MY FATHER IN CHINA

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To

Mrs. A. F. Neumann

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JAMES BURKE

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THE BOOK IS PRODUCED IN COMPLETE
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Publisher's Note

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Because James Burke only mentions himself once or twice towards the end of his father's biography, the reader is apt to have a natural curiosity concerning his relationship to the rest of his family. It is this: A year or so after the tragic death of his first wife, Addie, William Burke married Leila Gerdine. Their second child (Burke's fifth son) is James Burke.

Explanations and Acknowledgments

IN THE MILLENNIUM, there may be *one* Chinese language and *one* system of representing Chinese words in English.

But for the present, the Chinese language is a multitude of widely different dialects, and the accepted systems for romanizing Chinese words are legion.

Lay writers on China (a Sinologue has no difficulty; he simply sticks dogmatically to his own system) have devised a number of eclectic methods of handling the maddening problem. My method is somewhat as follows:

(1) Chinese place names, unless otherwise designated, are spelled according to the latest Chinese Postal Guide. Those spelled in the local dialect (Loktiauwan) are either very small villages, or for some other reason could not be found in the guide.

(2) Names of prominent individuals (Emperor Kuang Hsü) and other proper names common in Chinese history (Tungmenghui) are rendered as far as possible according to one modern standard authority, *Far Eastern International Relations*, by Hosea Ballou Morse and Harley Farnsworth MacNair.

(3) Names of Chinese characters (Lok Kwe-liang) best known only in the Sungkiang locality are given in the local, or Shanghai, dialect.

(4) Common Chinese words, except when otherwise identified, also are in the Shanghai dialect—since that locality is, after all, the setting of the book. Occasionally, where a Chinese word or expression has already been popularized in English in the Mandarin form (feng-shui), I have used both forms.

Now, as to a brief explanation of the Shanghai Dialect Romanization System: I have used a simplified form, in which these few points may help the uninitiated to get some idea of the actual pronunciation:

(1) The simple vowels are broad except when followed by *n* or *h* (i.e., *a* as in far, except when followed by *n*, when it is like *a* in fat). An *n* used to shorten a vowel is not sounded, however.

(2) *K* following a vowel is not pronounced; it simply makes the vowel abrupt.

(3) *Ng* is like *ng* in hanger.

(4) *Ny* is like *ni* in spaniel.

(5) *Hy* is like *ti* in Portia.

(6) And *ky* is like *ch* in church, except that it is more highly aspirated and originates farther back in the mouth.

I should like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratefulness to those persons in China whose warm interest and co-operation made this book possible.

I am indebted to Madame H. H. Kung and Madame Chiang Kai-shek for their helpfulness when I visited them in ill-fated Hong Kong. Later Madame Kung took time out from her pressing Chungking schedule to read and edit those portions of the book dealing with the Soong family. While in Hong Kong, I also owed much to T. K. King, of the China Merchants Steam Navigation Company, and to Robert Ward, vice-consul of the United States, for their genuine friendship and aid.

I wish to thank Dr. George Loehr, Professor of Western Languages at Yenching University, for his generosity in giving me access to the letters of his distinguished grandfather, Dr. Young J. Allen, among which I found the valuable first letters of Charlie Soong quoted herein.

I want to thank my brother, Gordon L. Burke, consul of the United States, for his hospitality and help while I was in Tientsin.

In Shanghai, I was deeply indebted to dozens, many of whom, like those above, are now at the mercy of the Japanese. Among them I should like to name J. B. Powell, American correspondent and editor of the *China Weekly Review;* Douglas Robertson, correspondent of the New York *Times;* Woo Kya-tang, managing editor of the *China Press;* Charles Millet, vice-consul of the United States; Thomas Pond, of the Borden Company; Lok Kwe-liang, my father's venerable friend and associate; the Reverend John W. Cline, the Reverend Sidney Anderson, the Reverend J. H. H. Berckman, and the Reverend John Hawk, members of the Methodist Mission; and the Reverend Cameron MacRae of the Episcopal Mission.

Finally, and by far most deeply, I wish to acknowledge the debt to my father, who patiently endured months of endless questioning, who permitted me to see the priceless diaries he had steadily kept for fifty-five years, who took me personally over many of the scenes of his long service at Sungkiang, and who gave me the comfort and encouragement that only a loving father can give.

To all these and others, my warmest thanks.

J. B.

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Missionaries in the Making

BILL BURKE'S ROOM seldom had the flavour of a theological dormitory. It was probably one of the more practical aspects of Wesley Hall —or of the entire Vanderbilt University, for that matter. The curricular year 1884–1885 found divinity scholars habitually gathering there whenever the burdens of Greek or Paul's Epistles demanded a moment's mental diversion. So frequent were these diversions, in fact, that Bill's less-social room-mate applied for and got a single room to himself a month after the year opened.

Bill's popularity was not due to his brilliant conversation. He was by no means a brilliant conversationalist. But there was a general good-naturedness about him. And this, together with his Irish propensity for arguing on any topic, once his opinion was disputed, made him the natural nucleus for a college bull session.

It was in anticipation of such a session that several young theologians one afternoon strolled up the stairway toward the room. Among them was a diminutive Chinese with the unique name of Charles Jones Soon (spelled Soong in later years). Within a half-century, he was to be legendized as the father of the world's most remarkable group of brothers and sisters—the uncrowned "Soong Dynasty" of China. At Vanderbilt, however, he was just Charlie Soon, a quiet, industrious Chinese with a knack for being friendly and chiefly remarkable to his college-mates for the fact that he was neither a laundryman nor a cook.

As the students entered Bill's quarters, they came upon a spectacle that might have attracted only casual interest on a Chautauqua platform. A small writing table, ordinarily standing against one wall, was set in the middle of the room with a blanket draped over it. A washbasin, taken from its wooden stand in a corner, had been placed on the table and filled with water. At the bottom of the basin gleamed a bright silver dollar, looking oversized through the water. To complete the visible outlay, a heavy metal-handled flatiron stood on the table beside the washbasin. What the visitors couldn't see was the home-made set of wet-celled batteries beneath the table and the thin copper wires running up under the blanket to the bottoms of the flatiron and basin.

"Come on in, come on in," Bill greeted formally. He was sitting on the side of his bed. He was a full-faced, husky youth weighing over two hundred pounds. The weight was well distributed over his six-foot-two frame. As he spoke, something mischievous danced in his grey-blue eyes.

"I've got a little surprise for you all today," he drawled. "It's that flatiron there on the table. It's an enchanted one. Came out of a witch's cave over in the Great Smokies. Anyone who touches it loses the power of his will. Just to prove it, I'll offer anyone of you that dollar if he'll pick it up while holding on to the iron."

No one moved.

"How about it, Charlie?" Bill asked.

Soon stepped forward gingerly under the stimulus of being called. He peered cautiously at the iron and into the basin. There was nothing to arouse suspicion. So he gripped the iron's handle and plunged his other hand into the water. The jolt sent him back with a startled cry, leaving the dollar still resting on the bottom of the basin. His surprised look, though, faded into a warm, sheepish grin almost before Bill's laugh broke out. It was this never-failing sense of humour that drew the two into close friendship from their first days together at Vanderbilt.

Bill had entered the Tennessee school in the autumn of 1884. He was only twenty. The previous year, a few days before his nineteenth birthday, he had taken his bachelor's degree from Emory College at Oxford, Georgia (now Emory University, near Atlanta). His heart was set on medicine then and he got a job as principal of the Quincy (Florida) High School largely to fill his boarding-house room with medical books and a human skeleton and prepare for medical school. But the rigours of teaching all subjects, as well as being principal, temporarily dulled his appetite for science.

Back at his home in Macon, Georgia, for summer vacation, Bill felt the call to the ministry. The idea probably first was planted when, as a boy, he went circuit riding in a horse and buggy with his father, the Reverend John W. Burke, a member of the South Georgia Conference, Methodist Episcopal Church, South. At any rate, the idea blossomed after the year at Quincy and Bill resigned the principalship and registered for entrance in the Vanderbilt Theological School.

It was inevitable that Bill should catch something of the missionary flame at Vanderbilt. For a flame it was beginning to be. The great organized effort of American Protestant missions in the eighties and nineties was getting under way. Missionaries spent their furloughs lecturing at churches and colleges, pleading men and money for "Christ's battlelines in the lands of darkness." Missionary societies sprang up in every town and village. The Southern Methodist Woman's Missionary Society alone boasted 44,362 members in

1885 and termed itself "truly a potent factor in gaining the heathens for His inheritance." Juvenile missionary societies also were formed and members were called "little workers." Great missionary conferences and mass meetings were held, with railroads granting special rates to delegates.

At Vanderbilt, moreover, there was the presence of Charlie Soon to focus attention on these developments. Soon was preparing to go back to his native land—the principal one of the "lands of darkness"—as a Christian missionary.

Though Soon's early adventures have been retold and embroidered in recent years, several important facts stand out. He was born on Hainan Island, off the South China coast. Adopted by a childless uncle, he eventually became apprenticed to that relative's tea and silk shop at Boston, Massachusetts. There he frequently came in contact with a group of Chinese students, members of the first educational mission sent to the United States by the Imperial government. Stung by ambition for an education himself, Soon ran away from his uncle in 1880, at the age of fourteen, and stowed aboard a coastal side-wheeler in Boston harbour. The master of the vessel, a deeply religious man named Charles Jones, was impressed by the boy's spirit and, after keeping him several trips as cabin boy, left him at the home of a Southern Methodist pastor in Wilmington, North Carolina. A few days of kindness and daily prayers in the parsonage turned the impressionable boy from heathen to Christian. He was baptized and took the Christian name, Charles Jones, in appreciation of the sea captain. The service was announced in the Wilmington *Star* of November 7, 1880:

"This morning the ordinance of baptism will be administered at this church [Fifth Street Methodist]. A Chinese convert will be one of the subjects of the solemn rite, being probably the first Celestial that has ever submitted to the ordinance of baptism in North Carolina."

An account of the ceremony in the same paper two days later described it as "exceedingly impressive." Soon went about shaking hands with everyone in the church building after the service. He told them all how he had found the Saviour and how he wanted to go back to China and tell his people about the salvation of Jesus Christ.

The idea of sending a saved heathen back out among the heathens appealed strongly to the good church people. General Julian S. Carr of Durham, a Confederate veteran and rich tobacconist, was interested in the case. He took the young Chinese into his household and started him off to Trinity College (now Duke University) after a modicum of preparatory work.

At this point, Soon wrote two letters, which exist as perhaps the only first-hand documents of his history up to that time. One letter was to his father. It was enclosed with another letter to Dr. Young J. Allen, superintendent of the Southern Methodist Mission at Shanghai. Dr. Allen was asked

to locate the father and forward the letter to him. The fact that South China was about as inaccessible to Shanghai as North Carolina apparently didn't occur to the Chinese youth. Considering that Soon was only fifteen and had been studying English less than a year, the letters are remarkably well written and attest to the boy's aptitude. The letter to Dr. Allen went as follows:

United States America,
Durham, North Carolina,
July 25, 1881

MR. ALLEN

DEAR SIR.

I wish you to do me a favour, I been way from home about six years and I want my father to know where I am and what I doing, they living in South East China in Canton state called monshou County, they have junks go from Macow to Hanhigh about 6 days water, my father name is "Hann Hong Jos'k" in Chinese. I hope you will be able to it out where they are, I was converted few months ago in Wilmington, North Carolina, and now the Durham Sunday School and Trinity are helping me, so I am a great hurry to be educated so I can go back to China and tell them about our Saviour, please write to me when you get my letter, I ever so much thank you for it, good by.

Yours respectfully,
CHARLIE JONES SOON

The letter to his father was a bit more involved:

United States America,
Durham, North Carolina,
June 25, 1881

DEAR FATHER,

I will write this letter and let you know where I am. I left Brother in East India in 1878 and came to the United States and finely I had found Christ our Saviour. God for Christ sake has meet in the way. now the Durham Sunday School and Trinity are helping me and I am a great hurry to be educated so I can go back to China and tell you about the kindness of the friends in Durham and the grace of God. he sent his begotten Son to died in this world for all sinners. I am a sinner but save by the grace of God. I remember when I was a little boy you took me to a great temple to worshipped the wooden Gods. oh, Father that is no help from wooden Gods. if you do worships all your life time would not do a bit goods. in our old times they know nothing about Christ. but now I had found a Saviour he is comforted me where ever I go to.

please let your ears be open so you can hear what the spirit say and your eyes looks up so you may see the glory of God. I put my trust in God and hope to see you again in this earth by the will of God. now we have vacation and I stay in Mr. J. S. Carr house at Durham. Soon as you get my letter please answer me and I will be very glad to hear from you. give my loves to mother Brother and Sisters please and also to yourself. I will tell you more when I write again. Mr. and Mrs. Carr they are good Christian family and they had been kind to me before I know them. Will good by Father, write to Trinity College, N. C. Yours Son.

HANN CARDSON
CHARLIE JONES SOON

One wonders what the father's reactions would have been had he received this letter and been able to translate it. As it was, he never got it. Dr. Allen couldn't locate him and stuck the letter away in his own files.

The interesting point revealed is that Soon's original name seems not to have been Soon, but Hann. His romanizations ("Hann Cardson") for his own name and "Hann Hong Jos'k" for his father's) appear to be from a South China dialect pronunciation. But Soon also wrote the names in Chinese ideographs at the bottom of the letters. These characters, when put into standard Mandarin romanizations, would be "Han Chiaoshun" (Soon's name) and "Han Hung-yi" ("father"). The Han in this case is an oft-met Chinese surname derived from the ancient Chinese feudal kingdom (not the great dynasty) of Han. Soon did not change his given name, Chiao-shun (or, in Shanghai dialect, Kyau-tsung), as he continued to be known by that when he returned to China.

Soon never mentioned the name matter at Vanderbilt. The presumption would be, of course, that the uncle who adopted the youth was named Soon and that the change of surnames followed the adoption. This is a common practice among the Chinese. In later years, after Soon's death, his children have given another explanation, based on the fact that Soon and not Han was the original name. The eldest daughter, Madame H. H. Kung, writes:

"Regarding the matter you referred to in your letter about my father signing himself as Han Chiao-chun, it is very easy to explain. His father's sister had no son, and so when he was a baby, he was supposed to belong not only to the Soong family but also to the Han family to assure that fitting sacrifices would be made each Spring before the Han family tombs."

This answer would be sufficient were it not unusual for a Chinese to represent two family lines at the same time. It also begs the question why Soon did not try to get in touch with his real father if "Hann Hong Jos'k" was his foster father. And why did Soon refer to his "brother and sisters" if Han was an uncle-in-law without a son of his own, as Madame Kung would have it? A fuller explanation may come in the official Soong family history, a work now being considered by members of the family.

The letters to Dr. Allen and "my father" also give evidence that, though the boy left home in 1875, he did not reach the United States until 1878. This contradicts most accounts, that Soon came directly to America when he left home. What he and his brother were doing for three years in East India or elsewhere would be colourful conjecture, for he was never known to discuss the matter.

Finally, there is much in the letters revealing the apparent sincerity of Soon's religious conversion and his zeal to do Christian service in China. When the youth reached Vanderbilt in 1882 to study theology—still under General Carr's financial care—this sincerity and zeal were in no way abated. He wrote again to Dr. Allen the following summer—in greatly improved English:

Wesley Hall, Vanderbilt University,
Nashville, Tennessee,
July 27, 1883

MY DEAR DOCTOR ALLEN,

Your kind letter was received sometime since, and indeed I was very glad to get it. I see that you are fully consecrated your work, life, and spirit in God's hand. I hope to see you *all* soon by the will of God. I do not know how long I shall remain in the States, but I will try to prepare myself as thouaghtly as the opportunity allow me. And when I ended my school days I hope that I will be able to carry the light to the Chinese. The object of my days is to do good, to honour man, to glorify God; to do good to others and save them from eternal punishment. God be my helper, I will. A few days ago there was a Methodist lady asked me an uncommon strange question, said she "well, brother Soon, you are a missionary, will you suffer in any convictions and die for the cause of Christ?" And I thought it was a strange question to me. But, for the sake of my heart I answered it according to my feeling. Replied I, yes, madam, I willing to suffer for Christ on any condition if God be my helper. Again said she "that is the way we ought to feel, for God will help us if we trust in him." May God help us all to lay our treasure in Heaven, and wait on him with great passion, and at last we may be able

to say "I have kept the faith, I have fought the good fight, and henceforth I shall receive a crown of life." God bless you and all your labours.

CHARLES J. SOON

Burke and Soon left Vanderbilt in the spring of 1885 and their courses diverged for the time being. The young Georgian had not yet felt a clear call to the mission field. He returned to Macon to be ordained into the South Georgia Conference and was appointed to a preaching circuit in South-west Georgia. Soon was ordained into the North Carolina Conference at Wilmington. Had he had his way then, he would have crammed some medical knowledge on top of his theology before returning to China. The church fathers saw it differently, though. Bishop H. N. McTyeire said as much in a letter to Dr. Allen announcing Soon's departure for China. The italics are the bishop's:

Vanderbilt University,
Nashville, Tennessee,
July 8, 1885

MY DEAR DOCTOR ALLEN:

We expect to send *Soon* out to you this autumn, with Dr. Park. I trust you will put him, at once, to *circuit work*, walking if not riding. *Soon* wished to stay a year or two longer to study medicine to be equipped for higher usefulness, etc. And his generous patron, Mr. Julian Carr, was not unwilling to continue helping.

But we thought better that the *Chinaman* that is in him should not all be worked out before he labours among the Chinese. Already he has "felt the easy chair"—and is not averse to the comforts of higher civilization. No fault of his.

Let our young man, on whom we have bestowed labour, begin to *labour*. Throw him into the ranks: *no side place*. His desire to study medicine was met by the information that we have already as many *doctors* as the Mission needed, and one more.

I have good hope that, with your judicious handling, our *Soon* may do well. It will greatly encourage similar work here if he does. The destinies of many are bound up in his case. . . .

Yr. bro. in Christ.
H. N. MCTYEIRE

It is unfortunate the bishop did not live to know how prophetic that last sentence was.

2

Off to the Heathens

FOR TWO YEARS, Burke preached and ate fried chicken like any other Southern Methodist preacher in Georgia.

His circuits were in Schley and Baker counties. He drove about in a buggy as he had done with his father and grew a beard so that he wouldn't look out of place among the rustics of his congregations. He also became adept at whittling slivers for his pipe from a slab of full-strength tobacco. But somehow he wasn't satisfied. There seemed such an abundance of preachers like himself and he felt he wasn't doing anything important or essential.

It was in this mood that he happened upon a letter from Bishop Alphaeus Wilson in the *Wesleyan Christian Advocate*, the weekly Southern Methodist paper in Georgia. The bishop had just returned from organizing the first annual China Mission Conference of the church at Shanghai late in 1886. He appealed for volunteers, calling attention to the "handful" of foreign missionaries among millions of "untended sheep." He went further to show a keen insight into the state of China and the relation of that state to mission work.

"Great changes are taking place in the empire," he wrote, "and our [i.e., the Southern Methodist Church] situation is eminently favourable for seizing the advantages and realizing the results of the new movements."

The *Advocate's* editor added his comments:

> "Bishop Wilson's letter . . . will stir the hearts of Christians throughout our church. He calls for three men and six women to be sent immediately as reinforcements to the brave band now bravely endeavouring to do the work which might well tax the strength of four times their number."

All Burke's earlier missionary thoughts revived. He remembered Soon's enthusiasm and the speeches of the missionaries on furlough ("Who is ready to come fill the vacancies in mission fields? The call for more help is loud, strong, urgent, pressing and great!"). It was a definite call to be a missionary. Without a moment's hesitation, he wrote the Southern Methodist mission board at Nashville, asking for an appointment to China. The appointment came in June, 1887, two weeks after his twenty-third birthday. Burke was

at his circuit headquarters at Ellaville then and the local *Enterprise* carried the announcement.

> "Rev. W. B. Burke, of the South Georgia Conference, and son of Rev. J.W. Burke, of the same Conference, and resident in Macon, has yielded to the call for help in foreign fields, and will go to China.
>
> "Brother Burke is a sweet spirited and worthy young man of noble and manly bearing, and will no doubt prove himself the true and devoted man in China that he has been in Georgia.
>
> "How these Church folks, many of them, grunt and growl and whine and complain when called on to give a dollar to foreign missions. Friend, suppose God lays his hand on your boy and girl, as he has on other people's boys and girls for the foreign work, don't you think you would change your faith and practice?"

The evening service at Mulberry Street Methodist Church, Burke's home church in Macon, was turned into a farewell meeting for the young missionary the Sunday before his departure for the Orient. The Reverend J. M. Austin of the East Macon Methodist Church presided.

"This meeting is twofold," he stated, upon opening the service. "One, we desire to give expression in this significant way to our interest in the work of saving the heathen and to show our appreciation of the honour God has conferred upon us in calling one of our number to preach Christ to those in 'darkness and the shadow of death.' Two, to show our brother our interest in him and his work whither he is going."

Several other local pastors, including Burke's father, were then called on to speak. All stressed the honour God had conferred upon the South Georgia Conference, the city of Macon, and the Burke family in calling the young minister to preach "the everlasting Gospel of light to the benighted." Finally, Burke himself was asked to say a few words and the meeting was closed with prayer and the doxology.

Coincident with Burke's appointment to China, the mission board had named his Vanderbilt classmate, the Reverend C. B. Moseley of Arkansas, to mission work in Japan. And at the same time, the woman's division of the board had designated five young women as missionaries to posts in Japan and China. Burke and Moseley at once arranged to meet in Kansas City and make the trip from there together as far as Japan. They also thought it would be nice if the women appointees could be along in their party. Believing the woman's board would be only too pleased to have proper escorts for the young ladies on the long journey, Moseley sent along his and Burke's travel schedule, with a warm invitation for the women missionaries to join them.

Unfortunately, Mrs. Sally Truehart, corresponding secretary of the woman's board, had a deep suspicion of chivalry in any form on the part of any male, clergy and lay alike. She was proud, too, of the record of her organization—no loss through marriage in its nine years of existence—and she was determined to keep it that way. So she cancelled all plans for the young women's trip and made no more until Burke and his companion were safely on their way.

