueh-liang's keeping and probably have killed him. In the early morning of Christmas Day he and Mme Chiang were conducted privately to the aerodrome, whence in due course they arrived safely in Nanking.

The joy of the Nanking public with which the Generalissimo was received showed that, whatever secret political enemies he might have, the people were under no illusions as to the mercy of his return. All the way from the aerodrome to his house the people surged round the car in which he and Mme Chiang were travelling with tumultuous shouts of welcome. Crowds gather quickly in China for any spectacle, but they are seldom demonstrative unless angry about something. The reception given to General Chiang was something altogether out of the way, a good omen for the years of trial that were to come, when the Generalissimo's calm confidence even at the worst moments was the core of China's resistance.

But the drama of Sianfu was not yet over. Close behind the Generalissimo's aeroplane came another, from which stepped no less a person than the Young Marshal, full of contrition, hastening to surrender himself to justice for his heinous

offence. One imagines that it may have been just as well for him to be away from Sianfu when the enraged Tungpei officers discovered that their bird had flown. But nobody would have been so rude as to hint at this. The general feeling was that Chang was behaving merely as would be expected of a man of propriety, and Chang made haste to confirm this good impression by appropriate public confession.

> "I am by nature rustic, surly and uncouth" (he wrote to General Chiang). "For that reason I have committed this impudent crime. Now, blushing with shame, I have followed you to the capital to undergo my just punishment so that discipline may be upheld. I am ready for death itself. Do not allow your friendship for me to stay your hand in treating me as I deserve."

To which General Chiang Kai-shek, not to be outdone in courtesy, replied in similar spirit:

> "It was through my want of virtue and my own defects in training my subordinates that an unparalleled revolt took place. Now that you have shown proper repentance I will request the Central authorities to take suitable measures to restore the situation."

We cannot do it in the West like that. A Minister who resigns office on finding that his chief's policy is really more than he can stomach will write a letter full of personal regrets at the rupture; and the Prime Minister will reply with fulsome thanks for the superlative service that the rebel has always rendered. But there is no disguising the fact that the one is relieved to be getting out and the other delighted to be getting rid of him. We cannot dress up these crises in the stately artifice which comes naturally to the Chinese.

So the Generalissimo, to atone for his lack of virtue and defects, handed in his resignation of all his offices, which of course was at once rejected. And the Young Marshal was tried by a military court, sentenced to ten years' imprisonment, and four days afterwards was pardoned.

But this pretty play was only a curtain-raiser—or perhaps one should say interlude—to the working out of the drama and the fulfilment of the unspoken understanding reached before that secret flight from the Sianfu aerodrome.

The first scene was the abolition of the Generalissimo's military headquarters at Sianfu and the withdrawal of the Government troops from Shensi. The next was the summoning of a plenary session of the Kuomintang in February, at which General Chiang gave a vivid account of his imprisonment and ended by presenting a new memorandum from the Communists, which repeated in different terms the demands set out in their eight-point programme. This, of course, was rejected as the Kuomintang's "face" required. But there followed a series of noteworthy speeches by Wang Ching-wei, now in favour again and, as Chairman of the Central Political Council, second only to the Generalissimo in authority, and on this occasion undoubtedly acting as Chiang's mouthpiece, in which resistance to Japan was enunciated as Nanking's future policy, and the release of repentant political prisoners was promised, and a definite pledge given for the summoning of a People's Congress in the following autumn.

The end of the session saw the issue of a long manifesto. It declared in emphatic terms that no aggression against China's territorial sovereignty would be tolerated, nor would the Government sign any agreement detrimental to it. It then launched an unsparing condemnation of the Communists' crimes during the past ten years. And at the end the Communists were offered forgiveness if they would agree to abolish the Red army and incorporate it in the National forces; dissolve the Soviet Republic; and abjure all propaganda contrary to the Three Principles of Dr. Sun Yat-sen.

A moment's comparison will show how faithfully these proposals fulfil what had been demanded by the Communists, only subtly rearranged so as to make them appear as a magnanimous offer instead of a climb-down by the Kuomintang, which as the source of all power could not conceivably be dictated to. The whole episode was an exquisite example of the Chinese skill in tiding over an extremely awkward *contretemps* and attaining a given purpose, distasteful to many but known to be inevitable, without loss of "face" to either side. The Communists lost none through being denounced afresh in the Kuomintang's manifesto; they had been called bad names too often to mind a few more, and it was noticeable that the newspapers had suddenly ceased referring to them as "Communist bandits". They got what they wanted in the last clauses of the manifesto; and although their Soviet Republic was to be dissolved their autonomy remained undisturbed. On the other hand, the Kuomintang, speaking with all the infallibility of a plenary session, had maintained its dignity, had rejected the demands of these barefaced rebels, and then out of its infinite clemency had offered them in different words precisely what they clamoured for, if only they would promise to be good.

The person who comes best out of the whole story is General Chiang. It is certain that he was well impressed by Chou En-Lai's arguments, and probably by his personality also, or he would never have taken the steps he did to bring about a reconciliation between the Reds and Kuomintang. He must have been convinced that an agreement would be for the good of China, or he would have stayed in captivity and probably been killed. At the same time, as already explained, it was impossible for him, and equally undesired by the Communists, to appear to be bargaining for release in return for granting their terms. Hence the preliminary rejection at the Kuomintang Congress of the Reds' demands, and the subsequent putting up of Wang Ching-wei to make speeches that would pave the way for the manifesto in which those demands were met.

If all this sounds like trickery it must be remembered that General Chiang was in a very delicate position. A strong faction in the Kuomintang, who hated the idea of concessions to the Reds, had to be won over, because, although Chiang had given no promise when he left Sianfu, it was tacitly understood that the Communists' wishes would be met; and when the Generalissimo says, or allows it to be understood, that he will do a thing, he does not rest until it is done. He is, above all else, a man of his word. As for the manner in which the agreement was achieved, there, of course, one must remember the inexorable requirements of "face" in China. The skill with which it was preserved all round leaves one slightly dazed.

One aspect of the reconciliation needs particularly to be stressed. It marked the Chinese Government's final and open defiance of Japan. The full story of Japan's doings belongs to another chapter; but one part of it must be mentioned here. Little more than a year before General Chiang's kidnapping, Japan had tried to have the five northern provinces, Shansi, Hopei,* Shantung, Charhar, Suiyuan, cut away from the rest of China and incorporated into a separate State under Japanese protection. This attempt was defeated by Nanking's clever diplomacy, backed by the outburst of popular indignation in the North against Japan's demands. But the Japanese had not ceased to bully Nanking *more suo* for a "settlement of outstanding questions"; and Japanese newspapers and speakers continually abused General Chiang and the Kuomintang for their lack of "sincerity"—which in the Japanese dictionary means unquestioning compliance with whatever Japan demands. As everyone knows, nothing is more abominable in Japanese official eyes than Communism. Thus the formation of the United

* When the capital was moved from Peking to Nanking in 1928, Peking ("Northern Capital") was renamed Peiping ("Northern Peace"), and the former metropolitan province of Chihli was renamed Hope ("North of the River", i.e. the Hoangho, Yellow River).

Front between the Reds and Nanking was a double proof of General Chiang's "insincerity"—defiance of Japan and alliance with Nehushtan.*

The reality of the United Front was shown in many ways. The Chinese Soviet became the "Special Area Government"; the Red army was enrolled in the National Defence Forces as the Eighth Route Army and received pay from Nanking; the economic boycott of the Red territory was raised, trade with the rest of China resumed, volumes of supplies of many kinds were sent to the Communists, mail and telegraphic communications with them were reopened. And now from all parts of China thousands of enthusiastic young men and girls flocked to northern Shensi to study in the Communists' schools and enrol themselves under their banners.

In recent years a great deal of first-hand evidence on conditions under the "Special Area Government" has been collected by foreigners who have paid long visits to the Communists' capital Yenan and moved about in their territory. The first of these, Mr. Edgar Snow, may be suspect to some as he is avowedly a Communist. But his brilliant and enthralling *Red Star Over China* is packed with facts fully corroborated by other writers. Mrs. Cressy-Marcks and Miss Joy Homer, an American girl who went to China with the Red Cross early in the war, went to Yenan with no predilections but simply to observe and inquire (tasks for which both of them were obviously well equipped by nature), and their books† contain a most interesting and impressive record of life under the Communists.

Of one thing there can be no doubt whatever—namely, the tremendous enthusiasm with which all are inspired. Life in Yenan, tucked away among the mountains of Shensi, not too well dowered by Nature and piercingly cold in winter, could never be luxurious, and the Japanese have bombed the whole city to fragments. All the population live in caves in the mountain-sides, where, too, are hospitals, schools, printing works and factories. An anchorite's food, millet and vegetables, is the daily fare, seldom relieved by dainties; possessions are limited to the strict necessities of daily life cut to the minimum—so much so indeed that the sheepskin coats so necessary in the Shensi winter are shared round among sentries because there are not enough for all. Yet every visitor comments on the remarkably healthy look of everyone, and on the cleanliness and tidiness of the dwelling-caves, qualities in which it must be confessed Chinese villages are not strong. Both Mrs. Cressy-Marcks and Miss Homer are also loud in praise of the hospitals and maternity homes as being well equipped (in caves, of course) and admirably conducted. Every mother is given a month and a half's complete rest on each side of her baby's birth.

Edgar Snow says that after the reconciliation with Nanking there was such a rush of students to the Communist territory that many of them had to be refused because there was not room for all. Many of them are the sons and daughters of wealthy people who have exchanged a life of ease for the penury of the Communist caves. Joy Homer describes their training as political organizers to work among the country people, teach them to read and write, hold classes in China's history and explain to the peasants the origins of the war. She seriously offended one girl by asking whether she did not study one academic subject, whether propaganda and organizing were all she learnt. "That is all we have time for," cried the girl. "This is the crisis."

Women play a large part in the activities of the Communist State. There are said to be 3,000 girls out fighting with the Communists. But Mrs. Cressy-Marcks, who saw a parade of the "Red Amazons" of the Eighth Route Army, says that these women "never went into battle, though they were often used for dangerous

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* Curiously enough, Nehushtan means literally "a piece of brass". Anything more brazen than Nanking's coming to terms with the Reds could scarcely have been imagined in Tokyo.

† *Journey Into China*, by Violet Cressy-Marcks; and *Dawn Watch in China*, by Joy Homer.

messages; their chief work was political, organizing, propaganda, teaching, nursing and being librarians". However, they have plenty of drill and are trained to be as hardy as the men. Mrs. Cressy-Marcks saw them scale the face of a hill for an exercise on which it looked as if even a goat could scarcely find a foothold.

Of the efficiency of the Eighth Route Army something has already been said in connexion with the fighting in Kiangsi and the Long March, and it has improved since it went to the North-west. But it is sadly hampered for want of equipment. The Central Government allows its pay (this money appears to be the chief revenue of the Communists, and the soldiers receive only a dollar a month, the officers from ten to fifteen dollars) but provides very little in the way of arms and ammunition. Whether this is because Chungking has none too much to spare or (as some aver) because some of the Kuomintang are afraid of the Reds becoming too powerful, it is impossible to say. But it has been a cause of friction all through the war that the Kuomintang would not agree to the arming of the proletariat, "the nation in arms", for which the Communists have frequently pressed. The Communists make some weapons for themselves—torn-up rails from the Japanese-held railway lines provide much useful metal—and quantities of hand grenades; but their chief supply is the arms and ammunition which they get by attacking Japanese outposts and seizing their convoys. Even with these meagre and uncertain resources the damage they daily inflict on the Japanese is considerable.

Very interesting evidence of the effectiveness of the Eighth Route Army and the guerrillas it has trained was given in *The Times* of November 10 and 11, 1943, by a correspondent in North China. In spite of the Communists' want of munitions and explosives, which debars them from large-scale raids and destruction of railways, the writer says that:

> "North China is an important part of the Chinese front. In February 1942 the Japanese forces in North China consisted of 11 divisions, 14 independent brigades and artillery, mechanized, and air force units. In spite of the Pacific war the number has not been much reduced, though some of the better troops have been replaced by very young soldiers straight from Japan, and the air force is now much less than in 1941. The number of troops used in the offensives against the guerrilla base areas during 1942 was very large. Though there are no large battles, and the Chinese forces are severely handicapped by shortage of ammunition, there is a steady drain on Japanese man-power. The Japanese exploitation of North China is also severely hindered. It is still true that the Japanese can only exploit the areas within a few miles of their garrison posts. This has prevented them from getting any really large supplies of cotton, of which North China was a large producer before 1937."

To cope with the guerrillas the Japanese have resorted to wholesale destruction of villages.

> "Over the whole of the guerrilla area it is rare" (says *The Times* correspondent) "to see a village which has not been at least partially destroyed. It is said that in north-west Shansi there are areas which have been completely destroyed. There has been increasing use of poison gas. Mustard gas is said to have been used in south-east Shansi, and at the end of May (1943) 700 people from a central Hopei village who had taken refuge in an underground shelter were killed by gas."

In passing, there is abundant evidence that the Japanese have also used gas in Central China. They are the only nation of the Axis that has hitherto done so (although it is pretty clear that the Germans were only deterred by the fear of its

being used against themselves), and it is to be hoped that the fact will not be forgotten after the war.

But such beastly methods have only recoiled on the Japanese heads. You may burn down a Chinese village, but the inhabitants run up huts and mat-sheds and carry on resignedly, but with greater hatred for the invader and the more alacrity to help the guerrillas. "If you rule the people by fear of death," says a Chinese proverb, "the time will come when they will not fear death." *The Times* correspondent says that:

> "The Japanese really lost their opportunity in 1937, when they could have obtained at least popular tolerance by enforcing behaviour towards the civilian population. It might almost be said that they could then have conquered North China by shooting a few hundred of their own officers. . . .
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> "In the central Hopei campaign, shortly after any village was occupied, all the people were compelled to attend a meeting at which speeches were made saying that the Japanese are only fighting the Communists and wish to help the people. However, at the end of such a meeting the Japanese usually seized several people and tortured them to find out where Chinese supplies or Government workers were hidden.
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> "There were also continual demands for money and supplies. Many villages reported that the first few weeks of Japanese occupation had cost them four or five times as much as a year's taxes under Chinese control."

To this may be added the stark fact that no Chinese woman within reach of a Japanese soldier is safe from assault, and that the first thing done by Japanese on entering a village is to round up all women and girls. Many a Chinese woman has killed herself sooner than give birth to a Japanese-begotten baby.

Thus is the ideal soil compounded for Communist propaganda, backed by the solid argument of the excellent treatment which the Communists have given to the peasantry throughout their sphere of influence. How many members the Communist Party contains no one knows except the leaders. Joy Homer believes that it is safe to say that there are less than a million, with a few hundred thousand men in the Red armies. But their organization is very perfect, their precepts and practice agree—after all, if they did not treat the peasants well their whole case would collapse, for agrarian reform is the basis of all their policy—and their influence has spread far and wide over North China beyond their original settlement in Shensi.

I have already indicated that the Chinese Communist creed has been vastly modified and tamed since the days of lawless labour unions in Canton and Wuhan and the looting and destruction of mission property. One interesting fact noted by Joy Homer is that, while she found no Russians in the Red State, except one "very homesick Russian photographer", the Chinese Communists have largely lost interest in Russia.

> "From the day that I set foot in Yenan" (she says) "I noticed a lukewarm attitude towards Russia on the part of students and young officials. . . . At least once a day I was told, very earnestly, something like this: 'You must not confuse our Communism with the Communism of Russia. Long ago we broke away from Russia. Today we do our own thinking. In your country you would probably call us Socialists. We believe in sacrifice for each other, and in hard work and love for all men. Almost it is like your Christianity.' "

Coupled with this one may quote a profoundly interesting comment by Mrs. Cressy-Marcks, the truth of which we have seen exemplified in Russia as well as China:

"No one can have any idea of this organization without coming themselves to study it. If so-called Communism spreads over China it will be different again from that of Russia. In any country where Communism comes, each ten years would of necessity see a great difference in its policy; compare France a few years after the Revolution with a hundred years after."

All the extremist doctrines have been dropped from Chinese Communism. Nationalization of the land has gone in favour of something very much like Joe Chamberlain's "three acres and a cow", and even landlordism is permitted if it does not mean exploitation of tenants. There is no universal State-ownership of industries; some are State-owned, others are not. Minerals are owned and developed by the State, but this is merely the ancient Chinese principle that, while the surface of the ground and its fruits can be privately exploited, everything under the surface belongs to the State.

Lastly, the tolerant Chinese attitude on religious questions has reappeared. Christians cannot be members of the "C.P.", but many of them are to be found in Yenan working for the Red Government; besides Moslems, Buddhists and Taoists. There is absolutely no anti-religious bias in the "Special Area Government", still less any trace of the frenzied attacks on religion of fifteen or twenty years ago.

As one looks to the future of China one cannot deny that a Party so well organized, so sagaciously tempered by experience to harmonize with Chinese instincts, firmly supported by the peasants and well approved by intellectuals, should be able to make a strong bid for popular favour.

Chapter XI

A LITTLE LEAVEN

HITHERTO WE HAVE SEEN LITTLE BUT THE WORST SIDE OF THE REVOLUTION—disillusion and discord following on the too-easy disappearance of the dynasty; militarism, civil war and public misery; Communist frenzy and Kuomintang arrogance; theatrical reforms that reformed nothing; and swarms of greedy adventurers helping themselves insatiably to the public wealth. In all this there was nothing to distinguish the Revolution from any of the periods of chaos that had always intervened between the demise and succession of dynasties; and, if it had been nothing else, China would certainly not be what she is today; either another Emperor would have emerged or Japan would have possessed all China by now.

But beneath all the superficial discord between 1911 and 1931 (I venture to choose the latter year because the Japanese seizure of Manchuria seems to have been the turning-point in China's history and the start of her true renaissance) there was an intellectual ferment at work, a divine discontent dating from many years back in the 19th century, still powerless for many years after the fall of the Manchus but never defeated, growing indeed ever stronger, and in the fullness of time producing the China that has stood up so invincibly to Japan. No one more readily admits than the Chinese themselves that Japan has done for them in six years, in respect of national regeneration, what it might have taken them sixty to achieve alone. The real point is that there could have been no such regeneration without the preliminary working of the little leaven that leaveneth the whole lump, without what Dr. Hu Shih has called "diffused penetration and

permeation" of ideas which informed and even in the worst times never deserted the Revolution.

Mr. E. R. Hughes, in *The Invasion of China by the Western World*, selects the year 1860 as the turning-point between old and new, when at last the Imperial Government was forced to admit foreign Ministers to reside in Peking and the Tung Wen Kuan College was established in the capital under the control of the veteran missionary W. A. P. Martin, with a number of foreign teachers under him, to train students in international law and the history of the British and French law codes. But with all courtesy one might object that the Manchu Court did little about Western ideas except to suppress them as hard as it could. Even after the Legations had been opened in Peking it was fourteen years before the Ministers could be received by the Emperor; the first batch of students sent to America, as may be recalled, were fetched home in a hurry on a report that they were becoming denationalized; and the grim story of what happened to the reformers in Kuang Hsü's "Hundred Days" has been told.

Dr. Hu Shih, in his lectures on "The Chinese Renaissance", recalls the brave, baffled life of the scholar and reformer Wang T'ao, who, born in 1828—the same year as Prince Ito, the Japanese statesman—went to England at the invitation of James Legge,* and after living there and on the Continent for some years returned to China an enthusiast for Western civilization. He tried hard but vainly to interest Li Hung-chang in his schemes for reforming education, the civil service and the whole system of law and justice. So he devoted himself to writing editorials for newspapers in Hongkong and Shanghai, which had a great influence on the reading public. Dr. Hu Shih tells us that in 1879 Wang T'ao visited Japan, where his name was well known, and he was received with veneration; and (says Hu Shih bitterly) "he lived long enough to see his Japanese contemporary, Ito, write his laws of financial reform and frame, almost single-handed, the Japanese Constitution—when Wang T'ao himself was still writing editorials". But what now has become of Ito's famous Constitution—corrupted by the Japanese Army into a mockery of all that the word implies? Was not the writer of editorials doing more lasting work as one of the first to set the leaven working in the old Chinese lump?

Kang Yu-wei, the next great figure in the work of enlightening China, holds a unique place among her would-be reformers not only because of his connexion with—it might well be said responsibility for—the Hundred Days' Reform, but for the unique trend of his thought. Kang was among the first of modern internationalists, although he could find foundation for his faith in a much older teacher, namely Confucius. A great scholar both in Chinese and Western literature, with a lively appreciation for the lessons of history, he taught that the root of all war and suffering lies in nationalism, and that lasting peace and amity are only to be realized by "the parliament of man, the federation of the world", guided by a World Council.

To this end Kang found that all nations had their own contribution to make, China included. For if the West had gone ahead of China in some things, particularly in recognition of the rights of the common people, were not those rights implicit in the teachings of Confucius? More clearly than any other did Kang Yu-wei see that China must reform or perish. Yet, curiously enough, he still believed in kings and emperors, an institution which seems at variance with his internationalism. He was never a Republican, but desired a constitutional monarchy for China; and this naturally led to his falling aside after the Revolution, and after the Empress Dowager's *coup d'état* in 1898 most of Kang Yu-wei's life was spent in exile. But the effect of his teaching upon Young China, though few

* Translator of the Confucian classics.

could rise to the height of his ideals, was felt by thousands who never came in direct contact with him. "Those who hereafter will write the history of the New China," said Liang Ch'i ch'ao in a funeral oration over Kang Yu-wei's coffin in 1927, "cannot do otherwise than take the events of 1898 as the first chapter in that history."

Liang Ch'i-ch'ao has already been mentioned as the most brilliant of Kang Yu-wei's pupils at the school he founded at Canton when first setting out on the path of reform, and afterwards associated with him in the "Hundred Days" at Peking, where, like his master, he was lucky enough to get warning in time to escape the Empress Dowager's clutches. He was an extraordinarily powerful and inspiring writer, and going far beyond Kang Yu-wei in his frank acceptance of republicanism he exerted an unequalled influence on Young China, chiefly through his essays in the *Min Pao*, the revolutionary paper produced by Dr. Sun's followers in Tokyo early in the century, and in a magazine of his own, *The Renovated People*. He was an enthusiast for Western civilization and the emphasis laid by European peoples on public morality, nationalism, love of adventure, the conception of personal rights and eagerness to defend them against encroachment, love of freedom, capacity for organized effort and belief in the infinite possibility of progress—in all of which he was obliged to confess Chinese deficiency. Later on, when the First World War was a terrible shock to Young China's admiration for the West, entailing a severe loss of European prestige, Liang shared fully in the general disillusionment, proclaiming "the imminent bankruptcy of the scientific civilization". But he still believed in the soundness of the principles he had stated; the trouble of Europe was that she had been false to them.

So Liang preached the supreme need of "a new people" without which no amount of mechanical reform would avail. In one notable passage he apostrophized "the soul of Japan", of which, he said, we hear so much; and he asked bitterly, "Where is the soul of China?" In fact it was always there, stifled under accretions of centuries of complacency, formalism and injustice. Had he lived a little longer Liang Ch'i-ch'ao would have seen it reasserting itself and he certainly would not have admired any more the soul of Japan.

One other character I would specially mention is Dr. Hu Shih, "the Sage of Modern China". He never held an official position until in the summer of 1939 he rather unwillingly accepted the Ambassadorship in Washington, resigning from it thankfully three years later. He preferred freedom to criticize, and one well remembers his lectures at a Chinese college at Shanghai in 1929 in a hall packed to suffocation to hear his unsparing exposure of Kuomintang shortcomings. It is to be observed that the college was outside Shanghai, and the daring lecturer could at any moment have been seized by the Kuomintang, which did not love critics. But Dr. Hu was too big and respected a man to be touched.

Hu Shih, however, was too fine a scholar to be a merely destructive critic. Everyone who knows China remembers him as the author of the Literary Renaissance, which has been probably the most important contribution to Chinese education in the present century; and in transcendental thought he has evolved a doctrine which, if not wholly novel, is certainly interesting and suggestive. His aptitude for learning reminds one of such prodigies as John Stuart Mill, who could read Greek when he was five. Born in 1891, the son of an official in Anhui, Hu Shih went to school when he was four, and by the time he was thirteen he had read and memorized ten massive works of the Chinese classics. He gives the list in one of his essays. One of these books was the *Analects* of Confucius, and Western readers who are interested may learn from Mr. Arthur Waley's translation of that book alone the stupendous nature of the task accomplished by this little boy. Chinese have amazing memories, and in their schools it is, or was, the invariable practice to make the children learn everything by heart: as, in so doing, they

chanted the sentence aloud at the top of their voices, the noise produced by a diligent class may be imagined. Most of them learnt by rote without understanding. But Hu Shih's mother paid double and treble fees for him to be properly coached, and what he read his teacher carefully explained to him, so that by thirteen Hu Shih was the complete Confucian.

From the village school Hu Shih went on to Shanghai for six years, where in a mission school he learnt English, history, geography, mathematics and natural science. He also read European novels: Scott, Dickens, Dumas, Tolstoy, etc. English romances had for many years been growing increasingly popular in China, though some of the situations strike them as odd. For instance, a Chinese writer would have married David Copperfield both to Dora and Agnes Wickfield at once and thus solved all difficulties. Rider Haggard, with his superb imagination and descriptive powers, and Sherlock Holmes, appealing to the analytical Chinese mind, are specially popular.

In 1910 Hu Shih won a scholarship to America, where he spent seven years, first at Cornell, then at Columbia. He thought it his duty at first to study agriculture on the general principle of acquiring some useful art, but soon abandoned it for literature, which was, of course, his natural bent, and proceeded to mop up all the writings of Western leaders of thought with the same ease with which he had absorbed the Chinese classics in boyhood.

It was at Cornell that the great idea which led to the Literary Renaissance came to him. It should be understood that the Chinese classics and all the most polite literature are written in a highly polished artificial language, extremely difficult to learn, incapable of being spoken or verbally understood—in fact a dead language. Every word of the pile of books which the little Hu Shih learnt at school had had to be translated and explained to him by his teacher in everyday words. Hu Shih recalls that when Western novels were first translated into Chinese they were put in this dead language, "and it was exceedingly amusing to read the comic figures in the novels of Charles Dickens talking in the dead language of 2,000 years ago".

On the other hand, China possesses an immense popular literature—plays, novels, folk-lore, verses, all written in the *pai-hua*,* the spoken language of the people. For samples of the vitality of this literature, Western readers may be reminded of that charming comedy *Lady Precious Stream*, dating from the 13th century, and Mr. Arthur Waley's translation of the inimitable fantasy *Monkey*, which is still older. Digging deeply into this rich storehouse, Hu Shih found the answer to his question, "In what language shall the New China produce its literature?" Indeed, the language was there ready to hand. Oddly enough, Hu Shih's ideas met with most opposition among his fellow-students in America. But when he put them forward in a Chinese monthly, *The Youth*, in January 1917 they were received with enthusiasm, especially by the editor, Chen Tu-shiu, afterwards the Communist leader, himself a well-trained scholar on the old lines; and when Hu Shih returned to China in the summer of 1917 the cause of the Literary Renaissance, or Revolution, was already well launched.

We need not pursue its story further. It has by now produced thousands of works, translations of foreign books, transcripts of Chinese classics, which have opened up to Chinese students a mass of thought and learning never before available, and that without degradation of Chinese literary style, rather with improvement to it, as Boccaccio showed (and even his precise friend Petrarch admitted) when he turned from the dead Latin of Courts to the living language of the Italian people.

Let us turn for a moment to Hu Shih's other contribution to the thought of

* Commonly known as "mandarin". In spite of the immense number and variety of provincial dialects in China, this language will carry one successfully through most of the country.

his contemporaries—that is, the development of his religious beliefs. He has told the story in an essay written in 1931, "My Credo and its Revolution". In this he describes how he was led from contempt for the Chinese gods and a somewhat pugnacious atheism (all while he was still quite a boy) through a period at college in America when he nearly became a Christian, to a sort of universal deism strictly conditioned, however, by the scientific discoveries of chemistry, anthropology, sociology, history and biology. Although he had long rejected the idea of personal immortality and his reflexions led him to hold that "the universe and everything in it follow natural laws of movement and change and that there is no need for the concept of a supernatural Ruler or Creator", the death of his mother, of whom he writes with touching affection, compelled him to revise his ideas.

> "As I reviewed the life of my dead mother" (he writes), "whose activities had never gone beyond the trivial details of the home but whose influence could be clearly seen on the faces of those men and women who came to mourn her death, and as I recalled the personal influence of my father on her whole life, and its lasting effect on myself, I came to the conclusion that *everything* is immortal. Everything that we are, everything that we do, and everything that we say is immortal in the sense that it has its effect somewhere in the world, and that effect in turn will have its results somewhere else, and the thing goes on in infinite time and space."

If one were criticizing Hu Shih one might dwell on the implicit contradiction between these beautiful lines and the other chilling clause I have quoted; and one might wonder that so careful a thinker, endowed as Hu Shih undoubtedly is with a poet's soul, did not perceive the essential fallacy in the mechanical universe which he unconsciously expounds nor feel the inescapable need of a First Cause.

But I have quoted these paragraphs from Hu Shih's apologia as an illustration of some of the thoughts which have for many years been agitating Young China. There was a time when the aspirations voiced by the student body were contemptuously dismissed as "half-baked" and the students themselves were roundly condemned as riotous, undisciplined and (in Mulvaney's phrase) "a curse to themselves and a nuisance to their betters". That was true enough at one time of many of them. All radical movements seem to have to pass through a period of violent irrationalism, and the students—say between 1922–30, when they were most in the public eye, chasing unpopular teachers from their class-rooms, organizing mass meetings and parades, shouting the wildest nonsense—were no worse than the politicians were in their own sphere of activity.

But there was nothing half-baked in such men as Hu Shih, V. K. Ting, James Yen, or older teachers such as Tsai Yuan-pei, Wu Chih-wu; and these brilliant figures have had hosts of quiet followers who, momentarily obscured by the noisy trouble-makers of the 1920's, quietly continued their efforts for the cause of a new China and must fairly be given their credit for the national unity which she has shown against Japan.

There is one specially marked difference between the old mandarinate and the student body. Although the mandarinate formed a single framework dependent on the Emperor, and the viceroys and provincial governers in the different districts could in special crises co-operate, their purpose in doing so was self-interested, their guiding principle to have peace and comfort in their own provinces without great regard for what happened in others. As with everything one says about China, plenty of exceptions to this could be quoted. But it is certainly true that under the mandarinate there was no growth of national consciousness; the provinces and counties were like marbles in a bag, touching without cohering.

The student movement, on the other hand, was from the outset all for solidarity,

first within itself, then for the masses of the people. What affected the students in one province affected all; what was good for the people of one part was good for the people of another; and no effective reform could be achieved in the North unless the demand for it was shared and combined in by South, East and West. These principles were, of course, immeasurably helped by mechanical developments, telegraphs and telephones, and in recent years by new roads and motor-bus and aeroplane services. But the idea of national unity and the breaking-down of provincial barriers as the indispensable condition of a New China was inherent in all that the student body stood for before ever a motor-bus or aeroplane had been seen in China.

How far Dr. Hu Shih made disciples for his Credo I have no idea. But in respect of religious thought, the progress of Young China has been both interesting and significant. Whether the Chinese people are naturally religious or not is a large question which I am not well enough equipped to discuss. The huge sums spent in the course of time in building Buddhist temples and monasteries, in decorating them lavishly and in endowing them with broad lands, certainly points to an active sense of religious need. But against this might be put the wide Chinese tolerance for all religions equally and the apparent daily indifference of masses of Chinese for religious observances. What one can say with confidence is that all Chinese thought and practice demand the acceptance of certain ethical principles,* which appear to be entirely distinct from "natural laws" governing the universe and which are closely linked with the highest religious teaching.

The educational changes in 1905, substituting Western learning for the Chinese classics with their wealth of moral precepts, did the youth of China great harm for a time by depriving them of all ethical training. At first they tried to find a substitute in science as the foundation of conduct. The Communists under Moscow's influence denounced all religion as "the opium of the people" and attacked every religious institution indiscriminately. The Kuomintang, after the establishment of the Nanking Government, prescribed the study in all schools of Dr. Sun Yat-sen's "Three People's Principles" as an all-sufficient substitute for Confucianism, which, at that time, it will be remembered, they were violently condemning.

All these manifestations of the fever through which China was passing have disappeared. Confucianism has returned to the schools and the observance of the Sage's birthday to the calendar of annual festivities. The Communists, as shown in the last chapter, have reverted to the normal Chinese tolerance of all religion; and long before the war with Japan the hostility to Christian missions had disappeared.

Most interesting of all has been the evolution of the students' thinking. In his profoundly interesting book *Christianity in the Eastern Conflicts*, published in 1937, after a prolonged tour of India, China and Japan, Mr. William Paton dwells on the search by young Chinese for an ethical basis for life. They are not so sure as they were, he says, that "science and socialism will save the State—a great slogan not so long ago". And while there has been a notable revival of Buddhism in China, Mr. Paton quotes the evidence of three professors who had recently made a tour of a great many colleges and universities and everywhere discovered among the students

> "a keen desire to find whether in the gospel of Christ there might not be both a way of understanding life with all its pain and difficulty and also a way of living. Men found this spirit at least as much among the students in the Government colleges as in those of Christian institutions."

* For example, Confucius's teaching of reciprocity and of the moral integrity in defence of which the truly cultured man will be ready to sacrifice even life itself.

I am not trying to make out that China is on the road to become Christianized; although it seems not unlikely that General Chiang Kai-shek's earnest faith may influence not a few Chinese in the same direction, and it is possible that, in many more, the war may have stirred thoughts that will lead to their conversion, just as has happened among our own sailors, soldiers and airmen. I only wish to show something of the thought processes which through the most discouraging times have been working in Young China beneath the storms of political strife and their own extravagances.