The two men met in Kansas City on Sunday, August 21st. That night a farewell service, similar to the one in Macon, was held at the Centenary Methodist Church. Both young missionaries were called on to speak. The Kansas City *Daily Times* carried their remarks the next morning:

> " 'It is God's will that the heathen be saved,' Burke declared. 'Now is His favoured time. Providential signals are waving before us. China and Japan are in the formative state concerning Western civilization. They are receiving innumerable ideas from us. The question is, shall we allow the worst or the best elements of our civilization to prevail among them. Satan and his emissaries are hard at work. Shall we be less earnest? God is doing His part. As someone had said, "the doors are not only opened wide, they are off the hinges." Heathen lands are begging us to come. We have the opportunity to do great things. We also have the means. God has blessed us in temporal things . . .' "

Young Moseley was somewhat more eloquent:

> " 'May the time soon come when the cannon of Christianity, loaded with the powder of the Holy Spirit, and fired by the electric torch of a consecrated church, shall with the projectile of truth, decapitate every idol in China and throughout the world.' "

In San Francisco, Burke took the cable-car ride to Golden Gate Park, got a foretaste of the future by walking about in Chinatown; then, on September 1st, he sailed with Moseley on the Pacific Mail Line steamer *City of New York*. Besides the two young Southern Methodists, there were two veteran women missionaries aboard, one of them a typical Spartan on worldly pleasures. Burke was a bad sailor from the start. The second day out he wrote in his diary:

"I awoke this morning with strange sensations in my head, but altogether I'm feeling better than the night previous. I intended to begin this diary on my first day out, but a sensation of misery in my stomach prevented me."

He had improved enough by Sunday, the fourth day at sea, to accept the purser's invitation to conduct the religious service on the ship. He approached the task with no great amount of relish, for outside the little mission party

the passengers and crew seemed anything but religious. One of the stewards, in fact, had curtly told him one morning that he'd be glad to have the Bible burned.

Nevertheless, the service went off smoothly, Burke taking his text from Matthew xxv. 14–30 (the parable of the talents). Besides the cabin passengers and some of the officers, several Chinese from steerage attended. The Orientals listened with a far more devout air than the others and, when time came to pray, got down on their knees instead of simply bowing their heads. The young minister was impressed and had high hopes of his mission audiences to come.

"It did me good to have the Chinese listening so attentively and to hear them singing the good songs," he wrote that night. "I have no patience with those who say it is folly to try and Christianize them."

Burke was never down long with seasickness. His energetic mind, insatiably curious, was too taken up with the delights of a first sea trip. One day he slipped into the engine room and followed the spinning propeller shaft to the stern of the ship. The heat and darkness and noise; the fitful red glare from an occasional open furnace door; blackened firemen walking around, shouting incoherently in the bedlam—all this conspired to bring back childhood visions of Inferno.

Then he was on deck at night, back aft in the clean, strong wind, looking down at the phosphorescence in the boiling wake. He thought of it—as no good Southern Methodist should think of it—as "like a sparkling and a snapping as of an inconceivable amount of champagne." The rest of the night scene was no less impressive to this imaginative young Georgia preacher:

"One by one the stars broke out until the firmament was studded," he recounted in his diary. "The fall of night had descended upon the mighty deep and infinite space above and seeming infinite waters below, and the dull throbbing of the propelling screw of the steamer, all indicative of wondrous power, the one of God and the other of man, bowed my soul down with thoughts too deep for my weak pen to tell of. When the moon rose in all its splendour, I cannot undertake to describe the scene. A silvery path of light ran down the restless waves. Now and then a moonbeam would be caught by breaking wave and a spray of fire met my eyes."

The ship rounded Diamond Head on the morning of the seventh day and anchored well out in Honolulu Bay. Large vessels could not come into dock then. Burke and Moseley went ashore by launch and were met by a missionary friend named Damon. He took them home for lunch, then put them in his carriage and drove them sightseeing. The palace of the king, Kalahua, stuck out in the Georgian's memory as "pretty, though rather plain."

Before the last tender left for the ship that afternoon, Burke and Moseley

found a chance to drop in at a tobacco store and replenish their supply of cigars. The voyage ahead was long and cigars would help. They lit two of them on the way to the ship and walked up the gangway to the main deck with them in their mouths. The Spartan woman was on deck at the time and her lips tightened as she eyed the young missionaries. At sight of her, a wicked gleam crept in Burke's eyes. He walked over, asked for her hand and plumped the odorous weed in it. He was sorry immediately—as he always was after upsetting someone with a prank—but it did no good. The woman came nowhere near him the rest of the trip.

The *City of New York* tied up at Yokohama on the twenty-second day out of San Francisco and Burke and Moseley separated. The big ship would go directly to Hong Kong from there. The Arkansan took a coastal boat next day for Kobe, where he was to be stationed; while Burke quartered at the Grand Hotel five days, waiting for a ship to Shanghai. The layover seemed short. So much was new, different, and worth seeing. He rode about the city in a three-man ricksha and visited his first heathen temple—a Buddhist temple with shiny images of bronze and gold.

On September 27th he sailed aboard a Japanese vessel, the *Yokohama Maru*. She was overcrowded and part of the dining saloon was laid out with pallets at night for those who couldn't get cabin accommodations. In addition to the large human cargo, the observant young missionary recorded that there were "two monkeys, an ape, a deer, seven pigs, some sheep, three cats and some very young kittens on board."

Somewhere in the China Sea the young minister began having qualms about turning up in the mission at Shanghai with his remaining supply of cigars. His conception of missionaries, like that held by most home church members, was something between saint and martyr and he made up his mind to try to reach for that ideal. The cigars went over the side that night.

The *Yokohama* was due in Shanghai the morning of October 4th and Burke was out on deck at dawn. The ship had already entered the muddy waters which the great Yangtze Kiang belches a hundred miles into the sea. There was that faint sewage stink in the air, so recognizable to Old China Hands. The young missionary looked out over the choppy yellow surface and it seemed to symbolize the heathen darkness into which he was going with the light of Christian truth. He liked thinking in metaphors like that. He felt impatient to be preaching to the Chinese. How they would flock to Christ once they heard His gospel. For how could anyone refuse the light once it was shown him. He would show them that light simply and clearly, just as he used to build up his arguments in the literary society debates at Emory. Yes, that's it. He would debate with these heathens. It would be easy to argue them out of their ignorant superstitions.

He woke from these reveries as a small ship appeared to the west. It was anchored and, as the *Yokohama* drew near, a boat was lowered and rowed toward the Japanese ship. The latter's engine, meanwhile, had stopped, but her momentum still carried her slowly forward.

"The pilot's coming aboard," spoke up a man. Burke turned and saw one of his fellow passengers pointing to the tiny boat bobbing toward them. "We're a mile or so from the mouth of the Yangtze."

Burke looked expectantly ahead, but there was nothing resembling the mouth of a river. No land to be seen.

"You know, the river's about thirty miles wide here at this channel entrance," the passenger continued, with the traveller's passion for volunteering information to less-experienced companions. "We go up some forty miles and turn into the Whangpoo River. Shanghai's fourteen or fifteen miles up the Whangpoo."

The pilot, a stocky European, climbed up a rope ladder from the rowboat and disappeared on to the ship's bridge. The small boat, manned by three Chinese, pulled away. Burke leaned over the deck rail watching the boatmen. Not quite like Soon, these fellows, each with his head shaved except for a patch in the back which sprouted a long pigtail. They were laughing and talking loudly, in the manner of Celestials, and he tried to catch some of the words Soon had taught him. Needless to say, he didn't catch anything. Soon's Chinese was a southern dialect, practically a different language from that spoken around Shanghai.

As the *Yokohama* got under way again, Burke kept his eyes strained ahead. He was excited, waiting for the first glimpse of China. Finally, he saw it. A thin, scarcely perceptible line marking the low mud flats of the outer Yangtze delta. He felt a tinge of disappointment. He had expected something more exotic. At least some silhouetted bamboo and a pagoda.

The disappointment lessened as the river narrowed. Houses and trees began to dot the banks and a pagoda did prick up in the distance. Native craft glided by on all sides: fish-eyed junks lumbering along under square, patched sails; small, blunt-nosed sampans of every variety, sculled by single, long fishtail oars.

Suddenly, one of the big, high-pooped junks veered sharply off her course and cut across the *Yokohama's* bow. The ship's whistle blared and her helm was thrown over as much as possible in the narrow river channel. The junk barely escaped and passed close under the ship's outhanging bridge. An officer stood on the bridge raining down Japanese curses.

"Happens all the time," the garrulous passenger said. He had been down to breakfast and come back while Burke stayed on deck. "Probably a junk starting a voyage somewhere. By cutting across our path like that, they

believe the evil spirit following their boat will be cut off and start following us instead."

Burke stared back at the junk unbelievingly.

Coming up the Whangpoo, the West began asserting itself over the dreamy East. Ranges of godowns, wharves, shipyards and graving docks passed and fell behind on both sides of the river. Life on the water richened also. A clumsy two-story paddle ark from Ningpo or Upriver Yangtze churned by; an American three-masted sailing ship was anchored in mid-stream; steam launches, whistles, sirens, and the ubiquitous junks and sampans completed the sights and sounds.

Then the river swept sharply away to the left and there, stretching along the far bank of the sweep, was a sight already famous the world over—the Shanghai Bund, that dramatic daub of Europe on the farthest side of old Cathay. Behind a grassy esplanade, set out in trees and gardens and bordered by a broad carriage road, rose an impressive front of white Italian-classic mansions—the money-making foreign hongs of Shanghai. There was only one flaw in the picture. Glaring gaunt and cold in the midst of this classic serenity was the curved-roof Custom House, its massive head reared up like a great Chinese temple.

"Wonderful, isn't it?" remarked the talkative one. "The city of the mud flat. The Chinese must have laughed up their sleeves when they agreed to hand over to the foreigners what they thought was a worthless piece of riverbank. Now look at it after only forty years or so. It's called the 'Model Settlement.' You wouldn't know you were in this wretched China."

The young missionary was somehow disturbed by the sight. This wasn't the China he had come to serve. He felt that the sooner he was away from this Western masonry the better. He was always to feel that way about Shanghai. There was something in the city's surface charm which repelled like Coleridge's serpentine Lady Geraldine.

The ship was now sidling up to the N.Y.K. wharf on the Hongkew bank, just below the sweep where the Bund lay. The red-brick Japanese Consulate stood close by. An hour later Burke was knocking half timidly on the door of a large verandaed house on Quinsan Road in Hongkew. If he had followed out directions given him at the wharf and by a foreigner he had met en route, this would be the home of the Southern Methodist mission doyen, Dr. Young J. Allen.

A Chinese man in an immaculate white gown opened the door and looked quizzically at the young Georgian. Before either he or Burke could say anything, however, a woman's voice inside inquired:

"Who is it, Waung?"

"Forlin' master," the servant replied. There was a swish of skirts and a

tall, pleasant woman appeared at the door. Her dark floor-length dress was belted tight around the waist and came up in a high collar at the neck.

"Good Morning, ma'am," Burke ventured, doffing his black felt. "I was looking for Dr. Young J. Allen. I'm William Burke."

"Oh, is this Mr. Burke, our new mission member?" she woman cried warmly. "This *is* a surprise. A letter last month told of your coming, but we didn't know when to expect you. I'm so glad to see you and I'm so sorry there was no one at the ship to meet you. This is Mrs. Allen. Dr. Allen left yesterday morning for the annual conference at Soochow. But do come in first and sit down."

Mrs. Allen led him into a plushy Victorian living room. "It will be dreadful if you miss the opening of conference tomorrow, Mr. Burke, but I don't see how you can make it. It takes two full days by houseboat to go to Soochow."

"That is too bad, ma'am," Burke agreed.

"You wait here a minute, though, and I'll go find out what can be done," Mrs. Allen said. "There's the day's paper if you care to see it. Now just make yourself at home."

Burke sat down on a curved-back settee and picked up the paper. He'd never expected to find an English daily newspaper in China. The name plate, *North China Daily News*, stood out boldly above the advertisement-cluttered front page. Directly below it appeared both the Chinese and English calendar dates. The Chinese dating was:

"8th Moon, 18th Day—13th Year of H.I.M. Kuang Hsü."

It was interesting, but meant nothing to him. He knew China had an emperor, but the fact that his name was Kuang Hsü had never impressed him. He turned to the inside pages and glanced through several news items. The town band was to play in the Public Gardens that afternoon. Seven secret society men had been executed at Nanking. A coolie was sentenced in Mixed Court to one month's imprisonment for stealing a silver biscuit box from an English taipan. Russian railway engineers had paused in the city on their way to Vladivostok to look into the possibilities of a railway across Siberia. He lingered longest over a story from the paper's Tientsin correspondent:

"Some superstitious native prophesied that during this year, the God of Pestilence would gallivant over the land and do much damage among the people. They printed and circulated thousands of cards recommending that certain medical ingredients should be put by each family into their water kongs as a charm or preventive against sickness."

The young missionary again felt impatient to be out among these poor heathens.

3

Land of Darkness

BURKE SAT CROSS-LEGGED in the footboat.

A section of the rounded bamboo-mat cowling had been pushed back enough to let his head and shoulders out of the cramped quarters under the covering. A hot October sun beat down as he sat there, swaying to the jerky motion of the boat and listening to the monotonous gurgle of water under the bluntish bow. Spreading out from the low mud banks of the narrow canal was a vast flat landscape of yellow rice fields, broken by tree-groved farm communities.

An hour earlier (or at exactly 2.17 p.m., for Burke always pulled out his heavy gold watch and marked the time of noteworthy events in his diary), one of the two pigtailed boatmen had shouted: "Ke ze! (Start the boat!)," and they had poled the little craft out of the jam of boats in Soochow Creek, near the Shanghai Bund. From the minute he saw the footboat, Burke held no illusions about the comforts ahead, but he would have taken a common Georgia bateau rather than miss the mission conference. And the novelty of the thing appealed too. Though that was wearing off fast.

Besides the boatmen, Burke's only companion was a young Korean student named Yun Tchi-ho, whom Mrs. Allen had asked to take the newly arrived missionary to Soochow. Yun was the son of a distinguished Korean nobleman and one day was to be equally distinguished himself as governor of Korea and a fearless, though helpless, foe of Japanese expansionism. He was studying at Dr. Allen's Anglo-American College at the time of Burke's arrival in Shanghai and would finish his Western schooling several years later at the Georgian's own alma mater, Emory College.

Yun couldn't talk Chinese, but he had been able to carry through written negotiations for the rental of the footboat—Chinese ideographs being familiar to Koreans and Japanese. These negotiations had been with a more or less literate person at the boat hong, however, and Yun was as helpless as Burke in making the two boatmen understand anything—and conversely.

One of the boatmen was perched precariously on the aft end of the boat, his long queue wrapped around his head to keep it off the water. With his feet, he dexterously managed a long, sweeplike side oar. He used a paddle in his hands, partly to help propel the boat, but mostly for steering. The second boatman sat or lay on the frying pan-sized foredeck, awaiting his turn

at the foot oar. He was an extra man, hired to speed up the trip. A footboat ordinarily had only one man, who simply stopped the boat and rested when he got tired.

Burke soon realized that balance was a vital operating factor. Any unexpected movement on the big missionary's part set the aft man howling with rage and clawing the air to keep his seat. A ducking is a serious matter with a Chinese boatman, for not one in a thousand can swim. So Burke sat as still as he could, his patience gradually ebbing toward the irritation point. It might have been better were it not for Yun, who lay back with Oriental complacency reading a volume of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.* Burke chafed at the example. He had nothing to read and couldn't have read if he had. He could only sit and think and wish a hundred times he hadn't thrown all the cigars away. As a matter of fact, the footboat was constantly reminding him of a cigar—long, slender, and rounded.

Scenes along the banks relieved the monotony and discomfort somewhat and Yun condescended to look up from Gibbon now and then to identify things. Round, straw-roofed irrigation pumps; yards of black fishing nets hung out on bamboo frames to dry; silent stone arches, marking the excellence of a forgotten scholar or the virtue of some widow who didn't remarry; small red-walled demon shrines; a farm community shaded by trees of several hundred yards up a small branch canal; a clump of cedars over the graves of some upper-class family; and the countless grass-covered gravemounds of common people dotting every piece of untilled land—it has been estimated that 13 per cent of all arable land in China is devoted to graves. There were a few cotton fields too, which made the young Georgian feel genuinely homesick for the first time.

Toward late afternoon, while the tide was at its lowest and the canal narrowed to a thin strip, the boatmen were forced to stop the footboat against a bank to make way for a heavy mandarin houseboat. The big boat's draught was too much for the shallowed canal and the crew was inching it along by hard effort. One man waded through the water in front of the boat and stuck a bamboo pole into the canal bottom. He tied a rope to the pole and the men on the boat pulled in on the rope with a wooden capstan. Yun pointed out the green sedan chair on the foredeck of the vessel. The official aboard would ride ashore in that.

The footboat reached the town of Nansiang about dusk. The boatmen drew the little craft up to the stone landing of a teahouse and made fast by that ingenious tideproof anchor of the Chinese—a bamboo pole stuck through a hole in the foredeck into the soft-mud canal bottom. The crew then went in the teahouse for supper, while the passengers stayed aboard and opened the lunches Mrs. Allen had prepared for them.

Along the opposite bank of the canal stood three bedraggled boats, covered with tattered roofs of matting. They were the homes of *kaung-pok* families (boat-dwelling migrants from famine lands in northern Kiangsu Province). A duck, tied by one leg to the side of the nearest boat, was swimming and quacking, dropping his head occasionally for a piece of food floating by. There was a cat sleeping on the deck of the same boat. Inside, a woman was cooking supper on a smoky, wood-shaving fire. Half-naked children played about on the bank above. As Burke watched, a man in one of the boats reached out with a long pole and drew in a turnip that was floating past on the tide. That would help flavour his evening rice.

For sheer misery, the night row from Nansing to Soochow was a high point in Burke's young career. To get his oversized frame spread out on the boat's three-foot beam and still leave room for Yun was the first problem. A thin pallet of quilts was laid on the hard plank flooring and he and the Korean tried to get into sleeping positions. They lay side by side on their backs, feet to head. Burke had the advantage here; being the longer, his head was well out of reach of Yun's feet, but Yun took the full effect of Burke's feet. This advantage was soon countered by the boatman in the prow. He thought to stretch out awhile also, and in doing so practically enveloped Burke's face with his dirty, straw-sandaled extremities. To remain quietly fixed on one's back all night in this manner was a feat no Occidental was built for—not Burke anyway. Whenever he dozed off, he rolled over on Yun, waking him and bringing near catastrophe to the foot rower, a fact the latter never failed to be profanely eloquent about. To climax it all, the boatman who went to the prow for his rest about midnight decided to smoke a bit of opium. The sweetish fumes came rolling back under the little cowling, doing nothing to improve the air for the two passengers. Burke tried to get some of the night's impressions into his diary:

"I was stretched out on the flat of my back, cautious in moving to rest some spot through which a bone had almost worn. The dark, dismal night was before me. How was I to pass it. Could I sleep in that boat and could I stay awake and be sane with such thoughts continually in my head as now. Hope seemed to have vanished from my life and I was shut up with despair. Longings of the soul, inexpressible; longings for something I could never realize. . . ."

When Burke woke from the exhausted sleep he finally had fallen into, it was dawn and the footboat was motionless and the gurgling under the bow had stopped. Yun already was reading Gibbon. The weary young minister raised himself carefully on one elbow and pushed back the mat section above him. Then, sitting up, he looked about. White- and dark-wall houses on heavy granite foundations rose out of the canal on both sides. Many boats

were moored or moving near by. The early-morning canal-front air stunk of night soil and greasy smoke. The footboat was at a stone-stepped landing. As Burke took in the scene, a large yellow houseboat drew up to the same landing. While watching its boatmen bring it alongside and jab an anchor pole through the deck hole, the young missionary distinctly heard voices speaking English inside the square-windowed cabin.

"Hello!" Burke shouted.

"Hello!" came a deep, throaty reply and an old man with a beard bushing about his ears and chest came out on deck. Burke recognized Dr. Allen, for he had seen him on furlough in Georgia several years before. Impetuously forgetting the canoelike qualities of the footboat, he sprang up and leaped across the three or four feet of water separating the two boats. The smaller craft rocked dangerously, upsetting the charcoal brazier over which the two boatmen were cooking their morning rice on the aft deck. It was almost too much and both rowers launched into an abusive tirade at the "stupid foreign devil"

On the houseboat, Burke was warmly greeted by Allen and the three other missionaries in his party. One of them, W. B. Bonnell, had coached Burke in high school in Macon. Their boat had taken two full days to make the sixty-mile trip from Shanghai, against the footboat's seventeen hours. But Burke could see from the spacious interior of the cabin, laid out with soft sleeping pallets, that the slower boat had the edge in comfort. The two footboat passengers joined the larger party for breakfast on the houseboat, after which Yun prepared to start back for Shanghai on the footboat.

The conference which opened that morning in Tien S Tsaung (Heaven-given Place) Church at Soochow was designated officially as the "Second Annual Conference of the China Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South." It was not a large meeting, for there were only seven missionaries in the mission. One of them was a Chinese. Burke met him as he walked into the churchyard with Dr. Allen's party. He didn't recognize him until Dr. Allen said:

"Brother Burke, I'd like you to meet Brother Soon, our first native conference member."

Burke rushed forward. "Well, sakes alive, Charlie, it's mighty good to see you again! It's been over two years!" He grasped Soon's small hand in both his and pumped it half a minute.

"I'm glad to see you too, Bill!" Soon greeted. "I didn't know you with that beard."

"Well, I didn't know you in that Chinese getup of yours either," Burke laughed. "Makes you look considerably older, I think." Soon was wearing

a long Chinese gown and a black silk skullcap. His face was much fuller, almost plump.

A familiar twinkle came into Soon's eyes. He grinned. "You didn't bring that magic flatiron with you, did you?"

"No," Burke chuckled, "but I think I'll have to fix up another one."

4

Thrown in the Ranks

SOON AND BURKE convened another Vanderbilt session after the first day of conference. Soon told his story first.

He had started back for China in December, 1885, with Dr. W. H. Park, a Southern Methodist medical missionary. Soon was memorably impressed on the train trip across the American continent. It was made at the time Chief Geronimo was out on the warpath with his rebellious Apaches. As the train sped through Arizona one day, the conductor came running into the car where Soon and Park sat. He was excited and pointed out on the plain to what he said was a party of Geronimo's warriors, with the terrible chief probably among them. They were naked and painted and were riding single file, their bodies leaning well forward over the necks of their ponies.

Arriving in Shanghai in January, 1886, Soon went directly to Soochow with Dr. Park and shared the physician's bachelor quarters there a few weeks. Then he moved in with a native preacher, Dzau Tsz-zeh, in order to have more language practice—learning the Shanghai vernacular was as much of a task to this South China youth as French is to an average American.

Dzau, better known by his Christian name, C. K. (Charlie) Marshall, was quite a character. He had gone to the United States as a small boy with Dr. D. C. Kelley, one of the first Southern Methodist missionaries in Shanghai. When the War between the States broke out and Dr. Kelley entered the Confederate forces as a colonel, Marshall went along as his personal attendant, a fact which threw him a great deal among the Negro attendants of other Confederate officers. Four years of this, together with the fourteen years he lived in all in the southern states, gave him a decided deep-South accent.

When Soon studied Shanghai Chinese with Marshall, the older man always

used English for explanations—that being their only common language—and Marshall's speech was an unending source of annoyance to his better-educated companion. The language lesson frequently developed to the point where Soon was correcting Marshall's English rather than Marshall improving the other's Shanghai dialect. Once, Marshall's patience wore down:

"You, you upstart, you!" he cried. "Why you come pesterin' me wid dat Yankee talk. I bin talkin' English 'fo you was ever born. Now go 'way and leave me 'lone."

It was during these first days in the mission that Soon ran athwart Miss Lockie Rankin, principal of a mission school for girls at Nansiang. Miss Rankin was the first Southern Methodist woman missionary. She was recommended to the mission board as "a single woman well versed in ancient and modern languages," qualifications which got her a quick appointment to China in 1878. She had no trouble falling in step with the more conservative of China's old moral virtues, particularly the custom that no respectable young man or woman should meet or see each other before marriage. Unwarned of this circumstance, Soon went to Nansiang with the directness of any American and asked Miss Rankin if he might call on a certain young teacher at the school. The good lady said indeed not and kept the teacher locked in her room until Soon was well out of town.

It is interesting to ponder on how the perversities of one Southern Methodist woman perhaps affected the whole course of modern Chinese history.

Soon was unprepared for this sternness on the part of some of the missionaries. It was entirely different from the friendly, patronizing atmosphere around Wilmington, Durham, and Nashville. The mission superintendent seemed one of those against him. Soon complained bitterly of his "authoritative ways." And it must be admitted, Dr. Allen was rather severe at times. Probably too severe in Soon's case. He had drawn his own conclusions about Soon before the young Chinese ever arrived at the mission, as is indicated in a letter which he wrote the mission board on January 12, 1886:

> . . . There is yet one other item—*Item* 10—which I should like to refer to—to wit the salary of Mr. Soon. He will be here in two days now and I have no information as to how the Board expects to treat him. What is to be his status and pay. There is much that is embarrassing in this case. The boys and young men in our Anglo-Chinese College are far his superiors in that they are—the advanced ones—both English and *Chinese* scholars, and can do and have done work here in the way of composition and translation that has won the encomiums of our eldest and ablest missionaries in public conference of missionaries when the

> work was presented and criticized. And Soon never will become a Chinese scholar, at best will only be a *denationalized* Chinaman, discontented and unhappy unless he is located and paid far beyond his deserts—and the consequence is I find none of our brethren willing to take him.

Thus Soon reached the mission with chances for success more or less predetermined against him.

Before judging Dr. Allen too harshly, one should understand that the old missionary had a passion for education and the educational approach in mission work. Himself a *summa cum laude*, he used to say that his mission was to "an empire ruled by an aristocracy of intelligence, to whom the sole appeal is through the printed page." He gathered Chinese scholars around him to help mould his thoughts into the highly artificial and difficult *Vung Li* (Mandarin, *wen li*), or written language, by which that appeal could be made, and then proceeded to write and translate on a prodigious scale. His books and pamphlets contained facts of social and political as well as religious importance and were read by officials from the emperor on down. The government, in return, ranked Allen as a magistrate and his house bore the insignia of an official residence.

He had little patience with straight evangelical work among the uneducated masses (which were ninety per cent of the Chinese). In fact, he was distinctly like a real Chinese magistrate in his aloofness toward the common people. He invited no Chinese to his home except scholars, a discrimination which barred most of the native preachers in the mission, including Soon himself. Allen never hid his irritation with the home church and board of missions for sending Soon out to him with so hurried and superficial an education.

Allen's educational passion blinded him to the ambition and sincere spirit of service that motivated Soon. The young Hainan youth had gone as far as he could with his limited opportunities and might have gone further had not Bishop McTyeire decided that "the *Chinaman* that is in him should not all be worked out." With a small amount of sympathetic treatment on the part of Allen, Soon might have fitted himself into a valuable position in the mission. As it was, the young fellow found himself only coldly tolerated, not alone by the mission superintendent, but by the native residents of the Shanghai region as well.

To Shanghai natives, Soon *was* a sort of "denationalized Chinaman." He knew nothing of their language or customs—so different is South China from Central and North China. He couldn't be respected by the natives as one of them, yet he was equally depreciated for not being a true Westerner. As a matter of fact, he had no status. Children ran away screaming "foreign

devil" when he came in sight and grown-ups called him *siau a-ts* (little dwarf). Soon realized painfully how little the church people in America, and he himself, had known about the homogeneity of China when they enthusiastically endorsed the idea of his becoming a missionary.

The unpleasantness of Soon's situation was temporarily eased by the friendship of one group of mission members. The missionaries were champions of old-time evangelism. They opposed Dr. Allen's educational policies, believing that schools should be a "natural growth rather than a forced, artificial production." They were the old aggressive missionary type, who burned like St. Paul to spread the gospel. The clash between the educationalists and the evangelists led to some of the latter moving out of Allen's sphere a few months after Soon's arrival and opening a mission in Japan. Soon tried to be transferred to the new mission, but wasn't successful.

After less than a year's preliminary study and some teaching work, Bishop McTyeire's advice ("Throw him in the ranks") was fully carried out. He was appointed a circuit preacher at Kunshan, a city between Soochow and Shanghai. There he lived alone, faced with a job for which he was altogether unsuited.

And then C. S. New turned up. New was one of the group of Chinese students who had fired Soon's youthful ambitions at Boston. The two met again in Shanghai after Soon's return to China. New sympathized with his young friend's problems and suggested that a wife at least might ameliorate the loneliness of Kunshan. Soon agreed and recounted his discouraging efforts in that direction at Miss Rankin's school. New had the answer, though. Knowing that Soon's years in the West had not whetted his taste for the uneducated, cripple-foot ideal of womanhood in Old China, the first person to come into New's mind was his own nineteen-year-old sister-in-law, Miss Ni Kwei-tseng. New went into details.

Miss Ni was a direct descendant of Zi Kwang-kyi (Hsü Kwang-chi, in the Mandarin), the illustrious Ming dynasty's prime minister who was converted to Christianity by the Jesuit missionary, Matthew Ricci, in 1601. Her mother was born at the old Zi homestead at Zikawe (this is the local dialect spelling: it is now more popularly known as Siccawei, and is a western suburb of Shanghai) and had lived there, as a good Catholic (the Zis had held staunchly to the Catholic faith since the great ancestor's conversion), until she married Mr. Ni. Ni was the family tutor and a brilliant scholar, but had not chosen to become a Catholic. Instead, he was converted to Protestantism by the London Missionary Society at Shanghai. And his wife changed her faith accordingly.

Kwei-tseng was the third daughter born to the Nis—not an enviable position in China. When she was four years old, her feet were painfully balled

up and bound in the prescribed fashion of the time, with the bindings tightened every day. But she reacted worse than usual. At the end of each day, she was running a high fever and the bindings had to be loosened. Finally, her parents decided that, since she was the third girl and it was not so important that she marry, her feet might as well be allowed to grow normally. No Chinese gentleman, they knew, would consider a girl with "big" feet.

Kwei-tseng was again different in showing an early appetite for books, a fact which pleased her scholarly father. He encouraged her. She was studying Chinese characters with a tutor at the age of five and read classics instead of taking up more womanly pursuits like needlework. When she was nine years old, she entered the Bridgman School for Girls, an institution operated by the Woman's Union Mission of Shanghai. Here she not only developed a firm foundation for her deeply religious character of later years, but she also acquired a great fascination for mathematics—especially trigonometry. She graduated at eighteen. To the female members of her family she was a veritable ugly duckling, lacking in all the conventional graces of her sex.

Soon was enthusiastic, when New finished this story, and wanted to meet Kwei-tseng immediately. But old Mother Ni had not been taken into account. Proud of a family boasting some of the bluest blood in China, she had no intention of allowing her daughter to break all ancient rules of propriety by openly meeting an unmarried man. If Soon wanted to be a suitor, he could go about it in the traditional way—by means of a matchmaker.

Actually, Mother Ni was playing into Soon's hand, for, stranger that he was to Shanghai speech and manners, he undoubtedly would have made a far worse showing with this Shanghai girl had absentee courtship not been forced upon him. As it was, New himself offered to be the matchmaker—a professional role in China usually taken by some old crone. He went to both parties, reporting the virtues and faults of each. Soon was found acceptable and he and Kwei-tseng were married by Clarence Reid, one of the Southern Methodist missionaries.

To make it complete, B. C. Wen had happened along and married the remaining Ni sister. Wen, like New, was a member of the Imperial student mission Soon had met in Boston. It was like old times again, except that Soon was now a respected brother-in-law instead of an out-of-the-circle shop apprentice.

It was late that night when Burke and Soon closed their session in Soochow. Burke was glad to learn of his classmate's marriage, but one matter in their talk disturbed him. This was Soon's disclosure of the rift between certain of the missionaries over mission policy. He at once made up his mind that he

would not let himself be drawn into any such conflict. He had come to China to spread a gospel of salvation and he was going to do it as he saw fit—evangelically or educationally—but *do* it. Arguing over how a thing should be done only took energy away from the doing.

The Soochow conference lasted five days and appointments were read out on the last day. Soon was sent back to Kunshan, while Burke was assigned to open a new mission station at Sungkiang, the prefectural capital of the Shanghai district.

As the conference was adjourning, Bonnell walked over to his old pupil with the consoling information that a Presbyterian missionary had been stoned out of Sungkiang the year before, when he went there to sell religious tracts on the streets. About the same time, a mob of students had burned the Catholic mission property in that city.

These acts of violence were not restricted to Sungkiang in 1886. They occurred throughout China as a protest against similar and sometimes less-civilized anti-Chinese violence in the United States. Celestials were becoming something of a cheap labour problem in this country. The Western powers subsequently forced China to respect foreigners. In 1887, Peking issued a proclamation calling on the Chinese to "live at peace with Christian missionaries." American churches praised this "voluntary" religious tolerance on China's part, but America continued to leave her Chinese residents to the mercy of the mob, to say nothing of humiliating China by an exclusion act.

5

From Burke to Boo

BURKE HAD SCARCELY RETURNED to Shanghai and settled into language study when he came down with smallpox.

He was living in Reid's home—the same Reid who had married Soon—and the doctor put the house in quarantine for ten days. What saved the young missionary was his baby vaccination. Though it had not taken properly, it was enough to hold the dread disease in check. There were two or three days of hot fever and about twenty pustules. But they were small sores and went away without leaving any scars. What was better, Burke was left immune to future smallpox infection—a state to be cherished in China.

Learning Chinese was not the easiest task Burke had struck. ". . . this wretched language is enough to deprive life of all its poetry," he wrote his mother. Yet he caught on faster than most missionaries. He had majored in languages in college.

The Shanghai dialect comes under the general head of the Wu dialects, the language of those Chinese living in southern Kiangsu, all of Chekiang, and a portion of the adjacent provinces of Anhweci and Kiangsi—altogether the most populous section of China. The Shanghai brand of the Wu can be understood by the more intelligent all over this section, making it probably the most widely used of all Chinese vernaculars. Sinologues claim the Wu dialects are more ancient than the Mandarin and nearer to the language used in North China during classical times. At any rate, nearly all the ideographs representing the Shanghai syllables are found in Mandarin and classical dictionaries.

Monosyllabic and without inflections, Chinese is a comparatively simple language. A favourite illustration of this is that American children exposed to English and Chinese usually learn the latter first. This simplicity of the language is offset to a great extent by the subtle variations in the tone and order of words. More often than in English, misuse of Chinese results in a meaning entirely the opposite of what was intended. Burke discovered this one morning while giving the day's orders to the cook, a language exercise Mrs. Reid sometimes conceded to.

"Go to hell," the young minister said in a calm, casual sort of way.

The cook bowed, left the house and was never heard from again.

Di-nyoeh, Burke found out, means "hell"; what he had wanted to say was *nyoeh-ti*, "meatshop."

Then there were words like *yang*. *Yang* meant "foreign." *Yang* meant "born." *Yang* meant "melt." *Yang* meant "sheep." And *yang* was the term for the young shoots of the rice plant. All had the same sound, but with different variations of tone. Shanghai dialect has four tones, each divided into an upper and a lower scale, or really eight tones.

There was also the problem of being correct about "rice," a far more important word around Shanghai than in wheat-growing North China. One had to remember that rice growing in a field is *dau*; that when it is threshed but still uncooked, it is *mi*; that cooked rice is *van*.

Complain to a Chinese about his language, though, and he immediately brings up the question of "to," "two," and "too."

Burke was assigned a private Chinese teacher. Here he was lucky, for Kwe was a born teacher, patient and understanding. And with a good teacher, half the battle for Chinese is won. What was more, Kwe could speak a little English.

An interesting point about Kwe was that, like Soon, he had been adopted by a childless uncle. His original name had been Waung. Kwe's background was that of any typical Chinese scholar of the old school. He had no recollections of any experience predating the learning of the classics and he had passed his *siu-ze* (Mandarin, *hsin-tsai*), or bachelor's, examination. He was different from the average Chinese scholar, however, in that his Confucianism had not got so firm a hold as to shake his belief in spiritual truths. Since becoming associated with the Southern Methodists as a language teacher, this belief was steadily being bolstered. He was a regular church attendant and even helped occasionally in evangelistic work as a hymn leader. But he had never come to the point of officially professing Christianity.

As was the usual Chinese school method, Burke was taught to read Chinese before he understood it. That is to say, he learned the sounds of characters without knowing their meanings. Kwe would spread out little red squares of paper with a character written in black ink on each and Burke would learn to call them by sight—though he didn't know what he was calling. The translations came later, after the word sounds were thoroughly fixed. This was the way Chinese boys got their classics, learning to chant through them by rote first, then finding out the meaning. To complicate matters in the classics, the books were written in vung li, which compares with everyday Chinese speech as Anglo-Saxon compares with modern English.

Burke spent at least five hours a day on language. Three hours with Kwe after breakfast, an hour reciting with a missionary friend after lunch, and another hour with Kwe in the late afternoon.

It was not all work for the young missionary. There were always Sundays and off days for looking about Shanghai. On his first day back from Soochow he joined a party sightseeing in the native city. They visited a quaint little tea garden, with a pavilion on top of an artificial mountain of rock. A winding path led to the pavilion by a devious route of romantic nooks and corners.

Another time, Burke and Bonnell took wheelbarrows the six or seven miles to Siccawei to look at the famous Catholic establishment there. The Jesuits had been strongly entrenched there since Zi Kwang-kyi's time and Burke thought of Soon's eminent ancestor-in-law while he was at the place. The Jesuits were skilled in science as well as religion and the young Georgia Methodist was impressed enough to describe the cathedral, school, observatory, etc., as "wonderful." Two French priests showed the Protestant visitors about and seemed friendly enough—until Burke naïvely invited them to visit the Southern Methodist work sometime. Then one of the fathers said coldly:

"C'est impossible. We could not allow ourselves to be seen going into a Protestant place."

Relations were none too pleasant between Protestant and Catholic missions then, as shall be pointed out in more detail later.

The first Christmas in China was memorable to Burke—or rather, Christmas Eve. The little band of Southern Methodists in Shanghai gathered that night for an old-fashioned Georgia pound party, everyone bringing a pound of something to eat. The Southern Methodists were a sociable lot among themselves, which was natural enough. They all came from the culturally knit South-east and there was a nostalgic pleasure in keeping up old traditions when far from the homeland.

A few weeks after the smallpox attack, Burke triumphantly recorded "doing my first missionary work." He had taken several days off from language study to accompany Clarence Reid on a circuit trip. Reid was presiding elder of the Shanghai Circuit, a territory extending westward about halfway to Soochow. The only other mission circuit, the Soochow Circuit, began from there. While Reid was inspecting a small mission school at the town of Kiating, his young companion took an armful of religious tracts and walked out on the street alone to sell them. He knew just enough Chinese to shout:

"Buy a book. Two cash."

The accent was terrible and all the people laughed. Burke knew his speech was awkward and he felt painfully self-conscious. He wanted to give up as soon as he began. But his Irish held on. He grinned back at the people. And he somehow sold ten tracts.

Besides the language, another important item for the new missionary was a Chinese name. "William Burke," of course, had no equivalent or meaning in Chinese and Chinese names must have a meaning. In such a case, ideographs with sounds approximating those of the foreign name are usually chosen.

The choice of a name in China is a matter of great care and deliberation and is *not*, contrary to a popular American fancy, consummated by picking up the sounds of a tin can bounced against a concrete sidewalk. Traits of character, personal sentiments, and other ideas—always in extravagant form —enter into it. The family name, or *sing*, is carried on, just as in the West. The most favoured ones are those included in the classical list, *Pak Ka Sing* (*Hundred Family Names*). But the variety of choice for the other names is limitless—and a Chinese delights in any number of such secondary names. First in importance is the particular name, or *ming*, corresponding to the Western given name, though much more formal in China. There it goes on the visiting card and documents, but is never used in addressing a person.

In the old days, only the emperor could call a man by his ming. For more general use, there is an *au*, or common name among friends. Then there may be a school name, a nickname, a literary name, a fancy name some admirer may bestow, or a special name connected with some event or circumstance in which the namee was involved. A Chinese may be known by one name in one locality, another in another, and sign his letters by a third and entirely different name. The aliases of American gangdom could scarcely be more confusing. Fortunately for foreigners acquiring Chinese names, they seldom have use for more than the sing and the ming.

Dr. Allen brought up the name problem one night while Burke was visiting him.

"It is high time you armed yourself with a Chinese name, Brother Burke," he said. "I will call for one of my native assistants to devise something suitable for you."

It was a week before the assistant finished mulling the thing over. Then he made his decision. Burke's name should be "Poo Wei-li." "Poo," represented by the ideograph for "cloth," was the choice for the surname—placed first, as is the Chinese order. "Wei-li," written with the characters for "gracious" and "generous," was the nearest Dr. Allen's scholar could approach "William" and yet express ideas appropriate to a good ming, or particular name. The literal interpretation of the surname is never so important—if important at all—as that of the particular name.

"Excellent," Dr. Allen had chortled when the assistant announced his choice. "Gracious-and-Generous Poo you shall be, Brother Burke."

There was very little Burke could say, though he thought "Poo" sounded somewhat inconsequential. Visiting cards, far more socially necessary in the East than in the West, were printed up accordingly. "William Burke" on one side and "Poo Wei-li" on the other.

When Burke's teacher heard of the new name, he was genuinely upset. The particular name was quite all right, he argued, but the surname not only did not approximate the "B" sound of "Burke," but it was *not* included in *Hundred Family Names*. This latter made "Poo" untenable for Kwe, who was a stickler for good custom. He therefore thought around a bit and came up with "Boo," written with the ideograph for "step"—as on a staircase.

Burke took the matter back up with the original name giver, who was forced to admit that "Boo" was much superior by virtue of its presence in *Hundred Family Names*. So all the newly printed visiting cards were junked and another batch printed for Boo Wei-li—Gracious-and-Generous Steps.

6

Kunshan Stopover

SOOCHOW'S FAME, LIKE TROY'S, rested on feminine pulchritude—only on a larger scale. All Soochow women were beautiful. And Burke was inclined to agree with this Chinese maxim, for he was in love with a Soochow woman.

Miss Addie Gordon had reached Shanghai two weeks after Burke returned from the Soochow conference. She was one of the five young women whom Mrs. Sally Truehart had guarded from the chivalrous attentions of Burke and Moseley. It was this very fact that stung the young minister into joining the mission party that went to meet Miss Gordon at the wharf.

As he glanced over the passengers on the deck of the berthing vessel, Burke saw a slender figure, wearing a dark bonnet, leaning over the rail. The face under the bonnet was decidedly pretty. With his eyes still on the face, he asked absently of one of the women missionaries standing by him:

"Do you see anything of Miss Gordon yet?"

"You are looking right at her, Mr. Burke," the woman retorted crossly.

Burke was conscious of an irrepressible little jolt around his solar plexus and he knew he was glad he had come down to the wharf. His eyes followed the slender figure as she walked down the gangway, the billowing, ankle-length dress failing to hide her light, graceful movements.

Miss Gordon left for Soochow the following day and settled in the mission compound there to study the language. Burke had had barely a chance to speak to her, much less become acquainted well enough for an excuse to visit her in Soochow. Then, too, he came down with smallpox a week later.

It was only with the coming of China New Year the following February that he brought himself to make the Soochow trip. Missionaries were in the habit of visiting around their stations during these three or four weeks of native holidays and Burke felt he could casually run over to Soochow and call on Miss Gordon without transgressing nineteenth-century propriety.

With this in view, he arrived at the Soochow Creek boat hong early the fourth day of the New Year and took passage on a westbound canal "express" boat. Although structurally low, narrow, and covered with rounded bamboo-mat sections like a footboat, the express is considerably larger and is powered by one to five slender, stern sculling oars. Burke bent under the mat cowling and took a vacant place on the benchlike seat running around the inside of

the hull. There were a score of other passengers. They all seemed to be either spitting watermelon-seed hulls on the floor or just spitting. One man blew his nose into his hands and rubbed them together. No wonder Chinese shook their own hands when meeting.