Another manifestation of this thought, and in this instance of a most practical nature, is the Mass Education movement dating from the First World War. The credit for this remarkable undertaking belongs to Dr. James Yen, a student at Yale in 1917 when America entered the war, who went to France to interpret and help in the management of the Chinese coolie corps.

It distressed him that the men had no means of recreation in their spare time; and from this there came to him the great idea to teach them to read and write. But with such hundreds to be taught the ordinary class-room methods were obviously impracticable, and the result of further cogitation was that Dr. Yen compiled a list of 1,000 essential characters (might one say, a sort of "Basic Chinese"?) and had lantern slides made of them. In a hall in Boulogne that held 500 (as an illustration of Chinese zest for education one may note that every night the hall was crammed) he set about teaching the coolies his 1,000 characters by throwing them on a huge sheet and explaining them one by one. The result was so encouraging that after the war Dr. Yen went back to China and with some other young scholars in Peking revised his list of characters, enlarging it to 1,200: for more advanced pupils a list of 4,000 characters was compiled, in a *People's Pocket Dictionary*. Anyone who masters these can read practically everything that he wishes to read in the *pai-hua*. But the 1,200 characters alone are quite sufficient for all that the average peasant needs.

Hosts of enthusiastic young men and girls flocked to help Dr. Yen. Within eighteen months of the Mass Education movement being formally started branches had been formed in thirty-two cities in North China, and within four years 5,000,000 pupils had been enrolled. Even that huge, very humble population of China which lives entirely in boats on the canals and rivers was not forgotten. Classes were arranged for its members and were eagerly attended. The effectiveness of Dr. Yen's invention is shown by the fact that a peasant can learn to read and write sufficiently for the business of his life in four or five months at a cost of roughly six shillings.

It is noticeable, by the way, that though the charges are necessarily very low, the pupil is expected to pay something. Not a few people think that one of the first essentials to real educational reform in Great Britain would be to make the parents pay something, however small, instead of adding to what is given them for nothing. To say this is, no doubt, rank heresy. But it is a common human trait that what we get for nothing, we value at the same figure; and that where we have to pay, we are usually on the look-out to obtain our money's worth. At any rate, that is the way in which the practical Chinese mind looks at things where education is concerned.

The progress of the Mass Education movement has naturally suffered severely through the war. But for that very reason it may ultimately prove to have been only a stage on the road to a genuinely national system controlled by the Government. Not the least of the remarkable social activities that the Chinese Government has been able to develop, even while fighting Japan, has been in the field of education, particularly in respect of elementary schools, which in pre-war years got too little support in comparison with secondary and college education. There can be no doubt that it is the Government's intention to conquer illiteracy in China, and

as national teaching becomes an accomplished fact Mass Education will have no further *raison d'être*. But surely the pioneer work done by Dr. James Yen and his thousands of lively assistants in filling the gap between the old neglected state of the peasants and future official interest deserves for ever to be enshrined in China's gratitude.

In a former book* I gave a chapter to the emancipation of Chinese women and the startling rapidity with which they have come to the front, since the Revolution, to take their part in the nation's life. Although there is not space to enter so fully into the subject here, it would be impossible to omit the girls from this survey of Young China's progress.

It is to be remembered that purdah has never been practised in China. In her early tribal days the head of the tribe was a woman, and to women was entrusted the keeping of the family's seed and the silk which was its money. The Yang and Yin, male and female, principles permeate all Chinese philosophy in equal respect. Many details of the marriage ceremony indicate that it was regarded as an equal partnership. Chinese history abounds in records of notable women (the Empress Dowager was by no means the only one who at times controlled the nation's destinies). In the T'ang Dynasty women were admitted to official positions. The Emperor K'ang Hsi's famous encyclopædia contains the names of 27,000 women who won distinction in various ways. And among the stone monuments scattered about China none are more common than those devoted to the memory of pious widows.

But it cannot be denied that until recent years Chinese women held an entirely subordinate place in the family. In everything the sons' interests came first; when there was not enough money to educate both girls and boys, the girls had to go without. A girl did not see her husband until the marriage, which was arranged for her by her parents, and while a husband was free to divorce his wife as he pleased, she could not divorce him. Also when he entertained friends he never introduced them to his wife and daughters, who remained strictly in the background. In the matter of concubinage, however, the responsibility was not always the husband's. A barren wife would commonly encourage her husband to take a concubine so that he might have an heir. And the wife's position as First Lady was strictly respected: the concubine's sons were regarded as the wife's sons and after her death she had the honour of ancestor-worship from them equally with her husband.

As in most reforms in China, the impetus to the change in woman's position was first given by the missionaries, when they began to persuade parents to send their daughters to the mission schools.† But once the movement was fairly started it advanced with amazing speed. Girls' schools, once considered unnecessary, sprang up all over China, and the girls embraced the opportunities offered them with avidity. Before the end of the 19th century girls were going abroad to the colleges of Europe and America. Sports appealed to them greatly: lawn tennis, basket-ball, swimming, running and javelin-throwing. For music they developed a positive passion, and at schools and colleges would rise at unearthly hours to practise and almost fight each other for possession of the pianos. Before many years had passed from the Revolution girls were found entering into all the professions, as doctors and lawyers as well as teachers and nurses. There are many in the Government offices. And in one of the provincial assemblies recently set up in connexion with the National People's Council at Chungking there is a woman mayor.

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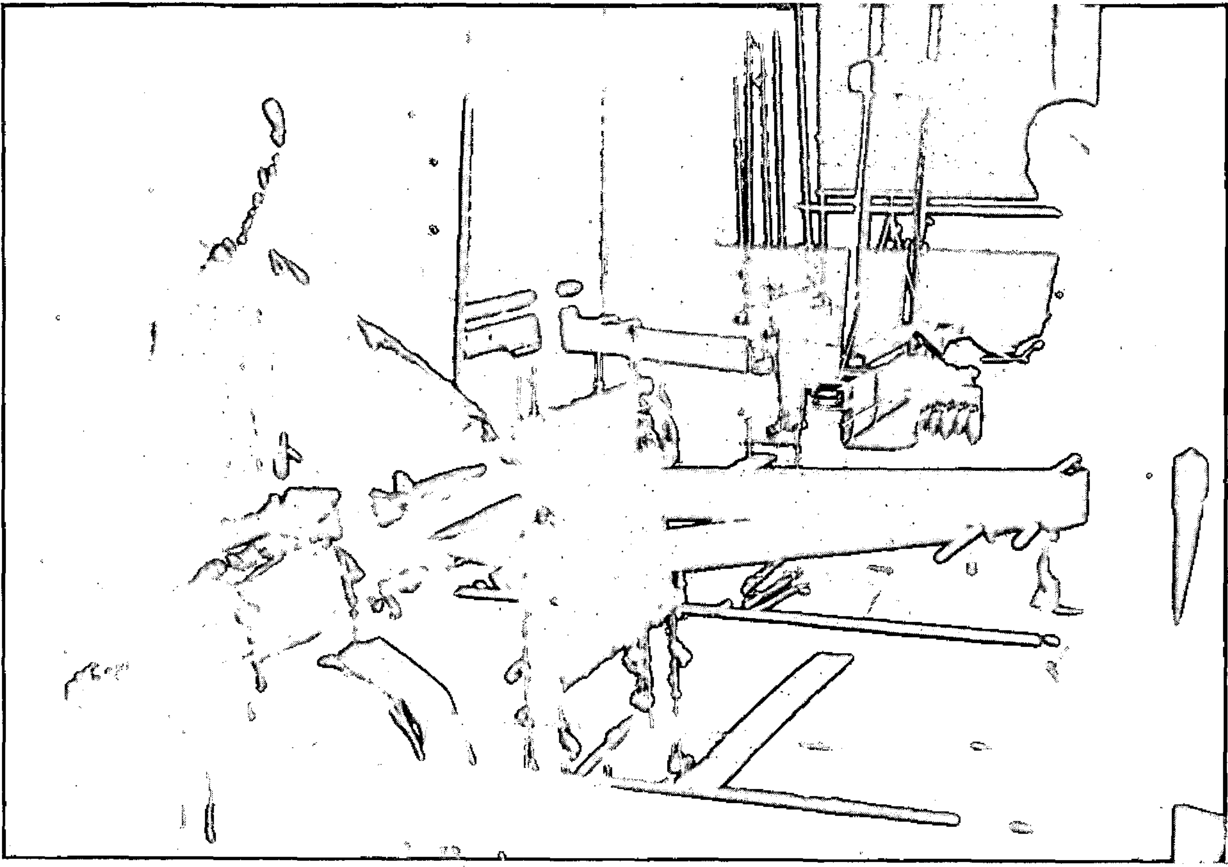
* *China's Struggle with the Dictators.*

† It was the same with the abolition of foot-binding. But here the missionaries had a much more difficult task. Painful as the process is, little girls with unbound feet would beg their mothers to bind them because the "lily-footed" cast such derision at the "big-footed".

CHINESE LAND GIRLS GO TO WORK



CHINESE VILLAGE WEAVERS

With the vast majority "this freedom" has worked extremely well. There was, of course, much scandal in the older generation at the time of the Revolution when Amazon Corps were formed to fight for the cause and the more daring girls went about proclaiming their absolute freedom in everything, right to companionate marriage and so forth. But such extravagances died down in time and the new freedom of intercourse between the sexes, particularly in colleges, which are almost all co-educational, has not led to any moral deterioration—on the contrary, the freedom now enjoyed by girls to choose their own husbands is generally regarded as a move in the right direction.

What the ultimate effect of Chinese women's emancipation will be is nevertheless a cause of anxiety to some who have been most closely connected with its progress. This rushing into professions, this ease of divorce, may they not strike at the very foundations of the sacred institution of family? But the same questions are being asked in other countries, and especially in England the recent legislation for easy divorce and the total disappearance of any stigma attaching to it are already working far greater harm than ever appears likely to occur in China. Miss Agnes Smedley, that pungent and rather tragic writer, has some contemptuous remarks in her latest book, *Battle Hymn of China*, on the "patrician" girls of Peking—girls, that is, of the well-to-do intelligentsia—who after marriage appear to forget that they ever had a college career and relapse into the cow-like contentment of wives and mothers. But the latter profession is one on which, by her own showing, Miss Smedley is hardly qualified to pass judgment, as she obviously has no taste for it herself. In any case, precisely the same criticism could be passed upon girls of all nationalities who perhaps have taken brilliant degrees at college, have even entered professions for a few years, yet in the end have found that what they like best is to become as the fruitful vine and the polished corners of a masculine temple. It does not follow that their college career has been wasted, nor will it in the case of the Chinese girls who do the like.

What is so noticeable is the grace and charm which modern education and freedom have developed in Chinese girls. The same influences at one time seemed too often to make young men undisciplined, awkward and rude. But exactly the opposite effect was produced on the girls. Missionary teachers have remarked to me on the extraordinary change wrought by a few weeks' education in their girl pupils, almost as if some fairy changeling (of the desirable order; fairy changelings in the stories are generally the reverse of what parents desire) had been substituted for the shy and frumpish girl that had come at the beginning of term.

In all modern literature it would be difficult to find two more engaging heroines than Mulan in Dr. Lin Yu-tang's *Moment in Peking* and Lotus Fragrance in Mr. S. I. Hsiung's *Bridge of Heaven*. They are so vividly drawn, so perfectly alive, that they convince the reader instantly as true types, not just clever projections of an imaginary ideal. But what is still more interesting is that one sees their prototype in *Lady Precious Stream* (who, like Lotus Fragrance, left a wealthy home to marry a penniless suitor), and she dates from the 13th century. The obvious inference is that the qualities which make the modern Chinese girl so attractive (and incidentally are a sufficient answer to the "sourpussies" holding up doleful paws over her future) were always there ready to be developed. It is also, by the way, curious that a nation in which for centuries women have been left in the background and marriage was a business contract should have produced great love romances on all fours with Western romances, which have held the Chinese stage for centuries, such as *Lady Precious Stream*, or the far older drama *The Western Chamber*, which might really be called China's *Romeo and Juliet*.

Mention of the writings of Dr. Lin Yu-tang and Mr. S. I. Hsiung leads one naturally to the remarkable, new, realistic development in Chinese literature. Dr. Lin Yu-tang, born in 1895, M.A. of Harvard, Ph.D. of Leipzig, steeped

alike in Chinese and foreign letters, after holding university professorships in Peking and Amoy, sprang into prominence during the early years of the Nanking Government with his biting criticisms of official misdeeds, which he wrote for a Chinese monthly, published in English. These were repeated in far more direct form than it had been safe to use in China in the book which first made him famous abroad, *My Country and My People*.

But what one would specially note in Dr. Lin are his romances, *Moment in Peking* and its sequel, *Leaf in the Storm*, which describe the life and fortunes of two typical Chinese families of the upper middle-class in Peking and carry the story through many years from the childhood of the chief characters till they are grown up, married, and have children of their own.

In the same category are to be mentioned Mr. Hsiung's *Bridge of Heaven*, Mr. Tsui Chih's English translation of *Autobiography of a Chinese Girl* by Miss Hsieh Ping-ying, which depicts the spirit of the Revolution and the struggles between a girl caught in the new ideas and her mother rooted in the old conservatism; and Miss Han Su-yin's exquisite *Destination Chungking*, which, like the *Autobiography*, is a narrative of actual events, not a novel, but has the same revealing qualities that make all these books so valuable.

For in each volume we get for the first time, in a form peculiarly suited to appeal to Western readers, by Chinese writers, a series of strikingly vivid pictures of ordinary Chinese life. Here for the first time the heavy mysterious walls of Chinese mansions in the narrow *hutungs* of Peking and the dark forbidden recesses of country farms become as glass through which we see hour by hour the pursuits and duties, the affections, joys and distresses, the generosities and meannesses, the births, marriages, deaths, funerals, holiday outings, entertainments, conversations, quarrellings—all the varied emotions and accidents of the inmates' daily life. Many penetrating books have been written by foreigners about the Chinese—Dr. Arthur Smith's *Chinese Characteristics*, Archdeacon Macgowan's *Lights and Shadows of Chinese Life* and Mrs. Pearl Buck's well-known stories. But these at their best are descriptive, something seen, however acutely, from the outside. The Chinese writers have given us of themselves stories unique and of the soil of China such as no foreigner can emulate. And it is as if they had said to themselves, "Hitherto the West has thought of China either as a problem or a comedy. Now we will show you what she really is, and the men and women, her sons and daughters, all very much of like passions as yourselves." The outcome is not only of extreme interest; it is also of the highest value at a time when new attention has been drawn to China by the war and with a view to the new conditions and, it is to be hoped, greater intimacies between East and West that will follow it.

The other new stream of Chinese literature has as yet come under the eyes of few foreigners. Very little of it has been translated into English, and as a great deal of it is journalistic work, in the sense that it was written for a special occasion or to embellish and drive home the lesson of particular incidents, it probably never will be. Nevertheless, as an essential part of the growth of China from old to new it is well worth attention.

The translation of the works of Western writers, opening up new visions of social organization, scientific discoveries, government and individual rights, naturally set many imaginations at work. The Revolution and the ambitions which it connoted produced innumerable writers to depict from various points of view China's misfortunes and aspirations. Dr. Hu Shih's Literary Renaissance and his own poems and essays called forth a swarm of enthusiastic imitators. Within a short space no fewer than four hundred periodicals in the *pai-hua* were founded. Many of these, of course, disappeared almost as quickly as they were started. But the writers remained and multiplied, their passion being influenced by the wars of the Tuchuns, the growing aggression of Japan, the glowing doctrines

of the Communists, and, as a corollary, the Kuomintang's savage repression of freedom of speech. In 1930 was formed in Shanghai the "League of Chinese Left Writers": most of the young authors of this time inclined strongly to the Left, too often disastrously for themselves.

Dr. Hsiao Ch'ien, lecturer at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London University, says in a little book *Etching of a Tormented Age*, written in 1942:

> "Hundreds of novels and thousands of poems and essays have been written in this democratic style in the last twenty-five years. They have eloquently shown its capacity to express all shades of human sentiment and to depict everything on earth from a waterfall to the legs of an insect."

Among the writers mentioned by Dr. Hsiao as specially worth notice it is interesting to see the names of three women: Miss Ting Ling, who holds a commanding place as novelist; Miss Lin Hui-yin, perhaps to be called China's Virginia Woolf; and Miss Ling Shu-hua, scholar and painter as well as author. Among men Mao Tun attempted pictures of the whole Revolution on the huge scale of Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, and Pa Chin is singled out as the "anarchist whose uncompromising spirit has spoken much for the discontent of his generation . . . while in France he became a fervent student of the French Revolution. The spirit of *j'accuse* runs through his works."

Many of these young writers, however, had more enthusiasm than experience. While they revolted against the "ivory tower" of Chinese classicism which continued to perpetrate the fairy atmosphere of the T'ang and Sung Dynasty artists, they were unconsciously prisoners of it still in that their lives were passed in the sheltered surroundings of colleges in Peking or Shanghai, shut off from the daily life of the Chinese working class. The Japanese invasion, by driving them out of these cloisters to tramp fifteen hundred miles across China and resume their studies in caves and mat-sheds amid dire penury in Szechuan, has opened their eyes and put the reality of life rather than the realism of the studio into their writings. The difference is that between such a *tour de force* of sheer imagination as *Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse* and the photographic horror of *All Quiet on the Western Front*. Dr. Hsiao Ch'ien says:

> "The war has been a blessing in disguise for Chinese literature in general and for fiction especially. Previously, two lamentable symptoms existed among nearly all story-tellers. They either lacked solid experience of national life or their diction was too remote from that of the people. The war has shown many writers the right direction. For the first time they inhaled the aroma of the rice fields and saw the gorgeous orange groves and the manifold marvels of the countryside. But above all they came in contact with the people, the people untouched by European influence, who lived far away from the coastal ports. Beyond all this they saw the war, its tragedy as well as its heroism. Consequently we may hope for much from postwar Chinese novelists."

The part played by this new school of young writers in rousing the people of China to the meaning of the war is hardly realized abroad. It is, of course, propaganda, but of a consistently literary type such as we have never attempted. Hundreds of poets, dramatists and novelists have roamed the country, particularly in the northern provinces where Communist control predominates, producing poems, plays and war stories that illustrate different phases of the war. The most obviously propagandist form of these writings is the plays—*Defence of Lukouchiao*, *On the Firing Line*, *Japanese Moustache*, etc.; the titles explain

themselves—which are performed by troupes of actors wandering from village to village. More interesting are the poems, long narratives describing battles, which are declaimed to an accompaniment of drum and lute in the style formerly popularized by professional minstrels.

One writer already mentioned, Miss Ting Ling, has been particularly prominent in this respect with a "Service Group of the North-western Front" which she has organized to work with the Eighth Route Army. Professional story-tellers have for ages been a recognized institution in China; one may well imagine how vastly their popularity is increased as they sing, not of the heroes of centuries ago, but of the living heroes of today and their brave deeds against the Japanese. There is a Homeric touch in these war-narrative poems, written as they are in all the heat of actual events, which seems likely to give them a permanent place in Chinese literature. Certainly they are very different from the rather self-conscious lamentations over the woes of China poured out by the *littérateurs* of fifteen years ago.

What part, it may be asked, are the students of China destined to play in the future? From the general awakening of their minds due to the inflow of Western ideas and familiarity with Western literature one has seen them pass through successive stages of passionate, ill-instructed agitation, unbridled attacks on foreign interests in China, and reckless, even suicidal, defiance of their own Government, to at least one practical appreciation of what to do for their country. In the early years of the war with Japan the Chinese Government was criticized for not allowing the students to join the Army, telling them that their duty was to fit themselves for the work China would want from them after the war. Actually many of them took French leave and joined up. Hundreds more, as just described, have made themselves heralds of the cause of China among the village folk. Numbers more, both men and girls, have enlisted in the Red Cross medical service, once deplorably lacking but since 1938 built up by the genius and devotion of Dr. Robert Lim into a really beneficial organization. But there are still thousands pursuing their studies in the colleges recreated in Szechuan and Yunnan from the wreckage of the once well-equipped seminaries of the East.

When criticisms are passed on the Chinese student body, it is worth remembering that the Japanese never made the mistake of underrating them as a national force. From the moment of their invasion in July 1937 they have made a dead set at Chinese universities and colleges. No fewer than a hundred and twelve major seats of learning have been ruthlessly destroyed, including the splendid Nankai University at Tientsin which was bombed to bits in the first few days of the war, besides schools innumerable. The indomitable courage with which professors, students and undergraduettes gathered up what they could of the remnants of libraries and scientific apparatus and made their way across China to start work anew in the West is almost comparable to the Communist Odyssey of the Long March. How these people, muscularly soft and unaccustomed to privation, accomplished such a journey, how they even managed to survive, let alone to take up their studies again with hardly any books or materials for learning, during the first wildly disordered days after the Government's retreat into West China, passes the imagination.

Conditions have improved; foreign universities have sent them books, scientific apparatus and other materials, and the general machinery of life in West China is now better organized. But it stands to reason that there is a vast difference between the equipment, comforts and recreations of the former universities on the coast and the makeshifts of Free China. And thus one may feel that the students, whether in the armies, behind the armies or still in the class-room, are vastly better men than they were before the war, tempered and hardened by misfortune and alert to the realities of life.

It seems likely that in time to come after the war the student body as such will cease to exist. Indeed, as China develops on constitutional lines, it must do so; political life will move on a new pattern in which the student organization will no longer have the excuse for acting as a separate force that it had in the past; and students going out into life to earn their own living will presumably join this or that political party according to their tastes, as happens in other countries.

This process will undoubtedly be accelerated if the general standard of life can be raised. One striking difference between China and the West is that there has been no middle class in China comparable to that, say, in England, America and France. Sir Frederic Leith-Ross, I think it was, commented that China contained only the very rich and the very poor. There were the merchant class, of course, generally to be put in the rich category, and shopkeepers, the vast majority of whom (outside a few big cities) conducted their shops on the humblest lines, their total stock perhaps amounting to but a few hundred dollars. But the doctors, lawyers, engineers, architects and scientists, who form so great a part of Western middle classes, scarcely existed in China before the war, for the simple reason that they could not make their professions pay. A doctor, for instance, who tried to set up in practice in the interior of China, away from such cities as Shanghai, Tientsin or Hankow, would find very few patients who could afford to pay him more than a few cents for a visit, while the vast majority were not "doctor-minded", having always been accustomed to treat their ailments as best they could, to let them alone, or just to die.

The Chinese Government has no greater ambition than to raise the general standard of life throughout the country. Every Chinese who has recently visited England has dwelt on the Government's schemes for industrial development, and the same theme is harped upon continually in Chungking. As this development takes place it will naturally provide employment for professional men; and the students who previously found their best hope of employment in a Government office, or in a post at one of the universities, or, if they were lucky, had a family mercantile business to fall back upon, will take their places to do the nation's work in the profession for which they have been trained at college.

In one respect, however, the years of trial since the Revolution and the sufferings of the war are likely to have left their mark on the students' minds. Although there is probably not a large number of them who have become Communists, their general trend of thought is towards the Left. Even those who have actually joined the Reds will have undergone the same modification of doctrine that has been described in all the Communists' political attitude. But one fundamental desire remains—the welfare of the peasant and working class, more food, better houses, better clothes, a wider margin between subsistence and stark starvation than has been the lot of the hundreds of millions of unknown Chinese.

And here, I believe, one may always count on the students collectively or individually to stand for the third of Dr. Sun's Three Principles—the Livelihood of the People. They have been driven from their "ivory towers", they have looked upon the realities of life in China, they have seen the sufferings so patiently endured by millions who were previously no more to them than a biological expression, they have tasted deeply of those hardships themselves, and life can never be the same again to them while its hideous inequalities and injustices have still to be swept away.

Chapter XII

THE BLUE GOWNS

"I HAVE OFTEN THOUGHT," SAYS DE QUINCEY IN *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater,* "that if I were compelled to forgo England and to live in China, I should go mad. . . . Man is a weed in those regions."

Here in a nutshell is the whole genesis of Dr. Sun Yat-sen's Third Principle—the Livehihood of the People. It was, first and last, the seething hordes of the blue-gowned folk and the patient tragedies of their unending struggle for bare subsistence which started him on the path of revolution and reform.

It is impossible in England to visualize how one is thronged about in China at every step by the multitudes of the people or how their poverty and the abysmal lowness of the scale of their living are continually thrust upon one's notice. When your ship ties up to the wharf and the gangplanks are down, or when your train draws into the platform, you are hemmed in by a swarm of coolies who almost fight each other for the right to earn a few cents by carrying your luggage. When you come out of your office a dozen ricsha coolies rush at you from every direction: their legal fare is about twopence a mile; their clothes often are no more than a cotton shirt, short cotton pants and rope sandals, even in the winter, when they stand about in icy slush all day waiting for fares. If, in a month, after paying the cost of a licence and the hire of the ricsha, a coolie earns the equivalent of one pound, he thinks he has done well.

It is the same whether in town or in country. The least incident out of the ordinary attracts a crowd, which in England would hardly be worth notice in the evening papers. In reporting a popular demonstration Chinese papers speak of 10,000 or 20,000 people being present; probably this is an exaggeration, but not by much. You go into the country for a picnic and choose what seems a secluded spot to open your basket, and within ten minutes a crowd has sprung up out of the earth to watch the foreigner eat. Mr. J. O. P. Bland has said somewhere that the problem of China is that of a country which produces four generations while Europe produces three, owing to the early age of marriage. Jesuit missionaries, who know China better than anyone, estimate the infant mortality at 73 per cent.; and still (to plagiarize from Keats) the hungry generations tread each other down.

China's total population has been reckoned variously by the Post Office and the Customs at from 435 to 480 millions. Taking even the larger figure, with an area of about 4,300,000 square miles (including Manchuria, Mongolia and Sinkiang), that does not suggest excessive density of population. But large tracts of the country are mountains, or, in Mongolia or the North-west, desert; and the people are thus largely herded together in the Yellow River Valley and North China Plain, around the lower Yangtze, in the great central plain of Szechuan in West China, and around the Canton delta. Where they are found elsewhere, as in mountainous regions, they are only not so crowded because the land will not support more. Taken all in all, it is estimated that over three-quarters of the population live on one-third of China's whole area. And of this multitude between 70 and 80 per cent. have to get their living from the "good earth"—a phrase whose tragic irony reminds one of the "shuddering propitiation" of the Greek name for the Fates, "Eumenides, the Kindly Ones".

Professor Tawney, in his book *Land and Labour in China,* says truly that:

> "A tolerable standard of wellbeing cannot be said to prevail as long as some considerable proportion of her [China's] rural population is under-fed and

under-housed, decimated by preventible disease and liable to be plunged in starvation by flood and drought. A stable State is equally difficult of creation until the social conditions of China have been substantially improved."

Naturally conditions of life vary greatly between one district and another. In some the soil is good and the weather fairly regular; elsewhere the soil is poor and storms, rains and floods may wreck months of labour in a week. The Foreign Settlements at Shanghai, Tientsin, Hankow, etc., unpopular as they were politically, did at least radiate prosperity over a considerable area. Not only did their markets call for a large constant supply of meat, fish, game, poultry and vegetables, but their mills, factories and filatures gave employment to hundreds of thousands. But away from such centres of prosperity, the standard of living, like the density of population, is unimaginable by those who have not seen it.

China is a land of few large towns and innumerable tiny villages. In these the best houses are but one brick thick. Many are only made of mud smeared on a framework of bamboo with an open space between wall and roof to allow the smoke to escape. In practically all except the better class houses the floor is just the earth beaten down, the family furniture consisting of a plank bed, a rough wooden table, one or two stools and a few cooking-pots and rice-bowls.

This is certainly a low type of dwelling; in the more prosperous parts of China, for instance the silk districts of Wusih, one may find plenty of fairly capacious and decently furnished farms. But the picture drawn is true of at least half the country population.

And there are yet humbler grades; numbers of peasants live in mere mat-sheds—bamboo matting fastened round poles stuck in the ground. There is also an enormous population—I do not know how many, but have heard it put as high as 10 per cent.—who live entirely in sampans. Here you may see a twelve-foot flat-bottomed boat with a bamboo covering over three-quarters of its length, which houses man, wife and four or five children with all their worldly possessions. What they do for a living Heaven knows. Alongside the principal ports on the Yangtze are huge floating villages, boats permanently anchored with crazy wooden planks forming streets among them. Why all the children swarming about on these planks do not fall off and drown one cannot imagine. Yet even the little tots that one sees wavering unsteadily from boat to boat along a single plank seem preternaturally surefooted. It is an illustration of the Chinese tenacity in the struggle for life.

Much of the perennial poverty of Chinese peasant life is due to small-scale farming. The big estates are comparatively rare, and where they exist they tend to be broken up in a few generations by subdivision among the sons. As they say in Lancashire, "From clogs to clogs in three generations". Partly because of this inevitable dividing up of the land, but still more because he can find a quicker and larger return on his money in the towns in house property, pawnbroking or straight moneylending, it never occurs to a landlord to put capital into his property and develop it by modern remunerative methods. The peasant on the land has not the capital to put into it, and so continues in the ways perfected by his ancestors in the time of Confucius (and with much the same sort of tools), incredibly industrious, highly skilled so far as his knowledge takes him, but with no resources on which to fall back when Fortune frowns, as she so often does, and no means of learning or applying the scientific discoveries which would reduce his risks and improve his output.

Dr. James Yen, of Mass Education fame, when the latter movement was fully launched, went to a district named Tinghsien, some 200 miles south of Peking on the railway to Hankow, to try to teach the farmers improved methods of farming. As may be imagined, their first reaction was that a scholar had nothing to teach

them about farming. But Dr. Yen persevered; he managed to obtain a couple of acres and his success in producing fatter fowls, larger eggs, better vegetables and more grain from his land than any of the surrounding farmers, and without prohibitive outlay in money, brought him many converts. "The Tinghsien experiment", as it was called, was already attracting notice all over China when the Japanese invasion came to put a brutal stop to such good work.

The agricultural labourer hiring himself out to other men is not a big part of the peasantry, which is fairly divided between actual owners and tenants whose rights of tenancy are secured to them so that they pass from father to son.* Those who have no land to cultivate drift into the towns for whatever jobs they can find, or join the local banditry or become soldiers. Rents are paid sometimes in money, sometimes in a percentage of the crops; and in the words of Mr. Bunker (in *All Sorts and Conditions of Men*), "rent comes first of all". That there are few hired labourers is due to the simple fact that the farms are very small and the farmer turns out the whole of his family almost as soon as it can walk to help him in the field.

Recent researches (that is, shortly before the Japanese invasion) by the Chinese Department of Agriculture and Commerce showed that while in some provinces (Chêkiang, for instance, at the mouth of the Yangtze, and Szechuan) farms might be as small as one to one-and-a-fifth acres, and in northern Manchuria as big as sixteen and even nineteen acres, the difference being due to densities of population, the average size for the whole of China in nearly 50,000,000 farms was about three-and-three fifths acres. This in a country where wants are few and simple does not at first sight appear too bad. The average size of Japanese farms is considerably lower.

But there are many factors that spoil the picture. Since married sons continue to live under the parental rooftree, the farm may have to support three generations, numbering at a modest guess ten or a dozen people. There is no animal husbandry, except in Mongolia, where, on the other hand, there is little tillage. Water buffaloes in the centre and south, mules in the north, are kept solely for haulage and labour, and there are none too many of them. The winter throughout most of China reduces work in the fields to a half or third of the whole year. And lastly there are the terrible caprices of Nature.

For centuries the Chinese have been ruthlessly cutting down their forests, either for use of the wood or on the fallacious principle that ground which might grow food ought not to be wasted in growing trees; and every autumn the hills are scratched bare of every scrap of grass and leaf for winter fuel. The vital importance of woodland in helping to regulate rainfall is a commonplace; and when rain comes there is no carpet of verdure on the hillsides to hold it up and the water sweeps down into the valleys and plains like a cataract. The resulting disasters are piteous. I shall never forget one summer passing through Chêkiang not long before rice harvest, and having pointed out to me the exceptional promise that year of the rice. Harvest-time arrived—with it as bad a typhoon as could occur in that part of China, and when the storm subsided I saw the farmers near Hangchow out in boats striving to salvage some of the grain, which they were cutting below the water. Conversely, with no forests to assist in precipitation, droughts are frequent in the interior and even more terrible in causing famine than the floods.

What human labour can do and does do in China is almost beyond belief. I have often marvelled, as I rode over the rice fields in winter, dotted as far as the eye can see with the stubble of the cut rice, at the infinite industry that they reveal; for each one of these myriad rice plants, planted about 18 inches apart, is put in by hand. Since rice must grow in water, irrigation is of supreme

* The question of land tenancy is so vast and complicated, with so many variations in different provinces, that one can only give an idea of it here on very broad outlines.

importance. In this the Chinese are pastmasters: the irrigation of the great central plain of Szechuan, dating from before Christ, has been admired by engineers from all over the world.

Nearly all the labour of bringing water to the grain is accomplished by human muscles. When water has to be pumped up from a creek into the rice field four or five feet higher, a long wooden trough is laid down the bank with one end in the creek, and in the trough an endless chain of paddles, geared to a horizontal wheel on the bank, laps up the water into the field. The more well-to-do peasants have water-buffaloes to turn the motive wheel. One may see the beast walking patiently round and round with bandages over his eyes—whether to delude him into the idea that he is really going somewhere, or to prevent him from turning giddy, I do not know. As he never fails to lift his feet over the shaft connecting the wheel with the paddles he is presumably not deceived. So one concludes that the bandages are to prevent buffalo-vertigo. But more often the water has to be pumped up by men, and one sees four or five of them on a sort of treadmill, leaning over a bar, while with tireless legs they keep the water-chain revolving.