The people stared, pointed, and talked about the big foreigner from the moment he entered. Only Chinese could have generated so much curiosity. A man came over and squatted on the floor of the boat in front of him and peered up into his face. Burke felt the hollow ache of loneliness creeping into his stomach. It was the first time he had actually been alone in a Chinese crowd. He thought he might try some of his new-learned language on them. Perhaps then they'd stop staring as at some different species of the animal kingdom.

"Where are you going?" he asked in his best Shanghai idiom, smiling pleasantly at the squatting man.

The squatter looked blank a moment, then broke into hysterics, looking around to his fellow passengers and pointing to Burke as much as to say:

"What a queer language this foreigner speaks."

Had the missionary's Chinese been perfect, he might well have met with the same result, for Celestials have an exasperating way of making up their minds from the beginning that Westerners can speak nothing but an unintelligible gibberish. So Burke resigned himself to the lonely ache.

The boatmen poled the express into midstream and unshipped four of the sculling oars. The boat rocked jerkily as it got under way, its progress helped by a strong incoming tide. There also was a *zung foong* (favourable wind) and when the boat reached the open canal outside the city, three of the crew raised a bamboo mast into place amidships and pulled up a square, bamboo-ribbed sail. The boat leaped forward as the wind filled the cloth and the oarsmen drew in their oars, quite content to let nature do the job. And nature did at eight or nine knots. Then the tide began changing and the wind died down. The crew took up the oars again. Finally, with the tide strong against the vessel, two men were put ashore to track along the bank, pulling the boat by a rope attached to the top of the mast.

Burke's seat, as unfortunately developed, was directly opposite the mast, where one section of the cowling had been slid back to let the pole through. Except for this opening, the boat was completely covered over by the rounded mats, for it was a frosty February day.

All went well until a two-year-old lad in the sealed fore end of the boat wanted to urinate. His mother picked him up and made for the only opening. The young foreigner moved politely aside and tried, with Victorian modesty, not to appear to notice anything. He hoped it would be accomplished smoothly. The boat's sides were rather high, though, and the woman had

trouble balancing herself, what with the boat's rocky motion and the strain of holding the baby out over the water. The baby, meanwhile, frightened and crying, refused to co-operate. At this juncture, near-by passengers, who had been observing the problem with close interest, began giving advice. The man who had squatted in front of Burke came over and showed the woman how she should rest the baby on the foot-wide deck around the gunwale instead of straining to hold him over the water. It worked out to the satisfaction of the baby, the mother, and all.

This seemed to be the starting gun for several adult excursions, with Burke moving politely aside as some men took advantage of the opening, one after the other. The young minister himself, whether by suggestion or not, was soon feeling the pangs of abstinence, but he somehow couldn't bring himself to follow the natural and uninhibited measures of the Chinese. The roots of American Puritanism were too deeply planted. He suffered stoically until the boat stopped at the next town.

It was dark when the express docked at the teahouse landing in Kunshan. Burke planned to spend the night there with Soon. He had written his college mate and the latter was at the teahouse to meet him.

"Welcome to Kunshan," he greeted cheerily, as the big missionary stepped on the landing. A crowd of people began gathering around them. People in Kunshan were not so used to foreigners as they were in Soochow.

"Two foreign devils. A giant and a dwarf," one rustic-looking man observed loudly.

"Do you see, Bill?" Soon said wryly. "The foreigners treat me like a Chinese and here you witness a Chinese saying I'm a foreigner."

The two friends walked toward the mission parsonage a quarter of a mile away. The crowd tagged behind. It was the fourth night of the New Year, one of several noisy climaxes in the month-long celebrations. Firecrackers were exploding on all sides and Chinese gongs rang out intermittently, as the two went along the narrow, crooked street.

"Not a welcome for you, Bill," Soon teased. "It's for the god of wealth. I'm sorry."

If the young missionary could have looked inside one of the many boarded-up shops he would have seen a banquet table stacked with food. Not cooked yet, but ready to be prepared for the big feast that was held in honour of the god on the fifth day. The god of wealth himself, brightly painted in his three guises on as many strips of paper, would be in the room, surveying these preparations in his honour. A more unfortunate observer would be the live carp hanging twitching at the end of a rope over the food table. If the poor fish retained enough life at dawn to swim away when thrown in the canal, the shop master would have good luck that year.

With the big feast on the morrow, the shop employees would know whether they had jobs for the coming year. Those invited to eat were the lucky ones; those who did not receive invitations knew they were fired. Just another pleasant device of the face-conscious Chinese.

Soon stopped talking as he reached the parsonage, a two-story, tile-roof house nestled in a line of identical buildings. He opened a door in the night-boarded street front.

"Please enter my humble dwelling," he said in mock Oriental courtesy.

They crossed a little court and entered a room which served as dining room and parlour. There was an oil stove in a corner and the window cracks were papered to keep out the chilly air. Soon knew the comforts of interior heating. He slipped out of his outer, quilted gown and invited Burke to take off his overcoat.

"I can never be Chinese enough to want to sit in a cold room with all my outdoor clothes on," he said.

The young wife came in a moment later. She carried two cups of tea for the men. As Soon presented her, one observation outweighed all else in Burke's mind. Her firm, full steps were graceful as any American woman's. Even in his short stay in China, he had grown accustomed to seeing upper-class Chinese women totter into a room on their malformed feet. He recollected Soon's story about the Ni's decision not to continue binding their third daughter's feet.

The three sat in the room talking. Mrs. Soon spoke in Chinese and Charlie interpreted. She knew some English, but was hesitant (as she continued to be throughout her life) about using it. Charlie's Shanghai dialect was becoming fluent, though, and he interpreted with little difficulty. Somehow the subject of footbinding came up.

"I think my mother was really happier than my father to stop binding my feet," the young woman remarked. "She knew as much as anyone how painful it was. Have you heard the story of how she had to run from the Taipings on her bound feet?"

Burke hadn't and Soon told it for his wife.

Mrs. Soon's mother was a young girl living at the Zi home at Siccawei when the Taiping Rebellion broke out in 1850. Her father, posthumously known as Fu Yuin, was commander of the Imperial forces guarding the Siccawei district. When the fanatical rebels swept down upon Shanghai in 1853, the father was killed in battle and the Zi household forced to flee for their lives.

It was more than six miles to the International Settlement at Shanghai, their only refuge. There were no conveyances and they had to walk and run across canals and along narrow paddy-field paths. For Soon's future

mother-in-law and the other womenfolk, with tiny bound feet, it was torture. The Zi girl fell exhausted time after time, but the thought of the mad rebel horde just behind kept her going.

The most heart-rending thing about the flight to the girl was the loss of the family pearls. She herself had done them up in a piece of cloth and tried to carry them with her. But they were too heavy and she had to leave them to the pillaging Taipings. In sentimental value these pearls were priceless. Most of them were from the ceremonial coat and headdress presented by a Ming emperor to Zi Kwang-kyi's celebrated Catholic daughter, known best by her Christian name, Candida.

Soon went into more detail about Candida. She was a widowed daughter of the great Zi and had taken hold of Christianity with tremendous vigour. She built churches and foundling hospitals by the score all over the empire and printed hundreds of religious pamphlets and books. Not the least of her deeds was the rounding up of Peking's blind storytellers to cram them full of Biblical lore. Then they were turned loose and told to substitute the freshly. acquired parables for their former sword-and-blood tales of the Three Kingdoms. It was in recognition of all this that the emperor had conferred on her the title of "Virtuous Woman" and presented the coat and headdress.

When Soon finished this narrative, his wife left the room to see about dinner. The men talked on. Burke could tell that Soon was genuinely in love with his wife, despite the absentee courtship. He was proud, too, of her lineage. The thought of her great forebear serving under the Mings, the last pure Chinese dynasty, appealed to his growing patriotism. Soon, at that time, probably already was thinking of resigning from the mission to take an active part in the revolutionary movement against the usurping Manchus; though it was to be two years before he did resign.

"Sometimes I think I could do more for my people if I were free of the mission, Bill," he said that night in Kunshan. "You know the way I feel about the spiritual and material burdens under which I labour in the mission."

Soon was always frank. The chief material burden was his salary and he admitted it. He was paid on the basis of a native preacher, or about $10 a month, with the prospects of having it increased a few more dollars if he had any children. Yet Soon felt he was in as responsible a position as some of the foreign missionaries were and was unhappy about what he considered an unfair discrimination in pay. Dr. Allen had been right after a fashion in his prognosis.

"But please believe me, Bill," Soon urged. "If I do happen to leave the mission, it will never mean my giving up of preaching Christ and Him crucified. I will continue to work as much as I can for the mission always."

Burke believed him; nevertheless, he hoped Charlie would change his

mind about leaving the mission. He liked to see a man stick a thing through, no matter what the odds. But he didn't want to argue with his old friend about it. It was a decision Charlie would have to make himself.

7

Courtship in Soochow

BURKE RESUMED THE TRIP to Soochow in the morning on another express boat, arriving there that night. He found his way through the winding streets to the mission compound, where warm welcome and dinner were waiting at Dr. Park's home.

Breakfast was hardly down the next day when he was out for a "stroll." It led straight toward the home of Mrs. J. P. Campbell, matron of the woman's mission hospital. Miss Gordon was staying there. As he turned up the brick path leading to the house, he caught himself breathing faster. The slim figure and pretty face seen on the ship's deck was sitting in the sun on the top step of the veranda. She was writing in a small notebook held on her knees. Hearing Burke's steps, she looked up and smiled brightly:

"Why, Mr. Burke, where on earth did you come from? I thought you were in Shanghai."

"Well, it's China New Year, you know, and I just thought I'd like to see something of Soochow during the holidays," Burke said, feeling warm about the ears.

"You must not have seen much of the place when you were here for the conference last autumn then," Miss Gordon suggested.

"No, I didn't. That's right. There wasn't much time to do a good job of sightseeing." Burke felt guilty. There was a moment's strained silence as the young missionary stood at the foot of the veranda steps, hat in hand.

"I'm working on a daily schedule for myself," Miss Gordon began. "I didn't like the first one I started on. Would you like to see how I'm doing it? Maybe you could offer some suggestions."

"Well, I doubt if I could help, but I'd be glad to try," Burke replied climbing up the steps. He stood by the side of the young woman and stooped to look over her shoulder at the open notebook. On the left-hand page was a list of studies headed:

"First Year's Course for New Missionaries of the Woman's Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South."

The list read:

> Chinese course: the four Gospels, the sacraments of the Lord's supper and baptism; twenty-five hymns; the Three-Character Classics; Smith's *Catechism Life of Christ.*
>
> English course: *Child Life in Chinese Homes*; Douglas's *Confucianism*; Hendson and Taylor's *China's Spiritual Needs and Claims.*

On the right-hand page was drafted a morning schedule. There were several scratches and revisions, but it now seemed complete:

6—Rising hour.
6 to 7—Make toilette; morning devotions.
7 to 7.30—Read over lesson for Chinese prayers.
7.30 to 8.30—Attend Chinese prayers; breakfast; and read *North China Daily News.*
8.30 to 10.30—Study Chinese.
10.30 to 11.30—Visit day school.
11.30 to 12—Study Chinese.
12 to 12.30—Noon devotions.

"It looks all right, except you've got to figure out something for the afternoon and evening now," Burke commented.

"Yes, of course, Mr. Burke. Don't rush me so," she answered half querulously.

Miss Gordon was a New England "Yankee" by birth, but had moved to Mississippi at an early age and was sent out to China under the auspices of a Mississippi missionary society. She was just twenty-two, a year younger than Burke, but she made up for her age with a religious character of extraordinary depth. She was representative of the early Protestant woman missionary, often more steadfastly devout than her male colleague. Which was only to be expected, for women needed their Christian convictions more than did men to keep them far from home among a sometimes hostile people.

A few weeks after coming to Soochow, Miss Gordon met with this occasional hostility. She and another foreign woman missionary, accompanied by several Chinese girl students of the mission school, walked out of the compound to board a houseboat in the near-by canal. Along the route they passed an old, wispy-bearded Chinese and a black-robed Buddhist priest standing together.

"Good maidens," the old man said, addressing the students, "I beseech you not to eat Christian rice."

As the mission party reached the boat landing and walked down the stone steps, some men spit on them. And finally, a crowd of dirty urchins stoned the boat after the women and girls had got aboard. Miss Gordon and the second missionary knelt in the cabin and prayed, then stood up and sang hymns while the vessel glided down the canal.

Miss Gordon cried a lot that night. Mrs. Campbell sat with her and, motherlike, held her hand and said comforting things. Then they prayed together and the new missionary felt better. Later she picked up her diary and wrote:

"Natives who do not know us call us evil and are not choice in their terms. 'Tis hard sometimes to endure these things. The people for whom we have left home, loved ones and native land do not simply not thank us, but revile and dislike us. But how can they know? How can they understand? Evil themselves, and filled with Satan's arts and wiles, how can we expect them to think another people better than anything they have known. But to bring them out of darkness into light have we come. Lord, give me a strong heart for these perishing ones."

There were no anti-foreign demonstrations to mar Burke's China New Year visit. Probably because it *was* New Year and the natives were fully taken up with their long and varied celebration.

With mission schools closed and other activity cut to a fraction, the missionaries disported themselves too. On warm sunny days there were picnics in some bambooed nook, with a game of beanbag to chase down the sandwiches. Nights found the mission members gathered at one of the homes to play charades or sing hymns. Burke and Miss Gordon were always conspicuously together on these occasions.

Then one day the young couple waved propriety aside and went for an afternoon walk alone. They were going to the city wall and climb up on its age-stained ramparts. The filth-and-frankness of China met them in the streets along the way and they heroically lost themselves in aimless conversation when it rose too strong in their path. Stinking crocks of night soil stood coverless just off the main street, waiting for farmers to make their collections. Men stopped to urinate against the wall of a house or to perform another function in an open toilet shed built above one of the stinking crocks. A young mother bared her breast in a doorway to suckle her baby. A quarrelsome old crone was telling a vendor, with piercing aspirates, to commit adultery with his mother. Fortunately, missionaries rarely learn the more lusty vocabulary of the Chinese.

It was a different world atop the broad thirty-foot wall. Chinese city walls

have always been a favourite retreat for Westerners. As they gave their ancient defenders a feeling of comparative security against the arrows and spears of attacking hordes, so these tall battlements, bristling with their merlons and crenels, afford foreigners a sense of lofty detachment from the din and nausea of China's streets.

Though not to be compared with the magnificence of Peking's 25-mile colossus, Soochow's 12-mile girth of stone, brick and mortar was not an unimpressive sight. There was good reason for impressiveness. Soochow, after all, was the residence of the Kiangsu governor and the ranking city of that province after Nanking, seat of the viceroy.

Strolling along the walkway on the summit—wide enough for four men to go abreast—the two young missionaries paused often to look out over the dense city. Massive temple roofs and several pagodas broke the otherwise flat vista. Miss Gordon pointed out prominent twin pagodas. She had heard the legend about them and Burke listened as she told it.

Years before, the residents in the neighbourhood of the two pagodas were constantly badgered by misfortune. Scholars, especially, suffered, none being able to pass the government examinations. It was at last decided that something about the pagodas must be disturbing the local *foong-s* (Mandarin *feng-shui*; literally translated wind-water), that elaborate system of superstition which underlay practically everything in China.

Geomancers were called and after much reflection they observed that the pagodas could (with elevated imagination) be seen as two enormous Chinese brush pens. That being the case, an important article of the writing kit was missing—the ink block. To restore the eternal fitness of things, an oblong black building in the shape of a Chinese block of ink was erected near the "pens" and the affected scholars immediately commenced taking first honours in the examinations.

Miss Gordon and her escort had walked nearly a mile on the wall, absorbed in the pagoda legend and pleasantly conscious of the clean, fresh air, when the young woman missionary chose to peer over one of the crenels in the thick brick parapet.

She shrank back. "Mr. Burke, I don't think I shall ever become accustomed to the way the Chinese leave their dead unburied."

Burke glanced down. On the ground by the stone base of the wall was a line of five wooden coffins. They might have been there two months or two years. And they might be there an indefinite period longer: until the families of the occupants, with the aid of geomancers, could find a grave location where the foong-s would be favourable. Rich families rented space in specialized coffin-storage houses for their unburied dead, but poorer families left their coffins out in the open, as here by the Soochow city wall.

There was little possibility of contamination or odour, for the coffins were made of stout timbers and tightly sealed and the bodies themselves were packed in lime.

Burke was in Soochow two weeks during the New Year holidays and, on the weight of that precedent, was back for another visit the following month. Dr. Allen took a half-serious view of the matter and mentioned it in a letter to Mrs. Nightman, one of the officers of the woman's board:

> ". . . Will Burke is very sweet on Miss Addie Gordon at Suchow [old romanization of Soochow] and were it not for that five years limit with its penalties guarding it as a barbed wire fence, your society might soon have to supply a vacancy. Our young ladies, particularly the last batch, are exceptionally good looking and it is not at all to be wondered at that they attract attention."

These "penalties" were both material and spiritual. The woman's board, trying valiantly to outflank Cupid, made its appointees sign a five-year contract under which the women missionaries must forfeit travel expenses to foreign fields and all salaries if they married before the time limit. In addition, the phraseology of the contract was such that the duty-bound young ladies felt almost sinful about breaking it. And Miss Gordon had an unusually strong sense of duty.

Burke's persistence and her duty soon stirred up a conflict of the first order. There were signs of it in Miss Gordon's diary in April, two months after the New Year visit:

> "Sunday night while sitting alone a letter came. I trembled as I read it. I read between the lines that which might tempt me to abandon so lonely a life as this sometimes is. But God has helped me up to this pathway. I may not now enter any other. I feel that it is God's will for me to give Him *five years of service.*"

8

Breaking New Ground

SHANGHAI'S INTERNATIONAL ATMOSPHERE, reeking with an unholy mixture of vice, intrigue, profit, and religion, depressed Burke.

He knew that just behind this crazy façade was real China—a totally different place—and he wanted to be there. The filth-and-frankness he had seen only convinced him of his need there. There was darkness, thick and heavy. His evangelical ideas had not been weakened by the educationalists and his youthful energies begged to be turned loose in the crowded streets and villages. His language was none too good yet, but he reasoned that, like the boy pitched into deep water, he would learn faster if he had to.

Late in April, 1888, seven months after reaching China, he decided to begin the work of opening up the foreign mission station at Sungkiang. A native preacher named Zung had been sent down earlier to lay some amount of groundwork for the new outpost. Besides his own house, Zung had rented a place in his name for Burke. This was necessary to avoid any difficulties which might arise if the city authorities discovered a foreigner was about to be harboured among them. No foreigner was living in Sungkiang then, or had lived there since the last years of the Taiping Rebellion, more than twenty-five years before, when the American soldier of fortune, General Frederick Townsend Ward, made the city his headquarters against the rebels.

Kwe, who had grown quite attached to his young student, wanted to go live with him in Sungkiang. Burke was hesitant over accepting the teacher's offer, for Kwe's health was poor and the interior meant rougher living than Shanghai. Like so many scholars of Old China, Kwe had learned the classics at the expense of bodily upkeep and he was skinnily on the brink of tuberculosis. But Kwe was determined to go and Burke was far from unappreciative of the immense help the teacher could be to him in the strange new city.

Besides Kwe, Burke was accompanied by a cook, a coolie, and a cat. The latter he had raised from a stray kitten found outside Reid's door. With an unconscious weakness for portmanteaus, Burke called the animal "mats," obviously a combination of the Chinese word for cat, *mau*, and the English. Persons and cat were loaded on a houseboat one dawn. Packed around them

were furniture, personal truck, and medical supplies. A 24-hour row lay ahead.

The young missionary spent most of the day on the broad foredeck, holding the cat in his lap and strumming a Hawaiian guitar. The guitar had been a parting gift when he left Macon. He hadn't played it much up until then—except when he was in smallpox quarantine—but now he somehow felt a great urge to play. He was off on his own in this heathen land. He was the spearhead of a new foray by God's forces. The devil and his might must be swept out of Sungkiang. Burke felt exultant and his energies came out in a hodgepodge of "Dixie," Stephen Foster ballads, and Negro spirituals.

A new season was unfolding before him. On his previous Soochow trips, he had seen both the autumn's yellow, waving grain and the winter's grey, denuded fields. Now he watched spring planting; planting which probably had not changed since Abraham's time, but which was amazingly scientific from centuries of trial and error.

Most of the farms already had been ploughed and were being flooded. Crescent-horned water buffaloes, wearing tortoise shells for blinders, plodded slowly around under the straw roofs of countless irrigation pumps, turning the big horizontal pump wheel. The wheels were geared to the endless-chain belt of paddle buckets, which drew the water from canal to fields.

Straw-hatted farmers, with brown legs bare to the thighs, sloshed through the flooded fields behind buffalo-drawn harrows. Here and there, thick, pea-green patches of young rice shoots (yang) brightened the corner of a field. A woman was tossing night soil from a long-handled dipper over one patch. Soon men would be wading in the glistening, harrowed fields, setting out the green plants in long, straight rows. No dust or drought or flood or famine in this rich, black, Lower Yangtze earth.

The houseboat was in sight of the Sungkiang city walls when Burke awoke in the morning. The dark-grey battlements, covered in places with ivy, presented an imposing sight against the early morning sky. Not as imposing as Soochow's walls, but nothing mean in their four-mile perimeter. To Burke, they were equal to anything the provincial capital's barriers could show. Sungkiang was his city. He already was beginning to feel a sort of patriotic pride in the place.