But labour the peasant accepts cheerfully, and the unkindness of Nature he battles with undauntedly. It is the unkindness of man, the landlord, the landlord's agent, and the moneylender, that "gets him down". There are, of course, exceptions. But the average landlord, even when he lives among his tenants, is no benefactor. He has none of that sense of responsibility to his land and his tenants which is found among great English agricultural property-owners,* perhaps for the reason already mentioned, that Chinese estates are so soon broken up—and his guiding idea is to get as much out of them as he can. If the landlord lived in a town, having his rents collected by an agent, the tenant's case was worse still, since he had to find both rent and the agent's "squeeze".

With taxes to pay and the inevitable expense of putting money into a farm if it is to make a paying return, *plus* the costs of living, it is no wonder that the peasant was continually in debt. He borrowed for everything, for the cost of improvements on his land such as wells and drains, for purchase of tools, for current expenses. The normal interest on loans was 6 per cent. *per month*: a "good" moneylender was one who was contented with three; some of them, however, charged still higher rates. Even if the farmer did not pledge his crop in advance, as too often he had to do, he usually had to sell a large portion of it as soon as it was gathered; and as there was no available buyer except the local dealer he was thus an easy prey to monopolists.

This calls attention to yet another evil from which Chinese peasants suffer, namely the enormous cost of transport, due to the number of tax stations through which produce has to pass and of middlemen collecting commissions on it. Thus, for example, between the farmer who grew tea at Hankow and the Shanghai market —a distance of 600 miles, but with the broad Yangtze all the way to provide what should be the cheapest of all forms of transport—the tea was mulcted by twelve or fourteen different harpies, middlemen or tax-collectors. Professor Tawney (*Land and Labour in China*) quotes the calculation of an expert that, "if farmers in Shensi (North-west China) were to make a present of their grain to mill-owners in Shanghai, it would still pay the latter better to import grain from Seattle than to pay its freightage in China". It is not surprising that in the past few decades China's export of tea and silk, which are naturally the finest in the world, should have suffered so badly in comparison with that from better organized countries.

To a peasantry thus at the best of times living so close to "the ragged edge of

* It seems to have existed among the ancient Israelites, too. When Elisha wished to make some return for the hospitality shown him by the Shunamite ("a great woman", as the Old Testament writer calls her), and offered to "speak for her to the King", her proud reply was: "I dwell among mine own people." The pride of her answer is not more noticeable than her obvious feeling that her tenants were "her own people", for whom she had a sense of duty equal to their loyalty to herself.

starvation" the political discords resulting from the Revolution spelt worse than ruin. As one general after another swept across the country the wretched people were continually forced to pay fresh taxes—in a previous chapter I mentioned how in parts of Szechuan the people were known to have paid their taxes as much as twenty years ahead—while their homes were repeatedly looted by ragamuffin soldiers whose pay was months in arrears.

In these years of upheaval, too, the bandits multiplied enormously. In ordinary times the bandits of China were not so great an evil as the word suggests; in fact, they might be regarded as a kind of insurance. The farmer paid an agreed annual sum to the local bandit chief, after which a mark was set on his house and he was free for the year from further molestation, since on the principle of honour among thieves, one bandit chief did not encroach upon another's territory. But during the Tuchuns' warrings the peasantry were reduced to such poverty that thousands of them "took to the hills" because there was no possibility of earning an honest livelihood, to prey on all alike indiscriminately. Even the silk-boats carrying silver from Shanghai or Hangchow to buy the farmers' silk up country, which from time immemorial had flown a special flag that guaranteed them safe conduct no matter what political convulsion was going on, were occasionally held up and robbed.

During the six years of renaissance between the first Japanese assault on Manchuria in 1931 and the invasion in 1937 the peasants' lot, at least in Central China, which was most directly under the Nanking Government's control, did experience some improvements. Under Dr. T. V. Soong's brilliant financial management the numerous inland taxation stations began to disappear; *likin*, the bone of so much contention between China and the foreign merchants, faded away. At the same time the Ministry of Agriculture did valuable work in inculcating new methods of cultivation and distributing better seeds, particularly of cotton. For many years the mill-owners in Shanghai, Tsingtao and elsewhere had expostulated at the watering and adulteration of the cotton received from Chinese fields; considering the farmer's penurious and oppressed state one can hardly wonder that he tried to stretch his cotton to the utmost volume by watering it. In this, after 1931, notable improvement took place.

Marketing and transport were bettered; model factories were built for the production of dried eggs, a highly important export and the backbone of the cakes in Britain's popular teashops. Even in such a comparatively small matter as the fruit industry, Hangchow and Nanking peaches, which are among the most delicious in the world, began to reach the markets properly packed and graded, and wrapped in tissue paper. The restoration of old, and the building of new, railways and the construction of thousands of miles of motor roads, all helped to lighten the peasants' lot. It was not yet to be called good. The power of landlord and moneylender was not yet broken. There were huge areas in the West and North-west which the reforms had not begun to touch, and until 1934 the war between Nanking and the Communists was a scourge. But compared with the previous rural conditions, especially during the 1920's, it was better than it had been.

And then came the second Japanese attack, to put a stop to all economic reforms, to ravage and ruin. The world has become so surfeited by horrors, by the piteous reports of destruction, slaughter and starvation in Greece, Yugoslavia, Poland—wherever the Germans have marched—that our nerves are numbed; they have almost ceased to react to the unending tale of cruelty and misery. But one wonders whether, even in Russia, German atrocity has equalled the cold, devilish cruelty of the Japanese, made still more repulsive by their nauseating cant about a "co-prosperity sphere" and "to win the friendship of China our only aim".

During the Tuchun wars one often saw the long trains of refugees fleeing for safety into Foreign Settlements, camping in open streets with all their poor portable

property about them, the mother always with a baby at the breast and three or four more children at her knees, homeless and hungry, yet miraculously quiet and resigned. But though they were stripped of their chickens, grain and money, and the men were often forced into the armies as porters and marched away hundreds of miles from home, their houses, furniture and land remained comparatively untouched. Stools and bedsteads are no use to a looting Chinese soldier; houses, unless they came directly into a battle area, were for the most part unharmed; and no Tuchun ever thought of "scorching" the fields.

But the Japanese conception of making the Chinese be friends with them is to destroy everything. Until the autumn of 1941, when General Chennault, with his gallant little band of American aviators "the Flying Tigers", came to Chungking, the Japanese had undisputed mastery of the air, and they made use of it for systematic destruction. How many thousands of hamlets were blotted out in heaps of rubble will never be known. Red Cross stations and outposts have been so consistently the target for their bombs that there is no greater attraction of danger than the Red Cross sign. Chinese wounded left on a battlefield are murdered in cold blood. And wherever a Japanese regiment goes all available women, from grandmothers to little things of seven or eight years, are swept into the "Consolation Houses" for the use of Japanese soldiers.

Such actions, which belong to the deliberate policy of the High Command, are well matched by the wanton cruelty of the common soldiers. One incident related by Agnes Smedley in *Battle Hymn of China* may suffice in illustration. A young Chinese mother from Hongkong landed in Canton carrying her baby and one precious tin of dried milk. The Japanese sentry, before passing her through, snatched the tin from her and scattered its contents on the muddy road. The wanton devilish wickedness of the action somehow stirs one more deeply than if he had bayoneted mother and babe on the spot.

It may be objected by some who still aver that the common Japanese are "very decent people" that such brutes are the exception. Unfortunately there is overwhelming evidence that they are the rule. No doubt they have been corrupted by propaganda and demoralized by war; there is evidence, too, that the behaviour of the troops varies with the character of their officers; and naval men generally seem to behave better than the soldiers. But there must always have been a strong strain of barbarism beneath the smiles and bowings one met with in Japan when it was her Government's policy to seem friendly to foreigners. It would be impossible for British and American soldiers to perpetrate the fiendish cruelties, apparently just for the pleasure of being cruel, that are daily committed by Japanese in China, or to maltreat and murder prisoners of war as we know they have done to prisoners in Hongkong.

Yet out of the dark sufferings inflicted by Japan a new light has dawned for Chinese peasants. Of all that the Chinese Government has accomplished since it retreated to Chungking in October 1938, nothing is fuller of hope for China's future than the work done for the peasants. Partly, of course, this was a case of necessity. The normal population of Szechuan, about 50,000,000, had been fully doubled by refugees from East China, and employment had to be found for them. At the same time West China's hitherto undeveloped wealth had to be brought into use for the waging of war. But with this due credit must be given to the determination of earnest men in the Government that the work of national resuscitation begun in Nanking should not be stopped. Public improvements are not only visible in the West and South-west but are being extended to the vast and shadowy North-west, Kansu, Suiyuan and Sinkiang, for the benefit of which a special Commission was appointed in 1941. General Chiang Kai-shek has recently found time to tour the district in order to see how the Commission's work is progressing.

Undoubtedly the greatest, most promising of all undertakings for the advance-

ment of peasants is the now famous Chinese Industrial Co-operatives movement, commonly known as the C.I.C. Exactly how it was started is not easy to ascertain; plans were formulated and some societies were in existence before the Government retreated to Chungking. The driving spirit in the movement has been by common accord a young New Zealander, Mr. Rewi Allen. Other foreigners actively associated with him are Mr. George Fitch, for many years well known in Shanghai as the vigorous secretary of the Chinese Y.M.C.A., and Mr. George Hogg, an Oxford man, who has been working for the C.I.C. in North-west China since 1940. But to mention these foreign helpers is not to underrate the part played by the Chinese Government—Dr. H. H. Kung, the Prime Minister, has interested himself deeply in the C.I.C. from its beginnings and is chairman of the Central Board of Direction—and the practical help it has given to the C.I.C., which is now an official institution with central officers in Chungking and regional supervisors.

Not the least interesting part of the C.I.C. is that many societies have been formed within the sphere of Japanese penetration. These are known as the "guerrilla industry" co-operatives, and their work is of a light nature easily shifted if the Japanese make a sudden swoop in any district. Behind these are the societies scattered over a great crescent from Kansu in the North-west to Fukien on the south-east coast, behind the battle line, and thus able to undertake heavier industries, cloth-making, leatherwork and carpentry, but all of them as much spread out as possible so as to escape bombing. Lastly, well away in the West and South-west are the heavy metal industries, which cannot be moved.

By the last available figures, bringing us to 1942, there were nearly 2,000 co-operative societies in existence directed by eighty-six regional depots. Since then the numbers must have increased considerably, although there was a reorganization and regrouping based on practical experience of the working of some societies, which has cut down their number while actually increasing the membership. They make everything that can be thought of—ammunition for rifles and machine-guns, soldiers' clothing, blankets, boots, gaiters, haversacks, leather articles, furniture, household utensils, soap, matches, candles, chemicals. The method of financing is interesting. Members of a new society must find at least 10 per cent. of the capital themselves; the balance is provided either by direct Government loan or by bank loans guaranteed by the Government. By the last obtainable figures the monthly output was about £300,000, which in Chinese dollars and Chinese values is a very big sum, and was steadily increasing. Noticeable, too, is the peasants' eagerness to repay the loans, most of those granted in 1939 having been paid off before 1942.

As can readily be seen, the C.I.C.'s great merit is that it gives the peasant another string to his bow. No longer is he solely dependent on the uncertainties of farming; the work is done in his own house; and in the long winter months he has regular and remunerative employment at home. With this, too, the C.I.C. has already awakened a new social sense. The interest of members in education and hygiene is easily aroused, and societies take a pride in seeing that their children get good schooling and in spreading the new rules of public health. Through the C.I.C., too, workers are continually trained to be more skilful, and there has already been a marked improvement in the technique of difficult industries, engineering, metalwork and so forth.

How far the co-operatives may solve the problem of China's future industrial development one cannot foretell. There seems at least a hope that the C.I.C. may save her from the soul-destroying degeneration of millions of human beings into mere numbers on a pay-roll in the vast factories which have demoralized so many of our people and destroyed so much of the beauty of our countryside.

The National Land Administration set up by the Government in June 1942 is another device for the farmer's benefit, its special purpose being to assist him

in buying his land. At the same time the inauguration of cheap loans undercuts the moneylender's evil power. The chief agency for such loans is the Farmers' Bank, but money is also lent to the peasants by the two principal Government banks, the Central Bank of China and the Bank of Communications, and already even by the "co-ops". The rates of interest vary according to the purpose for which money is borrowed, whether for land purchase, capital improvements, or merely to tide a man over a given period; but the object always is to keep the interest as low as possible, and it appears to vary from as little as 1½ per cent. to six or seven—annually, not monthly.

I would not appear to give the impression that everything in the garden is lovely. It is not. What has been accomplished is but a fraction of what has to be done. Vested interests in China have a tenacity unsurpassed in any other country. Behind the scenes are many reactionaries, fearful for their interests, secretly combining to cramp the reformer's arm and stultify his efforts. General Chiang Kai-shek has had more than one tussle with the landlords; black marketeers and rice-hoarders have been particularly noxious; and over and above the standard obstacles to reform, China's blockaded state has resulted in terrifying inflation of the currency. This has hit the peasants less hardly than other classes; though the cost of everything they buy has risen by hundreds, even thousands, per cent., the higher price of their produce still leaves them some margin. The fact remains that the Chinese dollar has sunk to such depths that very drastic measures will be needed after the war to resuscitate the currency, though not being a financial expert I cannot pretend to suggest what they will be.

But with all due recognition of difficulties to be faced and the magnitude of the task, one is justified in saying that, in the C.I.C., the National Land Administration and the cheap loans now put at the farmer's disposal, a door has been opened that should lead to a new and better life for him. Behind these reforms, moreover, one can see a sincere purpose and a new appreciation of the farmer's needs which is inspired both by sentiment and common sense—by sentiment because no one with a spark of human feeling can fail to be touched by the sufferings of the peasantry during the war and by their brave endurance; by common sense because the solution of all the greatest problems of the Chinese can be traced back to the perennial peasant problem. China's future prosperity is indeed bound up in the welfare of the men of the blue gown.

Chapter XIII

JAPAN REVEALED

FROM TIME TO TIME IN THESE PAGES THE BALEFUL FIRES OF THE RISING SUN HAVE flamed into the story. It is time to put into broad outline—to tell it all in detail would need a large volume—the progress and revelation of Japan's ambitions as they particularly affect China.

Strange it is to remember how utterly blind we were, even when Japan seized Manchuria, to her true nature and the long-planned sinister designs of which Manchuria was actually the fourth big move.

In the first Sino-Japanese War, watching more or less idly and without the faintest idea how directly we were to be affected by it, we were astounded at the speed with which the Chinese Colossus crumpled up. Kindly we applauded "the clever little Japs", who accepted our patronage with outward smiles and hate in their hearts.

By the time of her war with Russia, Japan was our Ally; Russia we thoroughly disliked and mistrusted; the Japanese victory was welcome.

The third stage in Japan's scheme of empire—the annexation of Korea—disturbed the West no more than it had been disturbed by the gross injustice to China, outcome of the Russo-Japanese War, which resulted in her Manchurian territory, as big as Germany and France together, coming under a joint control by Russia and Japan so stringent that the Chinese administration was in all essential subordinate to it.

As for the seizure of Manchuria, it is amazing to recall that, well on in 1932, when the ex-Emperor Hsuan T'ung, having been installed as Chincheng, or Director, of Manchukuo, was more than half way to its throne, one particularly well-informed and keen observer* of the Far East could still be speculating that Japan might withdraw her troops when satisfied as to the security of her interests in Manchuria.

Down to the outbreak of the First World War no one paid much attention to Japan's doings in China, although the Japanese colony in Shanghai was already larger than the British (hitherto the biggest and still most important foreign community), while Japanese mills were growing ominously large and prosperous and Japanese ships (not a few of them were still commanded by British officers) were in every Chinese coastal and riverine port. The legend that in 1911 Great Britain dissuaded Japan from intervening in support of the Manchus was repeated and dismissed as a piece of gossip. In the so-called Second Revolution, in 1913, the Japanese were believed to be helping the Republicans in their attack on the Arsenal at Shanghai; whether they were or not, nobody regarded the report as having any ulterior importance.

In September 1914, when the German forces in Tsingtao surrendered to the Japanese, it made a bad impression that the latter delayed in informing the British troops that had taken part in the attack, so that the triumphal entry into Tsingtao was staged by Japanese alone. This, everyone agreed, was not good manners. But as a revelation of the Japanese military mind and an emblem of the independent path of glory that Japan had marked out for herself in Asia—no one ever thought of it in that light at all. Lafcadio Hearn's moonbeam and silver rhapsodies; recollections of charming summer holidays in the exquisite beauty of Miyanoshita or Nikko; the tinkling laughter of *nasans* and *geishas*; and Gilbert and Sullivan—these still constituted the groundwork of most people's views of Japan.

The Twenty-one Demands, fired at President Yuan Shih-kai in January 1915 by the Japanese Minister Hioki, with a strong admonition that they must be kept secret, were a piece of unparalleled brigandage towards China and of black treachery towards Japan's ally, Great Britain. The most charitable explanation is that at that time Japan thought that Germany must win the war and sought to secure herself against the victorious Germans' reappearance in the Far East by getting China thoroughly in her grip. But the facts of the case leave Japan without any clothing of kindly excuse. She was merely seizing the opportunity presented by other people's embarrassment to further her own designs.

Soon after Japan's entry into the war of 1914 the Black Dragon Society† circulated among Army officers and Government officials a memorandum emphasizing that

* Whom for personal reasons I prefer not to name, though no doubt some will remember his able book from which I am quoting.

† So-called after the Amur, or Black Dragon River. It was founded during the Russo-Japanese War to further Japan's imperial aims, and has been at the bottom of most political assassinations, committed in the sacred name of patriotism, ever since. Its leader, Toyama, still alive, is one of the most powerful, most dreaded men in Japan.

"the realization of our great imperial policy depends on our being able skilfully to avail ourselves of the world's general trend of affairs so as to extend our influence and to decide upon a course of action towards China which shall be practical in execution".

The memorandum urged that now is the time to solve the Chinese question, "at this very moment", by compelling China "voluntarily to rely upon Japan", and to seize the financial and political control of China. "Such an opportunity will not occur again for four hundred years," said the Black Dragon; and it then set out how China's "voluntary" reliance on Japan was to be forced upon her, substantially as attempted in the Twenty-one Demands.

These demands were divided into five groups. By the first China agreed to any arrangements between Japan and Germany for the disposal of the latter's rights in Shantung.

By the second Japan's rights and leases in Manchuria were extended to ninety-nine years; Japanese subjects were to be free to lease land and reside where they pleased in South Manchuria, and Inner Mongolia was to be opened to trade.

The third group, giving Japan exclusive control of the chief coal and iron mines of the Yangtze Valley, was an obvious hit at Great Britain in her traditional sphere of influence.

By the fourth group China was not to cede or lease any harbour along her coast to any Power but Japan.

The fifth and most obnoxious group provided that China must lease to Japan a naval base in Fukien (this province is directly opposite the Japanese colony of Formosa, or Taiwan, as the Japanese call it); she must borrow only from Japan for any capital expenditure in Fukien; Japanese officers must be appointed to train and command Chinese gendarmes and police; and Japanese "advisers" must control China's finances.

Obviously these demands if granted would have made China a vassal of Japan. Despite Hioki's order of secrecy they were allowed to leak out to America, no doubt partly because of her traditional friendliness to China, partly because she was still outside the European War. The American Minister in Peking wrote urgently on the subject to President Wilson, but neither he nor Mr. Bryan was disposed to burn his fingers in the matter; indeed, Mr. Bryan wrote to the Japanese Ambassador in Washington vaguely protesting, but in the same sentence admitting that "territorial contiguity creates special relations between Japan and these districts" (Manchuria and Inner Mongolia).

The British Government had its hands too full with the war to make any serious protest, and there were very few people in England outside official circles who realized the enormity of Japan's conduct. For most of the British public in 1915 the Far East was as remote as the moon. Nevertheless the Twenty-one Demands got enough publicity in both English and American newspapers to be of some help to President Yuan Shih-kai. He managed to temporize until May, when, confronted with a Japanese ultimatum, he signed assent to the first four groups but was able to get that terrible fifth group put back for later consideration. Even so, his signing did not increase his popularity in China, though what any of his critics would have done in his place they did not attempt to say.

One curious offshoot of the affair was a violent outburst of Anglophobia in the Japanese Press, which not unnaturally led to counter-blasts from British newspapers in China. This was evidently more than the Japanese Government had bargained for, and in 1917 Count Soyeshima, who had been educated at Cambridge and was well known for his Anglophile tendencies, was sent to Shanghai to ascertain why there appeared to be so much feeling against Japan. There was no difficulty in giving him the reason. But the Japanese, like the Germans, can never see the

relationship of cause and effect, between their own conduct and other people's reactions. What is quite right and proper when done by Japan is utterly improper when done by anyone else. However, for the time being the Japanese Press was instructed to "pipe down".

In 1917 the Japanese Government, anxious to buttress the position gained by the Twenty-one Demands, sent Viscount Ishii to Washington to obtain a confirmation of that reference by Mr. Bryan to the "special relations" due to Japan's contiguity with China. Mr. Robert Lansing was then Secretary of State, and the visit resulted in the famous Lansing-Ishii agreement, by which the United States formally recognized that "territorial propinquity creates special relations between countries and consequently the Government of the United States recognizes that Japan has special interests in China, particularly in the part to which her possessions are contiguous".

It is incomprehensible that Mr. Lansing should have made such a concession; while the American Minister in China, Dr. Paul Reinsch, was kept in complete darkness as to what was being done in Washington. Patronage of China and the "Open Door" were the ground-bases of all American policy in the Far East, and the Twenty-one Demands had shown clearly how Japan interpreted her "special relations". The Lansing-Ishii agreement caused much pained wonderment in China, much uneasiness in America, and it ultimately disappeared at the Washington Conference. Viscount Ishii, however, naturally returned to Tokyo triumphant.

But Japan's attitude towards China from 1915–31 shows a curious vacillation between blowing hot and blowing cold. The main incidents have been mentioned in previous chapters and need only be briefly recalled here. Thus in 1916 Japan was among the first and most plain-spoken in telling President Yuan Shih-kai that he must not make himself Emperor. But why? Would not one man, with imperial autocratic authority, on whom Japan would be able to concentrate pressure as she pleased, have suited her purposes better that an amorphous, fretful Republic? In 1918 the Nishihara loans can only have meant that Japan's mercantile magnates thought they could buy the control of China by bribing the Anfu Party—as gross a miscalculation as Japan ever made.

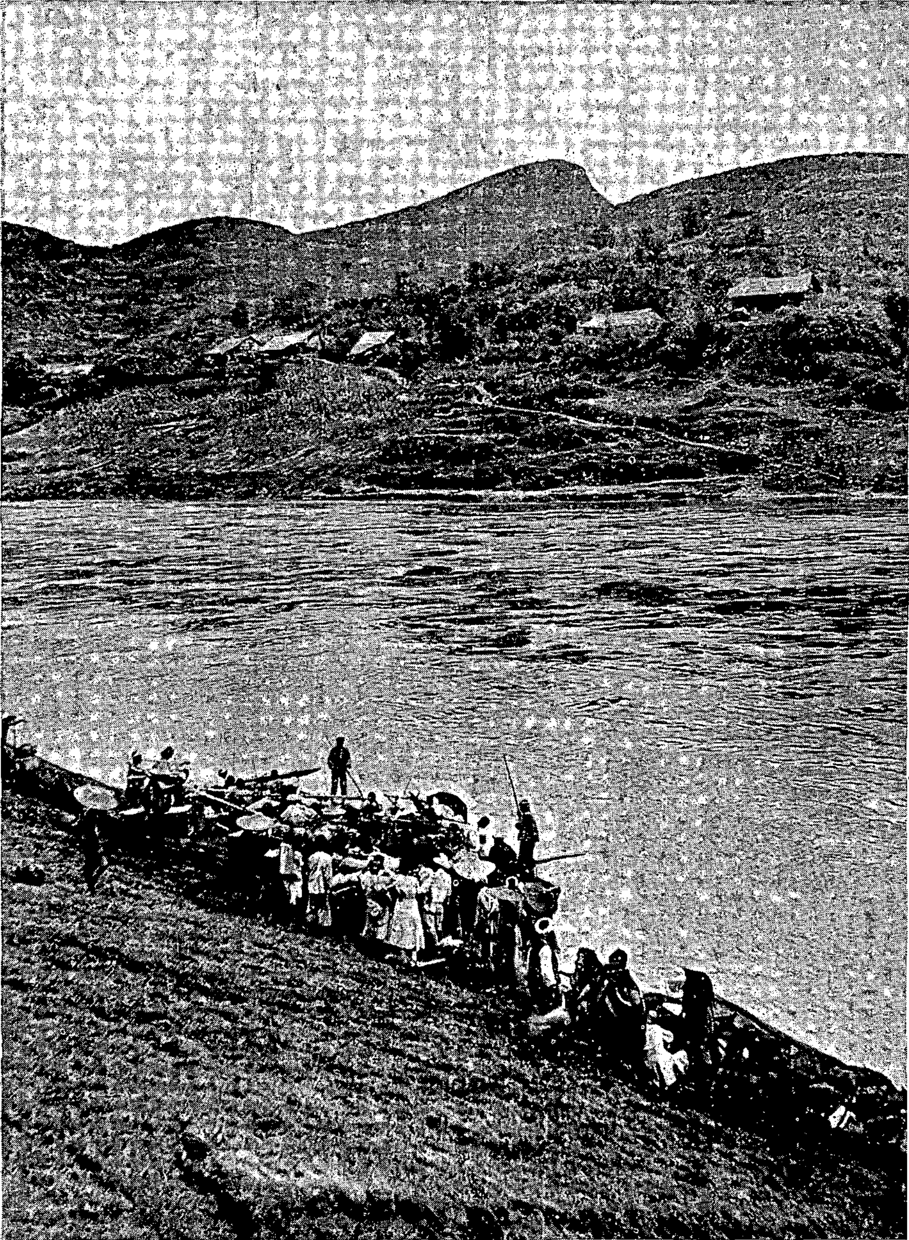
The uproar caused by the revelations of the Paris Conference that Japan was to be allowed to keep the German concessions in Shantung and the ferocious anti-Japanese boycott seem to have convinced Japan that she had over-played her hand in China, and at the Washington Conference she submitted to the displeasure of the Allied Powers—*reculer pour mieux sauter* is a principle that Japan has always well understood—and agreed to return Shantung to China* and to cancel the Twenty-one Demands.

It is noticeable, however, that while she gave way on other points she stuck resolutely to the treaties extracted from China in 1915 which affected Manchuria. China's alleged non-compliance with these treaties (on the ground that they had been obtained by force) was a part of Japan's excuse for the seizure of Manchuria.

For nine years after the Washington Conference it really looked as if Japan were trying to be a good boy and efface the recollection of her previous misbehaviour in China. From 1925–27 she positively "sucked up" to the triumphant Nationalists, but those were the years in which Great Britain was suffering from the boycott that followed the shooting of the students in Shanghai on May 30, 1925, and Japan was doing all she knew to grab her late ally's trade.

There was an unfortunate break in 1928 when, under the Premiership of General Baron Tanaka, the Japanese tried to block the Nationalist advance to Peking, blew holes in the wall of Tsinanfu and slaughtered numbers of Chinese. But Tanaka fell from office soon afterwards and was succeeded by the genuinely

* This was finally completed with the return of the Tsingtao-Tsinanfu railway in 1929.



FERRY OF THE UPPER YANGTZE, HERE CALLED GOLDSAND RIVER

THE WATER BUFFALO, CHINA'S UNFAILING FRIEND

liberal-minded Mr. Hamaguchi (murdered by a "patriot" in 1930 for causing Japan to agree to the naval disarmament scheme mapped out by the London Naval Conference), with the no less liberal Baron Shidehara as Foreign Minister.

Broadly speaking, the explanation of Japan's more reasonable behaviour in the 1920's is that Japan was passing through an era of indecision between liberalism and atavism which inevitably affected her foreign policy. In his penetrating book, *The Changing Fabric of Japan*, published in 1930, Captain M. D. Kennedy says that Japan was experiencing a change as profound as that of the Meiji Revolution, but still uncertain which course she would finally take.

Among her best men, such as Mr. Hara, the Premier who was murdered by a Black Dragon agent for agreeing to join in the Washington Conference; Mr. Takahashi, Japan's greatest Finance Minister, murdered in the "blood bath" of February 1936; Mr. Inukai, murdered by young officers for want of "patriotism" in 1932; Mr. Hamaguchi, Mr. Wakatsuki, Baron Shidehara and others, the guiding principle might fairly be described as "peace, retrenchment and reform". Manhood suffrage was introduced in 1927, and opinions expressed in the Diet began to have some real influence, while expenditure on the Army and Navy was cut by considerable amounts. The Japanese people meanwhile were revelling in Western games, fashions amusements such as the cinema, and especially music; and in the universities social and political books from abroad, even Karl Marx—the mere possession of which today would be a death warrant—were openly read and discussed.

A brief quotation from a statement in the Diet by Baron Shidehara on January 16, 1927, when he was Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, is worth notice. For Baron Shidehara is the one outstanding statesman visible in Japan today, and this statement defines the principles which he strove to follow towards China in 1930–31 until beaten by the Army.

> "We naturally are anxious" (he said) "to see the early re-establishment of order and security in China.* We are actuated instinctively by sympathy for our neighbouring friends, and by the need of safeguarding industrial and commercial interests of our nationals.
>
> "However, this can be attained only by efforts initiated by the Chinese themselves. Any attempt to force domestic peace by outside pressure would do more harm than good.
>
> . . . "The Chinese themselves must decide who shall assume the reins of government in China or what internal policy is sane and wise. If such policy suits Chinese characteristics it will naturally gain ground there. If, on the contrary, it betrays these expectations, it will fall of itself. . . . No plans for political and social institutions worked out by any foreign nation can be imposed upon China with lasting success. . . .
>
> "Japan's policy covering all questions of relations between Japan and China may be summarized:
>
> "First—Respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of China and scrupulously avoid all interference in her domestic strife.
>
> "Second—Promote the solidarity and economic *rapprochement* between the nations.
>
> "Third—Entertain sympathetically and helpfully the just aspirations of the Chinese people and co-operate in efforts of realization of such aspirations.
>
> "Fourth—Maintain an attitude of patience and toleration in the present situation of China, and at the same time protect Japan's legitimate and essential rights and interests by all reasonable means at the disposal of the Government."

* It will be remembered that in January 1927 the Communist outbreak in China was at its worst and most violent.

It is easy to imagine how displeasing such sentiments were to the Army; and when, as Foreign Minister—first under Mr. Hamaguchi, who had become Premier on Baron Tanaka's fall from power in September 1929, and, after he had been murdered, under Baron Wakatsuki—Baron Shidehara showed that he meant to put his principles into practice, the outcry against his "weak policy" was quickly raised and became louder and louder.

It is important to realize that the seizure of Manchuria was designed "a double debt to pay"—as a part of the Tanaka Memorial scheme of empire, and to wrest power in Japan from hands which the Army and Navy deemed unworthy of it and to end a policy which they detested. The Army was infuriated by the cutting down of its appropriations; the Navy by the "disgrace" of the London Naval Agreement; the public were easily roused by the military propaganda about Japan's humiliations; and there were many grievances in Manchuria that grew with airing.

Originally these centred in China's violation of or refusal to implement agreements made in the 1915 treaty—that section of the Twenty-one Demands which Japan had refused to cancel. She refused to complete the railway eastwards from Kirin to Tunhua to link up with the North Korean railways. This was particularly desired by Japan, since it would have enabled her to rail troops through the North Korean port of Seishin into the heart of Manchuria in a quarter of the time that it takes to ship them round by Dairen.

China also engaged Dutch engineers to develop the port of Hulatao on the Peking-Mukden railway not far from the Great Wall, and built feeder railways to the Peking-Mukden line—one from Kirin, one from Payintala on the Chengchiatun-Tsitsihar railway—by which produce could be routed from north-east and north-west over the Peking-Mukden line. This was a double-dyed offence, as it meant the taking away of business both from the South Manchuria Railway and the Japanese port of Dairen.

China's argument was that she was not bound by the 1915 treaties because they had been forced upon her. That is a point over which legalists may argue; I would not venture to express an opinion on it. A better argument, perhaps, is the moral one, that Manchuria was her territory and that she was justified in overriding Japan's attempts to treat it as Japanese.

Into this heated atmosphere came in May 1931 the Wanpaoshan affair. Wanpaoshan is a village near Changchun (now called Hsinking, the present capital of Manchukuo) where some Korean settlers had leased 500 acres for rice-growing. There are many Koreans in Manchuria, and in former years the Chinese never treated them as foreigners. But since the Japanese annexation of Korea, Koreans have become Japanese subjects and the Chinese accordingly began to watch their doings (which in fact were often a screen for something Japan wanted and could not get openly) more keenly. At Wanpaoshan the Koreans began to dig a large ditch for purposes of irrigation. Chinese farmers protested, fearing damage to their own lands. There was a riot, some heads were broken, but nobody killed. Instantly the Japanese Press took up the cry of "outrage" and there was a horrid outbreak in Korea against Chinese, both in the capital and elsewhere, in which some hundreds of Chinese were killed.

In the case of Captain Nakamura the Chinese position was less unequivocal. Nakamura was travelling on the borders of Western Manchuria, with a passport describing him as a student, when he was seized by the Chinese officials and shot as a spy—which he probably was. This was in June 1931. At first the Chinese professed to know nothing of the affair, and when finally driven to admit Nakamura's disappearance, the local officials in Manchuria insisted that he had been killed by brigands.

In both these affairs Baron Shidehara stuck firmly to his policy of conciliation,

offering compensation for the massacre of Chinese in Korea, labouring to settle the Nakamura murder by peaceable negotiation. It must be admitted that the Chinese Government, then in the full tide of its "rights recovery" campaign, was difficult to deal with; and passion in Japan rose to white heat, against Baron Shidehara and against the Chinese.