Kwe arose and joined Burke on deck as the houseboat skirted near the north-west corner of the walls. He had been to Sungkiang before and knew much of its history and culture. It, like Soochow, was noted for its scholars. The teacher picked out an ornately carved stone arch with six pillars. It stood on the north bank. That, Kwe said, had been built in honour of Sungkiang's *zaung nyoen* (title of the senior wrangler of the Hanlin Academy at Peking). This first scholar of the land had lived generations ago and the arch was

crumbling away, but what excitement Sungkiang had felt the day carrier pigeons or swift relays of couriers sped the news of his supreme literary attainment the thousand miles from the capital to the Kiangsu prefectural city. Firecrackers had burst, gongs clashed, and the family of the Hanlin victor had scattered rice in front of Sungkiang's four city gates that its good fortune might spread in some measure to all families there.

Farther on, the houseboat entered a lakelike bulge in the canal, which Kwe called the White Dragon Pond and said was the place where the renowned Manchu contemporary of George Washington, Ch'ien Lung, had once reviewed his navy. A stone tablet, carved with an inscription written by the mighty emperor (Ch'ien Lung,who conceived of himself as a peerless scholar, was constantly composing stone inscriptions for futurity) marked the spot on which he had stood to watch the junk armada row by.

Now the crowded, smelly canal closed in upon the mission party. Burke looked down the lines of close-packed houses. The boatmen were sculling and poling the houseboat along at a snail's pace through an early-morning jam of other craft: small open farm boats, laden to the gunwales with slopping night soil; footboats, "express" boats, freight junks, and bamboo rafts. Curses and jollities flew from side to side between the passing crews.

Women squatted on stone steps, emptying earthen urinals, scrubbing out red wooden toilet stools and washing baskets of rice—all in the same water. The houseboat passed under a tall humped stone bridge and edged up to a public landing jetty. The boatmen jabbed a pole through the deck hole into the canal bottom.

"Sungkiang," Kwe announced smiling. He waved his arm in an arc taking in the disordered vista of black-tile houses. Two pagodas broke the sky line behind, one directly north-west and the other far to the east of the landing. A crowd was beginning to collect. Word was spreading fast about the giant, bearded *nga-kok-nyung* (foreigner or, literally, outside-country man) on the houseboat. One of the boatmen was sent off to find Zung. When he returned with the preacher, the two had to shout and push their way through the throngs at the landing.

Burke, Kwe, and the servants went ashore along the houseboat's foot-wide gangplank. The crowd closed in at once. Men and women felt the young missionary's clothes, stared into his face, and laughed and giggled. But they seemed friendly and Burke's heart slowed down a few beats.

A short passageway led from the landing to the main business street, or Big Street, as the Chinese simply called it. The mission boat had stopped at the *li-kwe-yuh* (inside official landing), where great officials—such as the governor—sometimes came ashore on their inspection tours. It was the landing nearer the city, as the name implied. More often, the officials chose

to be carried off in their green, four-man chairs at the *nga-kwe-yuh* (outside official landing), which was farther from the city and gave the opportunity for a longer and more showy procession to the prefect's yamen, or wherever else in the city the destination might be.

The Big Street was a twisting, flagstone thoroughfare hardly eight feet wide and seeming all the narrower because of the solid front shops and homes pushing in from both sides. And what space there should have been above the street was cluttered with shop signs, clothes drying, shade mats, and what not. The street itself teemed with life. Coolies jogged along with loads suspended from their bamboo shoulder poles; peasants carried baskets of stuff hung over their arms; shopkeepers and assistants stood about in front of business places; mangy curs stalked or lay curled in the dank filth of the sewerless place, and an occasional chicken sauntered out to peck up a food morsel.

Zung led Burke's party, with the crowd streaming behind, to a building like any of the other surrounding shops, except that its front was shuttered with night boards. It was like the other shops, because it formerly had been a shop itself. The preacher opened a door on one side and Burke stepped in over the high threshold plank. People piled in behind. There was no keeping them out.

Inside was an empty room, measuring about twenty-five by fifteen feet, where the old business establishment had been operated. Up a flight of rickety wooden stairs was a similar room, probably the shop's storeroom. The shop opened behind on a small courtyard. Back of that was another two-story structure, the private living quarters of the shopkeeper. It had two rooms on the ground floor and two above. A kitchen,with its brick-and-mortar, straw-burning stove, was stuck off on one side, while the servants' rooms were above that. The rear apartment's windows, paned with oyster shells, overlooked the canal on which the young missionary had just arrived.

As the inspection tour ended, Burke was fixing in his mind how he would arrange things. The front shoproom, opening as it did on the Big Street, would be exactly suited for a chapel. The room above it would be his bedroom. The two bottom rooms of the back apartment could be used as dining room and study and Kwe could sleep in one of the rooms above. The other could be made into a guest room.

The remainder of the day was devoted to unloading the houseboat and putting furniture and stores into place. Boatmen, servants, and missionary struggled together on the heavier things. One of the heaviest was a mahogany roll-top desk, which had belonged to Burke's father and which the latter had shipped over from Georgia. Through it all the crowd never lost interest.

Even when the job was done and Burke and Kwe sat down for supper,

curious townspeople still gaped about, asking questions without end. Burke was on the point of losing patience several times and clearing the house of them, but he controlled himself. These were the people he had come to serve. He wanted to be friendly with them. In that frame of mind he would try harder to understand their questions and talk to them. He wasn't very successful—outside of holding their interest and keeping them from going home.

Kwe excused himself after eating and went to his room. Burke sat by his desk in the study trying to entertain a dozen grown-ups and children. Finally, the last uninvited guest said "*ming-tsau-we*" (good night or, more literally, until tomorrow good-bye) and Burke found himself blessedly alone for the first time that day. He sat in the desk chair with the cat on his lap, watching the native bean-oil lamp splutter. He remembered he had forgotten to bring his kerosene lamp from Shanghai. Oh, well, he could have Reid send it down next week. He felt tired.

The first problem in the morning was drinking water. The Chinese got theirs from the canal, but they never drank it raw or even as water. They always boiled it and made tea. That was why so many Chinese lived, despite the sewage that went through them. Burke took more precautions still. He put the canal water into an earthen crock, mixed in alum to settle the larger suspended matter, then boiled the water and ran it through a filter.

As soon as he could outfit the little chapel room with benches and a crude pulpit, Burke was ready to hold his first gospel service. Zung arrived at the appointed hour to do the actual preaching—as he would do until the missionary's language improved. There was no bell to call the service, so Burke, Kwe, and Zung simply took the night shutters off the street entrance and started singing a hymn.

A bell could scarcely have been more effective; people overflowed the place. It was a rare treat for Sungkiangites to see a foreigner—much less hear one sing. It was possibly as astonishing as would be the appearance of a lama on the streets of Macon repeating his "Om mani padme hum."

Burke was unquestionably an interesting singer too. He had a lusty voice which quite drowned out his two colleagues and he threw it in a peculiar way out of the left corner of his mouth. He read from a Chinese hymnal and whenever he came to a character he didn't know—which was often at that time—he just as loudly substituted the first word that came into his mind, be it English, Latin, Greek, or Hebrew.

After the opening hymn, Burke and Kwe sat in chairs in the front of the chapel, while Zung went to the pulpit. From this point on, the service was a revelation to the new missionary. First, Zung cleared his throat and spit on the floor to one side of the pulpit. After all, he was of good, common

Chinese stock and made no pretension of taking the West's manners along with its religion. But the manners of Zung worried Burke not nearly so much as the manners of the congregation. There was complete and steady confusion on the floor. Children running and shouting. People coming in for a moment and then leaving. Men smoking pipes, swigging noisily from the spouts of their brass teapots or cracking and spitting out watermelon-seed hulls. Everyone seemed to be talking, and not softly.

Zung preached through it all, not the slightest ruffled. But Burke could only think of how impossible it would be for him to face such an audience and keep any thoughts collected. He remembered grimly the conclusions he had drawn about Chinese attentiveness from the steerage passengers on the *City of New York.*

Nevertheless, Burke plunged on. His evangelistic schedule called for three chapel services a week and he had them. In addition, he went out on the streets to sell Biblical tracts and picture calendars. The latter were specially printed for religious work and every missionary kept a large supply, as they were popular with the Chinese. They were illustrated with coloured scenes from the Scriptures and inscribed in Chinese with suitable exhortative verses from the same source. The price of two cash each—which extended to the tracts as well—was not a prohibitive price, or even enough to cover printing costs (a cash being less than a tenth of an American cent then). But it was sufficient to place a real value on the article in the eyes of the frugal Chinese and ensure its not being thrown away.

The results of the services and tract sales these first days in Sungkiang were far from promising. There did seem to be somewhat less disorder in the chapel, but people were not reacting as the young missionary had hoped. No one was ever inspired to ask a question about the gospel or to show any interest whatsoever in the matter. How were these people to be argued out of their darkness if they wouldn't argue?

Only one man was won over heart and soul to the new religion. He was a *gaung-doo* (feeble-minded person). He attended every service, rushing in for a front-row bench as soon as the shutters were off the chapel. After absorbing something of the gospel for a few weeks, he became a bit more of a problem by occasionally wanting to preach himself, interrupting Zung and adding new uproar to the meeting.

It was discouraging.

9

Sungkiang Side Lights

FROM THE WALKWAY on top Sungkiang's crenelated walls, the city spread out in packed acres of black roofs, tiled in roll-and-pan fashion.

The flat expanse was broken only by the two aforementioned pagodas, the tall gate of the prefect's yamen, and a few large temple roofs. Estimates of the population ranged from 75,000 to 100,000, a fair-sized city for a country where most inhabitants lived in farm hamlets and small villages.

"Sungkiang," of course, was the Mandarin spelling (as are all romanizations in the Chinese Postal Guide). No real Sungkiang man pronounced it that way. In the local dialect it was "Soong-kaung," meaning "Pine River." Sometimes foreigners referred to it, as to other prefecture capitals, as "Sungkiangfu," which was comparable to saying "New York State" for the city, New York. *Fu* (or *foo*, in the local dialect) meant "prefecture" and Sungkiangfu was the prefecture of which the city, Sungkiang, was the seat.

There was considerable wealth in this city, most of it in the hands of the landlords of surrounding rice fields. Politically, Sungkiang ranked high in the province. The prefecture of nine *yoen* (Mandarin, *hsien*), or counties, administered there included the port of Shanghai. Besides the prefect, Sungkiang also seated two *yoen tsang*, or county magistrates, for the boundaries of two yoen—the Leu and the Woding—met in the city.

As mayors of their respective city boroughs, these magistrates were the real local administrators. In addition to being the city's mayors, each was his county's tax commissioner, treasurer, deed recorder, coroner, superintendent of education, commissioner of industry, head of the local militia and police, administrator of poor relief, commissioner of public works, and last but not least, judge of civil and criminal courts. Despite this string of offices, Chinese magistrates of that day were seldom known to suffer from overwork.

With that curious impulse which seems to animate cities in both Orient and Occident, Sungkiang had expanded outside its walls in a westerly direction, until now there was more of it outside than in. The term "East Sungkiang had expanded outside its walls in a westerly direction, until now there was more of it outside than in. The term "East Sungkiang" had somewhat the same connotation as "East Side New York" or "East End London" or even the eastern section of Burke's native town of Macon. The missionary liked to explain this westward propulsion as having some relation to the

centrifugal motion of the earth and the cerebral configurations resulting from it, an interesting if not undebatable view. At any rate, there was as marked a variation between the speech of an Eastside Sungkiangite and a Westsider as between Cockney and Piccadillian.

The new missionary parsonage-chapel was in the more prosperous business section outside the West Gate of the walled city. This was in the area under the authority of the Leu magistrate.

Burke retained vivid recollections of his first sight of the magistrate. It was one morning while the young missionary was in his study writing Chinese characters with Kwe. Both raised their heads at the din of a brass gong approaching in the distance.

"Probably an official procession," Kwe suggested apathetically, resuming his appraisal of Burke's chirography. The latter could not be so casual about it. As the brass strokes rose louder, he ran for the street door. Opening it, he saw a red-jacketed lictor coming along the narrow way at a rapid walk. He was beating a gong with a knotted rope end and shouting:

"Clear the way! The great man comes! Silence!"

A few paces behind came other red-coated runners, in two single files, holding aloft boards inscribed with the magistrate's various titles and degrees, honorary and real. Other inscriptions merely reiterated the gong-beater's cries. Then came a green sedan chair, like the one Burke had seen on the mandarin boat. It was carried swiftly by four men, two at each end of the pair of supporting shafts. As the chair passed the mission door, Burke glimpsed a fattish face with a black down-drooping moustache. On the man's head was a white straw hat—cone shaped—with red tassels flopping down from the peak to the brim. The chair curtain hid the rest of him.

Kwe, who had decided to follow Burke to the door and was interpreting what passed, called attention to the round rock-crystal button on top of the cone-shaped hat. It marked the magistrate as an official of the fifth rank, each of the nine Chinese official ranks being denoted by the sort of stone used for hat buttons. Marks of official rank in Old China were further hidden in such subtleties as the thickness of shoe soles and the type of cushion one sat on.

In addition to its high civil authorities, Sungkiang was headquarters of the commanding general of Kiangsu Province. There were extensive barracks and drill grounds inside the walled city, where the Imperial garrison was quartered. Sungkiang had always been a strategic military point, commanding approaches into the rich hinterland from both Hangchow Bay on the south and the Yangtze mouth to the east. Japanese pirates had penetrated to its walls in their fierce coastal raids of the sixteenth century. And even as late as 1860, Taiping rebels and Imperial forces had struggled for its possession.

Scars of this devastating rebellion still blotched Sungkiang when Burke

arrived. Weed-grown piles of masonry lay in deserted lots, where fire or cannon had crumpled them. The same evidence, often worse, existed all along the 2,000-mile line from Canton to Tientsin, where the Taipings and Imperialists had fought, burned, pillaged, raped, and otherwise tortured and slaughtered their fellow countrymen. Modest estimates of the number of non-combatants put to death during the fifteen years of fighting come to twenty millions, while some good authorities place the figure at more than fifty millions.

There is a strange paradox in the peaceful nature of the Chinese and the violent outlawry and rebellions which have marked every generation of China's history. If it can be laid to anything in particular, it is in the essentially individualistic character of the people. Tyrannical government will be stood just so long, then restraint breaks down. Thus dynasties have risen and fallen in China, the changes always occurring in moments of moral and physical inadequacies on the Dragon Throne. In a way, there seems to be something more virile here than in the philosophy of one unchanging line of rule—as in Japan.

Be that as it may, the Taipings, charged with a novel brand of pseudo-Christian fanaticism, showed promise in the beginning of ridding the country of the decadent, usurping Manchus. But once established in Nanking, the "Elder Brother of Christ" (as Hung Siu-tsuen, the Taiping leader envisaged himself) turned more despotic and decadent than his Imperial adversaries. Nevertheless, he might have maintained himself some years longer had not Frederick Ward started the fatal ball rolling by capturing Sungkiang.

Ward was a native of Salem, Massachusetts. He entered West Point and failed, but he was a born soldier and he set out in his teens to be one on his own account. He served with Garibaldi in South America, fought with the notorious Walker in Mexico, and saw service against the Russians in the Crimea. When the Taipings were threatening Shanghai for the second time in 1860 (they had been driven out in 1853), Ward was a twenty-nine-year-old chief officer on the American-built gunboat *Confucius*, one of a large fleet of armed craft financed by the terrified Chinese merchants of that city.

Ward soon got an introduction to Yang Tze-tang, the rich banker head of the merchants' organization and also a front for Li Hung-chang, the up-and-coming young Imperial general. Ward boldly told Yang he would capture Sungkiang and relieve the rebel pressure on Shanghai for 30,000 taels (about $40,000). Yang agreed and Ward collected a motley force of a hundred men, most of them deserters—Ward's promises of pay and booty were alluring—from European ships in port.

In June, 1860, this rabble marched across the flooded paddy fields to Sungkiang. The place swarmed with defiant rebels, who had captured, then

lost, then recaptured the city from the Imperialists. With no artillery to breach the walls, Ward tried scaling them, but was severely beaten off.

Back in Shanghai with the remnant of his men, Ward was clapped into a warship's brig by the American consul. The consul was worried about United States neutrality and he was inspired, as well, by the British consul's rage over the plague of desertions on English ships.

Ward proceeded at once to jump through a porthole, swim the Whangpoo, and lead another attack on Sungkiang. This time he had an even smaller force of Europeans and Filipinos, but he managed to surprise the city's defenders by night. A wiry Manilaman named Vincente Macanaya immortalized himself by leading a squad over the walls and throwing open a gate, through which Ward and his men charged. The rebels, confronted by the fierce "devil soldiers," quickly surrendered.

Established in Sungkiang, Ward commenced working out a pet idea of his—building up a purely Chinese army, but dressed in European uniforms and drilled by Europeans in modern warfare. Sungkiang became an advanced military school, with the Imperialists gladly sponsoring the project and making Ward an officer in their regular army. Nor was the American disappointed in the quality of the Chinese troops after proper training and leadership. They won battle after battle against the rebels and in March, 1862, the throne promoted Ward to *chen-tai* (brigadier) and conferred on his force the title of "Ever Victorious Army."

Ward, meanwhile, had grown rich from the booty of captured towns and had married a Chinese, the daughter of the banker Yang. He once made efforts to become a Chinese citizen himself, embittered as he was by his treatment at the hands of American authorities. This attitude changed though. His successes and their effect in safeguarding foreign trade in Shanghai made him a hero to British and Americans and he, in turn, succumbed to their lionizing. He even waxed patriotic, going so far as to write Anson Burlingame, the American minister at Peking, proposing to contribute 10,000 taels (more than $10,000) to the Union's cause against the Confederacy.

The contribution never materialized. In September, 1862, before Burlingame had replied, Ward was fatally wounded in the chest by a rebel bullet fired from the walls of Tszki, near the port of Ningpo. He died a few hours later on board the British warship *Hardy*.

The body was brought back to Sungkiang for burial and Emperor T'ung Chih directed the prefect there and at Ningpo to erect special shrines to the memory of the American warrior. On March 10, 1877, the shrine at Sungkiang was dedicated in an elaborate ceremony of parades, gongs, and firecrackers. Incense was burned before Ward's spirit tablet by members of the

old "Ever Victorious." Flattering inscriptions were hung on columns on either side of the tablet:

> "A wonderful hero from beyond the seas, the fame of whose deserving loyalty reaches around the world, has sprinkled China with his azure blood."

And:

> "A happy seat among the clouds [Sungkiang's ancient name had been Among-the-Clouds] and shrines standing for a thousand springs make known to all his faithful heart."

A third inscription in another part of the little shrine building was no less complimentary:

> "An illustrious man from beyond the seas; he came thousands of li to accomplish great deeds and acquire immortal fame by shedding his blood. Because of him Sungkiang will be a happy land for a thousand autumns. This shrine will witness to his generous spirit."

The American consul, in a patriotic heat, came down from Shanghai hard on the heels of this dedicatory ceremony and carried off the spirit tablet. This raised so strong a protest from the Imperial government, however, that it had to be returned to its niche in the Sungkiang shrine.

Ward's great English mastiff, who had followed into every battle, survived him several years. The big dog was a terrifying sight to the natives as he walked daily about the city, apparently looking for his master. When the animal died, the prefect ordered his body buried beside Ward's. The small mound stands to this day next to the American's grave.

After Ward's death, Charles ("Chinese") Gordon—later of Khartoum fame—took over the "Ever Victorious" and led it on to crush the Taipings in 1864. But neither he nor Ward proved a permanent stimulus to the Chinese military. Burke was aware of this whenever he watched Sungkiang's Imperial garrison put on one of its periodical competitive drills.

More than fifteen years after the Germans had presaged the twentieth-century blitzkrieg in the Franco-Prussian War, Chinese troops were still engaging in comic-opera manœuvres with bows and arrows. The textbook of military tactics officially in use was one written by Sun Wu in 550 B.C. (the Chou dynasty). But if the manœuvres were of impractical vintage, that very fact, plus the natural theatrics of the Chinese, resulted in a highly entertaining spectacle.

Hundreds of townspeople were lined around the drill grounds when Burke came to see his first drill. He climbed on a low wall to watch the proceedings. At one end of the field was the judges' stand, where the general, the colonel, and other officials were seated in lavish ceremonial robes. In front of the stand, two lines of troops stood facing each other. Those in one line, supposed to represent tigers, wore yellow uniforms with black stripes. On their heads were helmet masks, with ears and cheek bristles. The opposing troops were "dragons." They wore headdresses decked with horns and shining scales. All the soldiers had the character "brave" sewed on their breasts and backs.

Suddenly there was a loud thumping of drums and the two lines leaped into the air and closed in combat, howling and roaring. No weapons were used, the issue being decided by feats of individual strength, vocal cords included. The victor was the one who could drag or carry his antagonist away a prisoner.

The second event was swordplay. The troops again assembled in two confronting lines, a safe twenty feet apart. Each man held a Chinese great sword by its two-handed hilt. At the drum signal, the swords were brandished in a flurry of flashing arcs and cross slashes. Winners were picked by certain subtleties of stance. The same routine was followed with heavy Chinese spears.

Finally came horseback archery, a more spectacular, if not more practical war game than what had gone before. But as in everything they touch, the Chinese had overcivilized it. A shallow trench had been cut a hundred paces or so in length in front of the target. This spared the rider the trouble of guiding his horse.

The archers came up singly to the starting end of the trench, astride small but sturdy Mongolian ponies. Their bows were the regular Manchu type, resembling the classic Greek weapons. They were made of horn-inlaid wood and when unstrung sprang back until the inside was convex in shape. There is no doubt it took considerable strength to draw one of these bows. The arrows were over three feet long and tipped with iron. They were feathered up the shaft for fully ten inches.

Starting his horse in the trench, the first rider pricked him to a gallop and as he passed in front of the target, twenty or thirty paces away, let fly with an arrow. The first horseman was followed by another and another, ten paces behind each other. The aim was generally good—though arrows sometimes came swishing dangerously near the line of spectators.

Then the manœuvres were over. Not one modern firearm—not even a rifle—had made its appearance. There was a kind of incongruity between this sort of military preparation and the bellicose attitude the Chinese were

then taking toward Japan over the Korean question. Burke had seen a parade of goose-stepping Japanese marines (Japan had exchanged her French instructors for German after the Prussian victory in 1879) in Shanghai. The little men of Nippon had plans and they knew the kind of teeth needed in this modern jungle called "civilization."