No one was more violent than General Minami, Minister for War, who actually made a speech denouncing his own colleague, the Foreign Minister. But the Ministers for War and Navy in Japan are appointed by their respective Services and are responsible only to them, not to the Government in which they take part. Throughout the seizure of Manchuria General Minami proved himself an able instrument of the Army's policy.

It is impossible in the space at command, and indeed unnecessary, since the story has often been told, to describe in detail the seizure of Manchuria. On the night of September 18, 1931, there was an explosion on the South Manchuria Railway outside Mukden, said by the Japanese to have been caused by Chinese soldiers. It could not have been serious, as the night mail train arrived soon afterwards only ten minutes late; and as the S.M.R. was plentifully patrolled by Japanese guards the Chinese authorship of the explosion was more than doubtful. Also consider the sequel.

The Japanese troops rose as one man, even in districts far from Mukden. They seized the Chinese barracks, arsenal, aerodromes, wireless stations; they paraded and disarmed thousands of Chinese troops, who were taken completely by surprise; they seized all strategically important points. Within twenty-four hours they had occupied Changchun, Nanling, Antung, Newchwang and all the principal towns adjacent to the South Manchuria Railway. The Young Marshal, Chang Hsueh-liang, was living in Peking at the time, and with him were 150,000 of his best troops, who had been brought into North China the year before when he supported General Chiang Kai-shek against the revolt of the Reorganizationists. There remained in Manchuria about 100,000 of Chang's troops, but, taken by surprise, they made no resistance. This, however, did not check the Japanese from flying over the country bombing indiscriminately. Between September 18 and December 31 they made twenty-eight unprovoked bombing raids along the Peking-Mukden Railway. The most vicious was that on Chinchow, in south-west Manchuria, where a Provisional Government had been set up. There was no sign of resistance or military preparation in Chinchow, then or later; the Japanese bombed what was practically an open city, killing hundreds of civilians.

The speed and thoroughness of Japanese action left no doubt whatever that it was the outcome of long preparation: every Japanese officer must have been carefully drilled in what he had to do at the appointed hour. That certainly was what the Lytton Commission reported to the League of Nations. Only in one quarter did the Japanese meet resistance. In North Manchuria, at Tsitsihar, General Ma Chan-shan stood up to them gallantly and inflicted on them a serious defeat on the Nonni river. The delight of all China and the glory won by General Ma were unbounded. In February 1932 Ma pretended to come to terms with the Japanese, went to Mukden, where he was received with great honour, accepted an office in their administration, was entrusted with a large sum of money—and went back to the north to renew the fight. But he was defeated and had to retreat into Russia.

Meanwhile all China was flaming with anger. A mob of students stormed into the Foreign Office at Nanking and beat up Dr. C. T. Wang so severely as to put him out of public life, while the boycott of the Japanese, begun after the Wanpaoshan affair, redoubled in fury. Canton, already on bad terms with Nanking, clamoured for war with Japan. Public indignation was generally roused against General Chiang Kai-shek, who, knowing well China's weakness, was determined

to avoid war and if possible find a peaceful way out of the quarrel with the help of the League of Nations. A conference between Nanking and Canton was held in Shanghai at the end of October with a view to forming a united front. But the Cantonese attitude was so unreasonable that on December 15 General Chiang resigned, leaving the Cantonese to set up a Government, with Sun Fo as Premier and Eugene Chen as Foreign Minister. Now with the actual responsibility of facing Japan on their shoulders the Cantonese found themselves in a very difficult position. Within a month they had faded away and General Chiang had resumed the reins of government. One cannot have much respect for men whose only ability is to vilify those who are trying to do the nation's work.

When the Cantonese came north they had brought with them the 19th Route Army, commanded by the dashing General Tsai Ting-kai, which stayed behind when the politicians retreated to Canton, to earn undying fame in the defence of Shanghai.

Japan at this time was represented at Shanghai only by some ships commanded by Admiral Shiosawa. That the boycott was fierce—many Japanese were completely ruined by it—and the Chinese temper dangerous, with continual mass meetings, demonstrations outside Japanese mills, and so forth, is undeniable. But the chief blame for what ensued rests with Admiral Shiosawa. There was a fracas on January 18, 1932, in which a Japanese Buddhist priest was killed (by all accounts he invited it), and Shiosawa sent an ultimatum to General Wu Teh-chen, Mayor of Greater Shanghai, a most able and level-headed man, to suppress the boycott, apologize and pay compensation. On January 28 the Mayor agreed to all the demands. But Shiosawa was not to be baulked of his glory, and that night he landed 1,400 sailors and marched into Chapei, a huge, densely packed Chinese quarter where a large number of Japanese also lived, on the north-west border of the International Settlement.

And here, contrary to all the rules that a Chinese regiment must retire directly a Japanese soldier appears, the 19th Route Army held him up for six mortal weeks, though bombed by aeroplanes and plastered by naval guns, losing many of their men but killing many Japanese and, what was worse, causing Japan to "lose face" all over the world. Before she had done with General Tsai Ting-kai and the 19th Route Army Japan had to send over 7,000 troops to Shanghai.

The destruction of Chapei and the villages in the adjoining Kiangwan area between the Whangpoo and the Yangtze over which the fight had raged was terrible. Chapei had contained some 250,000 people packed together in closely crowded little houses. The whole of this area was reduced to heaps of rubble, and as such most of it has remained, the former Chinese inhabitants having no wish to live near the Japanese. For the foreign and Chinese residents in the International Settlements the battles were about as pleasant as it would be for Londoners if a hostile force were to land between Blackfriars and Tower Bridge and attack an enemy entrenched north of Aldgate. The wonder is that so few foreigners were injured. Great credit is due to the Chinese for not attacking the Japanese who were using Yangtzepoo, on the banks of the Whangpoo, from which to carry on the war. For Yangtzepoo is the eastern branch of the International Settlement and the Japanese had no right whatever to use it as a base for their assault.

On February 12 Admiral Nomura* was sent to supersede the egregious Shiosawa, who had landed his country in all this trouble, and by the good offices of the British Minister, Sir Miles (now Lord) Lampson, a truce was signed on May 5 (fighting had ceased some weeks before, the Chinese troops having withdrawn twelve miles). The Japanese were undoubtedly much put out by the fighting at

* Admiral Nomura, who has always been liked by foreigners, was sent to Washington in the early summer of 1941, it may be remembered, to carry on peace negotiations, while the Army and Navy prepared for Pearl Harbour.

Shanghai: it was too much in the world's eyes, with too many foreigners at hand to see what Japan was doing, whereas in Manchuria there were no inconvenient witnesses. But they took advantage of the outbreak to establish themselves permanently in Hongkew, Shanghai's northern quarter, where they built barracks and maintained a standing force of several hundred troops—a source of increasing inconvenience to the Municipal Council of Shanghai.

To return to Manchuria: by early in 1932 the whole of the Three Eastern Provinces which make up Manchuria had been occupied. Japan's penetration into the Russian sphere had caused much flapping at Geneva lest it should bring on war. But Russia was then too weak to resist and had to allow herself to be shouldered out. And now Pu Yi, ex-Emperor Hsuan T'ung, comes into the picture, not undramatically.

In November 1931 he had secretly left his house in the Japanese Concession in Tientsin for Dairen. In February 1932 Manchukuo, to use its new name, declared its independence; and on March 1 Pu Yi was installed as Chief Executive. It was not yet thought time by the Japanese to call him Emperor, but in August 1932 Japan formally recognized the new State and appointed General Muto as Ambassador to it—the fact that this was done before the Lytton Commission could get back to Geneva may be observed—and on March 1, 1934, Pu Yi was finally enthroned with the title of Emperor Kang Teh, which may be translated "Tranquillity and Benevolent Virtue".

Those are the bare facts; precisely what lies behind them will perhaps never be known. The Japanese declared that they had nothing to do with Pu Yi's coming to Dairen, but "what the soldier says is not evidence". The late Sir Reginald Johnston, who alone knew his former pupil and the Manchu Court intimately, was emphatic that there had for a long time been a scheme among the elder Manchu officials for the restoration of the ex-Emperor Hsuan T'ung to the throne of his ancestors in Manchuria. That would support the theory that Pu Yi, now a man of twenty-seven and probably sick to death of his aimless life in Tientsin, went spontaneously to Dairen. There is much evidence that he hoped to become a real ruler and to make of Manchuria a model State that would revive the glory of his House. His Prime Minister, the late Cheng Hsiao-hsu, was a Chinese scholar of high repute, the very embodiment of Confucian virtues and the young Emperor's devoted servant; and the Minister of Finance, Hsi Hsia, was a man of ability and integrity.

But every Minister had a Japanese Vice-Minister, and the power was his. Pu Yi was impotent in the Japanese grip. He visited the Emperor of Japan a year after his enthronement in great pomp. But he was and is nothing but a popinjay of the Japanese, hardly even gilded, his palace in Hsinking, a new tawdry stucco erection, being inferior in appearance and fittings to most of the Japanese government offices in the town. He is married to a beautiful wife but has no children, and, it is said, is not likely to have any. What further trials Fate, which has dealt him so much misfortune, may still have in store for him, no one can say. But he could be no worse off as a prisoner of the Chinese, if that is to be his lot when China recovers Manchuria, than as prisoner of Japan.

One more act in this stage of Japanese conquest has to be mentioned, namely the invasion of Jehol, the province between Manchuria and Inner Mongolia. In a way this caused more consternation than even the seizure of Manchuria. The Japanese had put up the preposterous argument that the Three Eastern Provinces were not really China's; one recalls with amazement that there were even people in this country who held that there might be something in this argument. But about Jehol there was no question whatever: it was as indubitably China as any part south of the Great Wall. Romance pervaded all the borders of Jehol. There the Emperor K'ang Hsi built himself a beautiful summer palace and surrounded

it with a vast hunting-park, in which, after the Revolution, until when it had been closely walled against intruders, Mr. Arthur Sowerby, a noted naturalist of Shanghai, identified every rare beast and bird known in East Asia. There the Emperor Ch'ien Lung received Lord Macartney on his hopeless mission; and here the same Emperor, with equal hopelessness, strove to win the love of the exquisite Hsiang Fei, widowed Queen of Aksu, whose husband had died fighting the Emperor. And here the worn-out Emperor Hsien Fêng, fugitive from the Anglo-French troops in Peking, died, while the youthful Yehonala circumvented the plots of Manchu princes to do away with her.

When in February 1933 the Hsinking Government sent an ultimatum to Tang Yu-lin, Governor of Jehol, to surrender the province, a cry went up from all China that this at least must be defended. The Japanese demand was not only a question of lust for territory: large numbers of disarmed Chinese soldiers had flowed from Manchuria into Jehol and were making themselves a nuisance to Japan.* Mr. T. V. Soong hurried to the north and gave a public assurance that Jehol should be defended to the last. So it might even have been; the natural difficulties of the country, together with the bitter cold of a North China winter, should have made invasion a hazardous task. Yet Jehol fell with shocking rapidity. Governor Tang Yu-lin fled incontinently with his wives and treasure. The Chinese troops, without direction or leadership, melted away, hardly striking a blow, and the Japanese swept down along the icy roads with scarcely a man lost. Only at the Great Wall did the Chinese gather themselves for a final effort against the barbarians. Here they really fought desperately. But once again the Great Wall failed to keep out the invaders it had been built to protect China from, and the Japanese passed south of it.

They did not, however, enter Peking. General Ho Ying-chin, Nanking's Minister for War, was sent north to treat with them, and in April 1933 the first phase of the second war between China and Japan was ended in an agreement between General Ho Ying-chin, Chinese Minister for War, and General Muto, the Japanese Commander. China was compelled to accept the accomplished fact in Manchuria and Jehol and to agree to the neutralizing of a large tract within the Great Wall, which Japan was to be free to inspect whenever she pleased. What else China was forced to concede has never been made public, a fact of which Japan took full advantage. It is obviously so easy to accuse the other side of violating an agreement of which no one else knows the prescriptions.

It is said that when the news of the seizure of Mukden was taken to Baron Shidehara he was for a few moments unable to speak. In that moment he must have realized that all his policy, all he had striven for, all his hopes of amicable understanding with China, had been blown to fragments with the bomb that blew out a rail of the South Manchuria Railway track. Yet for some months he strove desperately to hold the soldiers in check. On September 25 he sent a note to the League of Nations:

> "The Japanese Government has firmly pursued the object of preventing an extension of the incident and the aggravation of the situation; it is profoundly desirous of ensuring the peaceful settlement of this problem as rapidly as possible by negotiations between the two countries and it has the firm intention not to depart from this line of conduct.
>
> ". . . The Japanese forces are being withdrawn to the fullest extent which is at present allowed by the maintenance of the safety of Japanese nationals and the protection of the railway."

* These "bandits", as Japan called them, continued to give great trouble in many parts of Manchuria down to 1937, and the annual attempts to round them up and destroy them cost the Japanese a considerable toll in the life of her soldiers. Most of the settlements in Manchuria are military outposts against "bandits". Few Japanese go voluntarily to Manchuria.

There is no doubt that Baron Shidehara meant and believed every word he wrote. Yet it was all false. The Japanese Government was now not the civilians but the soldiers, and they were resolved to extend the incident to its utmost limits. They had no idea of negotiating with China, but to force her to their will. Japanese troops were not being withdrawn, but sent further and further afield. Every pledge that Baron Shidehara gave to the League—that no additional troops should be sent to Manchuria from Korea, that Tsitsihar should not be occupied, that Chinchow should not be bombed again and seized—were all falsified. In vain did Baron Shidehara plead with General Minami, pointing out how bad for Japan's reputation was this unbroken series of broken pledges. To a Japanese soldier deceit and broken pledges are part of the art of war, meaning nothing except disadvantage for the fool who thinks that an undertaking is something to be respected. In December a financial crisis in Japan over the question of the retention of the gold standard brought down the Cabinet and Baron Shidehara went out of office—one may imagine with combined grief and thankfulness. It will be interesting to see whether he may yet have an opportunity after the war of doing real service for his country. That he has not been assassinated is curious and inexplicable.

It remains to glance briefly (more than that would be a waste of time) at the doings of the League of Nations striving to assert authority while fully aware that it could never use the only argument by which authority could be upheld.

China lost no time in appealing to the League, and for many months clung to the hope that it might eventually do her justice. The Japanese stuck to the one point that the quarrel must be settled directly between themselves and China; they had been obliged at Washington to submit to third-party intervention in the shape of superintendence over their discussions with the Chinese about Shantung, etc., and they did not intend that it should happen again. From the outset the League showed a terrible inability to take a firm stand. Twice it adjourned for a few days after passing resolutions admonishing Japan to withdraw from Manchuria, and on each reassembling appeared much surprised that she had not done so. At last, in December 1931, the Council decided to send out the Lytton Commission of Inquiry, although the Chinese protested vainly that, all the while it was inquiring, Japan, not having withdrawn from Manchuria, would be consolidating her hold on the country. So, three months already wasted. The League could have got all the information it needed through experienced members of the Diplomatic Body in Peking within a fortnight of the railway explosion.

The Commission of Inquiry, consisting of Lord Lytton as chairman, the French General Claudel, the Italian Count Aldrovandi-Marescotti, the American General Frank McCoy and the German Dr. Heinrich Schnee reached Shanghai in March, in the thick of the fighting in Chapei. It had called at Tokyo *en route*, where it was received chillingly and was peremptorily forbidden to take Dr. Wellington Koo with it into Manchuria. However, it had no difficulty in Manchuria in ascertaining the facts, though many Chinese were too terrified to give evidence and others only dared visit the members of the Commission secretly by night. The Commission was delayed by Lord Lytton's falling ill in Peking with dysentery; then it visited Japan again, where it had to listen to a sermon by General Araki on Japan's holy mission; and it was the end of September—over a year from the time of the railway explosion—before its Report was presented to the League.

It was a beautiful document, lucid, factual, replete with interest. But in trying to do justice to all it only succeeded in pleasing nobody. Its proposals for settlement of the dispute were of course so much waste paper, Japan having already recognized the new State of Manchukuo and appointed an Ambassador to it.

The League set up a Commission of Nineteen, composed of representatives mostly of the small countries, to examine the Report, and on the strength of their

conclusions the Assembly put forward a list of terms for the final adjustment of the dispute which, except that it included recognition of the autonomy of Manchukuo compatibly with the interests of anyone who could claim interests in that distressful country, was moderate and fair-minded. Japan rejected these proposals, and on February 24, 1933, the Assembly passed a solemn unanimous condemnation of her. Thereupon Mr. Matsuoka theatrically led the Japanese delegation out of the hall. A month later Japan formally notified Geneva of her withdrawal from the League.

The part played by the United States Government in the League's long perplexities was imposing but empty. At the outset of the Council's confabulations Mr. Stimson, Secretary of State, sent a cordial note expressing "wholehearted sympathy with the attitude of the League". The Council replied by inviting the United States to be represented in its discussions; to which Japan, for once on sound ground, objected that it was unconstitutional for a non-member of the League to take part in its proceedings. But everyone else was eager to get America in, and she accepted the League's invitation, at the same time, however, instructing her representative that he was only to speak when the Kellogg Pact was involved (America being a signatory), and in other discussions to be merely an observer.

Mr. Stimson, in his book *The Far Eastern Crisis*, tells us that at the beginning he thought it would be wisest to adopt a cautious attitude; the Japanese Government (that, of course, meant Baron Shidehara and Mr. Wakatsuki) had a pretty good record, "and, if unembarrassed by interference by other Powers, might conceivably get the breach healed by peaceful diplomacy". He was, however, soon undeceived, and on January 6, 1932, he sent identical Notes to China and Japan, sharply worded, stating that the United States would recognize no change brought about by force.

This was the occasion—Mr. Stimson having suggested to the British Foreign Office that it should send similar Notes—from which sprang the rooted belief in America that Mr. Stimson had proposed joint *action* against Japan—which he never did—and that Great Britain had refused "to come along with us". All that Whitehall did refuse to do was to send a Note, which it thought should properly come from the League. But the matter was made worse by a *communiqué* to the Press, hurriedly put out by some official in the Foreign Office, which read like a rebuff to Mr. Stimson.*

In *The Far Eastern Crisis* Mr. Stimson says plainly enough that the American people could never have been brought to agree to action against Japan over Manchuria, and that he had no thought of anything but of bringing moral pressure to bear on Japan. And much she would have cared, or did care. More than once has Washington sent out these non-recognition Notes, beginning from the time of the Twenty-one Demands. They read beautifully, creating for the moment a glow of satisfaction and expectation in the reader. And in the end they amount to nothing. Supposing, for example, that Manchukuo had lived up to its professions when it declared its independence and opened its doors to trade with all the world instead of shutting them as tightly as possible: would it have made the slightest difference that nobody in the world had recognized the new State—except Salvador, which appears to have done so by accident in ignorance of what it was doing? None whatever.

As for the League's humiliation, what else could be expected when neither Russia nor America were members and financial disaster hung blackly over all Europe and America? Within a few weeks of the Mukden *coup* Great Britain actually saw her notes refused by Continental hotel-keepers. But surely there

* Those who wish to go more fully into this old controversy may be referred to the book *War and Politics in China*, by Sir John Pratt, then adviser on Chinese affairs in the Foreign Office.

was a deeper reason for the League's failure, which lay at the root of all its failure to bring erring States to heel. There was no mutual trust in its composition.

Before the First World War, if a man wished to go abroad he packed his bag, bought what foreign money he needed, and went. There were Customs to be passed through, but they gave him little trouble. Passports he never thought of unless he were going to Russia and possibly Turkey.

But after the war he could not stir an inch without a passport visaed for every port he might touch at. He was limited in the amount of foreign currency he bought and had to surrender the balance of it on leaving the country it belonged to. Russia it was extremely difficult to enter at all. And everywhere tariff walls sprang up ever higher and higher.

There could be no more vivid proof of the fundamental distrust of the nations or each other. And on such a foundation of sand the League of Nations inevitably collapsed at the first test of its reality.

Chapter XIV

THE YEARS BETWEEN: THE RISE OF NANKING

WHAT HIGH HOPES WERE BORN BETWEEN 1931 AND '37! WHAT SOLID FOUNDATIONS and commencement of national reform were actually achieved in those half-dozen years in spite of internal cavillings, discords and suspicion, and above all in defiance of the ever-deepening Japanese menace in the north!* As one looks back on the period between the seizure of Manchuria and Japan's resumption of the war in 1937, China reminds one of a man who has been told by his doctor that he cannot expect more than another two years of life and who strives furiously to complete a piece of work on which he has set his heart. I do not think any educated Chinese can ever have doubted that sooner or later war with Japan must come. I remember, about 1935, when there was some talk of a settlement of Sino-Japanese differences on the basis of China's recognizing Manchukuo, Dr. Quo Tai-chi, then Ambassador in London, saying to me, "We might conceivably consider that, if we could believe that Japan would ever abide by an agreement. But she would merely make fresh demands. She will never leave us in peace." For all that, China continued manfully with the labour of reorganization, and it is specially to be noted that she has never allowed the war to stop that work. Though necessarily interrupted in the East it has been prosecuted vigorously in the West, and that with all the greater promise in that the nation is awake and united as it was not previously. In all the story of China's Revolution no period is more significant than the six years from 1931–37, when the best minds in the country were shaping the pattern of things to come.

They did not, however, begin well. It was said in a previous chapter that the shock of the loss of Manchuria brought the politicians to their senses, and that is true enough as regards Nanking. But the South remained aloof and hostile still for five years, and even in Central China there was for some time deep suspicion of General Chiang and "the Soong dynasty" and a curious inability to realize the things for which they were working. The years 1929–30, when Nanking had had to fight two wars, against the Kwangsi generals at Wuchang and the Reorganizationists led by Yen Hsi-shan and Feng Yu-hsiang in North China, coupled

* In this chapter I shall only mention the steps by which Japan prepared the way for her renewed invasion of China as they impinge upon the doings of the Nanking Government. The whole tale of them is kept for the next chapter. This, I hope, will make the whole picture easier to comprehend by avoiding much jumping to and fro between one subject and another.

with the disillusion caused by the futility of the Kuomintang and the gross corruption of some of its members and its branch organizations, the *tangpu,* had created a general atmosphere of nerves, fretfulness and discord in which serious reform was impossible. More than one attempt was made on the life of Mr. T. V. Soong; his secretary was murdered; and there were threats against General Chiang, while inside the Government his policy was bitterly opposed by a group led by Hu Han-min.

Three circumstances in particular excited the Opposition—the desire of "T.V." to call in advisers supplied by the League of Nations to assist in national reorganization; the proposed establishment of a Government opium monopoly; and General Chiang's house-arrest of Hu Han-min.

As regards the League advisers, the outcry was that Chiang was seeking their help to make himself dictator, which was a common charge against him well-nigh until the renewed Japanese invasion. The proposed opium monopoly certainly appeared on the face of it to be a retrograde step. Yet the Chinese Government were only experiencing again the same difficulty that the old Imperial Government had experienced over seventy years earlier. Just as the Chinese had realized in the 1850's that the only way to stop opium smuggling was to create Government control with regularized taxation, so it was felt in 1931 that this was the only means of controlling and ultimately suppressing the widespread cultivation of the opium poppy.

The proposal is understood to have come from Dr. Wu Lien-teh, an old Cambridge M.D., famous for his discovery of the pneumonic plague germ and for his subsequent brilliant work in organizing and directing the Manchurian Plague Bureau—the last man in China who could justly have been accused of wishing to perpetuate opium for the sake of revenue, of which he and the Government were accused. But the project caused such an outcry that it was dropped.

The result, of course, was that opium-growing continued to flourish and callous officials to make money out of it; and just three years later General Chiang issued an order:

> That drastic measures should be taken to stamp out the evil.
>
> All those found engaged in the manufacture, transport or sale of narcotic drugs will be condemned to death. Civil officials found encouraging the traffic will be similarly treated.

The Anti-Narcotic Committee of Nanking followed up with more detailed regulations (providing among other things that smokers would be given the means of curing themselves of the habit and would not be punished unless they relapsed), which had considerable success in Central China, much less in the South, and in the North were defeated by the enormous trade in opium, heroin, morphia, etc., fostered by the Japanese Concession in Tientsin. Among all the detestable things which Japan has done, none is more shameful than her deliberate efforts to debauch the population of North China with cheap drugs. It was repeatedly exposed at Geneva before the war, but of course without the slightest result.

Another consequence of the proposed opium monopoly in 1931 was that it carried over many adherents to Canton, when, already incensed by the proposed engagement of League advisers and the opium monopoly, it exploded over the arrest of Hu Han-min, and on May 27, 1931, proclaimed an independent Nationalist Government, headed by the veteran T'ang Shao-yi—perhaps the one act of political myopia in his sagacious life—and including Dr. Sun Fo and Eugene Chen of the biting tongue and pen. In a previous chapter I spoke of the extraordinary difference of the feeling of the atmosphere of Canton from that of any other part of China. That is the only explanation that suggests itself for the

really impossible behaviour of the Cantonese politicians. Admittedly General Chiang was a hard man. He did not suffer fools gladly, he was dictatorial and at times vindictive. But he cannot be denied some excuse. He and his brother-in-law had a clear-cut programme of the reforms that the country most needed—fiscal, economic and administrative, a balanced budget and debt consolidation. But the Opposition could only oppose, apparently for the sheer perverse pleasure of doing so.

In the summer Canton announced a punitive expedition against General Chiang, but the Japanese seizure of Manchuria put a stop to that. The abortive conference in Shanghai on the question of presenting a united front to Japan; General Chiang's resignation; the brief, unpalatable experience by the Canton clique of the pains of responsibility for government; and Chiang's return have been mentioned in the last chapter. The year 1931 ended with a budget 280,000,000 dollars short of being balanced, while floods had wrought havoc, not only the monster flood in the Yangtze Valley already mentioned, but in Kwangtung and Honan.

The Tangku Truce which in May 1933 put a momentary stop to the war between China and Japan gave the Cantonese Government (which was the vocal—very vocal—centre of the whole South-west Political Council of Kwangtung, Kwangsi, Kweichow and Yunnan) a fresh opportunity for what it enjoyed most—namely, voluble denunciation. It dispatched to the League of Nations a long protest setting out the terms which, it asserted, Nanking had made with Japan. These were said to include *de facto* recognition of Manchukuo and a promise by Japan of financial and military help against the Communists. Canton declared that, on behalf of the Chinese nation, it solemnly repudiated any agreement with the Japanese militarists.

Nanking promptly telegraphed to Geneva that the alleged terms given by Canton were entirely untrue. Three Chinese Ministers abroad, Dr. W. W. Yen, Dr. Wellington Koo and Dr. Quo Tai-chi (then assembled in London for the World Economic Conference) telegraphed to Canton to urge the need for co-operation between China's leaders. But the South-west Political Council merely replied with another long memorandum contradicting all that the Ministers had said.

> "It would be tantamount to disloyalty, if not treason" (wrote Canton), "if South-west leaders were to fail to speak and warn against the policy of the man in power in Nanking, who is leading the nation to disaster because his conception and practice of the State makes for the subordination of the vital interests of China to personal and family considerations."

From which one will not have much difficulty in discerning the true cause of Canton's indignation.

In November of this year (1933) revolt broke out in the province of Fukien: the motives of it—between antagonism to Chiang Kai-shek, suspicion that some of the leaders in Canton were secretly intriguing with him, and indignation because the princes of Inner Mongolia, coerced by the Japanese, had recently declared their independence—are so involved that it is quite impossible to disentangle them.

With the backing of General Tsai Ting-kai and the 19th Route Army, which had returned to the south after its gallant fight at Shanghai the year before, Fukien declared its independence, proclaiming itself the "People's Revolutionary Government of the Republic of China". Its members included most of the Left-Wing group of the South-west Political Council, among them Eugene Chen, who in an interview informed Reuter's correspondent that Fukien was anti-Japanese, anti-Kuomintang, and anti the pro-League group, "whose chief aim," said Eugene

Chen, "appears to be the enlistment of American and European assistance to enable it to gain power and ascendancy in China".

This attack on the Kuomintang at once put up the backs in Canton, which prided itself above everything upon being the chosen vessel of the pure milk of Kuomintangism and the will of Dr. Sun Yat-sen. Thus left to itself, the "People's Revolutionary Government of the Republic of China" quickly collapsed before the powerful forces of General Chiang Kai-shek, its leaders finding rapid shelter in that haven of refuge, Hongkong.

To return to Central China: after the retreat of the Canton junta in January 1932 from their distasteful experience of facing Japan, and the resumption of power by General Chiang Kai-shek, the Government was remodelled on broader lines. Wang Ching-wei, who had been expelled from the Kuomintang for his share in the Reorganizationists' revolt in North China, was reinstated in the Party and became President of the Executive Yuan, a position analogous to that of Prime Minister; Dr. Lo Wen-kan, an Oxford graduate and member of the English Bar, who had held office at various times in Peking and had a deserved reputation for balance and character, was made Minister of Justice. General Chiang was reappointed Generalissimo; and it is interesting to recall that the late, much venerated, Mr. Lin Sen was elected President of the National Government, an office which this fine old scholar continued to fill with dignity and general approbation until his death in 1943 at the age of eighty-one. His title, by the way, may be noted as a matter of some interest, in view of the divided state of the country. There was no "President of China" until General Chiang was elected to that position after Mr. Lin Sen's death.

While the conflict over Manchuria dragged its slow length along, many interesting things were happening in Nanking. Canton grumbled in the distance, but it had lost so much "face" by its egregious failure in office that for the time being it kept fairly quiet. In 1931 the National Economic Council had been set up to undertake national reorganization; already Dr. Ludwik Rajchmann, the skilled Polish physician who was to prove an even more skilled manager of League politics in China, had done extremely effective work at Mr. T. V. Soong's invitation in organizing the Ministry of Health; now M. Avenol, secretary of the League of Nations, visited China; a satisfactory arrangement was come to for the paying off of China's dues to the League, which were much in arrears; and the League accordingly agreed to China's request for a supply of foreign advisers to assist the National Economic Council.

Meanwhile, under the direction of German officers, engaged by General Chiang Kai-shek, the army at Nanking was steadily improving. Colonel Bauer, the first to come, had died of smallpox at Hankow in 1929, it may be remembered, just after General Chiang's victory over the Kwangsi generals. He was followed by General von Falkenhausen, and the number of German officers was eventually increased to about a hundred. To his opponents this German-trained army was but one more proof of the Generalissimo's dictatorship. But to the public at large, continually angered by the sight of Japan's unresisted encroachments* in North China, this building up of the national strength was very welcome, and on the Generalissimo's fiftieth birthday he was presented with fifty aeroplanes bought by public subscription. Soldiering was for the first time becoming popular.

One picturesque feature of "the Generalissimo's own", as the new German-trained army was called, was the founding by General Chiang of an Officers' Club. As is well known, he had become a Christian after his marriage in December 1927 to Miss Mayling Soong, and this club was founded on rigidly puritanical lines.

* The word is too mild. A man who smashes the window of a jeweller with a brick and grabs a handful of rings and brooches is not described as "encroaching". But all parliamentary language is quite inadequate to describe Japan's doings.

Smoking, drinking and gambling were taboo; no one could become a member until after the most searching investigation of his character; and to be a member was a high distinction, eagerly sought after. It is a curious fact, proved by Garibaldi, by Chiang Kai-shek, by Mr. Winston Churchill, that the leader who promises his men only hardships, toil, suffering, blood and tears meets with far more alacritous response than one who prophesies smooth things continually.

Behind the activities in Nanking, nevertheless, there was much to discourage and obstruct accomplishment. Year after year the terrible wasting campaigns against the Communists in Kiangsi continued, draining the Government's resources and compelling Mr. Soong to raise new loans at continually rising interest. "How am I to do my duty as Finance Minister," he once bitterly exclaimed, "when all my time is taken up in borrowing money?"

In the north, too, Japanese arrogance and intimidation became ever more insupportable. It was nearly ten months after the Tangku Truce before the Japanese army withdrew from the passes of the Great Wall and restored them to China. Then followed the infiltration (to borrow from later times a phrase not then invented) and absorption of Chahar, easternmost province of Inner Mongolia. And then in 1935 the outrageous demand that the five northern provinces, Shansi, Hopei, Shantung down to the Yellow River, Suiyuan and Chahar, should be made an autonomous State under Japan's protection. General Chiang was able to parry this attempted brigandage, but he was obliged to accept the creation of an autonomous State, about 10,000 square miles in extent, inside the Great Wall, its western edge within twelve miles of Peking, nominally administered by a Chinese creature of the Japanese.

These are but the outstanding events, which will have to be dealt with more fully in the next chapter, in a course of studied aggression which stirred in all China such hatred of Japan as had never been seen before. In 1860, when Anglo-French troops were attacking Peking, the Chinese in Canton and Shanghai had continued to deal amicably with British and French merchants. China was a very different entity in the 1930's; there was no province that did not burn with indignation at the insufferable arrogance and pretensions of Japan.

This feeling reacted strongly against the Generalissimo, whose determination to stave off war till his resources were greater was equally misunderstood and resented; and, in conjunction with another event, it was the cause of the last narrowly averted civil war before all China was brought to stand shoulder to shoulder against "the yellow dwarfs".

It was also very nearly the cause of the death of Wang Ching-wei. Although he has since gone over entirely to Japan, which calls him the President of the Republic of China and sends an ambassador to play with him in Nanking, I do not think (and I write on the assurance of a Chinese friend as wholeheartedly anti-Japanese as any could be, who knew Wang intimately) that he was at all pro-Japanese in 1935. But as President of the Executive Yuan he had to bear the brunt of the unpopularity of the Government's temporizing policy. In November of that year the fifth National Congress of the Kuomintang was held in Nanking, and when Wang Ching-wei, with other members of the Government, was posing for a photograph he was shot down at a few yards' range by an assassin armed with an automatic pistol. One bullet lodged near the kidneys, and as soon as he could be moved Wang went to Europe to have it extracted. But both French and German surgeons were afraid to operate, and after a prolonged rest Wang returned to China early in 1937. A moralist might say that it would have been better for him if the bullet had proved fatal.