10

Sacred Characters

WHEN THE ART OF WRITING was invented, according to the Chinese, "heaven rejoiced and hell trembled." One mythological account tells how the god of writing imitated the footprints of birds in elaborating the art of forming ideographs. However that may be, Chinese looked upon their characters as something sacred in the old Imperial days, before the deluge of modern printing presses and cheap newspapers.

The literati were not averse to this reverence of their art and did their best to foster it. In Sungkiang, as elsewhere, a group of them were organized into a sort of "Association for the Preservation of Chinese Characters." This association had built a small, round brick furnace in a temple yard south-west of the city for the specific purpose of immortalizing discarded characters. Old wall posters, scraps of circulars or books, torn letters or any other flotsam with writing on it, which had fallen on the street and was in danger of an impious foot, was fit fuel for the furnace.

Anyone could lay up a store of good luck by picking up such stray characters and bringing them to the furnace to burn. When reduced to ashes, the immortal spirits of the characters were liberated. The ashes were then placed on sale and usually found a lively market. A fisherman might buy a handful to scatter on a piece of water to ensure a record catch. Or some might be bought to toss under a sick man's bed as a nemesis to the evil spirits lurking there.

It was unfortunate, therefore, that Burke's first serious misstep in Sungkiang should be to offend the sacred characters. And in a most unpardonable way.

It all came about when the farmer who bought the parsonage night-soil

supply came early one morning on his collection rounds. The excrement was daily stored in a big crock near the house by Burke's coolie, who had privately contracted with the farmer for its sale. Burke had no inkling of the matter, ignorant as he was of such customary transactions in China.

As the farmer filled his two wooden buckets on this particular morning, he was horrified to see some pieces of paper with Chinese characters on them. He picked them out, wiped them off and stored them under his white cotton jacket to take them to the furnace later. Then he dumped the bucket-loads into his open farm boat, which was already deep in the water from fillings out of other night-soil crocks, and went to his favourite teahouse to get breakfast and tell his story. There was no doubt in his mind that the outrage to the characters had been committed by the newly arrived foreign devil. Before the day was over, the entire city was talking about it and Burke himself learned of it as soon as his cook got back from a teahouse that afternoon.

The modest young minister felt self-conscious over the affair, to put it mildly. Not so much from the realization of the sacred quality of Chinese writing—though Kwe tried to impress the idea upon him—but simply from the standpoint of knowing a whole city was discussing his more personal habits.

Among the common people there was no effort to confine the discussion behind his back. Men sitting in teahouses along the narrow main street pointed to him as he came by selling calendars and shouted to their friends:

"Here comes the foreign devil who employs characters at the stool." Children would pick up the shout and Burke would redden. It was hard to adjust oneself to Oriental candour.

There were other and more serious repercussions. The cook came in from his teahouse a few days later with the rumour that the literati association was planning to go before the Leu magistrate to get official action against the foreigner, possibly an order for his expulsion from Sungkiang. Attendance at the chapel services began falling off. And no one would buy calendars or tracts. Only the gaung-doo stayed faithfully by.

Burke was worried, but not defeated. In fact, he decided it would be an opportune time to begin some evangelistic work in the rural districts. The character-offence business would surely blow over soon in the city. So he rented a houseboat and set out one dawn with Kwe and Zung.

The party headed toward a marketing town at the juncture of two important canals. Here, the boatmen said, a large fair was being held. The place would be full of people from the surrounding farm hamlets.

There was a zung foong all the way and the town, some thirty *li* distant (about ten miles), was reached before noon. Boats which had brought people

to the fair lined the canal banks and the mission craft was forced to stop nearly half a mile below the town itself. The boatmen threw the vessel's big four-pronged grapnel and rope ashore to make fast, and Burke got off alone with an armful of calendars and tracts. He started up the canal bank toward the town, planning to draw a crowd back to the boat and let Zung preach to them there.

Interest in the town centred on the public market square, a space the size of two tennis courts, bounded by teahouses and a temple. In one corner, an itinerant theatrical troupe had set up a wooden stage and was going through the endless processes of presenting a Chinese play. Fierce-masked generals, timid maidens, handsome dukes, and a score of other romantic characters came on and off the platform, singing their parts in falsetto. There were no divisions into scenes and acts and the stage was bare except for a table and two chairs. A property boy stood behind the table throwing the right number of pillows under officials as they sat down. The length of the play was limited only by the duration of the fair and might go on for two or three days.

People milled about, alternately talking to friends, buying from clamorous market hawkers, or paying attention to the play. It was absolute bedlam in the Western sense, but the Chinese loved it. A fair was one of the few breaks in the monotony of rural life. It was the farmer's Sabbath. He was able to get away from the humdrum of his isolated community and gossip and gamble in the teahouses. He watched the play, saw the quack, and consulted the fortune-teller, of which there was an adequate supply sitting at tables in front of the temple.

Burke reached the town outskirts and, as he had anticipated, the sight of a huge, bearded foreigner attracted a crowd at once. The people followed him, growing rapidly in number, as he walked through the main street. He paused now and again to sell his wares. They went well. Then he entered the market square and the throngs following him burst in upon the already crowded place. Those in the square who couldn't explain the sudden pressure of people became panicky and fought to get out. The incoming tide fought just as hard to look at the "bearded foreigner." The result was a growing confusion.

The critical thing happened at that point. A travelling kitchen standing on one side of the square was knocked over by the crowd, scattering hot charcoal, bean curd, meat balls, griddle cakes, and other viands on the ground. The owner let out a howl. From his vantage place away from the centre of the throngs, he had watched the disorder develop and he reasoned, not without good grounds, that Burke was the specific cause of his misfortunes. The vendor apparently was a Sungkiang man too, or at least knew

about the character offence. Whatever the explanation, he began pointing and shouting wildly at the young missionary, who stood head and shoulders above the crowd. Burke could catch nothing but the phrase with which he was so painfully familiar:

"The foreigner who employs characters at the stool!"

The man kept hammering the idea into the crowd until Burke became the centre of decidedly hostile attention. Realizing his predicament, but Irishly stubborn about running away, he looked around hurriedly for an "excuse" to get out of the square. He saw a group of boys laughing at him from a pile of bricks near the street entrance. He was sorry, but they'd have to be the scapegoats. Contorting his bearded face into his best rendition of Ivan the Terrible, he charged through the mob toward the unsuspecting urchins. The terrified youngsters broke into the street and away, with the big missionary close on their heels, taking advantage of the wake they left.

Reaching the edge of town, he forgot the boys and struck out across the rice fields on a short cut to the houseboat. He almost lost balance several times on the narrow dikes which served as paths across the flooded fields. Less than fifty paces behind was the vanguard of the angry peasants. As they came after him, they scooped up handfuls of black mud and pelted him with fair accuracy.

Burke never remembered how he reached the boat and sprang aboard. What stuck in his mind was the sudden appearance of the gaung-doo. He had followed the mission boat from Sungkiang on foot. As the peasants ran up, he stepped out in their path and began berating them.

"This foreigner is a good man!" he shouted at the foremost pursuers, who drew up uncertainly. "He belongs to the Jesus Religion. Jesus died to save wicked men like you and this man is His priest. Why do you attack such a good foreigner?"

The peasants were completely stopped by now. The poor demented fellow had them temporarily fuddled. Kwe suggested that the houseboat get under way at that desirable moment and Burke agreed. He didn't want to leave the gaung-doo, though. The fellow had certainly been a friend in need. Kwe was less sentimental.

"He will be all right there," the teacher said. "He is enjoying himself and helping us at the same time. They will soon discover he is feeble-minded and go off. Chinese never hurt demented people."

The day left Burke a little shaken. Yet the sense of failure could not altogether counteract two other forces—his Irish and his religion. When he got home late that night he went upstairs to his bedroom and knelt at the bedside. With elbows on the bed and his fingers pressed and gently rubbing against his forehead, he prayed silently and fervently for fifteen minutes or

more. His faith was strong and it was easy for him to feel a close, comforting nearness to the All-powerful Being that was his God.

When he rose, he felt fresh and confident, ready to face the trials of the day all over again. This was the secret of missionary perseverance: a capacity —mental, spiritual, call it what you will—to unload worries and responsibilities when they bore down too hard. An ability to clear the desk for new problems.

And new problems were in the brewing. Burke had yet to make an intimate acquaintance of foong-s. He had heard enough about it since coming to China, it is true, but he hadn't really taken it seriously. Foong-s was too vague and multifarious to take seriously on casual meeting. He simply knew it was something that came into play in all human interferences with the earth's surface or the air above. The keeping of the coffins unburied by the Soochow city walls until a lucky graveside was found—that could be placed in the first category. But Burke's first vivid introduction to the system of superstition was to fall in the latter classification—air interference.

It was in the autumn of his first year in Sungkiang. The dank, penetrating cold of the Lower Yangtze winter was not far off and Burke bought a small iron stove in Shanghai for his house. A chimney had to be built before installing it, for, with the exception of the kitchen, native houses in that section of China were provided with no facilities for interior heating—not even a *kaung* bed (Mandarin, *kang*), as in the northern part of the country.

Burke, without a moment's hesitation, had a mason called and told him to build the chimney. The mason shifted uneasily and raised the objection, with Oriental indirectness, that a chimney on top of the house would be exceedingly *feh-bien-taung* (inconvenient). This made practically no sense to Burke, who called Kwe to come talk to the man.

Kwe recognized the difficulty in a second. "He means that the foong-s might be adversely affected by putting a chimney on top of the house. A chimney sticking into the air above the level of the surrounding rooftops would be taken as a most disturbing factor to the foong-s, arousing the hostility of the spirits not only against this house, but against the neighbourhood."

"Stuff," snorted Burke. He felt impatient. It was exactly this kind of heathen superstition he had come to China to fight and he would make no concession to it. "Tell the man to fix that chimney."

As Kwe had foreseen, residents in the vicinity of the mission house were dreadfully upset when the chimney put in its appearance. Teahouses echoed with talk about the desecration of the locality and the dire calamities in store for everyone there. The opening of a gambling den in the vestibule of the Mulberry Street Methodist Church at Macon could not have caused more

grievance. It was a tribute to Chinese self-control in this instance that a mob didn't tear down the chimney and Burke with it.

A number of neighbours did take certain precautionary measures. These varied. The appeaser type of individual set out food offerings to placate the offended spirits. Others renewed the red paper signs usually stuck over the lintels of street doors on China New Year. "Chiang T'ai Kung is here; we do not fear a hundred demons," the signs announced. Chiang was a hero of the Chou dynasty who had the unique habit of canonizing his enemies after killing them. Thus he won the favour of their ghosts and he and his spirit after him were credited with great power in the nether world.

One particularly militant person who lived directly across the street from the mission house and thereby stood to suffer greatest damage from the angry demons, set up a stone tiger in front of his door and stuck an iron pitchfork in its open mouth. If the sharp prongs of the fork failed to pinion any marauding devil trying to enter the house, the tiger would make short shrift of him.

11

Fire Medicine

ALL THIS WHILE Burke was ardently courting Miss Gordon. He made the boat trip to Soochow on the slightest occasion and wrote profusely between visits. The main obstacle was the five-year ruling. Burke thought it was a fool rule and treated it with the same impatience he had shown for foong-s.

In November, 1888, a year after her guarded arrival in China, Miss Gordon finally promised to marry him the following February. It was this fact more than anything else that had inspired Burke to get a stove and in other ways make the little parsonage-chapel more livable.

He began thinking even further ahead at this time. Despite the discouraging progress he was making in Sungkiang, he had ambitious hopes for the mission's development there. He wanted to lay an early foundation for this expansion by buying a piece of vacant property and building a church and mission home on it. The mission authorities approved and an eight-*mou* (about one and a half acres) lot—one of the desolate remains of the Taiping Rebellion—was found in the western suburbs.

After considerable argument, the owner agreed to sell it to the *Yasoo Kyau* (Jesus Religion). All that remained to have a legal deed to the property was the county magistrate's seal on the document. Burke went alone one morning to the Leu magistrate's yamen to get the seal. He would have taken Kwe with him ordinarily, but the teacher was sick that day. His Chinese was becoming more usuable, though, and he felt he could accomplish so simple a matter as asking the magistrate to stamp the deed.

Ineffective and aloof as Chinese magistrates appeared to be in the late Manchu period, they kept a surprisingly close grip on the public pulse. The Leu magistrate knew all about the popular resentment to Burke's failings in customary behaviour and he realized that he would gain no popularity by making concessions to the foreigner. At the same time, he was not going to fan hostility against the young missionary, as some of the conservative literati had urged. The Western powers had shown themselves only too anxious to take advantage of missionary-persecution incidents for more territorial grabs—such as the French occupation of Annam. It was not so much the Leu magistrate's patriotic concern over China's dismemberment as it was personal worry about his job, or even his head. Under its policy then of preserving peace with the powers at all cost, the Imperial government, through its Nanking viceroy, would deal harshly with any Kiangsu magistrate whose yoen supplied an incident.

Thus the Leu magistrate was caught between two fires. He resolved the problem in realistic Chinese fashion. He refused to sanction open violence against Burke; at the same time, he went out of his way indirectly to insult the young missionary by being completely indifferent toward him. A policy which, thus far, was not so much appreciated by Burke as by the more sensitive, face-conscious Chinese citizenry.

This was the state of affairs when Burke reached the great iron-studded gates of the yamen that morning. The spirit wall facing the entrance carried a granite carving of the fabulous *te*, a mythical animal best described as a cross between a dragon, an alligator, and a buffalo. The beast was reputed to have been so avaricious that it tried one day to swallow the sun and thereby exterminated itself. The carving pictured the animal lunging up at the sun. Most yamens in China had such a *te* in front of their entrances, a subtle warning to officials against taxing or otherwise squeezing the people too heavily. This was one of the many admirable Chinese ideas which usually carried very little weight in the practical life of the country.

Burke knocked on the small door at one side of the great gates. It was the door servants used in presenting their masters' calling cards. Persons calling on the magistrate sat in their sedan chairs while this menial job was performed. The minister was committing a double *faux pas* in this official call—he had

no servant or chair and he was using the servants' entrance—but he was quite ignorant of the fact. When he was admitted, a yamen attendant took his card and left him standing at the gatehouse, a patently rude gesture at best. But why should this foreigner be treated respectfully when he showed no respect himself?

A half-hour later, Burke still was standing there. The same was true an hour later. Finally, two hours after taking the card in, the servant reappeared and said the magistrate was too busy to see anyone. Burke then sent the property deed itself in, thinking the magistrate might take the moment necessary to stamp the document. It was in good order. After another interminable wait, the servant came back with the deed unstamped, explaining that the magistrate had suddenly become indisposed and was dropping all official duties for the day. Burke walked home gloomily.

One night eight weeks after this thinly cloaked affront, Burke had gone to bed as usual at eleven o'clock. Shortly after midnight, he awoke with the crashing strokes of a Chinese gong in his ears. After each series of strokes, a man shouted, "Hoo zak! Hoo zak! (Fire burns! Fire burns!)"

Burke leaped out of bed and crossed to the open window overlooking the street. Cold January air nipped through his outing pyjamas. One glance at the sky to the east told the story. Bright yellow flames were licking up over the dark, flat roofline. The man beating the gong alarm was disappearing around a turn in the street, trotting behind another man with a lantern. The young minister turned back into the room, lit a candle, and began feverishly throwing on clothes over the pyjamas. He was going to that fire. He had always raced after the horse engines in Macon and he wasn't going to miss this fire just because it was in China.

People carrying paper lanterns were hurrying along in groups when Burke opened the front door. He joined in with one group, for he hadn't bothered to bring a lantern and the badly paved street was too dark to permit fast time without one. They went through the tortuous thoroughfare toward the walled city. The endless rows of boarded-up shop fronts and homes echoed the clump of the big missionary's leather shoes against the flagstones. It was a metallic sound and contrasted with the soft padding noise the Chinese made on their cloth or straw soles.

Around a sharp bend a hundred yards within the walls, the fire broke into full view. Flames and smoke were pouring from a row of two-story shop fronts, sending up showers of blazing cinders and sparks. Milling throngs were filling up the narrow street on both sides of the conflagration. From the cleared area directly in front of the blazing shops, the cries of fire fighters could be heard over the roar and crackle of the flames.

Burke pushed and shouldered his way to the front line of spectators. Three

shops were burning and a fourth was catching. Smoke billowed out of its second-story windows and men were scampering off with last armloads of rescued stuff. The shop on the end of the row nearest where Burke stood was completely gutted, its roof collapsed. The fire apparently had started there and spread to the others. Chinese houses in the Lower Yangtze regions are built with heavy brick fire walls between them, but holes are left in the upper parts for the wooden roof beams. When the beams burn out, flames blast through the holes like so many blowtorches.

A four-foot alley on the west side of the first shop had served as a firebreak to keep the blaze from spreading in that direction. But there was nothing to stop it on the east. The building threatened after the fourth shop was a teahouse. And just behind that, Burke remembered from one of his walks about the city with Kwe, was the Woding yamen.

A gang of straw-sandaled coolies, the fire company of that ward, was fitfully engaged in the street near the third burning shop. Two of the men were bearing up and down on the handle of a rude hand pump. The pump was placed in a large wooden tub of water. It forced the water out of a short metal nozzle in a weak stream that sometimes failed to reach the flames. A man squatted by the nozzle, turning it on its universal joint to direct the water. The captain of the company stood by the tub, throwing his arms about and shouting. The rest of the gang was formed into a double bucket line, extending across the street and down an alley to the near-by canal. Buckets were being passed up, emptied into the tub, and sent back in an endless chain.

As Burke came on this scene, the fire company from the adjoining ward was pushing through the crowd in front of the teahouse. Ten men carried a second tub pump on their shoulders. They set it down beside the first one and the bucket line was speeded up to supply both tubs. The coolies were keeping up a steady "hi-ho" in time with the bucket passing.

Meanwhile, the fire gained ground. The heat eventually became unbearable for the pump crews and the apparatuses had to be moved. To do it, the tubs were tipped on end to empty them of water, then picked up and carried to a cooler position. Here they had to be filled again by the bucket brigade.

In the midst of all this, a gong began sounding out over the general tumult and from the point in the opposite crowd where the second pump company had emerged, red-jacketed yamen runners appeared, clearing the way for a green sedan chair. The chair was lowered to the street a safe distance from the fire, but where its occupant could watch the progress of things.

"The Woding magistrate has come," the people around Burke murmured. With his yamen threatened, he had good reason to be concerned over the situation.

Another person who had good reason to be concerned was the prefect. Although he didn't appear at the scene, he was no doubt awake and worrying in his yamen. Under Chinese law then, if ten houses were burned within the walls of a city, the highest officer residing there would be fined nine months' pay. If more than thirty houses, a year's salary; and if three hundred burned, he forfeited his rank.

Spurts of flame began to redden the smoke belching out of the second story of the fourth shop now. The building would soon be as hotly ablaze as the other three and the pumps forced to move again. Burke groaned. The pumps might as well be junked for all the good they were doing. Their weak streams of water couldn't reach the burning second story at all. Any moment now, smoke would be coming out of the second story of the teahouse, presaging flames creeping along its roof beams.

An idea struck the young missionary. He bolted across the cleared space and came up to where the two fire captains were standing together. He clutched them both by the shoulders, then loosed his grip on one to point to the upper floor of the teahouse.

"I want water up there!" he shouted.

Without waiting for the startled men to answer, he turned and grabbed a bucket of water from a coolie in the bucket line. Pulling the man after him and calling the rest to follow, he started for the teahouse entrance. On the way, he snatched a lantern from a spectator. Whether by choice or by some hypnotic power in the mad foreigner's action, the coolies came.

Burke reached the second floor of the teahouse. The air was hot. He held up the lantern and saw wisps of smoke already curling around the bases of some of the beams in the wall next to the burning shop. Putting the lantern on a tea table, he emptied his bucket against one of the smoking beams, where it entered the wall. Then he handed the bucket to the coolie and asked for more water. The man took it to the head of the staircase and drew up a full bucket. The new water line was beginning to function. Burke threw the second bucketful on the base of another beam.

As the coolies caught on to the idea, the process of drenching the roof beams at their entrance into the fire wall began in earnest. The fire captains came up with their lanterns and they and Burke directed the water throwing. It turned out successful beyond the young missionary's best hopes. The fourth shop burned itself out with no more harm done to the teahouse than a scorched wall.

Feeling rather ridiculous about the rash way he had thrust himself into the fire fighting, now that it was all over, Burke slipped away in the dark, walking home alone. It was after three o'clock.

At breakfast that morning, the cook, who had already been to market,

congratulated Burke on saving the city from fire. He said everyone at the market place was talking about it.

"Hah wo (Silly talk)," Burke protested.

Later that morning, Burke was sleepily studying Chinese with Kwe, when a great crashing of gongs and crying of lictors arose in the street. The gongs stopped beating in front of the mission house and there was a loud rapping on the chapel door, with a cry of:

"Open the door! the great men are here!"

Burke and his teacher ran across the little courtyard and swung open the door. Three green sedan chairs were lined up in front of the chapel. Red-liveried yamen attendants were all about. Calling cards were presented and Kwe read them excitedly.

"The Wodin and Leu magistrates and a member of the local gentry [in old Chinese society, the literati of a city were often termed "gentry," by virtue of their semi-official status] named Tsau are calling on you," he said, for once losing some of his composure.

The visitors were invited in and got out of their chairs. Burke recognized the Leu magistrate's fat, moustached face immediately. The Woding official was thin faced and shorter. Both wore mandarin hats of black felt (the straw conical ones were discarded in cold weather). The Woding magistrate's red-tasselled headgear was topped by a lapis lazuli button, marking him as an official of the fourth rank, one grade below the Leu magistrate. Square, embroidered bird medallions, corresponding to their ranks, were sewed on the fronts and backs of both men's blue-satin coats and signified their civil status—military officials wore wild-beast medallions. The Leu magistrate's bird was silver pheasant and the Woding magistrate's, wild goose. The gentryman Tsau was dressed in a rich padded silk gown.

The only place to take the guests was the study, for Burke had not included a regular reception room in his arrangement of the house. Kwe was visibly upset by this, as there was no convenient way to seat the visitors according to rank. The cook, beside himself over this unexpected honour to his master, scurried about preparing tea.