This fifth Congress of the Kuomintang showed greater signs of amity among the factions than had been seen for a considerable time. One thing that makes it so hard to write a coherent account of Chinese politics is the rapidity with which

its *dramatis personæ* group and regroup themselves in fresh combinations, and the deadly enemies of today, denouncing each other in every term of abuse that classical Chinese can command, are the best of friends tomorrow, uniting now in vilification of their respective friends of yesterday. This, no doubt, is an excellent example of *jên** and the teaching of the Five Relationships, and an endearing trait in Chinese character. But for the aspiring student of Chinese affairs it is not a little bewildering.

To recognize facts without probing too deeply into explanations, we find, at this fifth National Congress of the Kuomintang, Yen Hsi-shan and Feng Yu-hsiang, who had been at war with Nanking only five years before; Lin Yun-kai, Chairman of Kwangtung, and Liu Chi-wen, Mayor of Canton, who even more recently had been helping to proclaim a punitive expedition against General Chiang; and the Young Marshal Chang Hsueh-liang, who within thirteen months was actually to be kidnapping the Generalissimo. If it is suggested that these gentlemen could attend the Congress merely to oppose without relinquishing their old hostility, the answer is simply that they couldn't. Otherwise they would have stayed in their respective provinces and published long memoranda to prove that the meeting of the Congress was illegal *in toto*. The fact that they were there was public acknowledgment that axes had been buried.

The Congress is memorable for a speech by General Chiang in which, after dealing with the need for internal reform and China's demand for equality of status with all nations, he addressed himself specially to Japan: one cannot doubt, remembering how but a few weeks before she had been proposing to strip China of her five northern provinces, that he was making a last desperate appeal to any remnants of reasonableness which might still possibly prevail in Tokyo. Some quotations from this statesmanlike speech deserve to be remembered. After pointing out that the rise and fall of the Chinese race, comprising a quarter of all the population of the globe, must have a great effect upon world peace and the welfare of mankind, "a fact which must have been well recognized by the friendly Powers", General Chiang continued:

> "It is natural therefore that our neighbour Japan should take a deeper interest in the peace of Asia as well as the common weal of the two nations. What we have been striving for incessantly is nothing more than our existence as a nation and co-existence with other countries in the family of nations. If international developments do not menace our national existence or block the way of our national regeneration, we should, with a view to the interests of the whole nation, use forbearance in facing issues not of a fundamental kind. At the same time we should seek harmonious international relations provided there is no violation of our sovereignty. We should seek economic co-operation based upon the principle of equality and reciprocity. . . . We shall not forsake peace until there is no hope for peace. We shall not talk lightly of sacrifice until we are driven to the last extremity which makes sacrifice inevitable. . . . Granted a limit to conditions for peace and a determination to make the supreme sacrifice, we should exert our best efforts to preserve peace, with the determination to make the final sacrifice, in order to consolidate and regenerate our nation."

Clearly this was both an invitation and a warning to Japan; a sincere assurance that China was ready, even after the loss of Manchuria, to be friends and to act for the best interests of both countries; but therewith a firm warning that Japan might yet learn the cost of goading the Chinese too far. If Japan had really wished to co-operate with China, General Chiang's speech opened the door wide. But

* See Chapter I.

"co-operation" in the Japanese dictionary means abject surrender, which was precisely the *rôle* cast for China by the Japanese military, drunk with ambition and belief in their own omnipotence.

The better atmosphere observable in the Kuomintang Conference was not long to remain undisturbed. The question of summoning a National Assembly to provide China with a permanent Constitution instead of the Provisional Constitution still in force had been mooted in 1931 but had twice been put off by the internal quarrels described. A committee of jurists had, however, been set up by the Judicial Yuan to draft a Constitution, and in May 1936 the result of their labour was published.

Universal suffrage was provided for all citizens over twenty years of age, with means of having their opinions represented effectively in the periods between the meetings of the National Assembly, and for their share in the election of the President. The powers proposed for the latter were evidently modelled on those of the President of the United States. He was to be Commander-in-Chief of all the national forces; to have the power to declare war, make peace and conclude treaties; to be authorized to promulgate laws and issue mandates, but always in conjunction with and as agreed to by the president of the Yuan affected; and he was to be empowered to appoint and remove officials both civil and military in accordance with law.

The most apparent difference between these proposals and the powers actually conferred on the President by the instrument adopted in the autumn of 1943 (when General Chiang was elected to the office) is that by the later constitution the President countersigns all laws and mandates passed by the Yuans. This would obviously give him scope to resist them if he thought fit; but the right of initiating them is with the Yuans, not the President. That the President's powers, as proposed in 1936, were wide is undeniable. So are those of the American President. But to a dispassionate eye there did not seem to be any lack of the means for keeping an adequate check on the Chinese President.

It nevertheless produced an explosion in the South. General Chiang protested strenuously that he did not aspire to the Presidency. The South refused to listen, declaring that it had long known and warned the nation that the Generalissimo was for making himself dictator, and here was the proof of it for all to see. The fact that after Wang Ching-wei had been shot down General Chiang had taken on the presidency of the Executive Yuan was further evidence, in the Southern view, of his malign intentions.

Such was one of several ingredients in the storm that blew up in June 1936 between the South-west Political Council and Nanking and nearly led to the renewal of civil war. There were, of course, others. Kweichow had recently come under the control of Nanking, and the crude opium from that province which had previously gone out through Kwangtung was deflected to the Yangtze with consequent loss of revenue to the South.

Again, in November 1935, China had "gone off silver" (of which more later), and the notes of Canton, as a result of the South-west refusing to fit in with this movement, had depreciated heavily.

Finally there was the latest Japanese assault on China's sovereignty and prosperity in the shape of the colossal smuggling through the Autonomous State of East Hopei, instigated and protected by the Japanese army in Manchuria.

Between these various motives for revolt "you pays your money and you takes your choice". The cry raised by the Heavenly Twins, the Kwangsi generals Li Tsung-jen and Pai Chung-hsi, was that Nanking must be compelled to lead the nation against Japan. And in view of their subsequent able service and their loyalty in the war to General Chiang one may well prefer to believe that this motive counted at least with these two men more strongly than any other.

In the end there was no war and, beyond a frontier skirmish or two, no fighting. General Chiang certainly did not want war. He posted troops on the Hunan and Fukien borders of the rebellious provinces in overwhelming force and invited the contumacious ones to negotiate, in which course he was clearly backed by the general public opinion. The situation was materially helped by the entire air force of Canton coming over to the Generalissimo's side. Thereupon General Chen Chi-tang, head of the Canton Government, removed himself to Europe, making way for Nanking's appointee General Yu Han-mou, who arrived in Canton with a large escort of its own aeroplanes. He was followed shortly afterwards by the Generalissimo, and terms were made with the Kwangsi chieftains, General Li Tsung-jen being appointed "Pacification Commissioner" of Kwangsi and commander of the 5th Route Army, while General Pai Chung-hsi went to Nanking as a member of the Defence Council.

There is no public record of what passed in private during the negotiations in Canton, but one may perhaps conclude that the Kwangsi generals were given an entirely new view of the Generalissimo's attitude on the Japanese question, and that, being both able and sensible men, they accepted it without further demur.

But one highly important consequence of the wrangle was that South China passed completely within the ambit of Nanking's control. Now it only remained to come to terms with the Communists in the North-west, and that, after the dramatic kidnapping of General Chiang, was accomplished within the next half year.

So let us turn to the really remarkable work which in spite of so much difficulty the National Government none the less managed to achieve.

In 1933 Mr. T. V. Soong went to London for the World Economic Conference. On the way he visited President Roosevelt, and the result of their conversations was a joint statement, issued on May 19, noting "with profound gratitude" the complete agreement in which the two statesmen found themselves on all practical measures necessary for the solution of the world's major problems—military disarmament and political tranquillity as indispensible to economic stability—together with a hope (but nothing more than a hope) that "the destructive hostilities" in which China and Japan had been engaged for the past two years "may soon cease in order that the present effort of all the nations of the world to re-establish political and economic peace may succeed".

Neither hope nor effort was realized. But Mr. Soong secured one tangible evidence of American goodwill by success in raising the so-called Wheat Loan, of 50,000,000 gold dollars. The South-west Political Council, it may be remarked, had telegraphed to Washington protesting against the loan, but when it had actually been concluded Canton put in a claim for 190,000,000 Chinese dollars on account of the expedition in 1926 "which established Chiang Kai-shek in power".

On his return from London "T.V." gave up the Ministry of Finance, which was taken over by his brother-in-law, Dr. H. H. Kung. It is not worth while repeating the gossip as to why Mr. Soong left the office which he had conspicuously adorned. In spite of having to raise huge loans to finance Nanking's war with the Communists and other demands, he had done much to put China's finances in order and to restore her credit. In 1929 he had invited Mr. Kemmerer, the American economist, to China, and on his advice had instituted the collection of Customs dues in gold units, of approximately forty gold cents' value,* to safeguard China against the fluctuations of silver, which obviously told heavily upon her in the payments on foreign loans. In the following year Mr. Soong arranged for the resumption of payments of interest on the Anglo-French loan of 1908 and the

* Many years before, the late Sir Robert Hart had pressed this reform on the Imperial Government but without success. Mr. Kemmerer, adopting Sir Robert's ideas, had better luck with them.

Crisp loan of 1912; and in this he undoubtedly set the standard for the renewed payments on various railway loans in default, although these were not carried through until early in 1936, after Mr. Soong had left the Ministry of Finance.

If he did not succeed in balancing his Budget, for reasons already noted, he did at least produce one annually from 1930 onwards showing how the national finances stood—a thing never before seen in China. Many obnoxious internal taxes disappeared, as we have seen in connexion with the abortive sittings of the Tariff Commission in 1926, under his control. At the time of his going to the World Economic Conference Mr. Soong was at work on a plan for a consolidation loan to put all China's internal loans on a single footing. And he also had great hopes of a similar consolidation of China's foreign debts. Nothing was more irritating to "T.V." than that certain revenues should be earmarked for certain loans. To his mind the security of the Chinese Government as a whole should be enough—and indeed any other sort of security was an implied slur upon China which any patriotic Chinese would resent. The Fates did not allow Mr. Soong time to realize his ambitions in this direction. But that he deserves to be called a great Finance Minister there can be no question, respected by all who had dealings with him, adored by his staff, though he worked them mercilessly, and only somewhat flustering to old-fashioned Chinese, who were disconcerted by his direct habit of disposing in fifteen minutes of questions over which they would have spun out the morning.

One other reform of T.V.'s must be mentioned. In April 1933, just before he left for London, he had decreed the replacement of the old sycee-silver by a dollar currency of uniform value throughout the country.

I do not know whether anyone has ever written a history of China's currencies, but it would be a romantic tale. The real basis of her coinage was the copper cash—the familiar brassy coin with a square hole in the centre so that it might be strung on a wire, a thousand cash being the equivalent of one tael of silver. It is not many years since missionaries in the interior commonly wrote of things costing so many "strings"—meaning, of course, taels, an illustration of the tiny sums in which Chinese peasants and those in daily contact with them are accustomed to think.

The tael, of course, was never a coin, but a lump of silver shaped somewhat like a bucket, the weight of which varied in every province to add to the perplexities of a traveller already sufficiently burdened with the load of sycee (as the silver taels were called) that he had to carry. But the melting of bars of silver into taels was in the hands, not of officials, but of the Silver Guild, in whose hands the fineness of the tael never varied even when the Tuchuns were depreciating the dollar coinage as much as they dared. It was the foreign traders who brought dollars to China to pay for the silk and tea, first the Portuguese in the 16th century bringing the Carolus dollar, which could still be found in circulation thirty years ago; after which the Mexican dollar set a standard for many decades. But both these coins had a rich silver content, and after the Revolution they quickly vanished, according to Gresham's inexorable law that a bad coinage always devours a good one.

In the latter years of the Empire an imperial dollar appeared with a beautiful dragon on the obverse. Then there was a Yuan Shih-kai dollar; and in Yunnan Tsai A-o (he who first raised the flag of revolt against Yuan's attempted Empire) coined a little gold in five- and ten-dollar pieces; and lastly the Nationalist dollar bearing the head of Dr. Sun Yat-sen. Through all these years dollars and taels kept the field side by side, the general distinction being that dollars were used in retail, the tael in wholesale, business. Gradually, however, the convenience of coined money, combined with the growth of Nanking's authority, the improvement of communications and the increasing number of branches of the big banks,

issuing dollar notes which they would pay silver dollars for at sight, led to more and more transactions in dollars* and made the way easy for Mr. Soong's reform. The conservatives, of course, prophesied disaster, reminding each other of how the Tuchuns had sweated the dollar till the long-accepted rate of Tls. 75 to 100 dollars dropped as low as Tls. 71.80, and of the impeccability of the old Silver Guild.

But these prophecies of woe were not fulfilled, even when China became seriously embarrassed in 1934 by the United States Silver Purchase Act, which caused a considerable rise in the price of silver. While the silver-mine owners of Nevada rejoiced, China was thrown into consternation as silver began to flow from her in ever-increasing volume. Between the passing of the American Act in June and the following October the export of silver from China was over 200,000,000 dollars. Added to this, in the north the Japanese were actively smuggling silver out of China, with the deliberate intention of wrecking her economy, which was then, as it has been during the present war, one of Japan's weapons for destroying China.

Matters became so serious that, after urgent but infructuous representations to Washington on the evil caused in China by the Silver Purchase Act, the Chinese Government in October 1934 put a tax on the export of silver. This stopped the outflow through official doors, but, as the price of silver continued to rise, not through the back doors. Smuggling went on merrily and a year later (to be precise on November 23, 1935) China "went off silver" with the announcement that henceforth the dollar was to be fixed at 1*s.* 2½*d.* and that the notes of the three Government banks, Central Bank of China, Bank of Communications and Farmers' Bank, would be the sole legal tender. All silver in other banks or in private possession was to be given over for these notes within three months.†

The repercussions of this daring move, which, as is often the reward of boldness, proved highly successful, extended far beyond the parlours of bankers and merchants. It happened that in September 1935 the British Government experienced an unusual spasm. It decided that business with China might be worth looking into. It sent Sir Frederick Leith-Ross, its leading Treasury expert, out to China to look and to report.

On the way he called at Tokyo. It seems scarcely possible that he can seriously have expected co-operation for the resuscitation of China, which was one of the purposes of his tour. Only some eighteen months before Mr. Eiji Amau, Press representative of the Foreign Office, had been put up to enunciate Japan's "Monroe Doctrine for China", which, in plain English, meant that China was Japan's property and Western nations were peremptorily to keep out. Sir Frederick was received with opaque and frigid politeness in official quarters and with torrents of abuse in the Japanese Press.

He arrived in China very shortly before she went off silver. The Japanese insisted that he had advised this step. That is not true. But there is reason to think that his opinion was asked and that it was favourable; and there is little doubt that he was responsible for the instructions immediately issued by the British Government that British banks must comply, like Chinese, with the order to surrender their silver to the Chinese Government.

That this order was of great value to China—it might almost be said to have turned the scale in favour of the new managed currency at the critical moment—has always been gratefully acknowledged by the Chinese. It was the beginning of a new era of increasing friendliness between the two countries. But it need

* *The Chinese word for dollar is "yuan", and is used in all their publications in English.*

† Canton refused to hand over its silver and its notes accordingly depreciated heavily in comparison with the National notes. After the abortive revolt of the two Kwangsi generals, when the South-west was brought within the ambit of Nanking's authority, the new currency law was extended also to South China.

hardly be said that Japan was furious. She of course had refused to give up her silver, but the effectiveness of this was nullified by the action of the immensely wealthy British banks. Worse still, Great Britain had dared to intrude upon her preserves, in spite of Japan's express warning to her to keep out. Whether Whitehall really intended to challenge Japan in the Far East one can only speculate. The fact remains that it had done so, and to that extent had hastened the day of Japan's renewed incursion into China.

The boldness of these two great monetary reforms, first the introduction of a national dollar and then the managed currency, reflected high credit on the Chinese Government and greatly enhanced its prestige, proving that in spite of its manifold difficulties there were men in Nanking who could take long views and successfully carry them through. This good impression was deepened by the solid reconstruction accomplished in other directions.

Mr. T. V. Soong's retirement from the Ministry of Finance left him free to concentrate his energies on the National Economic Council, of which he was chairman. He also remained Governor of the Central Bank of China, a position which naturally was helpful in the financing of the Council's schemes, for which Mr. Soong announced that 12,000,000 dollars had been set aside as a preliminary grant. This, however, was greatly increased as river conservancy, road construction and other work progressed, while in 1935 a three-year plan for the development of mills and factories to make the province of Kwangtung independent of foreign imports at a total cost of 93,000,000 dollars was also devised; and to this was added a scheme of railway construction for another 120 millions.

By 1932 the League of Nations advisers had arrived and had settled down to their duties—a polyglot band including experts on river conservancy, road-making, health, sericulture, geology and civil administration. Among them were Mr. Somervell of the British Labour Ministry, and Sir Arthur Salter to advise on financial questions. China had had plenty of foreign advisers in bygone years. But for the most part they were retained for window-dressing. The League advisers were really intended and allowed to work.

One of the most interesting schemes, most regrettably cut short by the Japanese invasion, was the conservancy of the Hwai Ho. This great river, running roughly parallel with the Yangtze through the province of Anhui and fed by large tributaries from Honan and Hupeh, has no outlet to the sea but discharges into a chain of lakes in northern Kiangsu. Its valley ought to be some of the most fertile land in China, but with no proper outlet it had been cursed for centuries with floods which annually submerged a wide tract on either side. Broadly speaking, the scheme of conservancy begun by the National Economic Council, besides building locks to regulate the flow of the river, was to turn the Hwai into the old channel out to the sea through north Kiangsu which the Yellow River had used until in 1852 it suddenly decided to switch northwards and reach the sea through Shantung. Had this plan been completed (as no doubt it will be when peace returns) it must have added greatly to China's food production.

Another important piece of work was the making in Central China of some 30,000 miles of motor-roads. True, they were largely mud tracks. But this when the war came was an advantage, as they could be quickly ploughed up to deny them to the Japanese. Meanwhile China is not pernickety about public conveniences; and although the roads were rough and the motor-buses which rattled along them, habitually crammed to the lid with animal as well as human livestock, were perpetually given to break down, their social and political importance was even greater than their commercial, in opening up the buried corners of the country and awakening their denizens to new conceptions of nationality, the fruits of which have been seen in the war.

Meanwhile railway repair and construction went on actively. A fine bridge

was built across the Chientang river at Hangchow, thereby at last enabling the Shanghai-Hangchow-Ningpo railway to be carried through over its whole length.

From this railway another starting at Hangchow was built southwards through Chêkiang and then westwards by way of Nanchang, the capital of Kiangsi, to the great collieries at Pinghsiang in Hunan, whence it was intended to link up with the Canton-Hankow railway at Chuchow. There has never been railway connexion between Canton and Nanking or Shanghai, and the journey by sea takes three days, so that this railway would have proved a great convenience, as there is a loop round Shanghai connecting the Shanghai-Hangchow and the Shanghai-Nanking railways. Also the new construction in the 1930's included a line from Nanking to Wuhu, some hundred miles up the Yangtze in Anhui.

The Lung-Hai railway, running across Central China from the sea coast in northern Kiangsu—scene of grim fighting with the Japanese in 1938—was carried on through Sianfu in Shensi into Inner Mongolia. In addition much repairing was done of the road beds and tracks of existing railways, which had suffered enormous damage during the civil wars.

The completion of the Canton-Hankow railway, with the aid of the Boxer Indemnity returned by Great Britain to China in 1930, has been mentioned, but must be noted again here in the general catalogue of railway construction. Begun from either end in 1904, it had been left since 1917 with a gap of 270 miles in the middle, around the mountainous country between Hunan and Kwangtung. The crossing of this gap, which involved many bridges, difficult gradients and long tunnels, was a fine piece of engineering; and China has reaped the benefit of it during the war. For although the Japanese command a piece at each end of the railway, they have never yet got the central parts in Hunan. Four times they have tried to reach and capture Changsha, but every time they have been beaten back to where they started with heavy loss. Changsha has suffered cruelly from bombs and once from a tragically premature application of "scorched earth" policy, when the local governor thought the Japanese must reach the city, and lost his head. Many lovely temples and stately mansions lie in ashes; but Changsha has hitherto kept its record of proud inviolability. Deeply engaged as the Japanese now are with the American drive in the Pacific and the increasing British menace in Burma, one would fain hope it may always do so.*

Such are the outstanding features in that remarkable renaissance which China achieved in the years before Japan renewed her attack. Others have been mentioned briefly in previous pages—the improvement of cotton cultivation, to which the Cotton Commission in 1933 devoted 1,000 acres at Nanking for production of better seed, with the result that both the area under cultivation and the quality of the cotton increased by large percentages; the improvement of tea cultivation; and a specially notable revival in silk production, which promised to enable the industry again to compete equally with foreign silk.†

Aeroplane services were established by the China National Aviation Co., with the aid of American pilots, and aeroplanes plied regularly from Nanking to Peking, to Canton, to Chêngtu in the far west, and to Lanchow and Ninghsia in the shadowy north-west, the last two routes enabling journeys to be covered in three or four days which not so long ago might have taken as many months. And this too helped insensibly to the awakening of a national spirit.

More valuable, perhaps, than even the material accomplishments was the

* Alas, since this was written the Japanese have succeeded, in June 1944, in taking Changsha although not yet (touch wood!) the whole railway to Canton.

† If Chinese silk were produced as it might (and in time will) be, the question would be not whether it could compete with foreign silks, but whether they could compete with it. In natural quality I believe I am right in saying that no other silk can compare with the Chinese—just as there is no other tea which can compare with China's best.

mental exhilaration which they inspired. That they were only a beginning was obvious; in the North nothing could be done because of the Japanese incubus; Canton had come under the Central Government's control too late before 1937 to feel the full benefit of the reformation; the West was as yet hardly touched: there were whole atlases of work to be overcome. But a beginning had been made; it was visible, practical and solid; and there could be no mistaking the Government's determination that it should continue and spread.

One interesting illustration of the new temper of the Chinese people was the instant popularity of the New Life Movement. Readers who may be familiar with the story of its inauguration will forgive me if I repeat it for others—how in 1934 General Chiang Kai-shek, at his headquarters at Nanchang, from which he was directing the operations against the Communists, happened to see a student thrown out of a restaurant, his clothes awry, his face purple, kicking, biting, screaming, literally foaming with passion. The Generalissimo was deeply shocked by this sorry spectacle. "How can we ever progress as a nation until our people learn to control themselves individually?" he said to himself. It was a question that touched the quintessence of Confucianism; and General Chiang, be it remembered, is a devout Confucian as well as a devout Christian. He went back to his lodgings, and there was born the general idea of the New Life Movement subsequently defined in a code of rules for the benefit of the nation.

No one can surpass the Chinese in drafting rules and regulations, and the New Life code covers every aspect of everyday doings. To drink several bowls of hot water on waking; to sit up straight at table, eat moderately and not to make loud smacking noises in eating; to work diligently; to behave with courtesy to all; not to jostle others for places in train or bus; to be self-restrained in everything; not to smoke, drink, or gamble; not to "gossip on idle topics for more than fifteen minutes"; with Polonius's advice "neither a borrower nor lender be" —these are the chief headings of the New Life precepts. It was Confucianism in modern phrasing; it suited the nation's mood exactly; and it has caught on amazingly. It has had a variety of offshoots—New Life weddings, for instance: instead of parents running into debt for several years by giving their sons expensive weddings, young couples get married by the State, as many as fifty in a single ceremony, after which they all sit down to a joint feast at a total cost of perhaps ten dollars per couple. In trains and omnibuses there is no doubt that the New Life has led to a marked improvement in manners. And only a few days before writing these sentences I saw a report from Chungking that the New Life urges that ricshas, which are scarce, should be reserved for old people and mothers with small children, and that others should walk or go by bus. One may smile at some of the precepts—the admonition against idle talk (though the Psalmist did warn us against "the crackling of thorns beneath the pot"), and against smoking and the artistic enjoyment of good wine. But there are times when one could wish for a New Life Movement in England.

National reforms, public improvements, the growing prestige and efficiency of Government, the dawning sense of national unity, all combined to foster a spirit of self-confidence and defiance towards Japan. Two remarkable illustrations of this must be given.

In the summer of 1935 the Chinese Government proposed negotiations with the Japanese Government for the settlement of all outstanding differences. In reply Mr. Hirota, the Japanese Foreign Minister, laid down three principles which Japan would require to be accepted. These were:

(1) China must forgo the policy of playing off one foreign country against another;

(2) China must recognize the existence of Manchukuo;

(3) China and Japan must jointly devise effective means of preventing the spread of Communism in North China.

It should be obvious from what has been written of the public fury aroused by the seizure of Manchuria that no Chinese Government, even if it wished to do so, would dare to accept No. 2. And as for No. 3, the Chinese had excellent reasons for fearing how Japan would interpret a "joint" scheme of action against the Communists, especially in view of point No. 1, which in plain English meant that China was to accept Japan's dictation in everything. Negotiations, however, were begun between General Chang Chun, the Chinese Foreign Minister, and Mr. Kawagoe, the Japanese Ambassador in Nanking, when several other desiderata were raised by the Japanese—for instance, their right to fly aeroplanes into China; the suppression of anti-Japanese agitations; employment of Japanese advisers; and revision of the Chinese tariff.

In November a large force of Mongols and Manchukuo troops supported by Japanese tanks and aeroplanes invaded Suiyuan; there were some sharp skirmishes, one fairly large encounter, and the invaders were defeated and driven back. That they were aided and abetted by the Japanese there is no doubt whatever; indeed, the invasion could never have been attempted except by Japanese instigation.*

Thereupon General Chang Chun broke off the negotiations, and when the Japanese Ambassador tried to see him he was either diplomatically indisposed or so immersed in work that it was impossible for him to receive visitors.

It is characteristic of the Japanese that they complained loudly of China's "insincerity" in "taking advantage of the Suiyuan affair" to break off negotiations and repudiate agreements to which (the Japanese asserted, but China denied) she had already consented. It did not apparently occur to them that China might justly object to continuing diplomatic conversations while Japan was trying forcibly to deprive her of another province. But General Chang Chun remained invisible.

This was the official reaction to Japanese bullying, a plain warning that China's patience was giving out. The reaction of the business world, as shown a little later, was equally emphatic, and was not wrapped up in diplomatic language. Early in 1937 the Japanese Chambers of Commerce, impressed by China's growing prosperity, sent a mission to Shanghai to propose trade agreements to the Chinese General Chamber of Commerce. The Chinese merchants' reply can be summarized very briefly (it was longer, of course, but not less plain): "When your soldiers," said the Chinese," stop bullying and stealing pieces of our country, we will talk about enlarging our trade with you. Until then it is useless to do so." With that the Japanese delegates had to return home empty-handed.

That "big business" in Japan had not yet surrendered its better judgment to the soldiers is evident not only from this mission but from the tone of Japanese Press comment about this time. When the negotiations between General Chang Chun and Mr. Kawagoe were suspended, a note published by the Japanese Foreign Office, although upbraiding China and warning her that Japan would take instant measures to protect Japanese lives and interests when necessary, was content to add that "Japan is now watchfully waiting for China to reply to Mr. Kawagoe's request that the agreements already reached should be implemented". At the same time the *Shanghai Nippo*, chief Japanese paper in Shanghai, and certainly not given to liberal views, wrote:

* Japan had by this time occupied most of Chahar, and she wanted Suiyuan, the next province of Inner Mongolia westwards, both for its mineral wealth and as a further stage in the intended seizure of North China. The invasion of Suiyuan coincided with Major-General Doihara's attempt to get the five northern provinces of China formed into an autonomous State under Japanese protection.

"No progress will be made in the readjustment of Sino-Japanese relations until the Japanese people change their conception of China and realize the tremendous changes that have taken place in this country since the formation of a Nationalist Government in 1927."

To any sane mind, of course, the mere thought of Japan's making war upon China was suicidal madness. Geographically her position gave her an advantage in the China trade which no other country could rival. Despite boycotts and anti-Japanese animus, the price of her own folly, she was outdistancing all competitors in China. All the best factories in Shanghai, Tsingtao and Tientsin were owned by Japanese. If the Japanese Government, and especially the fire-eaters of the Kuantung army, could have been persuaded to drop the big stick and to use the language of common courtesy, China's response cannot be doubted. She was intensly keen on her plans for internal development; her business men would have been as ready to trade with Japanese as with any others; Japan could have got from China all the iron, coal, cotton and other "raws" that she needed by ordinary peaceful exchange; and Manchukuo would have faded into the background of forgetfulness, of things unpleasant but no longer worth quarrelling about, like Formosa.

Such was undoubtedly the opinion in 1937 of great numbers of Japanese (and of Chinese too), and such was the tenor of the advice given by Mr. Kawagoe when in April of that year he was recalled to Tokyo to report on the general situation in China. But sanity and the soldier were worlds asunder. Common sense had no appeal to the authors of the Tanaka Memorial inebriated with visions of goose-stepping over the necks of millions of prostrate Asiatic slaves. Kawagoe's report only convinced them that the time to strike had come.

For a few months, however, the Chinese were left to dream their dreams too, to hope against hope, while new rolling-stock continually arrived from Great Britain for their busy railways, and aeroplanes hummed daily from east to west, from north to south, over fields which already began to show the fruits of scientific care. From abroad came flattering evidence of the new respect which China was gaining. Great Britain had raised her Minister in China to the rank of Ambassador in 1934, an example quickly followed by other Great Powers. In the winter of 1935–36 the Chinese Art Exhibition at Burlington House, with its glorious display of painting, porcelain, statuary, bronze work, silks and ivories, had opened the eyes of the modern world to what Chinese culture is: it ran for five months, longer than any similar exhibition except the Italian, and attracted over 422,000 visitors, among them large parties from America, Germany and France. When Dr. H. H. Kung, the Chinese Premier, came to the Coronation of King George VI, China's prestige and credit had never stood so high. It cannot have been by accident that he was given one of the best seats at the ceremony in Westminster Abbey.

> Alas! what boots it with incessant care
> To tend the homely, slighted shepherd's trade.
>
> . . . .
>
> To scorn delights, and live laborious days;
> But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
> And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
> Comes the blind fury with the abhorrèd shears
> And slits the thin-spun life.

Dr. Kung was in London still, discussing with bankers a comprehensive reconstruction loan, when Japan created another "incident" at Marco Polo Bridge

and recklessly plunged into the war which will be as surely her doom already proving China's ultimate redemption:

> Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more;
> Henceforth thou art the Genius of the shore
> In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
> To all that wandered in that perilous flood.

Chapter XV

THE CHINA INCIDENT

IN A SPEECH MADE ON THE SIXTH ANNIVERSARY OF JAPAN'S RENEWED ATTACK on China at Marco Polo Bridge, General Chiang Kai-shek said that he had always foreseen that the seizure of Manchuria would eventually mean war between Japan and the Western Powers.

It will be for historians to say, as many people certainly do say already, whether the League of Nations' failure to stop Japan in 1931 did not contribute largely to the Second World War by showing Hitler and Mussolini that they had nothing to fear from Geneva. It is, at least, certain that the future will make as little of the uneasy years of peace between China and Japan that followed the Tangku Truce as we in looking back on the Napoleonic Wars make of the brief quietude after the Treaty of Amiens. In fact there was no peace. The war upon China begun at Mukden on September 18, 1931, was prosecuted by other weapons than guns and aeroplanes between the Tangku Truce and Marco Polo Bridge, but just as relentlessly and with even more devilish cunning for being undeclared.

It will be remembered that the truce had left Japan in possession of the passes through the Great Wall, while China had been obliged to agree to the neutralizing of a large triangular tract inside the wall over which Japanese aeroplanes were to be free to fly in order to make sure that the ground was not being used as a base for guerrillas operating against her in Manchuria. This was the occasion for a brief dramatic interlude by our friend Marshal Feng Yu-hsiang, now ensconced at Kalgan, who came out in loud opposition to the Truce. He also seems to have been once more in opposition to Nanking, which certainly did not wish to have him striking gestures and renewing the war with Japan. There was a skirmish or two with troops from Japan's puppet State of Manchukuo, and Feng retired into oblivion. But the incident gave the Japanese a pretext for staying where they were on the Great Wall, and it was not until March 1934 that they gave back the five passes and Shanhaikuan, the town at the Great Wall's seaward end, to China. That they did so even then was probably because there were certain matters which they wished to clear up before making a further move against China.

First of these was the question of the Chinese Eastern Railway, connecting the Trans-Siberian Railway with Vladivostok across northern Manchuria, which, although the Russians were too weak between 1931–33 to save themselves from being squeezed out of Manchuria, was still owned and managed by them. But Manchuria was now an "independent" State, to whom it was intolerable that her principal railway should not be in her own hands. Manchukuo was (at this time) profuse in her expressions of desire for friendly dealings with all Powers, and thus in May 1933 the world was apprised that Manchukuo, acting on Japan's advice, would like to open negotiations with the Soviet for the purchase of the railway. By the original concession granted to Russia for the construction of the line, the

only Power entitled to buy it back was China, and Dr. W. W. Yen, the Chinese Ambassador in Moscow, accordingly presented a formal protest to the Soviet. But what could it be more than formal? The only interest for outsiders was to see how much the Soviet would abate its price of Rls. 200,000,000 for the railway, and Japan would increase her offer of Yen 50,000,000, with the further demand that the Soviet must settle all the railway's outstanding debts.