The Leu magistrate opened the conversation by extolling the warmth of Burke's new Shanghai stove, thereby giving his tacit approval to the missionary's recent encounter with the foong-s. The Woding chief then asked how long Burke had lived in Sungkiang, although he knew perfectly well. This pointless talk continued through the first cup of tea. The scholar Tsau played the part of an interpreter, translating what the magistrates said into Shanghai dialect. The officials were northern men—Chinese officials were commonly stationed far from their home grounds to discourage graft—and spoke only Mandarin.

The Woding magistrate at last came to the point of the visit. Upon reporting the fire to the prefect that morning, he had been instructed to thank the young missionary personally for saving the Woding yamen and possibly a great part of the city. The Leu magistrate spoke then to say that he had accompanied his colleague since he had the honour of having Burke as a resident of his yoen.

The Woding magistrate went on to relate how he had watched the brave foreigner lead the bucket brigade into the threatened teahouse. He said the fire captains had later told him that Burke poured something out of a small bottle into each bucket of water as it was thrown on the beams. The magistrate wondered if the missionary would favour him with a small sample of this extraordinary *hoo-yak* (fire medicine).

Burke hastily denied the fire captains' imaginative account, but it was easy to see that the magistrate was not convinced. He thought Burke was just being polite.

Before the callers left, Burke didn't lose the opportunity to bring up the matter of the property deed. The Leu magistrate was all co-operation. He said he would set a special day for publicly stamping the document at the property site. The official's smiling round face gave away nothing about the unpleasant treatment meted out to Burke at his yamen eight weeks before.

That afternoon there was another uproar outside the mission house. This time it was the colonel of the Sungkiang garrison. He had come, as had the Woding magistrate, at the request of his superior, the general, to thank Burke for his services to the city.

After the colonel left, an ordinary two-man sedan chair, smaller and darker than the conveyances of the officials, came up to the chapel door and the president of the Sungkiang Chamber of Commerce paid a visit. Calling as late in the day as he did, this good man was filled with the more elaborate teahouse versions of Burke's activities at the fire. After thanking the young minister for stopping the blaze, he earnestly asked him to bring out the strange apparatus he had used to spray the hoo-yak on the flames.

All in all, it was a memorable day. Crowds had gathered around the chapel entrance during the two official calls and every teahouse in the city had the details. Burke's name was securely made. All the old blunders were forgotten.

As for Burke himself, he discovered for the first time what an appreciative people the Chinese are. He *had* tried to help in the fire the night before and his services had been acknowledged to an extent he could hardly believe. He had learned another thing too. The Chinese are a practical people to the extreme. His mere coming to China and preaching had not convinced them of his desire to serve them. It took a concrete act to win their confidence. The Chinese wanted to see deeds before words. By having those things made

clear to him early in his career, Burke forestalled the bitterness and failure that have upset many missionary lives.

The day after the official visits, the *dipau*, or bailiff, in whose ward the fire had occurred, called on the young missionary and prostrated himself in kowtow, bumping his forehead on the floor of the study. Burke made him get up on his feet before he completed the ceremony, kowtowing being one Oriental idea the Georgian could never justify. The dipau said he was being held responsible for the fire. He would be given five hundred strokes with the bamboo and discharged. His wife and six children would starve. Only the great foreign fire doctor could save him by interceding with the Woding magistrate. Burke promised the intercession and the bailiff went off wishing the young minister a long, prosperous life and many sons.

Foong-s, of course, had to be brought in before the fire episode was fully closed. The sincere superstitions of the populace demanded that the city authorities probe beneath the natural circumstances of the blaze. Geomancers were called in for consultations on how the foong-s of the burned area had been disturbed into bringing on such havoc. As the cook relayed the story from his teahouse to Burke, the geomancers, after careful study of the situation, reported that a tall tree on the south bank of the canal near the gutted shops had been the unsuspected villain. It had upset the foong-s balance of the place, causing the influence of the south, or the region of heat, to overpower the influence of the north. Burke noticed a freshly cut stump on the canal banks a few weeks later.

12

Little Fox Feet

THERE WAS AN APPRECIATIVE SIDE of Burke's nature as deep as that of the Chinese. Distasteful though it was, he made up his mind to undergo all the best social amenities in repaying the official calls. He felt it would in some way make up for the exceptional courtesies shown him.

Kwe was delighted. His pupil's social shortcoming in the past had worried that Confucian-bred individual. The teacher arranged everything. He borrowed the scholar Tsau's green four-man sedan chair (a social coup in itself, as it was the only one in Sungkiang besides the officials') and hired a *nyi-ya*,

or professional card bearer. Finally, he gave Burke a thorough course in the etiquette of the formal call. As the young missionary was setting out, Kwe called out a parting reminder:

"Do not forget to remain in the sedan chair until your call has been acknowledged and the gates opened."

The first stop was the Leu yamen. When the chair was lowered to the street in front of the gates, the card bearer, who had been walking behind, ran up to present Burke's card at the small side door. After a short wait, the great portals swung open impressively and the chair was carried into the first court. Here Burke got out and a servant (the same who had left him standing by the gatehouse before) ushered him into the magistrate's private reception room. The minister chose the seat nearest the door, as Kwe had repeatedly cautioned. That was the lowest ranking seat and the polite thing for a guest to do.

When the magistrate entered, followed by a Shanghai dialect-speaking secretary, he protested and tugged until Burke, judging how long Kwe had said to resist, let himself be put on the two-seat settee against the rear wall. The official took the seat on the right of the settee's low partition table, thus allowing the young American to be on his left—the place of honour in China. The secretary sat in a plain chair. Tea was served and the first call was smoothly under way.

The calls on the Woding magistrate and the colonel were equally successful. Burke didn't forget to ask the former to forgive the bailiff. The magistrate said he would and apparently kept his word, for two days later, the dipau sent a *pah-pau-van* (eight-precious-rice pudding) to the mission house.

In the course of the call on the Leu magistrate, that official had set a day the following week for the public deed-sealing. At the appointed time, he arrived at the property site with his red-coated retinue. The scholar Tsau also was along. On hand to meet them were Burke, Kwe, and Zung.

The five men, trailed by the yamen lictors, walked out on the rubble-strewn piece of ground. Passers-by and people from shops and homes in the vicinity gathered around. Chinese were never too busy to put matters of the moment aside when something novel appeared to be going on.

Near the middle of the lot, the magistrate stopped and began audibly sniffing the air.

"The foong-s seems good here," he remarked loudly.

The scholar Tsau translated no less loudly into Shanghai dialect.

A hum rose in the crowd.

"The great man says the foong-s is good here," the people repeated. "It is not disturbed by the foreigner's presence."

The magistrate sniffed again, then asked for the deed. A lictor produced

a seal and red-ink sponge and the official placed the all-important mark on the document.

Altogether the Leu magistrate had given an inspiring sample of the manner in which Old China's officialdom nurtured superstitions among the common people. Cynical Confucianist that he was, the Leu magistrate had no respect for foong-s as such. On the other hand, he knew the people's belief in it gave him a convenient instrument of power. In his position as county magistrate, he could make authoritative decisions in this supernatural field. And if he wanted to promote some scheme, he had only to relate it favourably to foong-s; whereas, if he wanted to frustrate something, foong-s was an easy and weighty obstacle to put in its path. This, naturally, might not be in the interest of Chinese enlightenment, but that was an interest which rarely, if ever, entered the rotund magistrate's head.

The magistrate apparently doubted whether even his official sanction could placate the superstition-conditioned people against certain flagrant violations of foong-s, because he dispatched a note to Burke several days later asking him to favour the city by putting Chinese roofs on any buildings erected on the new property. The young minister still was in a grateful mood and agreed—though he held out for and got one concession. He argued that he should be permitted to have chimneys on the roofs, as that precedent had been set without noticeable ill effect to the community.

Burke and Addie Gordon were married in Soochow on February 4, 1889, exactly a year after courtship began. It was China New Year again and a bleak, cold one at that. The wedding was in the home of Dr. A. P. Parker of the mission, with Dr. Parker himself performing the service. Most of the Southern Methodist missionaries, including Soon, were there and the American consul came from Shanghai as official witness.

Immediately after the ceremony, Burke and Addie ran through a shower of rice to the houseboat waiting to carry them to Sungkiang. The trip normally took two days, but stormy weather extended this one to three and a half. It began snowing late the first afternoon and a near blizzard was screaming around the boat that night, pounding the vessel with wind, snow, and angry wavelets. One time the boatmen could be heard muttering something about rice being wasted—no doubt referring to the rice thrown at the wedding. It was a common superstition that storms were brought on by a person or persons' wilfully wasting the grain.

But it was warm and peaceful inside the boat's little cabin. An oil stove was firmly fixed to the deck planks, while a candle lamp hung from one of the rafters. The lamp swung gently to the creaking motion of the boat.

The honeymoon, if it could be called one, came to an abrupt end the first week in Sungkiang. Burke had essayed to be a useful husband by painting

some of the dining-room furniture with Ningpo varnish. He bought a supply of the reddish lacquer and went confidently about the task, dipping a rag into the pungent liquid just as he had seen Chinese painters do. He was ignorant of two facts, though: Chinese apprentice painters are thoroughly tested for allergy to the thick, sumac preparation before ever being allowed to take up their profession; practically all foreigners seemed to be allergic to the stuff. Burke's head swelled to an eyeless, unrecognizable mass and Addie fed him three days with the handle end of a teaspoon.

The young couple lived in the native parsonage-chapel the first year. They took the two rooms above the rear apartment for their private quarters, Kwe having moved to a house near the new property site. Here the teacher helped oversee the work which began that summer on the mission home. It was not until late the following spring that the new home was ready for occupancy.

It was an odd architectural assortment, this house; the only known species of its kind. The contractor was a Ningpo house builder named Tong, whose son, Hollington, was destined to become foreign propaganda chief of Nationalist China. Tong's instructions had been simple and ambiguous:

"Build a foreign-style house," Burke told him, "as much like a Chinese house as you can and as cheap as possible."

The result was unique, but not indescribable. It was a two-story house, predominantly Chinese outside and mostly foreign inside. There were verandas running across the entire front on both floors. The upper porch was designed especially for the Lower Yangtze's damp, cold winters and burning summers. In the latter season it could be enclosed by wooden flaps and fourteen pairs of oyster-shell windows. When closed up, this upper front looked like the second story of any Chinese residence. The whole house was topped by a roof in the best Ningpo tradition, complete with black tiles and ornamental wing terraces on each end. It should have gladdened the heart of the most foong-s-conscious Sungkiangite.

There was one exception to the general foreign design inside. Not forgetting Kwe's dilemma over seating the officials at the native parsonage, as well as wanting all Chinese visitors to feel at ease in the new home, Burke had provided a typically native reception room. Carved, straight-back chairs, with little tea tables between, lined both side walls, and the seat of honour was in its proper place against the rear wall, facing the entrance. The floor was cold and bare and a few scroll paintings adorned the walls. Above the seat of honour, where Chinese sometimes hang the picture of some deity, Burke placed a wide white scroll inscribed with the Ten Commandments in black ideographs.

The day the young missionary couple occupied the home, Chinese came

in droves to kibitz. They collected in the yard and on the veranda and even strolled through the house. The next day, Burke had a twelve-foot bamboo fence put up around the house and yard. Later a brick wall with iron gates was substituted for the fence. It was the only thing to do and didn't insult the Chinese in the least since they enclosed their own homes in the same way. No wall, or an open door in China meant "public invited," and strangers had no scruples about accepting.

The Burkes had moved just before *Waung-me* (Season of the Yellow Plum, commencing around June 1st), hoping that the six weeks' period of mud and mildew would be somewhat mitigated by the new house. But it wasn't. The unsightly season (if any season can be called altogether sightly around Shanghai) crept through every crack and crevice the Chinese carpenters had so unerringly supplied. The plaster on the walls sweated with a strong musty scent; shoes picked up a grey-green coating of mildew during the night and the bread box was a discouraging spectacle; wood veneer buckled and split; doors refused to shut, and glue in bookbindings ran sticky. All the while, it alternately rained and steamed. The Chinese almanac divided the period into the "first mould," the "second mould," and the "third mould." The latter was followed, during the first week of July, by the beginning of the "small heat." If it didn't thunder on that day, then Waung-me would be over in another week. If it did thunder, a second full-length Waung-me could be expected. That was the Chinese almanac's position, and the Chinese almanac wasn't something to wager against.

Fortunately or not, there was only one Waung-me that year. After it came the blistering heat of the Yangtze Valley summer, heat flavoured with insects and disease. Missionaries later learned to go to the beaches or mountains in this season, but the Burkes stuck it out in Sungkiang the first years. Flies swarmed out of night-soil crocks and fresh vegetables came doused with the contents of those crocks. Was it remarkable that cholera scourged the land? Though Western science itself did not yet know this germ source, the Burkes survived by sticking tightly to the rule foreigners in China had found safest by experience:

"Cook everything you eat and eat it hot."

To add to the summer's trials, mosquitoes hummed out of the flooded rice fields and marshlands surrounding Sungkiang. It was the days before screens and Addie sometimes sat down to supper with her legs wrapped above the knees in a pillow-case. At night, she and Burke slept under a double net. A candle and matches were kept inside in the event any mosquito managed to get through.

These precautions against mosquitoes, however, were directed solely at their nuisance value. No one associated them with malaria at that time, least

of all Burke. In fact, his ideas on mosquitoes were comparable to Chinese beliefs in foong-s. As was popularly thought in Georgia at that time, he believed the insect's bite was an inoculation *against* malaria. So he and Addie drank a solution of arsenic with their meals to ward off the disease and, when the chills and fever came, they dosed up on quinine until their ears buzzed.

The Chinese around them knew no more about malaria and lacked arsenic and quinine as well, but their fever-racked bodies lived on and multiplied. Another evidence of the virility of their race.

These summer difficulties slowed down the work of the mission, but it always picked up early in the autumn. Burke's programme was a full one in his third year at Sungkiang, branching out into fields of medicine and education as well as religion. The educational effort had really begun the second month in the native parsonage. The young minister employed a teacher and opened a day school in the chapel room, announcing the fact in posters tacked up on the streets. But the project had been rather ineffectual until the fire episode; after that the school began to flourish. Now, Burke had rented a separate house for it.

He was also opening similar schools in near-by towns and villages, making regular trips to inspect them. The curriculum of these mission day schools—all of them primary—was based on the standard beginner's course in Chinese classics, plus a proper garnishment of Biblical catechism. They were a real boon to poor children, for there was no public school system in Old China and private tutors could be afforded only by the wealthy.

The tri-weekly services in the little native shop-room chapel had been discontinued after moving out of the place, though evangelism continued in Zung's house and in the streets and market-places. Building would start soon on a church in the new mission compound. It was to be named McLain Chapel (more popularly known by the Chinese version, Lau Ung Daung), in memory of a deceased China missionary.

Meantime, Addie had plunged into religious work among Sungkiang women, a job in many ways more difficult than work among men. The secluded position of women made it a problem to reach them. Men might be reached by chapel services and street preaching, but women were kept cloistered in the inner recesses of their homes, where they whiled away dull hours sewing or gossiping with other members of the large households.

Addie discovered that her best approach was through the children in the mission day school. As she won their friendship and confidence, some would invite her into their homes. When inside the private sanctums, she usually found the womenfolk eager to hear of the new religion. It was a break in the monotony of their lives and they even begged her to read the Bible or sing from her Chinese hymnal.

Once a home was thus "opened," it was subject to repeated attacks. Next came the opportunity of inviting the Chinese women to the mission home. This met with considerable success, for, curious like all women, they were burning to look in on a stranger's domestic life. Addie began holding regular Friday afternoon Bible readings in the Chinese reception room for these visitors. But before she opened a meeting, she learned to herd the women through the foreign part of the house. They were always more attentive to the Scriptures after their curiosity had been satisfied.

When women came too regularly to the services in the foreign home and seemed on the point of conversion, their families often forbade further attendance. This would be a cruel blow to Addie, who wrote in her diary regarding one such discontinuance:

"Miss Li failed to come to the meeting today. It was the first she has missed since she began attending three months ago. The Devil saw that she was on the brink of the Kingdom and has gone to work in the hearts of her family."

The first woman convert was a devout old Buddhist. It was a struggle of faiths and a tribute to the staying qualities of the Christian mind. At first, the Buddhist tried as hard to get Addie to the temple, as the latter tried to induce her to visit the mission home. The temptation to see the foreign house prevailed, and after attending a few Bible readings the battle was lost. She discarded her vegetarianism for the gospel and began proselytising for Jesus as zealously as she had for Gautama.

One inspiration of the Southern Methodist women about this time was to give a Bible to Empress Dowager Tzŭ Hsi as a birthday present from the native churchwomen. Addie did her part toward the project by collecting small contributions from her Chinese converts. Every Chinese woman church member had to contribute something in order that it could rightfully be a present from them. The Bible was bought and sent to her Majesty handsomely engraved with her name. That redoubtable sovereign duly acknowledged the gift, but judging from her connivance with the Boxers some years later, she was not greatly taken by the Scriptures.

Another field of activity among Sungkiang women which kept Addie almost as busy as straight religious work was the anti-footbinding campaign. This humanitarian effort for Chinese women had reached world-wide proportions at that time. It enlisted club- and churchwomen in America and Europe. Mrs. Archibald Little displayed limitless energies as commander on the field.

The origin of footbinding among Chinese women was vague at best. Most authorities placed it about A.D. 900, when one of the pretty concubines of the Tang dynasty court decided to add to her lustre by binding her feet

like the "new moon" and walking like a "waving lily" (as the awkward hobble was seen in Chinese eyes). The myth that grew with this story was that the concubine's body was invaded by a demon who changed everything about himself except his "little fox feet." The demon idea can well be associated with the concubine's impulse for binding her feet. Another story told of an empress who imposed the practice to remove the reproach of her own clubfeet. And yet another claimed that husbands started the custom to keep their wives from gadding about.

Regardless of the origin, footbinding was a deep-seated tradition in China in the nineteenth century—this despite the fact that the second Manchu emperor, K'ang Hsi, had outlawed the practice two hundred years before. It was the mark of gentility and, as pointed out in the case of Soon's wife, no girl with "big feet" could expect a gentleman to marry her. When an unscrupulous matchmaker did happen to palm off a normal-footed bride on a man, the latter could and usually did send her back to her parents at once.

Addie organized a class at the mission home for women interested in the anti-footbinding movement and it was well attended. Several wives and daughters of the gentry were among those who came, giving Addie her first contact with that stratum of society. These higher-class women arrived at the mission house in their sedan chairs, followed by an amah and a footman. The latter would go up and present his mistress's husband's card (Chinese women had no cards of their own) and upon being invited in, the lady would step out of her chair and totter (like a "waving lily") to the door, sometimes with her hand on her amah's shoulder.

Addie would give private help to any woman who wished to unbind her feet. This was possible if the woman were young and the foot bones had not been crushed, as they so often were, leaving the person crippled for life. It was always shocking to the sensitive young missionary, after taking off a woman's tiny red-silk shoes, to begin unwrapping the tight bandages. The little feet, scarcely five inches long and covered with wrinkled, dead skin, would be pressed out of all proportions, the four small toes bent under the sole and the big toe laid on top. Addie would unwrap slowly, massaging gently with vaseline as she worked.

13

A Buddhist Headache

CHINESE WERE PLAGUED by most diseases and ailments known to science and some additional ones yet unclassified. The native means of coping with this was a thoroughly inadequate mixture of herbalogy, quackery, and black art. Chinese, therefore, were always ready to seize on any new cure in which they had some degree of confidence. The fame of Burke's "fire medicine" supplied just such confidence. The foreign priest could be expected to have a good remedy for anything.

Burke had brought a large stock of common medicines with him when he first came to Sungkiang, having the idea of setting up a public dispensary of some sort. Until the fire, however, the only dispensing done was to Kwe, Zung, the mission servants, and himself. The situation changed almost immediately after the fire. To be exact, it was the third morning afterward that a man ran to the parsonage-chapel with blood spurting from his hand.

"I am bleeding to death!" he yelled.

The man had got into an argument with his wife and, in a burst of Celestial passion, had seized a butcher knife and chopped off the tip of his forefinger—an act one might not associate with the "practical Chinee."

Burke hastily wound a piece of string above the severed joint to stop the bleeding, then doused the finger with iodine. The man howled. After the finger was dressed and the man sent home, the young minister turned to Kwe quizzically.

"Now why in the name of sense do you suppose a fellow wants to go and do a fool thing like that?"

The teacher shrugged dispassionately. "It was better to relieve his anger by cutting himself instead of his wife."

Burke, on another occasion, met a case of impassioned finger chopping by a young man who had lost everything at mahjong. He had sworn never to game again and, in evidence of good faith, hacked off the finger he used in playing the "tiles." Needless to add, he was playing again in a few months, gambling being a national weakness no fatalistic Chinese could long forgo.

The first finger case was a precursor of things to come. Scalds, boils, sores, and even one case of leprosy. Burke found himself operating a regular clinic and was forced to set aside certain hours for it, except in more serious cases. As confidence in his medical abilities grew, people now and then brought

in prescriptions of native doctors for him to check over. One man with a mild case of sore eyes presented this prescription:

"Three spiders, one ounce of petrified snake spittle, two ounces of caterpillar skins, two ounces of vegetable oil; place in a new pot covered with a new cloth and bury in damp ground behind a temple for one hundred days."

Burke hurriedly gave the man a solution of boric acid to wash his eyes with and tore up the prescription.

A more tragic case was that of a sword juggler who somehow misjudged things and disembowelled himself while performing at a village near Sungkiang. The wound was packed with cow dung and the man started off to Burke's clinic. Fortunately, the poor chap died of tetanus poisoning before he arrived.

A dental department had to be added to the general clinic, for the big missionary showed a pulling aptitude superior to that of weaker native dentists. His speedier removals had the advantage too over the Chinese dentists' "painless" method—a process whereby the dentist jabs a red-hot needle into the patient's cheek as he pulls. The pain of the needle so overshadows that of the tooth that the patient rarely feels the latter go. Burke used only an ordinary pair of pliers at first. Later his brother-in-law, Dr. Walter Holmes, sent him a set of dental forceps from Macon.