The bargaining dragged on for many months. In September the Russians openly accused the Japanese of egging on her puppet to seize the railway, and a Note to that effect was handed to the Japanese Ambassador in Moscow. There are times when Soviet diplomacy is a refreshing example in candour to other nations. After this it was really impossible to continue negotiating, and a long hiatus followed. But both parties were anxious to settle, and eventually a bargain was struck on January 23, 1935, by which the Soviet agreed to accept Yen 140,000,000—one-third to be paid down in cash and the balance in kind delivered half-yearly within a space of three years.

Although the price for such a railway was small, and the payments in kind were anything but regular, it was a good bargain for Russia. With Japan in control of Manchuria, the C.E.R. could never be a paying property to her; she got something for it; and meanwhile she was much more interested in building up her military power in the Far East and developing the resources of Eastern Siberia in order to make the new army as far as possible self-supporting.

This work does not belong to a story of China's Revolution. But it is interesting to recall that Marshal Blücher, who now organized the Russian Far Eastern forces, was the same man who some ten years before, then known as Galens, had organized the Nationalist Communist army at Canton. There is no doubt that he did good work in Siberia, though no one outside Russia knows what her Far Eastern forces are. In 1935 Japan averred that they numbered 250,000 men, including two or three cavalry divisions (at least five times what they had been in 1931), with 800 tanks, 900 aeroplanes and 500 armoured cars distributed around the borders of Manchuria at Chita, Blagovestchensk, Harbarovsk and Vladivostok. There were also interesting rumours of submarines taken out by railway in sections and put together at Vladivostok and of a *frissade* of concrete pillboxes along the left bank of the Amur which marks the northern boundary between Manchuria and Siberia. Certain it is that in the numerous frontier clashes between Russia and Japan during the next few years the Russians generally had the best of it, particularly in the two quite serious encounters at Changkufeng on the Korean, and Nomonhan on the Mongolian, frontiers; and that, in spite of her non-aggression pact with the Soviet, Japan has continued to keep a large force of her best troops, probably not fewer than 250,000 in Manchuria—even since she hurled herself at Great Britain and America.

Russia, too, is the explanation of the network of new railways Japan built in Manchuria, from the moment she felt herself secure. The first of these was the extension of the Kirin-Tunhua line (which China had obstinately refused) to connect with the North Korean railway and thus to the port of Seishin. Others have since been built, opening up hitherto untapped country, but with curious unanimity contrived to lead to strategic points on the Russian frontier; and these have been supplemented by a network of excellent roads. The economic value of all this expensive work is undeniable, but this is less conspicuous than its strategic significance.

During 1934 two events occurred the meaning of which is now so plain that in retrospect it seems extraordinary that they can have caused so little stir in the world as they did. The first was the "Amau statement" given to the Press in April 1934 (Mr. Eiji Amau was the Press officer of the Foreign Office in Tokyo). It is too long to print in full, but the main points must be quoted. The internal

evidence is that it was meant to define Japan's attitude to China as a direct consequence of her leaving the League.

After alluding to "hostile elements" in China "desirous of stronger co-operation with America and the League Powers", and "contemplating schemes to invite their financial aid", the statement says:

> "Regardless of the success or failure of these schemes, the Japanese Government is firmly determined to shape its course towards China in accordance with its own view of the situation. . . .
>
> "Although Japan's attitude towards China may be at variance with that of other countries in some respects, these divergencies cannot be helped, as they arise from Japan's position and mission. . . .
>
> "Japan must necessarily share responsibility with China for the maintenance of peace in the Far East. . . .
>
> "If China should attempt to exclude Japan . . . by exploiting the influence of other Powers, or if she should resort to the policy of playing off one foreign country against another, Japan would be compelled to oppose such measures stoutly. . . .
>
> "If they" (individual efforts by Powers to negotiate with China) "should prove disturbing to the maintenance of peace in the Far East,* Japan will be obliged to oppose them. For example, Japan must oppose the efforts made of late by Powers to supply military 'planes to China, to aid China in the establishment of aerodromes, to supply military organs and advisers and to give political loans to China."

The statement concludes with a warning that this pronouncement "may not be out of place in view of the fact that some countries have been acting positively of late in China on the nominal pretext of joint action and joint aid".

Such was Japan's "Monroe Doctrine" for China, the plainest intimation of her resolve to allow China to have no dealing with others but herself. Yet it drew from Western Governments only the most superficial and easily satisfied inquiries. The late Mr. Morgan Young, in his book *Imperial Japan*, says truly that "for lack of adequate protest the Amau statement superseded all rights, treaties and understandings with China".

At the close of December 1934 Japan denounced the Washington Naval Treaty by which a ratio of 5–5–3 in ships had been agreed upon between Great Britain, the United States and Japan. Here again was a writing on the wall which might surely have been interpreted without difficulty. Consider the course of events. In the late 1930's the Army had been incensed by the Government's reduction of its estimates and standing strength; the rape of Manchuria, partly to get power into its own hands again, was the reply. In 1930 Mr. Hamaguchi, the Premier, had been assassinated for adhering to the London Naval Treaty, which maintained the Washington ratio. In May 1932 the aged Premier, Mr. Inukai, had been murdered in cold blood by a group of the notorious "Young Officers" on the general grounds that civilian government was disgracing Japan and that power must be restored to the Emperor† and exercised on his behalf by his faithful Army and Navy. It was perfectly clear that the civilian section of the Japanese Government had been superseded by the Services, and their record in Manchuria showed well enough what that meant.

Having thus freed her feet from the entanglements of Geneva, Washington

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* "Peace in the Far East", in the Japanese dictionary, means the Far East under the foot of Japan.

† This was the famous "Showa Restoration" Movement. "Showa" is the reign title of the Emperor Hirohito. It may be translated "Enlightened Peace". Anything more inappropriate to Hirohito's reign can hardly be imagined.

and London, Japan could turn her attention fully to China. Relationships between the two countries were no better than might be expected from the Tangku Truce, the smuggling of vast quantities of silver out of China by Japanese and Japanese-protected Koreans, the steady invasion of Chahar by Japan and the continued bullying and sword-rattling by Japanese officers in Peking.

On the other hand, the rising temper of Chinese nationalism, the sporadic boycott of Japanese goods and the activities of the Blueshirts, a newly formed patriotic society strongly anti-Japanese—all perfectly natural if not excusable—gave the Japanese plenty of ground for new demands. To make matters worse for China, in May 1935 two Chinese editors in Tientsin who were in Japan's pay were assassinated. To compensate for the removal of these two quislings the Chinese Government was compelled to dismiss the administration in Peking, withdraw its troops from the North, and promise to disband the Blueshirts and suppress anti-Japanese feeling in China. The last condition was more easily made than fulfilled. But it was noticeable at this time that a rigid censorship, commonly called muzzling of the Chinese Press, was enforced. Those who blamed General Chiang for this did not understand how strenuously he was labouring to gain time before the inevitable clash with Japan should come.

The next move in the Japanese game brought to the front that remarkable plotter Major-General Doihara. Born in 1883, he distinguished himself at the Japanese Military Academy, specialized in Chinese, and from 1918 (when he was a leading factor in the Japanese intrigues with the Anfu Party in Peking) was at the centre of every crisis between China and Japan. The device—a faked railway accident outside Mukden, which was Japan's pretext for seizing Manchuria in 1931—has been ascribed to Doihara's fertile imagination, as it may well have been. He was not a good soldier. In 1937, in the early stages of the war, he was defeated in Shansi; and again in 1938 when the Japanese were advancing against Hankow he was cut off by the Chinese and only rescued with difficulty: in both reverses his own careless impetuosity was to blame. But in bold plotting and subtle intrigue Doihara was certainly a past-master.

In the autumn of 1935 Doihara produced his *magnum opus*, already referred to in these pages, namely the severance of the five northern provinces, Shantung, Hopei, Shansi, Chahar and Suiyuan from Nanking's control, and their formation into an autonomous State under Japan's protection.

The ground for this impudent demand had been carefully prepared by articles in the Japanese Press, by the formation of a new syndicate which was to take over the management of the North China railways, and by interviews given by Japanese officials pointing out how indispensable it was to the safety of Japan's position in Manchuria that she should control North China. The most amazing of these utterances was a memorandum given to Japanese journalists in Tientsin by Major-General Hayao Tada, commander of the Japanese forces in North China. Some quotations are worth giving, for the light they throw on the Japanese military mind and the fantastic creed of Japan's "holy mission".

> "The basic principle of Japan's policy towards China" (General Tada wrote), "based as it is on the Empire's great missions which consist of the salvation of the world and of humanity, is for the salvation of the Chinese people and the promotion of co-existence and mutual prosperity between the countries. In carrying out the above-mentioned policy there is a great force of obstruction. It is the force created by the Kuomintang headquarters and the *régime* of Chiang Kai-shek. Chiang Kai-shek has repeatedly proved unfaithful to Japan. The Kuomintang have become the party of Chiang Kai-shek. . . .
>
> "Therefore the Japanese Empire should act independently and create a paradise for co-existence and mutual prosperity. That paradise will be

extended by degrees to such an extent that China will have to change her attitude sincerely, or even they—Chiang and his clique—will not be permitted to exist. North China is the district where the above-mentioned policy can be most easily and quickly worked out."*

Comment on such a statement seems superfluous. It is by no means the only instance of Japanese generals taking it upon themselves to pronounce *ex cathedra* what Japan's policy must be regardless of what Tokyo may think. From Japan's point of view much had happened to make her feel the need of positive action—the Chinese Government's adoption of a managed currency and the assistance it got from Great Britain; the evidence afforded by Sir Frederick Leith-Ross's visit of Britain's resolve to play a prominent part in the Far East once more; the progress of reform and growth of Nanking's prestige; and as an additional cause of irritation someone assassinated General Sun Chuan-fang (the last Tuchun of Nanking), whom the Japanese had marked as the intended Governor of their new "autonomous" State—though it is hard to believe that a man of his character would have lent himself to such a design. The Japanese therefore had reason for thinking that China was slipping from their grasp.

But Doihara made a false move when, as an argument for the proposed change, he represented that all North China ardently desired it. He was quickly undeceived. From every vocal quarter in the North, as from all China, went up a passionate cry of protest. It was too real and voluminous to be ignored. Doihara was badly caught out and made to lose "face". Japan for once was nonplussed. And General Chiang was enabled to effect a clever compromise whereby on December 18 a new organ was set up in Peking, called the Hopei-Chahar Political Council, consisting of General Sung Cheh-yuan, Governor of Hopei, the Governor of Chahar, and the Mayors of Peking and Tientsin.

It will be noticed that Shantung, Shansi and Suiyuan did not come into the Council's circle of control; the integrity of the Customs and Salt Services was preserved; and although the relationships between the Council and Central Government were purposely left vague, the new body was certainly not independent of Nanking.

One piece of robbery, however, Nanking could not prevent. A Chinese puppet of Japan's, named Yin Ju-keng, who had married a Japanese wife, was put up by Japan to declare the autonomy of East Hopei and to appeal to Japan for her protection—readily given, as may be imagined. The territory consisted of the area inside the Great Wall which had been demilitarized by the Tangku Truce and about as much more, altogether about 5,000 square miles with a population of 5,000,000 and its capital at Tungchow, fifteen miles from Peking.

This autonomous State of East Hopei became famous, or infamous, during the next eighteen months for the unbridled smuggling which went on through it. Japan's schemes to cripple China's finances by smuggling silver out of China had been baulked by the managed currency. It remained to try what could be done to wreck the Customs. The little port of Peitaiho, which is situated in East Hopei, became like a miniature Liverpool. Junks and steamers from Newchwang and Dairen across the Gulf of Pechili lay off it discharging volumes of cotton, sugar, beer, matches and Japanese manufactures of all kinds, which were then passed on into China by gangs of Korean roughs armed with bludgeons which they used promptly on anyone who attempted to question them. Chinese revenue cruisers tried to intervene, but were grimly warned off by Japanese men-of-war. China appealed to Tokyo, but the latter refused to check these monstrous doings, pointing out (*a*) that East Hopei was an autonomous State and therefore could

* Translation quoted from the China Association's Annual Report for 1935–36.

not be interfered with in a purely domestic matter; and (*b*) that East Hopei had set up its own Customs and charged its own dues and the goods were therefore not smuggled.

In the end the Chinese Government answered both these arguments by instituting Customs stations on the railways outside the autonomous State: if it was independent, anything coming from it was logically open to be taxed. This procedure was helped by the saturation of North China, ultimately resulting from the inordinate greed of the smugglers and of the Japanese soldiers, who, as later at Shanghai, showed only too plainly that the honour of the Japanese Army did not debar them from making all the profits they could from commissions on illicit trade, the price of their protection. According to Mr. Tsui Chi, in his *Short History of Chinese Civilization*, "between February and November in 1936 the income of the Chinese Customs had fallen by about £15,000,000 through this source"; but this appears to represent the value of smuggled goods rather than revenue. China's loss was none the less very great.

From the declaration of the East Hopei Autonomous Area to the outbreak of "the special undeclared war", as a Japanese spokesman in Peking called it,* in July 1937 events moved rapidly to their inevitable end. Outwardly there was a lull as between Nanking and Tokyo, even indeed faint signs that they might yet adjust their differences. Thus in March 1937 the then Foreign Minister, Mr. Sato, said in the Japanese House of Peers that the deadlock with China was bad for both her and Japan, and "a new starting-point must be found". (This was about the time when the Japanese trade delegates in Shanghai were being bluntly told that there could be no improvement in trade dealings with China until Japan stopped her bullying.) The soldiers were much incensed, and Mr. Sato had to eat his words. But soon afterwards, at the annual conference of Prefectural Governors, he said that

> "anti-Japanese sentiments in China are partly traceable to a misunderstanding by the Chinese, who suppose that Japan harbours aggressive designs. We have no such designs. We are planning to create a harmonious atmosphere through cultural and economic co-operation, thereby establishing a mutually interdependent economic relationship founded upon the common interests of the two peoples."

And less than a month before the outbreak of war *The Times* reported from Tokyo that Japan, under the guidance of Mr. Hirota, the Foreign Minister, "will patiently await a change in the Chinese attitude, neither pressing her claims nor abandoning her advantages".

These interludes are of interest as showing that even at this late date there were men in office in Tokyo who could take sane views. Unfortunately, directly war began they were either forced into silence or carried off their feet in the general excitement. And it is regrettably true that there is no difference between one Japanese and another when it comes to questions of sharing out war loot.

But Mr. Sato's words are also interesting for their indirect evidence that neither the civilians in Japan nor certainly the soldiers at all appreciated how hotly Chinese temper was rising. In fact the smuggling through East Hopei on the top of so long a series of outrages had, in the common phrase, "put the lid on", and the pot was boiling up more and more furiously. Its heat was intensified by the daily behaviour of the Japanese troops, who were now being spread all over Hopei. Under the Boxer Protocol the Powers secured the right to station troops in Legation Quarter in Peking for its protection and, if necessity arose, to

* See Frank Oliver's *Special Undeclared War*, which gives one of the best accounts yet written of the war down to the fall of Hankow.

guard the railway to Peking. It was not, however, stated how many troops they might maintain in the North; and thus while this clause in the Protocol had become almost a dead letter for most of the Powers, who kept up little more than a token maintenance of troops in Peking, Japan rapidly increased her forces, until there were 6,000 in Hopei in the summer of 1936, 7,000 early in 1937 and over 10,000 at the outbreak of the "incident".

They were not confined to Peking but were parcelled out at most of the strategic points around the city and at Tientsin, and the brutal arrogance of their behaviour was a foretaste of their monstrous conduct in war. They arrested Chinese as they pleased and knocked them about brutally. They pushed foreign women off the sidewalk and threatened them with bayonets. And whenever the Japanese army had demands to make of the Peking Government, aeroplanes flew low over the city to add intimidation to insolence.

Throughout these months of trial great credit is due to General Sung Cheh-yuan, head of the Hopei-Chahar Political Council. He kept his temper marvellously, parrying the Japanese thrusts and fending them off with his disarming mildness, a weapon for which Japanese soldiers have so little use themselves that they are often bewildered by it in others. He could have made easy terms for himself with the Japanese; but, in a position of excruciating difficulty, his loyalty to Nanking never failed. General Sung deserves that this should be recorded of him, because he was much criticized when, soon after the fighting began, he fled to Paotingfu. But he could do nothing in Peking; in Paotingfu he could and did carry on the struggle. In any case he is to be judged on his record before July 7, not after it.

Elsewhere in China people were less patient. Not a few Japanese met their deaths at the hands of the mob. For instance, at Chêngtu, in West China, where the Chinese Government had refused to allow the Japanese to reopen their consulate after the civil wars (they were particularly anxious to know what was happening in Szechuan, and the Chinese Government was resolved that they should not), two Japanese were killed in a small riot arising out of this question. At Pakhoi a Japanese chemist was killed. At Shanghai three Japanese sailors were wounded and one of them died. And once an attempt was made to blow up a Japanese troop train near Tientsin. It is rather surprising that the Japanese army held its hand as long as it did.

So much has been written about the war between China and Japan that only its main features need be recalled here. These, too, belong mostly to the first fifteen months, while it was still a war of movement with a traceable design. After the Chinese Government's retreat to Chungking and the loss of Canton in October 1938 military operations ceased to have any coherent pattern. Had the Japanese sat tight at Nanking after capturing it in December 1937 and along the coast and, a most important point, had set themselves to give the Chinese good government and treat them decently, it is difficult to see what the Chinese Government could have done to upset them. But they unwisely allowed themselves to be drawn out into the vast spaces of the interior and they became like flies on a flypaper.

They could not get on and they could not get out. The war became a stalemate, with the Japanese making occasional rushes here and there to clear out a swarm of guerrillas, who reassembled as soon as the Japanese pressure had relaxed, or to endeavour to seize some strategic point, in which they were as often as not defeated. They could fly over the mountains and bomb Chungking, but they could not get infantry and guns up the Yangtze Gorges nor through the mountains to capture the capital. They tried more than once to cross the Yellow River into Shensi, and thus turn the protecting barrier of mountains and march down into the plain of Szechuan; but the Chinese managed each time to drive them back. There was no point on which they could concentrate for a final victory that would

bring China to her knees. Though the Chinese suffered enormous losses, the steady drain on Japan's man-power and general resources has also been enormous. And the war which was to have been a triumphant, facile march to victory, with five more Chinese provinces added to the Japanese Empire in six months, has lasted at the time of writing over six-and-a-half years; it is needless to dwell on the state in which Japan finds herself today. There can be no more striking example in history of infatuated miscalculation, of the old Greek warning of the inevitable reckoning that awaits "hybris"—the vaulting ambition that o'erleaps itself.

The exact circumstances of the opening of the war are hazy. It is clear that on the night of July 7 some Japanese troops were sent out for manœuvres near Marco Polo Bridge, some fifteen miles from Peking. There were Chinese barracks close by, and the Japanese assert that they were fired upon from these barracks. If they were, it would not be surprising, since they themselves were firing, and the Chinese might have imagined that they were being fired on. The Chinese naturally say that the Japanese had been deliberately sent out on the night manœuvres to create an "incident" (like the bomb on the railway at Mukden in 1931) in order to give the Japanese army a pretext for action. This contention is not disproved by the fact that on the morning of the 8th the Japanese commander drew off his men: he had done what was required of him and the sequel was now in higher hands. Judging by the nature of that sequel, there is little reason to doubt that the Chinese explanation was true.

The next fortnight passed in a maze of sterile negotiations, tentative agreements and more "incidents". An armistice was declared, without detriment, however, to sporadic encounters between Chinese and Japanese troops. The Japanese published an announcement that General Sung Cheh-yüan had given in to all their demands; General Sung flatly denied it. The Government in Tokyo declared that no more troops were being sent to China; actually they were pouring in from Manchuria by every train with tanks and guns. Within a week of the clash at Marco Polo Bridge there were 20,000 Japanese troops in Hopei and their engineers were at work constructing an aerodrome within ten miles of Peking. Possibly the Japanese generals thought to cow China by an overwhelming display of force. But one does not imagine that they cared much whether they did or not.

And China was not to be cowed. The Chinese Government were at this time in recess at Kuling, the mountain resort behind Kiukiang on the Yangtze, for the heat in Nanking in summer is intolerable. Here General Chiang held a war council—with all China crying for united action against the Japanese, it could not be anything else; any hint of surrender would have raised a revolution at once—and from it he issued a statement of four terms, the irreducible basis on which the quarrel at Lukouchiao could be settled. They were:

> "That the settlement must in no way infringe upon China's sovereign rights and territorial integrity;
>
> "That there must be no illegal alteration of the status of the Hopei-Chahar Council, which is fixed by the Central Government;
>
> "That the Central Government will not permit the removal of any officials whom it has appointed;
>
> "That the Central Government will not permit any restrictions to be put upon the movements of the 29th (General Sung Cheh-yuan's) Army."

These terms, if turned round, give us in fact the demands that the Japanese were making and which they declared that General Sung had accepted. Their teply to General Chiang's statement was an insolent order that Nanking was not to interfere in the North. The Chinese Government began to move troops up rhe railways from Nanking and Hankow.

It is unnecessary to go further into the wrangling of these heated days during which, by way of emphasizing their arguments, the Japanese furiously bombarded the little town of Wanping, near Marco Polo Bridge, where a part of the 29th Army was established. On July 25 the Japanese sent General Sung an ultimatum to withdraw all his troops from the neighbourhood of Peking and Wanping, and Sung sent orders to his troops to resist if they were attacked. Japan had got the war her generals wanted.

It will make the course of events easier to follow if we dispose first of the operations in North China, leaving for another section those at Shanghai which soon overlapped with them.

Peking fell to the Japanese with very little fighting, General Sung Cheh-yuan having left for Paotingfu. Both Peking and Tientsin were in Japan's possession by the end of July. But along the railway from Peking to Tientsin there was fierce fighting in which the Chinese suffered terribly from the enemy's aeroplanes; and for three or four days there was a stiff encounter around Tientsin, where the narrow crowded streets gave the Chinese the opportunity for that heroic and dangerous resistance which the 19th Route Army had practised with such effect at Shanghai five years before. Large sections of the Chinese city of Tientsin were reduced to rubble, and with them the beautiful Nankai University, bombed to bits by the Japanese with the cold deliberation that they have shown in destroying all Chinese seats of learning. The slaughter of Chinese was terrible both of civilians and soldiers. The Japanese swept hundreds of corpses into the river, where, as the stream is sluggishly tidal, they swayed to and fro for weeks like shoals of dead herrings. Then occurred the "massacre" of Tungchow, capital of the East Hopei Autonomous State, where the Chinese police rose and slaughtered numbers of Japanese civilians and Chinese hangers-on of the quisling Yin Ju-keng. The Japanese Press screamed with indignation at "this unparalleled atrocity". In fact, it should not have happened, and the Chinese Government publicly expressed deep regret that it had. But, compared with Japanese atrocities, what happened in Tungchow was nothing.

Having got control of the Peking-Tientsin area, the Japanese turned their attention to the railways as well as northward. Part of the 29th Army was stationed around the Nankou Pass through the Great Wall, where it was an obvious threat to the Japanese. The Chinese defended the Pass bravely for a few days, but more Japanese troops were brought round in their rear through Inner Mongolia, and thus, taken on both sides, the Chinese were defeated and the Pass fell to the enemy. The conflict, indeed, was too unequal between the trained Japanese troops, equipped with every device of modern war, and the loosely knit Chinese, with but few guns, no aeroplanes or armoured vehicles and scanty supplies of ammunition. Yet the Japanese did not have things all their own way. As they pressed into the mountainous province of Shansi one column got surrounded in a ravine between Chinese regulars and guerrillas and was severely cut up before it could extricate its remains.

The autumn was spent by the Japanese on this side of North China in fighting their way down the Peking-Hankow railway to Shihchiachwang, whence a line runs westward to Taiyuanfu, capital of Shansi, their advance here being combined with another from the north of the province. There has never been much definite information about this campaign. The Chinese records, if they were ever exactly kept, have not been made public; and the Japanese will never disclose theirs, since they encountered a great deal more resistance than they ever bargained for. The "Model Governor" Yen Hsi-shan had had a good arsenal at Taiyuanfu for several years, and the Shansi troops, aided by the Red guerrillas of the 8th Route Army, fought heroically. So much of Shansi is rugged mountains that the disparity in armament was less against the Chinese than in the plains round Peking

and Tientsin, and the lightly armed Chinese, capable of marching thirty miles in a night, moved from point to point with disconcerting rapidity. There was one particularly fierce battle eighty miles south-west of Taiyuanfu, where the Chinese massed 100,000 men for the defence of a pass which is the key to the capital. This conflict went on for several days, and although the Japanese eventually took the pass it was at the price of heavy losses. Not until early in March 1938 could the Japanese claim to have conquered Shansi, and it was a very dubious conquest. The province was full of Chinese irregulars not at all ready to acknowledge defeat, and the Japanese have had to reconquer the province more than once. Except some of the chief towns and the railway they have no secure possession. Marshal Yen Hsi-shan lost his capital, but from some secret well-camouflaged retreat for which the Japanese aeroplanes have repeatedly but vainly sought he continues to govern the greater part of his fief; and to train guerrillas for the continual harassment of the invader.

Meanwhile on the eastern side of North China the Japanese had made much more rapid progress down the Tientsin-Pukou railway than they did on the Peking-Hankow, the terrain generally being easier for attack along the former line; and by the end of the first week in October they had reached the northern bank of the Yellow River.

There is no doubt that Han Fu-chu, the Governor of Shantung, could now have made the Japanese pay a stiff price for his province. As a Governor it is fair to say that he had been a success, ruling despotically but in general justly and well. He had been Feng Kuo-chang's chief lieutenant in the days when the prestige of the "Christian General's" army stood high. And the Shantungese (as we learnt from the old Weihaiwei Regiment) are among the toughest soldiers in China, far more so indeed than the Shansi men. Yet Han Fu-chu offered no more than a token resistance to the Japanese; it was commonly believed that he had tried to bargain with them for the safety of Shantung in return for a free march through the province. I cannot, however, state this as a fact. The upshot, at any rate, was that by the end of December the Japanese had captured Tsinanfu, the capital, and the chief cities of Shantung. They were not quick enough, however, in getting to Tsingtao. There the Chinese troops were of sterner stuff than their leader, and when the Japanese entered the former German port they found nothing but smoking ruins of the great mills and factories on which they had spent £12,000,000. The "scorched earth" policy had begun.

Han Fu-chu meanwhile had fled to Hankow, whither the Chinese Government had by this time withdrawn. He must have been grievously out of date in his reckonings or he would have gone anywhere else. The days when a defeated Tuchun was granted a comfortable sum with which to go abroad and study foreign constitutions were no more. He was courtmartialled for his *fainéance* and shot on January 24, 1930.

The story of the fighting at Shanghai, which lasted from August 12 until roughly the same date in November, is the most generally familiar part of the whole war, for the obvious reason that it was fought under the uncomfortable gaze of several thousand foreign onlookers. Who fired the first shot will always be a matter of dispute. There was the incident of the Japanese officer and a bluejacket who were shot by sentries when trying to get into the Chinese aerodrome at Hungjao, six miles west of the Settlements; but that was before the fighting had properly begun. There was the massing of Chinese troops outside the Settlements against which the Japanese protested as a violation of the agreement made on the cessation of fighting in 1932 that Chinese troops must keep at a fixed distance from Shanghai. But it certainly does not "lie in the mouth" (as lawyers put it) of any Japanese to complain of violated agreements. If we believe that the Chinese deliberately attacked the Japanese at Shanghai, we can only admire their

strategy without the shadow of a question of its rightfulness. Since war had been forced upon them they rightly resolved that it should not be fought in remote corners of the north, but in the full view of all the world. There was even a chance that it might bring in some of that world on their side against Japan.

Whether they had already formulated the strategy of drawing on the Japanese into the great spaces of the interior, which has since proved so effective, is not clear, but is most probable. For we know that, when the fighting at Shanghai was only a few weeks old, General Chiang Kai-shek, with truly remarkable foresight, gave orders that the construction of the Burma Road should be begun.

During the first month the Chinese greatly outnumbered the Japanese, and consisting, as they did, of the German-trained "Generalissimo's Own", with the assistance of aeroplanes, they put the Japanese on the defensive. At one moment they had virtually driven a wedge between the Japanese in the eastern part of the Settlement and those down the river. Had they shown a ferocity in attack equal to their later sturdiness in defence, they might well have driven the Japanese into the Whangpoo. Why they did not is a mystery. One has heard that the German officers were again and again in despair at the Chinese failure to take advantage of favourable openings for attack. Can it be that there still lingered some of the sentiment of the old days of Tuchun warfare, when advantages were not pressed home, but a way of escape was ever left open for the defeated one? The Chinese are nothing if not civilized, and that quality is a heavy handicap in modern war.

By the end of August the Japanese were landing large reinforcements at Woosung—at the mouth of the Whangpoo where it enters the Yangtze—and now the tide of war turned against the Chinese and they began slowly to fall back. As a commentary on modern fighting it may be recalled that the Chinese said that they did not much mind the Japanese aeroplanes: they could hear and see them coming; but the naval bombardment by the old battleship *Idzumo* and the enemy's cruisers on the river was a different and far deadlier peril. At the end of October the Chinese were beaten back out of the defence line they had formed diagonally through the Kiangwan country north of the Foreign Settlements to Liuho on the banks of the Yangtze, and pivoting on the edge of the Settlements they were gradually pressed back farther and farther.

Again, there is little doubt that they ought to have retreated much earlier to the hills and lakes around Soochow and the narrow hillbound channel of the Yangtze at Chinkiang, which indeed they had closed with a strong boom. But far stronger defences, manned by fresher and better-equipped forces than the now weary Chinese, have been overcome again and again in these years of war. The defence of the boom across the river at Chinkiang was very feeble; the Japanese landed troops in Hangchow Bay (they seem never to have been expected to do this), and coming with boats ready prepared in which to navigate the lakes and creeks they attacked the Soochow line from the rear. After that the Chinese retreat became a rout. Nanking fell to the enemy on December 13.

Of the many dramatic incidents during the war at Shanghai one may take note briefly for purposes of record: they have been often described in full. The most sanguinary occurred on August 14—known as Bloody Saturday in Shanghai —when some Chinese airmen going out to attack the *Idzumo* on the river somehow dropped at least twenty bombs on the narrowest part of the populous Nanking Road. Over 600 persons were killed, including eleven foreigners, and as many more wounded. This ghastly accident has never been explained, but the impression was that the Chinese lost their heads when for the first time meeting anti-aircraft fire.

On August 26 the car of the British Ambassador, Sir Hughe Knatchbull-Hugessen, *en route* from Nanking to Shanghai, was machine-gunned by two

Japanese aeroplanes, and the Ambassador, severely wounded, was *hors de combat* for many months. Even as the party got out of the car a bomb was dropped, so near that it blew them off the road into a field. There is very little doubt that the attack was deliberate; the Union Jack was plainly painted on the roof of the car, and the Japanese came too low to mistake it for a military vehicle. The general belief is that the Japanese thought that General Chiang Kai-shek was motoring to Shanghai, and their airmen had been ordered to fire upon all vehicles indiscriminately. For several days the Japanese Government replied to the British protests that it was "making inquiries". Not till September 29 did it send in a formal and utterly inadequate apology. This the British Government noted "with satisfaction"—an emotion that certainly was shared by no one else.

It was particularly noteworthy, in contrast with Japan's unworthy behaviour, that when on August 29 a Chinese aviator attacked the American liner *President Hoover* outside Woosung (the Chinese had definite information that ten Japanese transports were on the way to Shanghai, and the airman, unfamiliar with shipping, might easily have made a mistake), the Chinese Government apologized the same day, accepted responsibility and promised payment of full compensation.

The bombing near Wuhu on December 5 of the British steamer *Tuckwo*, which burnt out with terrible loss among the 2,000 Chinese refugees on board, was certainly no accident. Nor was the sinking of the U.S. gunboat *Panay* on December 12 and the firing, about this date, on H.M.S. *Ladybird* and the bombing of H.M. gunboats *Scarab* and *Cricket* (but they fired back and the Japanese 'planes sheered off), all a few miles up the Yangtze from Nanking. Here we have the statement of Colonel Hashimoto that he had orders to fire on all craft on the river. Probably he would have fired in any case, for Hashimoto is a choice specimen of the most fanatical of the Japanese "Young Officers". He was recalled in order to appease the United States Government. But Hashimoto was far too influential and formidable to be left in the cold, and before long he was again found in an important position.

These events and the cold-blooded ferocity with which the Japanese bombed and butchered wherever they went lead up naturally to the eight weeks' long sack of Nanking. I do not propose to repeat the details of that horrid story, as beastly as it is murderous.* Enough that an army which, in the Russo-Japanese War under other leaders, and when Japan still valued the opinion of civilized peoples, had behaved well, stamped itself at Nanking as a horde of the vilest barbarians known in history, and has deepened that black mark in every successive week of its warrings.

Foreign reactions to the war cannot be recalled without shame. A clearer case of unprovoked aggression could not be imagined, dating from the seizure of Manchuria, continued through subsequent years of bullying encroachment, and now flaming out in a murderous invasion accompanied by every species of inhuman brutality. But while public opinion was shocked by the Japanese bombing of Nanking and Canton, and still more by the sinking of an innocent Chinese fleet of fishing junks near Hongkong on September 27, it was very soon seen that neither the British nor American Governments nor the League of Nations could be roused to any effective action.

China lost no time in appealing to the League under three Articles of the Covenant which state in the plainest terms that members of the League undertake to preserve as against external aggression the political independence of members; and that any war or threat of war is a matter for all members of the League. The only reply was a declaration that Japan's military operations against China were "out of all proportion to the incident which occasioned the conflict"; that

* Any reader who wants them may be referred to H. J. Timperley's *What War Means* (Gollancz), compiled from the written evidence of first-hand foreign witnesses.

they were not to be justified by any right of self-defence; and that they violated Japan's obligations under the Nine-Power Treaty. To this was added a recommendation to all members to abstain from action that would weaken China's powers of resistance or increase her difficulties, and that they should consider how far they might extend help to her. But having failed so lamentably over Manchuria *to accomplish the grand purpose for which it had been created, the League could* not be expected to do more now.

To detail the many Notes addressed to Tokyo by London and Washington would be a weary waste of time. After the Chinese retreat from Shanghai the United States Government managed to extract satisfaction on some small points from Japan, such as the handing back of American mission premises seized by Japanese soldiers. At this time Japan was not ready for an open breach with America. But when she attacked Pearl Harbour, Mr. Grew, the American Ambassador in Tokyo, had a list of 6,000 claims for outrages on American rights and interests in China, on which he had been vainly trying to obtain amends.

One British Note to Japan, presented on January 14, 1939, is an important historical document for the unanswerable clarity with which it sets out Japan's avowed aims (to form a tripartite *bloc* of Japan, Manchuria and China under Japanese hegemony) and Prince Konoye's announcement that the war must continue until China was crushed or submitted.

> "His Majesty's Government" (the Note continues) "are at a loss to understand how Prince Konoye's assurance that Japan seeks no territory and respects the sovereignty of China can be reconciled with the declared intention of the Japanese Government to compel the Chinese people by force of arms to accept conditions involving the surrender of their political, economic and cultural life to Japanese control, the indefinite maintenance in China of considerable Japanese garrisons, and the virtual detachment from China of the territory of Inner Mongolia."

Here in a nutshell is the eternal contradiction between Japan's words and deeds. How often her Ministers have protested that she was not doing and would never do what in fact she was doing with all her might! And in this Japanese civilian speakers appear as blandly unconscious of any incongruity as the soldiers; indeed, of the two one rather prefers the latter, who for the most part have never made any concealment of their aims. At least one knows where one is with them. Those who know the Japanese best tell us that such blatant hypocrisies and, to use a plain word, lies present no difficulty to Japanese minds, which are not even conscious of any incongruity between their sayings and doings. One must leave it at that. But the obvious fact that Japan speaks a different language—or thinks in different terms—from the rest of the world must be carefully remembered when Japan, defeated, puts up a putatively Liberal Government to pretend that it has all beeen a horrid misunderstanding, that the soldiers never spoke for the real Japan, and, having failed in war, tries to win the peace by smiles, genuflexions and pretty speeches.*

In November 1937, for the first and doubtless last time, a conference was held in Brussels of the signatories to the Nine-Power Treaty. It was a lame affair, for Japan, of course, refused to attend, replying to the invitation to do so with a flat denial that she had violated the Treaty; and Italy, who on November 6 joined the Anti-Comintern pact concluded between Germany and Japan twelve

*Only a day or two before this was written the *Daily Herald* correspondent in Arakan sent a description of Japanese prisoners bowing and grinning whenever anyone looked at them, profuse in their protestations of hatred of their officers and their eagerness to serve the British. Pointing to one of them, a British officer said to the correspondent: "Looks pretty harmless, doesn't he? But vicious underneath." That is a perfect image of what Japan will be when defeated.

months before, was utterly unsympathetic and refused to sign the declaration adopted by the Conference on November 24. In this declaration the seven other Powers urged that hostilities be suspended and then adjourned "in order to allow time for participating governments to exchange views and further explore all peaceful methods by which a just settlement of the dispute may be attained". And that was the end of all effort in even pretending to curb Japan. "My son," wrote the great Swedish Chancellor Oxenstierna of the 18th century, "dost thou not know with how little wisdom the world is governed?"

From the British Government of 1937, or indeed from any previous British Government since the First World War, nothing else was to be expected. Future historians will rank the years between the two world wars as perhaps the most degraded in English history in art as in politics; when expediency took the place of principle, government was a game of vote-catching, national welfare was debased into social security; while in foreign affairs awkward decisions were evaded by the parrot reply to all critics that "British policy is pivoted on the League of Nations". By 1937 Mr. Neville Chamberlain was Prime Minister and the policy of appeasement was well under way—the eternally futile device of trying to buy off an inappeasably voracious enemy with bribes. It is no wonder that Continental nations thought we were done for.

But it is surprising that the United States did not take a more resolute stand. President Roosevelt's eyes were wide enough open. In a speech at Chicago he warned the American people not to think that they could escape the consequences of international lawlessness and urged that "the peace-loving nations must make a concerted effort in opposition to those violations of treaties, those ignorings of humane instincts", and that "there must be a return to belief in the pledged word, in the value of a signed treaty". But he could evoke no national response, and when in the beginning of 1938 a proposal strongly backed by the Navy to fortify Guam* was advanced, even the meagre vote of $5,000,000 for harbour improvements to which the plan was whittled down was defeated in Congress by the clamorous Isolationists. What is particularly remarkable is that the powerful American missionary body did not exert itself to rouse opinion on behalf of the country which America traditionally regards as more or less under her protection. Yet until the summer of 1941, when Japan's occupation of Indo-China led to the Anglo-American economic blockade of Japan, the United States continued to sell steel, scrap, petrol and machine tools to Japan. (The British Empire was also supplying her with rubber, wool and other raw materials.) Wherever Agnes Smedley went in China, as she tells us in her striking book, *Battle Cry of China*, she was asked: "Why does your country supply Japan with the means to kill us?"

It is to be remembered that Japan very early in the war was making her aims clear beyond misunderstanding. On August 28, 1937, Prince Konoye made in the Diet the speech which contained that famous phrase, "Japan's only course is to beat China to her knees so that she may no longer have the spirit to fight." In October, replying to an American Note, the Japanese Government wrote that

> "It is the firm conviction of the Japanese Government that in the face of the new situation fast developing in East Asia any attempt to apply to the conditions of today and tomorrow the inapplicable ideas and principles of the past would neither contribute towards the establishment of real peace in East Asia nor solve the immediate issues."

* Guam lies about 400 miles south of the Marianas, the nearest large group of Japanese-held islands to Japan, and about 800 miles west of Truk, the so-called Japanese Gibraltar in the South Pacific. Japan was particularly anxious at the Washington Conference that the United States should promise not to fortify Guam, a promise unfortunately given. Needless to say, Japan's corresponding promise not to fortify the Marianas, Carolines and Marshalls was not kept.

And in December 1938 Prince Konoye made a statement of Japan's aims from which it is enough to quote the following paragraphs:

> "The Japanese Government are resolved to carry on military operations for the complete extermination of the anti-Japanese Kuomintang *régime* and at the same time to proceed with the work of establishing a new order in East Asia. . . .
>
> "Japan, China and Manchukuo will be united by the common aim of establishing a new order in East Asia and realizing a relationship of neighbourly amity, common defence against Communism and economic co-operation. . . .
>
> "In order to ensure the full accomplishment of this purpose Japan demands that Japanese troops shall be stationed . . . at specified points" (in China).

This is the first official mention of a "new order in East Asia", afterwards elaborated into a "co-prosperity sphere for Greater East Asia". And by the time of Prince Konoye's statement Japan had made it very clear that there was to be no place for foreigners in her new order. In every direction she was openly attacking or planning to undermine the white man's rights.

In only one direction did China receive help and encouragement. On August 21, 1937, she concluded a five-year non-aggression pact with Russia, and until the latter was invaded by the Germans in June 1941 she helped China lavishly with arms, ammunition and aeroplanes, besides the loan of instructors to train Chinese pilots. No doubt it was to Russia's interest that Japan should be bled as thoroughly as possible, but China was and is none the less grateful to the Soviet for perceiving what appeared so unaccountably hidden from others.*

Chapter XVI

JAPAN MEETS HER MATCH

BY MARCH 1938 THE JAPANESE ARMY WAS CONSIDERED TO HAVE HAD A SUFFICIENT debauch in Nanking; General Matsui, the Commander-in-Chief in Shanghai, had been recalled, not so much because his army had disgraced itself as because it had been found out;† and Prince Konoye had put out his first peace-feelers through the German Ambassador in China—it was time to be getting on with the annihilation of these unconscionable Chinese.

The first move in the advance on Hankow was designed to get complete hold of the Tientsin-Pukou railway with a view to advancing across China by the Lung-Hai railway, which crosses the north-south line at Hsuchowfu in north Kiangsu. Then it was, in April, that the Japanese were conspicuously defeated at the famous battle of Taierchwang, with the annihilation of nearly two divisions. It was their first fair and square defeat in modern times, and its tonic effect on all China was electrical.

In another respect, too, the Chinese were to prove too clever for the enemy. Though checked at Taierchwang, the Japanese brought down reinforcements

* The Foreign Office made a great deal of the British Government's allowing China to import war material via Hongkong, until the loss of Canton closed that channel. In view of what Japan was being allowed to buy in the Empire, the British Government could scarcely do less.

† It is curious to notice that in the early months of the war the Japanese were still sensitive to foreign opinion. They angrily repudiated Reuter's reports of the bombing of Canton in May 1938, reports sent by a trustworthy British correspondent, who was in Canton all through these terrible raids. Later the Japanese appear to have grown entirely indifferent to foreign censure, coincidentally with the elimination of all but the "Japanese god-folk" influence in the Government.

from the North, and by the middle of May they claimed excitedly to have got 250,000 Chinese in "a steel ring" from which there was no escape. One was often to hear of those steel rings as the war went on; they never proved unbreakable. At Hsuchowfu part of the Chinese army punched its way out, the rest melted into the landscape and re-formed westwards on the Lung-Hai.

Twice more before Hankow fell the Chinese were to taste the sweets of triumphing over the "dwarf slaves". On April 29, the Emperor Hirohito's birthday, which the Japanese proposed to celebrate by bombing Hankow, there was an air battle over the city, when twenty-one of the fifty enemy 'planes were shot down, the Chinese losing but five. And again, on October 10, auspicious anniversary of the Revolution, a Japanese force was encircled at Tehan, south-west of Kiukiang, and badly cut up. The famous cutting of the Yellow River banks between Chengchow and Kaifeng, which flooded hundreds of square miles of the Honan plains, also took the Japanese completely by surprise and cost them a great deal of equipment besides, in all probability, many lives. The advance to Hankow was an expensive matter for Japan. The Yangtze Valley is intolerable in the summer months. Malaria, dysentery and cholera made severe inroads on the Japanese army. Between the start from Nanking and the occupation of Hankow it was conservatively estimated to have lost 100,000 men dead in battle or from sickness.

On the other hand, the Japanese were advancing; that could not be denied. And well as the Chinese fought in some areas, they failed badly and unaccountably at others. At Matang, for instance, a little down the Yangtze from Kiukiang, the river had been closed by a strong boom, protected by guns well concealed in the cliff-like hills on either side. It should have been well-nigh impregnable. But there was hopeless confusion in the Chinese command; officers were away in Kiukiang instead of being at their posts; the Japanese burst through with but little difficulty.

Worse still was the case of Canton. Between Bias Bay (just north of Hongkong), where the Japanese landed on October 12, and Canton there are three ranges of hills, and a maze of streams, tributaries of the Pearl River, altogether meet for good defence. But there was simply no defence (it is difficult to think that the Chinese had not sufficient troops), and within only nine days the great city had fallen, thereby cutting off China from her main line of communication with the sea. She continued to draw supplies by the French railway from Haiphong in Indo-China to Yunnanfu (now called Kunming) until the fall of France in 1940. But this is a single-track, narrow-gauge railway on which trains run only at night, not to be compared as a means of transport with the Canton-Hongkong steamers.

The fall of Canton undoubtedly hastened that of Hankow. The Japanese, advancing by river and by the Lung-Hai, sent a flying column across country which straddled the Peking-Hankow railway and swept down it upon Hankow. On October 24 General and Mme Chiang Kai-shek left Hankow by aeroplane for Chungking. On the 25th the Japanese marched in. But it was a barren victory. The Chinese had cleared everything of value from the Japanese Concession, every scrap of machinery from the local mills; they had destroyed the chief Japanese buildings, and they would have destroyed still more but that bluejackets were sent by the British authorities to draw the fuses of the mines which the Chinese had laid under several buildings. Was this "appeasement"? In any case a grave injustice to the Chinese and a flagrant breach of neutrality.

The Chinese army had again disappeared into the blue. China had suffered enormous loss in the lives of her people and her best cities. But Japan was as far from conquering her as ever, and had now been drawn into a position which she had never anticipated and which was to cost her very dear in "the slow march of the inevitable years".

In December 1938 the world was really electrified by the news that Wang Ching-wei (having prudently removed himself with a few friends from Chungking to Indo-China) had publicly urged acceptance of Prince Konoye's peace terms. Wang Ching-wei's character is indeed an interesting but baffling study. Tall, handsome, well dressed, fascinating, orator and poet, he had been one of the most ardent revolutionaries in his youth, a devoted friend of Dr. Sun Yat-sen, whom he had accompanied on his last journey to Peking to sit beside his death-bed. Variable and difficult to work with as he was, there was nothing really to indicate that he was pro-Japanese, still less that he would commit the awful act of treachery that has for ever blackened his name.

After his announcement from Hanoi, Wang disappeared from view for a few months, while the Japanese angled hard and vainly, as described in a previous chapter, for Marshal Wu Pei-fu. In the summer of 1939 Wang reappeared to preside over a crowd of nonentities calling themselves the Sixth National Congress of the Kuomintang. But it was not until March 1940 that he succeeded in forming a government in Nanking, instantly recognized by Japan and to which she appointed an ambassador. There had been, since 1937, another provisional government in Peking presided over by an elderly, half-blind, but very shrewd man named Wang Keh-min, who had once been a banker and once Minister of Finance. He came down to Nanking for the inauguration of Wang Ching-wei's government; there must have been some bargain struck between them, though nobody knows what; but on his return to the north he told the reporters that his own position was entirely unaffected. That Wang Keh-min has ever acknowledged any kind of overlordship in Nanking is wholly improbable.

Wang Ching-wei signed a treaty with Japan on November 30, 1940, by which in return for being recognized as President of the National Government of China he surrendered everything that had been required of Yuan Shih-kai in the Twenty-one Demands, and more, reducing China to a colony of Japan's. Since then he has signed an alliance with Japan and declared war upon Great Britain and America. Except as a hollow attempt to give himself "face" one can see no purpose in either move. If he ever allows himself to think, Wang must be one of the most miserable men alive. He has never been able to attract to himself a single Chinese of repute: even those most closely in touch with Chinese affairs would be hard put to it to name one of his Ministers. Daily he has fresh proof of his utter impotence in the Japanese hands. Even in Nanking he dares not go out except in a heavily armoured and escorted car. And by every decent Chinese he is equally loathed and despised.

After the Chinese Government's retreat to Chungking the war lost all coherence. For convenience it might be said that China was divided as between the occupied and unoccupied by a diagonal from the western end of Inner Mongolia to the neighbourhood of Canton. "Free China" westwards of this line consists of eight of the largest provinces: Szechuan, Sikang and Chinghai bordering on Tibet, Yunnan, Kweichow, Kwangsi, Shensi (the Communist headquarters), Kansu and Ninghsia in Inner Mongolia, with a total population of about 180,000,000. But by figures compiled in February 1941, of 929 counties or *hsien* in occupied China, 417 were completely free from Japanese occupation and controlled by Chungking, and since that date the tendency has been to increase the area held by the Chinese.

Furthermore, there is no real line of demarcation, no front in the military sense, but armies dotted about here and there, their whereabouts only being revealed by the more conspicuous battles reported from time to time. And in these battles it is not generally recognized how much real success the Chinese have had.

It is very much to be regretted that the British War Office never seems to have

thought it worth while to send out military attachés to watch the Chinese troops at war. At least, if it did, it was singularly secretive about the fact, for one has never heard of any British officers in the field. In contrast, Major Evans Carlson, formerly of the United States Marines, followed the Chinese armies in many conflicts for over two years, and wrote a most valuable monograph on them, published by the Institute of Pacific Relations in 1940. And General Stilwell, now Commander-in-Chief of American Forces in China, formerly military attaché in Peking and an excellent Chinese scholar, had also studied the Chinese soldier for several years. The indifference of London to what the Chinese armies were doing and, still more, might do was the more culpable not only because of their tenacious fighting at Shanghai in 1932 and 1937, but because the War Office knew very well (if it had not forgotten) what excellent stuff the Weihaiwei Regiment had been and what good service it gave in the International Expedition to Peking in the Boxer year. There is reason to believe that in the autumn of 1941 the Chinese Government offered to send troops to reinforce the defences of Malaya. Not till it was too late were they called into Burma; even then their sturdy defence of Yenanyaung, which helped to save some British troops in a dangerous position, was one of the bright features of the retreat. Had they been brought in earlier the story of Burma at least, if not of Malaya, might have been different.*

After the Chinese Government and army had slipped away beyond the Yangtze Gorges, Japanese efforts were for some time concentrated on trying to turn the mountain barrier from the north by crossing the Yellow River through southern Shansi into Shensi and then turning southwards. If successful, this attack would also have enabled them to cut China's communications with Russia through Sianfu. Not only, however, did they fail, in spite of using 120,000 men in the attempt—as they have failed again and again in more recent attempts—but the Chinese succeeded in recovering some important towns and a considerable part of southern Shansi, and with it coal and iron mines much needed by Japan for their development of North China.

Other Japanese operations were undertaken in the Han River valley in order to complete their hold on the Peking-Hankow railway; but here too they were repelled, and even now they have never got the whole of this great railway in their hands.

In September 1939 the Japanese launched the first of the five big campaigns they have undertaken to seize Changsha, the keypoint of the Canton-Hankow railway. This was described by *The Times* correspondent as "one of the major campaigns of the war", and was started from both ends of the railway—from Yochow on the Yangtze and from Canton. Of the advance from Canton we have few details beyond the fact that it was easily checked by the Chinese in the mountains between Kwangtung and Hunan. But the operations in the north are clearly followed.

Changsha is fifty miles as the crow flies from Yochow, and the Siang river which flows through it northwards into the Tungting Lake is fed by numerous tributaries. The Chinese tactics were simply to fall back nearly to Changsha and then close in on the attenuated Japanese communications and their rear. They followed exactly the same plan in the autumn of 1940 and 1941 and with the same signal success, the Japanese on each occasion being driven back to where they had started with heavy losses. The Chinese Commander in Hunan, who is also Governor of the province, is a young Cantonese named Hsueh Yueh—he is

* In saying this one thinks particularly of the Kra peninsula, the narrow stalk by which Malaya hangs like a pear from Asia, divided longitudinally between Burma and Siam. Many onlookers must have wondered, while the Japanese were thrusting down through Malaya, why no effort was made to cut their communications through this narrow neck of land. Not till the Japanese turned their attentions to this region, to invade Burma, was it revealed that we had never had more than a battalion or so of Indian troops at this vital point.

only about forty at the time of writing—who has undoubtedly an iron nerve and a fine sense of when to strike. He is not unnaturally the hero of all China. The victories of Changsha not only showed how much the Chinese had learnt in co-ordinating and timing their movements, in which respect they were once markedly deficient, but they were also an indication of the wooden-headed arrogance of the Japanese and their contempt for China* that they continued to use exactly the same methods in all their attempts on Changsha, in spite of repeated failure.

As against these reverses and the failure of an attempt to round up the Chinese army in Kiangsi—in which the Japanese took one town and quickly lost it—they occupied Swatow in June 1939 (but more with the object of cutting off Hongkong from the hinterland than for any particular advantage against China) and in October they drove inland from Pakhoi and captured Nanning in Kwangsi. This cut an important road from Indo-China by which the Chinese had obtained supplies; and although the latter contrived another road farther west it was a poor substitute for the one through Nanning.

Hitherto, except for the loss of Nanning, the Chinese had certainly had the best of things since they quitted Hankow. But the year 1940 was a black one for them. In June the Japanese advanced up the Yangtze and took Shasi, and followed up this success by taking Ichang at the foot of the Gorges in November. It is from this point that they have made their repeated and savage bombing raids on Chungking, which reduced the dark, tortuous old city to a heap of rubble. But the Chinese honeycombed the rocky hill on which Chungking stands with caves and tunnels and carried on undefeated.

In June, too, the fall of France was for Japan as a gift from her peculiar gods, enabling her to force the Vichy Government to acquiesce in her stationing troops and occupying airfields in northern Indo-China and closing the railway to Kunming. Worse still, the British Government in those terrible days after Dunkirk was compelled to consent to the closing of the Burma Road, though only for three months. This celebrated road, zigzagging over mountains 8,000 feet high and two great rivers, and constructed by such primitive means as might well have been in use in the days of Confucius, had been opened to traffic in January 1939, actually less than eighteen months from its commencement. Until the Americans took charge of the transport along it, some time in 1941, the casualties of vehicles on its narrow, dubious surface and at its fearsome hairpin bends were terribly heavy. Though it had been much improved in every way, before the loss of Burma its carrying capacity never exceeded 12,000 tons a month. But it was a symbol, its moral value was higher than its material, and the closing of it was a severe shock to Chinese and British alike. The Chinese took the British Government's sad decision very well; they appeared to understand the situation thoroughly, and no word of reproach was ever heard from them.

For some compensation the Chinese in 1940 shattered further attempts by the Japanese to cross the Yellow River;† they defeated their efforts to advance up the Han River valley and thus continued to deny them full use of the Peking-Hankow railway; and they recaptured Nanning in November, when the Japanese withdrew altogether from Kwangsi. The Japanese version is that they went voluntarily, their occupation of northern Indo-China having made it unnecessary to retain Nanning. The Chinese version is that they were driven out. The truth, as usual, probably lies somewhere between. Japan by the autumn of 1940 must

* The legend was at one time industriously circulated in Japan that British troops were helping the Chinese, in order to explain their long and stubborn resistance. The Japanese High Command could not bear to admit that their invincible army was actually being held up by such contemptible foes as the Chinese.

† On the very day this was written came a telegram saying that the Chinese had recaptured the Black Dragon Pass, a position of great value in south-west Shansi, which the Japanese had held for six years. Japanese operations during the war in southern Shansi have not been to their credit.

have been turning her thoughts principally in a southward direction, and since she had successfully stopped all passage of materials from Indo-China, she did not so greatly need to hold Kwangsi. On the other hand, she had not been successful in extending her occupation beyond Nanning, although she had certainly tried to do so during the previous year, and it is scarcely in the Japanese nature spontaneously to relinquish any territory once it is in their claws.

The year 1941 is retrospectively overshadowed by the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour. Yet the Chinese can remember it with more satisfaction than the year before. In July they had to endure much murderous bombing of Chungking: one raid on July 30 in which a very large number of Japanese 'planes was used lasted for seven hours; part of the Soviet Embassy was destroyed and Sir Arthur Blackburn of the British Embassy was severely wounded. The capacity of the Chinese people for stoic endurance was perhaps never better proved: and almost before the enemy 'planes were out of the sky the Chinese were running up mat-sheds and trying to get together their homes and their little businesses.

But in September the Japanese evacuated the port of Foochow—again voluntarily, they said; but on this occasion there is little doubt that, under the Chinese constant attacks, they found the place too costly to hold. In October the Chinese defeated another large-scale Japanese assault on Changsha. And about the same time the Japanese made a determined attack on Chengchow in Honan, crossing-point of the Lung-Hai and Peking-Hankow railways, took it, and were beaten out of it.

This autumn, too, was memorable for the arrival of that picturesque figure Colonel Chennault and his "Flying Tigers", otherwise the A.V.G.—American Volunteer Group of aviators. Colonel Chennault had been in the American Air Force, and after his retirement on age limit (he is well over 50) he went about with an air circus, performing breathless aerobatics. His volunteers whom he collected for service in China probably never much exceeded a hundred in number, and their 'planes were none of the newest. But Colonel Chennault trained them in his own tricks and they were masters of flying. Before the end of 1941 they had shot down 128 Japanese 'planes, for the loss of only five themselves, besides doing much damage to Japanese transports and installations. Since then the "A.V.G.", much reinforced and containing an increasing number of Chinese pilots trained in America, has become the 14th American Army Air Force. But the "Flying Tigers" will always be affectionately remembered in China. They put new heart into the Chinese soldiers, so long resigned to the feeling that the air was Japan's, and were as much a help morally as materially.

This was specially shown between May and August in 1942, when the Japanese launched a very heavy attack designed to clear the Chinese out of Chêkiang, the so-called "bomb Tokyo" province at the mouth of the Yangtze, in order to prevent the possibility of its airfields being used by the Allies. Driving diagonally down the railway from Hangchow, they captured Kinhua, the provincial capital, and then pushed on westwards into Kiangsi, at the same time spreading out into northern Fukien. At one time it even looked as if they might reach the Canton-Hankow railway on the other side of Kiangsi.

But they had made their common mistake of stretching out their communications too far. Supported by the Flying Tigers, the Chinese delivered a manful counter-attack. They practically wiped out the Japanese who had penetrated into Fukien and drove the main force well back into Chêkiang, recapturing some hundreds of square miles of ground and two good airfields. Only Kinhua they have not been able to recover. Nevertheless "it was a famous victoree"; as *The Times* of August 31 expressed it, "a Japanese campaign which opened with impressive successes has ended in a retreat which no excuses can disguise". The said excuses, it may be noted, were a Japanese *communiqué* that, "having attained

their objectives, the Japanese forces were withdrawn according to plan". When things go well with the Japanese their *communiqués* are terse, factual and accurate; when things go badly their mendacity would stagger Ananias.*

Two more major undertakings by the Japanese call for attention. In the summer of 1943 they drove hard from the neighbourhood of the Tungting Lake, at first apparently at the rich rice lands in northern Hunan; but this was a feint, their ultimate objective being the passes through the mountains south of the Yangtze Gorges. Whether they really aimed to reach Chungking, some 350 miles further on, is doubtful: the attempt would have been too gigantic. It seems more likely that they meant to destroy the Chinese fortified positions at the foot of the mountains, from which the Chinese had made divers attempts to retake Ichang, and which were a continual nuisance to Japan. The conflict raged for several days with great fury, the Chinese defence of the principal pass earning for it the name of "China's Verdun". But in the end the Chinese were able to get upon the Japanese communications, at the same time delivering a heavy attack on the north bank of the Yangtze, and the Japanese were forced to retreat with undoubtedly heavy loss.

The second big battle gained more world-wide celebrity and kudos for the Chinese than any they have fought. Late in the autumn the Japanese, again starting from their positions around the Tungting Lake, invaded the "rice bowl" of Hunan and captured its chief city, Changteh. This was a most serious crisis. The loss of the rice lands would have been a grievous calamity, while with Changteh securely in their hands the Japanese would have been excellently placed to push on to Changsha.

But Changteh was not securely held. There remained in it a gallant Chinese garrison, part of the 57th Division, which held out indomitably till the counter-attack with the aid of the American 14th Army Air Force came. This 57th Division, which had to hold all the Changteh area, went into battle 12,000 strong. They came out only a few hundreds. But the Japanese were utterly defeated. They left 10,000 dead and wounded in the ruins of Changteh, and many thousands more perished in the retreat to the Yangtze, many of them being sunk and drowned by the American aeroplanes while crossing the Tungting Lake. The importance of the help that the Chinese received in the air is a notable feature of this great battle, especially in the destruction wrought on the retreating Japanese. But nothing can detract from the glory of the 57th Division, or indeed of all the Chinese forces.

This is not a history of the general war in the Far East since Japan attacked Pearl Harbour, but certain features in it as they affect China must be noted. Chief among these has been the rising sense of China's importance as a platform on which to smash Japan;† of her value as a fighting force; and finally as one of "the Big Four" on whom the destinies of the world will depend after the war. This recognition, it is true, was somewhat slow in coming. For some months in 1942 the expected transport 'planes which were to fly supplies to China, after the loss of Burma, were few and far between. In fact they were needed elsewhere, but there was much bitter feeling in Chungking that Great Britain and America regarded the Far Eastern war as "a side show" which could be left to look after

* When the Americans seized the Kwajalein atoll in the Marshall Islands in February 1944 it was universally noticed that for the first time the Japanese admission of ships and 'planes lost practically tallied with the American claims. Never before had such a phenomenon been observed, certainly never in connexion with China. The inference that the Japanese Government thought it necessary to stimulate the public by sticking pins into it was irresistible.

† In one of his rare statements, General MacArthur, as reported in *The Times* of February 17, 1943, said that Japan could not be defeated by blockade and bombing alone: "Japan's strongest military element is the army, which must be defeated before success is assured. . . . Just as is the case with Germany, we must defeat Japan's army." Short of an invasion of Japan, where, it may be asked, can this be done except in China?

itself until Hitler had been defeated. In February 1942 General Chiang Kai-shek flew to Delhi, accompanied by Mme Chiang (who acted as his interpreter all through the conversations with General Wavell and Field-Marshal Sir John Dill, perhaps the first time a woman has figured in such momentous debates), and his Minister for War, General Ho Ying-chin. But whatever may have been planned in Delhi was useless while the Japanese were carrying all before them in Malaya, the Dutch East Indies and Burma.

Four events may be noted as indicating the change in China's position among the United Nations—the appointment by General Chiang Kai-shek of General Stilwell as Commander of the Chinese 5th and 6th Armies and Chief-of-Staff in China under himself; the dispatch of 50,000 Chinese to India to undergo intensified training with British, Indian and American troops, especially in jungle warfare; the appointment in the autumn of Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten to the South-east Asia Command, a clear indication that the Allies were at last able to spare the necessary supplies and to plan for an offensive; and, last but certainly not least, General Chiang's visit to Cairo in November 1943 to meet President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill.

The statement issued at the end of this conference, on December 1, testified to the opening of new operations against Japan:

"The three great Allies (it said) expressed their resolve to bring unrelenting pressure against their brutal enemies by sea, land and air. This pressure is already rising.

"The three great Allies are fighting this war to restrain and punish the aggression of Japan. They covet no gain for themselves and have no thought of territorial expansion.

"It is their purpose that Japan shall be stripped of all the islands in the Pacific that she has seized or occupied since the beginning of the First World War in 1914 and that all the territories that Japan has stolen from the Chinese, such as Manchuria, Formosa and the Pescadores, shall be restored to the Republic of China.

"Japan will also be expelled from all other territories which she has taken by violence and greed.

"The aforesaid three Great Powers, mindful of the enslavement of the people of Korea, are determined that in due time Korea shall become free and independent."

This statement obviously raises several questions: for example, who will take charge of the South Sea islands previously held by Japan, and, still more burningly, who will be protector of Korea to shepherd her through the long period of instruction in the blessings of democratic self-government? The Koreans, having been serfs for the past fifty years, are obviously as little able to govern themselves as an infant school; and to complicate matters there are at least three parties among them each claiming to be the only true representative of Korean nationalism.

But with these problems, mercifully for himself, the present writer is not required to deal. What one would particularly emphasize is the psychological importance of the Cairo declaration, reinforced as it has since been by the greater flow of supplies to China, which at the end of 1943 were said already to exceed anything previously carried over the Burma Road; the British invasion of Arakan and (for a matter of Chinese national pride) the excellent work done by the India-trained Chinese troops in northern Burma, where, going ahead of the builders of the new Ledo Road which is intended to link up Assam with the Burma Road, they have been successfully "winkling out" and driving back the Japanese.

It will be remembered that on the Republican anniversary, October 10, 1942, Great Britain and America had formally announced the renunciation of all extraterritorial and cognate rights in China. So the Chinese recovered their status of equality among the nations. Now in the Cairo declaration China is spoken of as one of "the three great Allies". There is no implication that she is in any respect less important than her colleagues. What the others supply in arms, she can balance in man-power, in geographical convenience for smiting Japan and in her record of undaunted resistance, though on most unequal terms, to the common enemy. This is "face" on the largest scale. It is a frank recognition of what China has become since the far-off days of the ill-prepared revolt at Wuchang and through the subsequent years of inevitable chaos, and an incentive to all Chinese to steady themselves for their part after the war in world reconstruction.

And now, what of China's army, that vast agglomeration of enduring men who with every diversity of disadvantage that a military staff could conceive have none the less defied and thwarted the careful plans and perfect equipment of one of the world's three strongest military Powers, have defeated her, tied her down, caused her incalculable loss of men and material and have literally saved civilization in the Far East, perhaps even in the world?

It need scarcely be said that the inspiration and mainspring of China's resistance has been the Generalissimo. As England found her leader after Dunkirk in Mr. Churchill, so China at her greatest need was vouchsafed her greatest leader in Chiang Kai-shek. Politically and militarily his influence has been all-pervasive, his prestige throughout China is beyond anything imaginable; and nowhere does he enjoy greater popularity and confidence than among the millions of men whom he has built up into a coherent army and who carry his portrait in their pocket diaries. But no one would more quickly recognize than the Generalissimo that it is the devotion, patriotism, courage of those millions which have made wreckage of Japan's schemes, and that without the excellence of the material ready to his hands Chiang Kai-shek's genius must have failed.

The obvious fact that Chinese armies today are very different from what they were in 1937 needs to be stressed because, although in six years changes are naturally to be expected, the degree of improvement achieved in comparison with the state of all China six years ago seems really miraculous. In England it is comparatively easy to take a city clerk, a bus conductor, a shopman, and turn him into a soldier or sailor.* He has some education, some floating traditions of military duty, a clear idea of his nationality and what it requires of him; and when he is mixed with other conscripts there is no language difficulty. But in China you are dealing with unlettered peasants whose traditions had for thousands of years been positively anti-soldiering, devoid of any habit of political thinking, whose patriotism was bounded within a few miles' radius of their birthplace; while the men of one province and the next could not understand each other's speech. While the German-trained army, "the Generalissimo's Own", as already shown, was as good in 1937 as it could be within the limits of its still imperfect equipment, the provincial armies were deplorably weak, badly officered, often very irregularly paid and still prone to prey upon districts where they were quartered and, according to Chinese custom, accustomed to regard themselves as the troops of this or that general rather than a part of the national forces. Of

* In February or March 1944 there was a striking article in the *Observer* on the extraordinary success with which thousands of Englishmen have been turned into first-class sailors during the war, although many of them had never been on the sea, perhaps had not even seen it, previously. Our vast fleet of "little ships" is largely manned by such men. The *Observer's* contributor rightly put it down to the fact that as a race we have the sea in our blood. Equally, the formidable nature of British troops, built up in wartime from hundreds of incongruous elements, is due to the latent warlike instincts of the British people which all the endeavours of our professional pacifists could not destroy.

an army medical service and all the vast organization for supply that radiates from a Quartermaster-General there was none.

At the beginning of the seventh year of her war China had 5,000,000 men under arms. Not all their equipment, of course, is equal, but it is all a great improvement on that of six years before. Tin hats are now a common feature; the supply of blankets and clothing is well maintained by the co-operative societies; while the medical service, base hospitals and field hospitals, built up by Dr. Robert Lim's devoted work in the Red Cross and Mme Chiang Kai-shek's electrical energy, save vast numbers of shattered men who a few years ago would have panted out their lives where they fell. In the matter of weapons there is an amazing diversity of types: German, British, Russian, American, Czechoslovakian and even Danish. This, of course, does not apply to the Indian-trained Chinese, fighting in Burma early in 1944, of whose equipment at the time of writing there are no details; nor do we know what China has been able to import by air since the Burma Road was sealed. But for the bulk of the Chinese armies equipment is still very heterogeneous.

Much of it has been captured from Japan. It is not only the Communists who excel in guerrilla warfare. Large guerrilla forces organized by local leaders have been operating since soon after the fall of Nanking in North-east, Northern, Central and Eastern China; they get something from Chungking but depend largely on what they capture from the Japanese. Although in this chapter I have only noted the principal battles, it must not be supposed that these were interspersed between long periods of stagnation. The Chinese War Ministry's records show an annual list of engagements varying between 8,000 and 10,000, many of them quite considerable, and in the great majority of which the Chinese are the aggressors. The Japanese do not want to do any more fighting in China. They want to sit tight and develop the country. That is just what the Chinese will not let them do. For many months now, even for years, the Japanese have not dared to stir outside their fortified posts at night-time except in strong force, and their convoys and outposts are continually raided and plundered.

Artillery is, as well known, the Chinese armies' greatest deficiency, the few large fieldpieces they have being old and by now well worn. But from their own arsenals they are turning out a fair number of light arms, rifles, machine-guns and, I believe, even small fieldpieces. Ammunition for these is also produced in adequate quantity by the co-operative societies, and vast numbers of hand-grenades, a weapon which seems to have a special attraction for the Chinese soldier's impish sense of fun.

Perhaps the most wonderful change in the Chinese Army is, to use a much-overworked word, the psychological one. It is an army now, not a congeries of more or less disconnected units. In each of the nine different war zones, so called, in which operations are divided, the local commander has supreme authority and initiative is largely left to him. But he is always in close touch with the General Staff, which directs all military affairs. By now, too, every unit down to the smallest is provided with radio, which keeps it well informed of what is happening in other areas and helps in that improvement in the timing of large combined operations which has become so marked. The new stamp of officer turned out by the staff colleges in West China, the creation of which was General Chiang's especial care, has helped to spread the conception of common responsibility in all sections of the Army for the cause of China as a whole, though it must be said that there are still not enough of these officers.

Since the retreat to Chungking a Political Training Department for the Army has been formed which devotes itself to the ethical training of the soldiers and the building up of their morale. In conjunction with this is a War Area Service Corps (another idea of General Chiang's, and an offshoot of the New Life Movement),

which attends to the soldier's leisure, giving him motion pictures, games, athletic exercises and libraries, the same idea being kept in view as in the Political Training Department—namely, to educate and stimulate the men's minds, strengthen their morale, break down provincial barriers and foster fellow-feeling. As an example of the new unity it is worth notice that the Chief of the General Staff, said to have the best military brain in China, is Pai Chung-hsi, who was in open revolt against General Chiang in 1936; and that the Vice-Chairman of the Political Training Department is Chou En-lai, who in December 1936 was chosen to put the Communist arguments for a common front against Japan to the august and angry Captive of Sianfu.

For the rank and file of the Chinese army everyone without qualification expresses the warmest respect and affection. Major Evans Carlson says well that

> "The average Chinese is unusually intelligent and he readily absorbs instruction. He is resourceful and he possesses initiative. He is traditionally loyal to his family and he is faithful to the point of death to a leader who treats him with consideration. He responds readily to kindness and justice. Basically he is honest and truthful. He appears to lack nerves. He is inured to privation and physical hardship and he meets death with the same philosophical realism with which he has faced life."

All these good qualities the Chinese soldier has consistently displayed throughout the war. Naturally his aptitude for fighting varies between province and province. The best are the small wiry mountaineers of Kwangsi, closely followed by the Kwangtungese, Hunanese and Yunnanese. Kiangsi also produces some good fighters. These Southerners seem to have minds more alert and active than the physically bigger, more stolid Northerners, although in stubborn endurance and unflinching courage there is nothing to choose between one set and another.

The great majority are peasants. Hence, no doubt, the special attention paid to their ethical training. But while their minds may (or may not) need enlivening their bodies are toughened to privation and hardship from childhood. A little rice or millet, according as the soldier is Southerner or Northerner, salted vegetables, and the heavy, filling Chinese bread is his everyday fare, and on this he can perform incredible marches and come up smiling. His innate capacity to "make do", and the unexcelled sense of humour which is the blessed gift of all his race, carry him through all vicissitudes, while his stoic, silent acceptance of pain brings tears to the eyes of every visitor to a Chinese military hospital.

The Times correspondent in China, in a vivid description* of China's fighting man as he had seen him at close quarters in many fields, paid him a tribute with which this chapter may fittingly close:

> "After six years of war in China the world still knows little about the Chinese soldier who has fought—and died—in countless thousands for the land of his ancestors.
>
> "Yet fighting up and down the face of the country, sleeping on the hard ground, marching incredible distances on an empty stomach, drilling with a tommy-gun or playing his bamboo flute in the tea-house, he has been one of the mainstays of the world's freedom.
>
> "The endurance, simple faith, and humour of the Chinese soldier have not only saved China in her greatest crisis but, in frustrating the Japanese, have also had profound effects on the course of events in the Pacific."

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* *The Times*, July 29, 1943.

Chapter XVII

THE THREE PRINCIPLES OF THE PEOPLE*

THERE IS NO QUESTION OF GREATER IMPORTANCE TO THE WORLD THAN WHAT CHINA will become after the war. A peaceful, prosperous country of China's enormous population, natural wealth and unsurpassed industriousness must radiate benefits throughout all Asia and far beyond it. A divided, quarrelsome China will begin by disappointing other nations of the help they rightfully expect from her in rebuilding the world and will probably end by becoming once more the victim of some greedy aggressor.

Looking to the future, it cannot be denied that there are pessimists, prophesying bleakly from the unhappy friction that still persists between Kuomintang and Communists, from the vast load of financial difficulties raised by the war, and from the size and disparate characteristics of the different provinces, that China will never pull together as a Republic and that before long civil wars will break out again. But, with all possible allowance for the seductive dangers of wishful thinking and propaganda, one cannot believe that such gloomy views are justified or that the people who hold them have honestly considered facts in China today, about which there is no dispute among those who have studied them at close quarters.

Most conspicuous among these facts is the amazing distance that China has travelled in the past thirty years. As already pointed out, the Revolution of 1911 was too easy. Once the strong hand of Tzu Hsi had been taken away, the Manchu Dynasty was ready to fall at a touch like a rotten apple; and when it fell, the revolutionists were caught with no clear plan for the duties of governing which had passed to them, no means of carrying it out if they had had one, and obviously dazed by the magnitude of their success. From that point the Revolution superficially ran true to type like any of its predecessors, through the dictatorship of Yuan Shih-kai, the wars of the Tuchuns and the disruption of all ordered government.

Yet even in those bad years between the Washington Conference and the Japanese seizure of Manchuria, when chaos and misgovernment were at their worst, there were signs of new leaven at work in the body of the nation which marked the Revolution as something totally different from all previous periods of anarchy consequent on a dynasty's downfall. The blow of the Japanese invasion certainly hastened the process of welding together the disconnected elements of class and clan in the united resistance that has been the admiration of the world. The point to emphasize is that these elements would never have attained the conscious vitality in which it was possible for them thus to be welded without the previous evangelizing by generations of reformers, from the writings of K'ang Yu-wei and Liang Ch'i-ch'ao to the literary renaissance of Dr. Hu Shih and James Yen's mass education movement, aided by the labours of thousands of returned students from Europe and America.

For the first time a national public opinion was created that went far beyond the mere passive resistance in which Chinese public opinion had traditionally manifested itself and assumed a definitely constructive form. This was already visible, as previously described, in the Nationalist Government's achievements between 1931 and the second Japanese invasion in 1937, and it has been immeasurably stimulated by the war. The Chinese are well aware of the doleful prophecies

* To avoid continual explanations of such phrases as "at the present time", it may be explained that this chapter is written in April 1944.

of foreign Cassandras that they will never accomplish a genuinely democratic government and are determined to prove them wrong.

In this mood the almost mystic influence on all classes of Dr. Sun Yat-sen's "Three Principles of the People" must be realized. It is at least as potent as with Americans is Lincoln's familiar "government of the people, by the people and for the people". Every step towards reform is tested by its harmony with the *San Min Chu I*. It is worth recalling that almost from the outset of their career the Communists have clamoured for government "in accordance with the principles of Dr. Sun Yat-sen". The only danger that one may fear in this respect is that there may be too many different opinions as to what accords with Dr. Sun's wishes. But so far this danger has not become serious. On the contrary, there seems a fair prospect that the different schools of thought will be given full opportunity to state their views in ways that may lead to common agreement. Thus among the 240 members of the People's Political Council set up in 1942, two-thirds of whom are elected, there are men and women of many shades of thought; and though the Council has no legislative powers, it has well-recognized and effective rights of criticism, suggestion and protest.

Still more remarkable is the composition of the Committee for Promoting the Realization of Constitutional Government—in other words, the Committee appointed in the autumn of 1943 to prepare the way for the National Assembly which is definitely to meet one year after the war to adopt a Constitution. Among its fifty-three members are, besides Kuomintangites, Communists, a Moslem, a Tibetan, four members of semi-illegal political parties, and a woman. A body of such mixed nature seems fair guarantee that the National Assembly will be no mere "rubber stamp" machine.

Of the "Three Principles of the People"—national sovereignty, democracy and the people's livelihood—the first was achieved on "the Double Tenth" in 1942, when Great Britain and America formally announced their renunciation of extraterritoriality and kindred rights in China, thereby bringing to an end the "semi-colonial" status of the Chinese (to use one of Dr. Sun's most often-quoted phrases) and acknowledging their full sovereignty in their own country.*

Very large are the financial interests which foreigners have built up in China under the shelter of extraterritoriality—Great Britain's alone have been estimated at £200 millions—and it stands to reason that there will be some difficult negotiation over their future. But no better proof could be wanted of the moral effect on the Chinese of the abolition of the "unequal treaties", nor better promise of the spirit in which the Chinese are prepared to meet us, than the resolution adopted by the Executive Committee of the Kuomintang in November 1943, which lifted the numerous restrictions on foreign enterprise which had previously been enacted in the more zealous and exclusive days of Nationalism.

The *Manchester Guardian's* Chungking correspondent, in its issue of March 22, 1943, gave a clear summary of how the new regulations will work.

> "Chinese industry" (he wrote) "will be organized in three sectors. First in completely State-owned industries (mainly heavy industries, armaments, and similar enterprises) in which foreign capital can take part by granting loans. But no State revenues must be pledged against these, or indeed against any other State or railway loans.
>
> "Secondly, in industries jointly owned by the State and private Chinese capital, like a good number of mechanical and chemical concerns, foreigners may take part as bond- or shareholders if permission is granted by a special control board consisting of members of the Ministries of Finance, Economics, and Foreign Affairs, Communications, and the Central Bank.

* Or what will be full sovereignty when the Japanese have been expelled.

"Thirdly, in a free sector, consisting of industries 'unconnected directly or indirectly with national defence and the people's livelihood', Chinese firms may negotiate directly with foreign investors with the permission of the Control Board, which must approve the terms of the investment. Foreign interests desirous of engaging in business in China must get a special permit not only for buying or leasing land, but also for operating independently, and will be directly controlled by the Government. Foreign capital, however, cannot operate industries connected with national defence and the people's livelihood."

Nothing is said about foreign banks. But here, surely, what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander. There are, I believe, over 300 foreign banks in London, and China will no doubt see the utility of granting similar liberties.

The necessity for making conditions attractive to foreign capital was strongly emphasized by General Chiang Kai-shek in his first address to the plenary session of the Central Executive Committee after his election as President in September 1943, and the abolition of restrictions on foreign capital was undoubtedly largely due to his arguments. The C.E.C.'s decision, however, is unequivocally expressed in a manifesto issued at the close of its discussions.

"We are convinced," the manifesto says, "that in establishing permanent world peace international political collaboration must be based on economic co-operation. Only in this manner can international collective security be firmly safeguarded. For this reason, in addition to laying down principles for accelerating economic and industrial reconstruction, this plenary session has formulated a policy of encouraging foreign capital for industrial development which is expected to be enforced immediately after the termination of the war."

The question of China's existing obligations—Reorganization Loan, Crisp and railway loans, etc.—inevitably presents itself. These are naturally in default owing to the war; and although in 1938 the Chinese Government announced its determination to set aside a proportion of such Customs and Salt revenue as it could collect against future loan payments, it would be unreasonable to expect that much, if any, funds can thus have been accumulated. On the other hand, nobody will appreciate more readily than the Chinese that they cannot begin their new *régime* with a default that lasts a moment longer than is absolutely necessary, or their hopes of new loans are not likely to be realized. The one thing that the Chinese are anxious to be done with is the earmarking of particular revenues for particular loans, with its obvious reminder of the old days of "semi-colonial" status. When they borrow for national purposes they wish to borrow on the credit of China as a whole. The possibility thus suggests itself that a portion of the new money which must be lent to China after the war will be devoted to the consolidation of old debts.

The word "must" in the last sentence may excite question. But surely it is obvious that the whole world is vitally interested in getting China on her feet again, not only as a matter of sentiment (and that, considering all that she has endured since 1937, is an argument which cannot be underrated) but for the interests of the lenders themselves. If the Chinese standard of living can be raised sufficiently to increase the individual purchasing power of the 450 millions by no more than half-a-crown a week the additional stimulus to international trade is equal to over £292 millions a year; and the Chinese hope to do very much better than that.

The most formidable question of the moment and as one looks to conditions immediately after the war is the high inflation which blockade and war conditions

generally have inflicted. Officially the Chinese dollar is valued at 3*d*. But the delusion of this valuation is frankly recognized in the bonus of an additional eighty dollars in the pound allowed to foreign workers in China, which reduces the rate to 1½*d*.; and even that appears to be an optimistic figure. The *Manchester Guardian's* Chungking correspondent reported on March 9, 1944, that the Chungking price level had again risen by 60 per cent. since the beginning of the year and then averaged 230 times the pre-war figures. Farmers are not too badly off, as the prices of their produce have risen not very far behind the general increase. But civil servants, soldiers, and all people on a fixed salary are in terrible straits. The Government has made various attempts to fix prices, but the Chinese administrative machinery is too primitive for these to have had more than trivial success even in Chungking, and elsewhere they have had none. For the same reason (according to official spokesmen) it appears to be impossible to tax wealthy people and war profiteers according to their wealth, although the immunity of these men is the subject of many bitter attacks in the Chinese Press.

What will happen after the war in respect of China's currency it is impossible to foresee, the outlook being further complicated by the seas of worthless "military notes" with which the Japanese army has flooded occupied China. In 1942 the British Government made a loan to China of £50,000,000 to pay for articles not covered by the Lease-Lend arrangement, and the United States Government also lent China $500,000,000. It has been complained by some critics that the Chinese Government has been having quantities of notes printed in America and imported by air, which necessarily increases the inflation. But it is difficult to see what else Chungking can do, in the absence of national war savings certificates as used in this country, and for which there is no machinery in China.

In September 1943 Chungking announced that it was buying $200,000,000 worth of gold bullion with that amount of its American loan, which was to be brought to China to check the inflation, while the British loan was being left in London as a reserve. By buying up notes in China with the American gold, their value should be increased and inflation thus kept within some control. At the same time funds are being accumulated abroad by Chinese banks which used to flow to China. These are regarded by Chinese financiers as hopeful circumstances for post-war conditions. But whether China will have to start an entirely new currency, or whether she will be able to resuscitate the dollar to something more respectable than the meagre official (and at present illusory) rate of 3*d*. no one would predict with any confidence.

Turning to the second of the Three People's Principles, although China is not yet a democracy, she can certainly be said to have made a vastly more definite advance towards it in the war years than she had achieved in all the previous twenty-six since the Revolution. The People's Political Council in Chungking, as already shown, is certainly not a mere talking machine. It has the right to be consulted as well as to advise and criticize. Outside it is a network of provincial assemblies and of town and village corporations, of which there is plenty of evidence that they are taking their duties seriously.

As at present expected, the Draft Constitution, produced at Nanking in 1936, will be the foundation of that adopted after the war. The basis of all authority will be the National Assembly, which, it may be recalled, is to meet one year after peace has been restored in order to adopt a Constitution. This Assembly will consist of 1,200 members—665 elected regionally; 380 representing occupational groups such as merchant guilds and landed gentry; and 155 representing Chinese overseas, Tibetans, Manchus and Mongols. The Assembly will be elected every six years, but will meet only once in every three. In the intervals it will be represented by the Legislative Yuan, which will be a sort of continuation of the present People's Political Council, to enact laws and pass budgets.

Very great powers are given to the President of the Republic. He can declare war and make peace; he is Commander-in-Chief of all the forces; he represents China in foreign affairs; in times of crisis he may issue emergency orders; he can call upon the Legislative Yuan to reconsider legislation it has adopted and, if a deadlock arises between him and the Yuan, he can refer the dispute to the National Assembly; he appoints all the chief officials of the State.

Two important checks, however, are provided for. The Examination Yuan will decide who are fit for official positions and the President will have to make his choice from among them. And he is always to be subject to the National Assembly. Meeting at such long intervals as the latter will, this check does not at first appear very formidable. But here is seen the importance of the village councils, which, it is expected, will continually be able to express public opinion and for which the provincial assemblies will perform their chief duty in serving as a channel for the transmission of local wishes to the Central Government.

There seems no reason why this system should not function satisfactorily. Just as the foundation of Chinese currency in past years was the humble copper cash, so the real unit of government throughout China was the *hsien*, or county, and the village—the business guilds and the heads of the chief village families. The problem was to link up these innumerable small agencies in one centralized organization, and the method employed has the attraction of being something that the Chinese have hammered out for themselves and which owes little of importance to foreign models.

The most anxious question is the future relationship of Kuomintang and Communists. Its history during the war has been far from happy, full of angry disputes and even of armed clashes. One, very serious, occurred in Anhui early in 1942. Numbers of scattered troops in this district left behind after the retreat from Nanking had turned to brigandage in the old-fashioned manner, and agents were sent by the Communists in Shensi to round them up and convert them to better ways; which was done very effectively, the derelicts being formed into the 18th Group Army, which did excellent guerrilla work against the Japanese. For some reason that has never been made plain, orders came from Chungking that this force was to remove to the north side of the Yangtze. The 18th Group Army objected strongly and fighting broke out between it and the Central Government troops, in which many Communists were killed and their general was made a prisoner.

This quarrel simmered down, but friction continued, as shown by a speech of General Chiang Kai-shek to the Central Executive Committee in September 1943, in which he is reported to have urged the Committee to

> "continue to be tolerant, and earnestly expect the Communist Party eventually to realize and correct their errors, making it clear that the Central Government has no particular demands on the Communists, but hopes that they will abandon the policy of forcibly occupying our national territory, and give up their past tactics of assaulting the national government troops, thus obstructing the prosecution of the war".

Actually the issue does not seem to be between the Communists and Generalissimo—"Support General Chiang Kai-shek" is one of their slogans—but between the Communists and the Kuomintang. It is impossible for an outsider to judge the rights and wrongs of the case.

The Communists have continually pressed for "total war" against Japan; in other words, putting arms in the hands of every peasant; this the Kuomintang have steadily refused. But worse than this, the Communists complain, apparently with truth, that they are starved by Chungking for arms and ammunition in spite

of their unquestionable success in harrying and bleeding the Japanese. On the other hand, the Kuomintang accuse the Communists of illegally increasing the strength of their army (the 8th Route) and even of trading with the enemy. But according to *The Times* correspondent in North China, writing in the issue of November 11, 1943, Central Government forces have often actually blockaded adjacent areas under Communist control: "In south-east Shansi in 1941 it was said to be easier to get salt through the Japanese lines than to buy it from an adjoining salt-producing area under Central Government."

On their general record the Kuomintang as a party have not a very good name for sweet reasonableness; and it is not only the Communists who accuse them of being reactionary and over-closely associated with anti-popular interests. The Communists are not of the stuff that easily brooks disappointment of its ideals; and being more closely in touch with the masses of the people than any other Party and more keenly alive to their hardships, they are prone to be impatient. The Kuomintang have not forgotten the violence of the Reds in their early days when many landlords were shot in cold blood just because they were landlords; and the undoubted success of the Communists in winning the peasants' support wherever they go, added to the efficiency of their administration, which is the best organized of any in North China, has excited the suspicions and jealousy of the older Party. This is in all probability the root of the persistent trouble between the two, the Kuomintang being afraid that the Reds may create a State within a State too powerful for control by the Central Government.

Whether the Kuomintang may not be acting in the best way to bring about this very condition is for them to consider. The 8th Route Army's organization is a necessity of the war; without it they could never have fought so successfully as they have against the Japanese, while the Communist political teaching has been so thoroughly modified to suit Chinese tastes that there appears nothing in it which would not fit into the national Constitution—far more readily, in fact, than the French Communist Party fitted into the French political world. *The Times* correspondent just quoted says that "it might almost be said that the Central Government need only fear the existing organization in North China if they intend to govern badly".

One thing seems perfectly clear, namely, that the future of China is for the progressives, a term which covers multitudes who are in no way to be called Communists. It may be hard for the Kuomintang to realize that fact, or to admit that the days of the single-party dictatorship which they have so long wielded are numbered and that the Party must admit and even bow to the expression of other people's opinions. But that is not only implicit in constitutional government; it is the inescapable outcome of the war and of the widely enlivening effect it has had on the minds of all Chinese even in the lowest strata.

Last of the "Three Principles", yet that on which the success of all else must depend, is the Livelihood of the People. It may be remembered that when Dr. Sun Yat-sen first proclaimed this principle it was not well received by some of his followers who belonged to the propertied class. There are plenty left of that class in China (where are there not?) who are by no means disposed to lose the ascendancy and privilege which wealth has secured for them. But public opinion will not tolerate the continuance of the abuses of power that money gave in the bad old days, and there is no enterprise on which the Chinese Government is more determined than that the standard of living throughout China must be raised.

In one respect China will start the peace with an immense advantage over other nations—namely, the natural aptitude of her people to do things for themselves instead of waiting on bureaucracy's long delays, and their unsurpassed industriousness. A Chinese in need of a house will not wait while, as in England, half-a-dozen different Ministries wrangle as to what sort of house he shall have,

where it is to be built and who shall be allowed to build it. He will run up a mat-shed for himself and family, and when times improve will build himself a better one; and there will be no inquisitive inspectors to prosecute him for contravening tiresome by-laws. China's recuperative power must be seen to be believed. The great city of Hankow was thrice burnt down and thrice rebuilt during the fourteen years of the T'aiping Rebellion. During the Revolution in 1911 this same Hankow was a sea of flame, scarcely a house survived. But within two years no trace of the disaster remained, and the city hummed with its myriad lives as if nothing had befallen. It is indeed a fair bet that China, badly as she has suffered, will be the first of all the nations to recover from the war's destruction.

But agriculture, the employment of four-fifths of the Chinese nation, the secret of their marvellous recuperative power, is not enough to satisfy Dr. Sun Yat-sen's or the Chinese Government's ambitions for the Livelihood of the People. Agriculture alone merely means a continuance of old conditions, low wages, a meagre scale of living at best, and recurrent periods of drought, flood and famine. Hence the resolve that China must be industrialized, the Ten Years' Plan already conceived, with development of roads, railways and water traffic, of coal and iron mines and other minerals in which China is rich, such as wolfram, manganese and antimony, of mills and factories. Much has already been done in spite of the war. The great province of Sikang, between Szechuan and Tibet, previously *terra incognita*, is now a hive of industry. North-west China too is being developed. West China generally is the part where old abuses, particularly of landlordism, are most deeply rooted. Yet West China can never again be what it was before the war, a focus of violent contrast between the few very rich and the millions in dire poverty; and when Burma is reopened and the railway already agreed upon before the Japanese invasion links up the Chinese and Burmese systems, the great natural wealth of the West and South-west, finding a new and more natural outlet than the 1,500 miles' journey down the Yangtze, must add immeasurably to China's prosperity and political balance.

The co-operative societies, as already shown, have added another string to the peasant's bow to make him more independent of the caprices of Nature. This movement is bound to spread all through China. But there are obviously many industries beyond the scope of cottage workers, and for which the larger capacity of mills and factories will be indispensable. It is earnestly to be hoped that China will escape the horrors and ugliness that industrialization has wrought in Britain, America and Japan, destroying wide areas of once beautiful country and debasing myriads of human individualities to the colourless monotony of numbers on a pay-roll. The problem of factory legislation for China will be to curb the sweat-shop and at the same time not to aim too high. Factory laws drafted by Nanking in 1929 would have been almost beyond realization even in so highly advanced a country as Denmark; in China they were simply impossible. The result was, of course, that they became a dead letter, and conditions in Chinese mills and factories —as usual, the smaller the employer, the worse were the conditions in his "shop" —were frequently unspeakable. The wind must be tempered to the shorn lamb in beneficence as well as in malevolence, and reductions of hours of work and restrictions of child labour must at first be proportioned to the habits of a people who for generations have been used to work for twelve or fourteen hours a day and to put their children to work as soon as they can walk.

To say this may sound a low, harsh standard at which to aim. But one is rather concerned with what will be practicable than with theoretical perfection. Perhaps the most important reform—one, moreover, which should be within bounds of attainment—is to ensure that hygienic conditions in factories are good, that employees have plenty of air space, that apprentices do not sleep among the machines and that dangerous machinery is adequately guarded against accidents.

Withal it appears certain that China means to be industrialized. Wages and standard of living must be raised. For that the time-honoured tea, silk, bristles, hides and dried eggs will not suffice. She must make use of the wealth under her soil as well as what is on the surface. The prospect of China as a large exporter, which she must be if budgets are to balance and the people's livelihood is to be realized, may be alarming to foreigners with manufactures of their own to export. But while China as a market for cheap cottons and patent medicines is already a thing of the past, she will for many years yet depend on others for high-quality goods, machinery, surgical, optical and scientific precision instruments, and a hundred different articles from abroad for which her appetite will grow with the means of gratifying it. It is absurd to suggest that if China grows richer, others will grow poorer. The very opposite is what we should expect—provided only that better distribution of goods can be assured so that we may not see repeated the frightful crime of wheat being ploughed in and fish thrown back into the sea on one side of the world while on the other multitudes stave off starvation with bark and leaves.

Clearly there are many pitfalls in the path of China's realization of the Three Principles of the People. Yet one cannot but think that these tend easily to be exaggerated. In the spring of 1944, as I draw to the end of my book, all over the world men are filled with hope that the end of the war is approaching; yet, while there is no certainty of when that blessed end will come, and we wait for something decisive to happen, we fall into a peevish impatience, full of carping and criticism, exaggerating every apparent shortcoming and mismanagement, the inevitable symptoms of hope deferred and nerves increasingly at a stretch.

If this is so with us in Europe, how much more must it be with the Chinese, who have for so much longer endured the suffering of battle, murder and sudden death? Even yet I often feel that we do not sufficiently realize what China has done for the world in standing up so manfully to Japan; for great as Japan's power has proved, it must have been immeasurably greater but for the wasting of her resources in her vain effort to crush the Chinese, and if she could use elsewhere the million men tied down in China. There is still too much tendency in high places to speak publicly as if Great Britain, America and Russia were the only factors to be counted on in the war with Germany. We even hear broadcasts which seem to imply that the war on Japan is being conducted by America with some help from us. That attitude of mind is not in accordance with facts; it is grossly unfair to China, and, looking at things only from the low standpoint of self-interest, it will do great harm to our future relations with the Chinese when we want their trade.

As for the jeremiads over China's inflated currency, her hoarders, tax-evaders and political squabblers, it must be remembered that these undeniable evils are on the whole confined to a small circle. In Chungking, the chief focus of foreign observation, they bulk large. In Chêngtu, Kunming and other large towns they certainly exist, but with less acute disturbance of life than in the dark, nervous, perpetually bombed, over-strained capital. But even these outlying cities and towns are but a fragment of China, throughout whose endless fields millions of patient labourers carry on in spite of every obstacle that war can provoke. And when the war is over the massed effect of their labour will more than counterbalance the transient difficulties born of blockade and war-time economics which so much alarm some foreign onlookers.

Through the years of dynastic decay, of revolution, civil wars, the Communist madness, the insufferable bullying by Japan, the myriad tragedies and destruction of war, the Chinese have won their way to two priceless possessions—faith in themselves and faith in their leader.

Many years ago a Chinese friend said to me, "These revolutionary troubles

will eventually be solved by a man whose very name is at present unknown." I have often wondered whether he was merely speaking on general principles, on the analogy of the course of most revolutions—who, for example, in the early days of our own Revolution, ever thought of Cromwell or later of Napoleon, of Stalin?—or whether he had some uncanny prescience of what General Chiang Kai-shek was to be for China.

At the time when my friend spoke Chiang was but an obscure officer in the ranks of the revolutionaries' tattered armies. In the ensuing years one can imagine him watching with increasing disillusion the quarrels, futilities and wasted energies of Dr. Sun's adherents. That is not too imaginative a supposition, for the faculty for clear thinking and grasp of essentials which so distinguishes the Generalissimo, though it can be cultivated, must first be born in a man. Also we know that he once threw up the cause of revolution in disgust and tried his hand quite unsuccessfully at stockbroking in Shanghai.

It was not till after he had been sent to Moscow for some additional military training and had been put in charge of the Whampoa Cadets' School at Canton in 1923 that General Chiang's name became widely known. From that date the principal episodes in which he figured, as noted in this book, are a clear indication of the development of Chiang's nature. There were the years when many people would have said that his chief characteristics were ruthlessness and desire for power. His expulsion of the Russians, his overthrow of the Wuhan Government ("which, after all," Chinese said, "is the only Government that has scored a solid success for us over the foreigners"), and most of all his summary arrest of Hu Han-min, which was a terrible shock to the Chinese sense of propriety—all these multiplied Chiang's enemies and even alienated some of his friends.

Yet there were clear indications that his motives were national, not personal. The caustic speech with which he flayed the politicians in Nanking after his journey to the North in 1929, telling them how intensely they were disliked in the country and, on their record, how justly, was perfectly in line with the speech he made last month on the anniversary of the National Spiritual Mobilization Movement which he had launched five years before.

> "Although the war has entered its eighth year," the Generalissimo cried, "the National Spiritual Mobilization Movement has not yet achieved the desired results. This is a great disgrace for our nation. While comrades in arms come from afar to assist in the counter-offensive, we ourselves have been unable to drive the enemy from our soil or to recover an inch of territory. It is high time we fulfilled our wartime basic obligations as citizens. I therefore fervently hope we shall all develop a spirit of loyalty towards the Fatherland and eradicate our bad and selfish habits and bring the war and the revolution to a successful end."

How completely Chiang Kai-shek has won his countrymen's confidence is known to all. When the powers proposed for the President in the draft Constitution were published in 1936 a scream of "Dictator" was raised from one end of China to the other. He was elected President on the death of the venerable Lin Sen last September with universal acclaim, and these same powers are contemplated for him in the Constitution that is to be put to the National Assembly after the war without the faintest sign of dissent.

The Generalissimo is not likely to abuse them. Success and power, so far from turning his head, seem rather to have broadened his nature and strengthened his patience. And how much his Christianity has helped in the process none can say. But it is well that Chiang has been elected President. That he is frankly the dictator of China is willingly accepted by all while the war lasts. But

afterwards it might not be long before his position was questioned with the acidity one can easily imagine. As President he becomes an integral part of the State with Constitutional rights. What he has done for China in war is beyond price. What he can do in peace may be even more valuable.

Among the multitudes of Chinese, too, the war has brought great changes full of promise. In one notable particular there has been a marked decline in the influence of family. From the time of the Revolution the restrictive power of family ties has been steadily on the decline—the new freedom of women, particularly the right they have asserted to choose their own husbands, is but one evidence of it—and the war in which so many families have been completely broken up, while millions of men and girls have been removed altogether for years from parental authority, in the Army or the war services, has incalculably speeded this emancipation. So much is China's stability in the past bound up in the strength of family ties that such a change may at first seem a doubtful boon. But it must be remembered that the war has taught the Chinese people to think as they never thought before, enlarging their minds from the petty parochial issues which once bounded their horizon to affairs of national scope.

I am not thinking of the well-to-do, nor even of intellectuals and the business classes—though I certainly do not underrate their eagerness for a better China—but of the hundreds of millions of the peasantry, who have formed the bulk of China's armies and borne the brunt of the fighting. They are conscious of new desires, they have thought out what they want, and under the new Constitution they will be put directly in touch with the Central Government to voice and press home their wishes.

No one who has ever known the Chinese peasant has any doubt of his sterling qualities: his honesty, his sturdy common sense, his unfailing good temper, friendliness and reasonableness. For him the Confucian precept of *jên* is a lively reality, learnt through generations of hard living and close association with his fellows. And in this national virtue of her people, using the word in its old Roman sense of strength in its best form, China has the makings of a great future.

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