With the approach of summer and its malaria, cholera, dysentery, and smallpox, Burke prepared for double duty. He dug out his old medical books —which he had kept since the Quincy High School days—and plunged with renewed enthusiasm into the studies he had given up. He wondered more than once why the home church leaders had told Soon the mission needed no more trained doctors.

The only M.D. in the mission then was Dr. Park at Soochow. His hospital was a full-time assignment in itself, but he broke away occasionally to make a houseboat circuit of the other mission stations, bringing medical supplies and treating patients. When he was coming to Sungkiang, he notified Burke a week or so in advance and the latter would round up the more serious patients for him. If any of the sick needed hospitalization, Dr. Park gave them his card and invited them to Soochow.

Between Dr. Park's visits, Burke had to depend solely on his medical books and common sense. His practice was by no means limited to Sungkiang, for he carried medical supplies whenever he went into the neighbouring countryside on evangelistic trips, usually opening a clinic on his houseboat after preaching. Three medicines he never failed to have on hand at all times: calomel, castor oil, and quinine. Next to God, Burke swore by calomel, castor oil, and quinine.

The Season of the Great Heat was well under way, during Burke's second summer in Sungkiang, when the silk merchant Zia fell sick. Zia had been especially friendly to the young foreigner since the fire, for his shop was near the teahouse where the blaze had been halted. But Burke was not called in immediately on the case. It was purely by accident that he first learned there was any serious illness in the Zia home. As he was passing the house one day, he saw two men entering from the direction of the Ngauk Miau, the big Taoist temple outside the West Gate. The leading man carried a lighted paper lantern (though it was midday) and the man behind held something wadded up in cloth.

Burke had watched this scene too often not to understand its meaning. These men had been soul hunting at the temple. Chinese believed that a man's soul departed from his body when he was very ill and it must be found and restored before he could recover. In Sungkiang, the likeliest place to find a strayed soul was at the Ngauk Miau, where the god Yang Lau-ta had special disposition over them. By going to the temple and paying a fee, the soul might be found by poking around the image of Yang. The first cricket, spider, or other insect (with which Chinese temples abound) the searchers came upon would be taken as visible evidence of the soul. It would be clapped into a jar and wrapped up in the sick man's clothes—brought along for that purpose. Then the soul would be "lighted" home by the man with the lantern.

A week after Burke witnessed the "return" of Zia's "soul," a servant came from the Zia house with an urgent plea for the *yang i-sang* (foreign doctor) to call. The young minister had a strong feeling it would be futile for him to go, but he followed the servant to the merchant's home.

Relatives and friends were gathered in a deathwatch. It was a tumultuous scene. Some of the womenfolk were wailing loudly. Children laughed and played. And a *dau-z* (Taoist priest) was beating a drum in an imperious outburst against the evil demons supposed to be haunting the household. The sickroom was next to this bedlam, the door wide open. Burke walked in.

He shuddered at the sight before him. Zia lay on a canopied bed, his face a dark and bloated mass of pustules. A faint moaning sound came from the puffy bulge which should have been a mouth. There were no eyes at all. The smell of death was in the hot, tightly shuttered room—the putrid smell of decaying flesh from that misshapen face. Burke had never seen smallpox in so horrible a form. He silently prayed God to take the man without more suffering.

Going back into the crowded room, he told Zia's wife there was absolutely nothing he could do. Then he pointed to the children running about, sometimes entering the sickroom itself.

"Can't you keep the children away from here?" he asked almost harshly.

"Feh-iau-kyung (It doesn't matter)," she answered calmly. "They won't worry Mr. Zia."

The young missionary tried hopelessly to explain that this wasn't the point. They might catch smallpox from him. Finally Mrs. Zia said "hau (all right)" and proceeded half-heartedly to send the children away. Though it should have been done days before, Burke felt relieved to see them go. He realized how utterly lacking the Chinese were in any conception of quarantine.

The Taoist meanwhile, kept up his harangue at the demons. He had drawn a large black "magic" character on a piece of paper and hung it on the wall. This was intended further to frighten the evil spirits.

Mrs. Zia informed Burke that she had engaged a *ta-pau* (wizard—also called *ne-woo*) to come later in the day. This personage would work diametrically to the Taoist, claiming, as Chinese wizards do, to be on the best of terms with the spirit world. He would have the Zia family set out a table with food and arrange places for the number of demons he estimated were lurking about the house. He would fussily inspect the dishes to see that they were just so, then ceremoniously invite the unseen guests to dine. When they had finished, he would speak politely with them, pointing out the hospitality of the Zia family and suggesting that the demons stop bedevilling the house. Finally, he would show them to the street door and bow them out, one by one.

The wizard was not all Mrs. Zia had thought of. She had sent a servant to buy two hundred cash worth of sacred character ashes from the literati association's furnace and a member of the family had been dispatched to the S Miau to pray to S Siang Kong. S Siang Kong was a Buddhist deity who once had been a mortal doctor of great fame. As a god, he was credited with even greater healing powers.

Zia, of course, died and his long funeral *cortége* passed by the mission house on its way to the grave. Burke stood at the door, listening to the discordant reed band and watching the sons walking behind their father's bier in white sackcloth. He felt a wave of pity for the ignorance and superstition attendant on the man's death. Turning back into the house, he resolved to fight all the harder to bring light into this darkness.

If it could be said that Burke had a specialty, it would be opium-suicide cases. This popular form of self-destruction in China consisted in swallowing a quantity of the raw drug. Unless an emetic was quickly administered, the opium was absorbed into the system and the victim drowsed off into death.

Under the rigid family hierarchy of Old China, most of the suicides in that country were young wives. Completely subjugated from two sides—

husband and mother-in-law—their lives could be miserable. When a cruel mother-in-law or a gambling, profligate husband did conspire to bring on such misery, the wife had no hope of escape in life unless the husband divorced her. And that was rare. As for her divorcing her husband, that was virtually impossible. Old Chinese law gave wives only two grounds for divorce—long-continued desertion and leprosy—and even these were sometimes not upheld in court.

By suicide, however, the tormented wife achieved both escape and revenge. Not only did the husband and his family suffer considerable loss of "face," but they were sued by the dead wife's family and usually compelled to pay a large indemnity. So leaving out true love (as it should be left out in most of China's matchmaking marriages), it was clear enough why the husband and his family always made frantic efforts to save the wife's life when she tried to take it.

Addie and Burke were fast asleep in the rear of the little native parsonage when his first opium-suicide call came. A servant with a lantern came banging on the street door, shouting for the "foreign doctor." He was from the Tsang family on the Black Fish Way, he told the sleepy minister. He had been sent to bring him to the home. The master's young wife had just eaten opium.

Burke hastily prepared a sulphate of zinc solution in a bottle and followed the servant. Tsang, the minister remembered as he ran along with the bottle in his hand, was an incorrigible wastrel. Addie had visited the home and heard how Tsang beat his young wife whenever she remonstrated with him over his high gambling losses.

When Burke reached the Tsang home, members of the family were vainly trying to make the victim vomit by forcing soapsuds down her throat. He brushed them aside and had the young woman swallow the zinc sulphate. The opium came up immediately. Enough had been absorbed, though, for her to be in great danger of fatally drowsing off. So Burke made two amahs start walking her about the room between them. They might have to walk her until dawn, still several hours off.

A sudden inspiration flashed through the young minister's mind. His batteries! He had built four Leclanché sal-ammoniac cells and rigged them up in a wooden frame, with a switch controlling them singly or in unison. They were far more powerful than the simple zinc-copper batteries he had used on Soon at Vanderbilt. When Kwe had sat down on a hot seat made with these Leclanchés, the unhappy teacher's queue all but rose vertically on his head.

Burke took two servants to the parsonage to get the batteries. The servants carried the heavy frame box between them on a bamboo pole. Back at the

Tsang home, Burke placed the opium victim in an armchair and connected her up—one wire around each calf. Then, with his hand on the switch, he kept vigil the rest of the night. If the young woman's head showed any sign of drooping, he turned on one battery. When that failed to rouse her, he stepped the charge up to two, three, or all the cells—and that always roused her. At dawn, she seemed over the worst effects of the drug—though her nerves were none too good—and Burke packed up his batteries and went home.

Not long after that—long enough for the battery story to make the teahouse rounds—the *lau-da* (captain) of the houseboat Burke rented for itinerary work asked the young missionary please to do something about his brother. Accompanying the boatman to the brother's house, Burke found the latter on a bed, quite sallow and stiff. He had hanged himself the day before.

"But he's dead," the minister protested, turning away from the corpse.

"I know," the lau-da agreed, "but that makes no difference with your spirit box, does it?"

The opium victims were sometimes just as hopelessly beyond recall. One case was a particularly lurid affair and made teahouse conversation for weeks.

Woo, a wealthy tea merchant living inside the West Gate, learned at his guildhall one afternoon that his wife had been unfaithful. Blind with rage and mortification, he rushed home to confront the woman with the story.

He ran into the house yelling so loudly about the matter that she heard him and hid herself. Not finding her and convinced that she was out with the alleged paramour, Woo picked up a cleaver in the kitchen and set off to hunt down the pair, swearing to carve them both into ten thousand pieces.

The terrified wife came out of hiding and apparently swallowed all the opium she could find in the house. Burke was called, but the woman already was unconscious when he arrived and there was no hope of reviving her. Woo, meanwhile, had made contact with the accused Casanova and, though he failed to carry out his oath literally, accomplished a fairly bloody bit of carving.

The case now went before the Woding magistrate, who in his capacity as coroner must determine whether Woo should be indicted for a double murder or absolved of all guilt. Under Chinese law, the question hinged entirely on the truth or falsehood of the guildhouse rumour.

With no witnesses able to swear to the dead parties' guilt or innocence, the magistrate conducted the inquest in the prescribed manner of the day. A large *kaung*, or earthen crock, was placed in the Woding yamen's hall of

justice and filled with water. Half the water came from a river, where the yang (male principle) prevailed, and half was drawn out of a well, dominated by the yin (female principle). These two elements are the basis of all Chinese philosophy.

Having arranged the yin-yang water, the magistrate had the severed heads of the wife and accused lover brought out. The water was stirred violently with a stick and the heads dropped into the swirling eddy. If they turned face to face, the dead persons had been guilty of adultery; if the backs of the heads met, the pair had been innocent.

Burke didn't see the gruesome test, but his cook relayed the result from a teahouse a short time afterward. The heads had faced each other and Woo had gone free.

The successes Burke met with in the medical field added substantially to the prestige he already had gained from the fire. People in the immediate neighbourhood of the parsonage began consulting him before they went for native doctors, Taoists, or wizards. And when the young missionary's treatments happened to cure, the quacks and occultists lost their opportunities for fees.

It was hardly to be wondered at, therefore, that the high priest of the S Miau was troubled when Burke chose to move within four feet of the Buddhist temple—that being the width of the alley separating the S Miau from the new mission compound. Had it been a Taoist temple going up next door, the high priest might have given it only a passing thought. Buddhism and Taoism could live together very well in China. They were willing to compromise and share profits. There even were instances—common ones—of Buddhist and Taoist gods sitting side by side in the same temple, with a dash of Confucianism thrown into the worship ceremony. But the Christians—especially the Protestants—were different. They wanted everything for themselves. They contended that a man couldn't be a Christian and still pray at the temples.

So the S Miau high priest felt his temple would be ruined by Burke's proximity, particularly since S Siang Kong was a medical god and the Christian's medicines had shown up only too well. And not least to be considered was Addie's influence among the womenfolk. Women in China, like women everywhere, were the bulwarks of religious institutions and the high priest hardly wanted to have his best clientele diverted into a hostile faith. He already had lost one of his proselytising women to the young missionary wife.

The high priest brooded in silence for the first two years of this undesired apposition of rival religions. He bowed coldly to the big Christian if the latter happened to walk in to look around the temple, as he often did.

S Siang Kong appeared aloof too, an eight-foot wooden image half seated and half leaning forward in his gilded shrine. The idol had a flowing black beard and held a gold-tipped mace in one hand. His ceremonial clothes were painted on the wooden surface in brilliant colours, though accumulated dust of years dulled the brilliance.

Then one day Burke rang his new church bell. The bell weighed five hundred pounds and had been bought and shipped to him from America by his father. He had hung it in a wooden tower built next to the recently finished McLain Chapel. Townspeople gathered in masses around the mission compound as the bell sounded out. Once they might have resented the clanging strokes, but Burke no longer was an unwelcome stranger whose every action courted a foong-s disturbance. The S Miau high priest, though, felt differently and saw his opportunity.

The following morning an odd tale was floating around the teahouses. The god S Siang Kong was complaining of a headache from the new mission bell. These complaints grew in intensity as chapel days and Sundays passed, with the bell regularly pealing out the call to service. Finally, on a Sunday afternoon, the high priest led a group of faithful S Miau worshippers behind S Siang Kong's shrine. There in the back of the idol's head was a crack, fully five inches long. The god had cried out in anguish that morning when the Christian bell struck, the high priest explained sadly, and here was plain evidence of the suffering the immortalized physician had undergone.

The high priest was disappointed if he expected to turn public wrath against Burke. Sungkiangites believed the story well enough, but they approached it with a strong sense of humour. Teahouses roared with laughter over old S Siang Kong's discomfort at the hands of the rival priest. Chinese were not a religious people in the American sense of the word. They had no reverence for their multitudinous gods. They had only a certain respect for them, grown out of a general superstitious fear of the unknown. They wouldn't take the risk of offending them; if someone else wanted to, that was his business. The Sungkiangites had taken no part in causing the Buddhist god's head to crack, so they laughed.

14

Taoist Spotlight

TAOISTS, TOO, SEEMED RESENTFUL of Burke's prominence in Sungkiang. The grey-robed priests spread their fans in front of their faces whenever they passed the young missionary on the streets. They didn't care to speak.

The Taoists might also have been somewhat jealous of their Buddhist colleague, the S Miau high priest. For if that worthy had accomplished nothing else, he had got his temple plenty of publicity. Whether the Taoists tried to seize their own share of the local spotlight or whether it was thrust upon them unasked was difficult to determine. The fact remained, their innings did come.

Unlike India-born Buddhism, Taoism was indigenous to China. It was a disordered mass of animistic superstitions and magic handed down by the Woo, the conjurers, magicians, wizards, and soothsayers of China since time immemorial. In an effort to ennoble their cult, the ancient Wooists took advantage of the name of Lao-tse after his death, making the famous contemporary of Confucius the high priest and founder of their Taoism. And his vague but lofty pantheistic speculations were transformed into the degraded Woo alchemy, fatalistic and pessimistic to an extreme.

Though Taoism, with its Woo basis, never appealed to Chinese scholars, it was made to order for the unlettered and superstitious millions of China. As a result, Chinese Buddhism, and Confucianism to an extent, was obliged to adopt something of the Woo demonology in order to compete with Taoism among the masses. But Taoism, again, had borrowed from Buddhism, so that the modern versions of the two religions were sometimes indistinguishable to the average Chinese. And both exploited the people for an estimated three hundred million dollars (American) annually in incense sales, worshipping fees, and priestly functions.

The Taoist stronghold in Sungkiang was the previously mentioned Ngauk Miau, or Temple of the Sacred Mountain. Its massive double roof sloped up imposingly, high above the general two-story roofline of the city. A pair of carved dragons spat at each other along the length of the heavy ridge beam. Sharing the beam with them were four huge gilt characters meaning: "Wind is Proper; Rain is Favourable." The official name of the temple was inscribed in black ideographs on a red board hung under the eaves of the upper roof: "Temple of Tai Shan." Tai Shan was the sacred mountain in Shantung Province.

A passageway led a hundred feet from the main business street to the temple square, a stone-paved space an acre or more in area. The passageway and that part of the square bordering it formed the chief market-place of the city. Several teahouses were packed in here and the air was noisy with hawkers. In the centre of the square stood a handsome bronze incense burner, cast in the shape of a small triple-roof temple. Off at one side rose an old ginkgo tree. It was famous in Sungkiang as the "Buddha's Hand Tree," there being a curious growth on the gnarled trunk resembling a giant hand. The Ngauk Miau's Taoist personnel had no hesitancy about accepting and propagating this idea of Buddha's hand being on the tree. It drew public interest and that was more important than religious jealousies.

There was never a dull daylight moment in the temple square, which among other things was the public amusement centre of Sungkiang. A story-teller usually entertained a crowd in the shade of the ginkgo, while on the opposite side an acrobat could be found swinging his swords and lifting stone weights. Sometimes, always during China New Year, a troupe of actors erected their stage and presented a play. Dice and card games went on constantly, occasionally centring under an inscription on the temple wall which moralized: "Gambling is the mother of vice."

Whenever Burke visited the Ngauk Miau, he was drawn by an odd fascination to the long open buildings, on the sides of the square. Here was housed a three-dimensional exhibit of the Taoist hell, sometimes called the "Ten Halls of Purgatory." It was made of clay, painted in bright colours, and represented a series of weird underground labyrinths where realistic little red-faced devils were in the process of tormenting wicked souls of men. These plastic horrors were attached to most large Taoist temples in China (though they were of Buddhist origin) and Europeans were fond of associating them with Madame Tussaud's waxen efforts—not that she could hold the proverbial candle to an Oriental torture mind.

The Taoist purgatory, in contrast to Dante's nine lessening circles, one above the other, was conceived of as ten halls lying in different depths at the bottom of a subterranean ocean. Each hall had its judge and was subdivided into sixteen wards. The wards contained such substances as quicklime, human manure, blood and pus, boiling oil, etc. Into this uninviting environment, the little devils dragged souls for torture. Holes were bored in their flesh and packed with salt; their muscles were cut and the bones wrenched out; they were sawed in two at the waist; their hearts and livers were squeezed with pincers; their fingernails and toenails were pulled out; their mouths were jammed with needles; their brains were scooped out and the skulls stuffed with porcupines—and dozens of other inflictions no less satanic.

In one specialized ward, the punishment was somewhat more refined.

This place was reserved for Taoist and Buddhist priests (again a mingling of the religions) who had received money in life for prayers and liturgies they didn't know. Here their souls must sit in a dark stall, supposedly lit only by an infinitesimal wick in a bucket of oil, and pick out of their prayer books as best they could the words and passages faltered upon on earth.

Mortals whose evil outbalanced their good at death were sentenced to varying degrees of this purgatory before being returned to earth to try again for heaven. If they failed a second time, they stayed in the infernal regions for eternity. Evils punishable in purgatory ranged from throwing broken cups in the street to murder, but for each good deed stored up in life a soul might escape one of the torture wards.

All such rules and regulations together with a full description and drawings of the "Ten Halls," were set out in paper-bound booklets. The Taoists got these gratuitously circulated all over China by printing on the covers a threat of bad luck to anyone who destroyed a copy instead of passing it on.

The only bit of comic relief in the Ngauk Miau's hell was one of the hall judges' mother-in-law. Because of the judge's position, the king of hell granted the woman a special privilege when she was sentenced to eternal stay in the lower regions. She was to be allowed to leave hell one day each year. When the infernal gates were cracked open for her to get out, however, the perverse woman stood in the opening and refused to budge. As a result, all the other wicked shades in hell escaped through the crack and invaded the outer world, like Pandora's ills. They were rounded up at the end of the day and, along with the stubborn mother-in-law, shut back up in the torture wards. But the same scene was repeated every year on that day. In the temple's clay reproduction of the "Ten Halls," the little figure of the mother-in-law is shown resolutely wedged in the half-open gates, with some of the escaping spirits flying past.

This annual flight of evil souls from Hades was observed in Sungkiang, as elsewhere in China, as All Ghosts Day. There was nothing the Chinese dreaded more than wicked and hungry (starvation being one of the tortures of hell) ghosts on the loose. To have them ascend into the world *en masse* was terrifying. Some people shot firecrackers constantly to scare them off, while others hired priests to celebrate a special mass appeasing the ghosts. This mass culminated in piling food on a table for the starving shades to devour or carry back to hell. The priests usually carried it back to their temple.

From the ceramic purgatory, one entered the Ngauk Miau proper by way of a raised stone approach. In the outer vestibule sat those familiar Chinese temple accessories, the fortune-tellers. There were four of them (six on

festival days), half dozing behind their tables or occupied with clients. Fortune-telling was a big business in China, where all matters from the purchase of a building lot to the sex of an unborn child are put to the art.

The Ngauk Miau was famous in Sungkiang for the particular brand of sortilege practised in its vestibule. One of the principal props of the performance was a trained crow. When the applicant had stated his question, the crow pecked into a box of bamboo slips and brought up one in his beak. On the slip was written a character, which the fortune-teller proceeded to break up into its component parts. These he wrote down and joined to the name of the applicant and a cabalistic lot of other ideographs, such as the viscera, the five planets, and the five ancestors. Then assuming a most sapient expression, he read the answer from the hodgepodge before him. This answer most likely was the one the applicant wanted to hear. If not, he went to another fortune-teller. Chinese would never countenance an evil future—although they bore up as well or better than any other race when misfortune did fall.

During festivals or whenever the temple and square were unusually thronged, chess sharks set their tables alongside the fortune-tellers and challenged all comers. The games never started from openings, of course. The sharks set the men in an end-game position, which looked advantageous for their opponents. But the sharks always won.

Once within the lofty main hall of the temple, a person was likely to forget the clamour and play outside, or even the sadistic horrors of purgatory. Eyes had first to grow accustomed to the dim light filtering in from the vestibule. Like all Chinese temples, everything was in a state of disrepair and thick dust coated all objects. The air smelled strangely of age and incense and felt cool and damp from the stone-slab flooring. There was some magnificent carved woodwork around, but the darkness and dust made it difficult to appreciate its beauty. High up in the gloom, the heavy-bearded image of Toong Ngauk Da Tien (Great Emperor of the Eastern Sacred Mountain) sat on a throne. An altar, caked with dust and the drippings of countless red ceremonial candles, stood in front of the throne and people knelt on straw pads to worship. The altar was framed between two enormous wooden pillars, entwined with dragons. Flanking the approach to the altar were two pairs of towering figures representing soldiers and scholars. The soldiers were twelve feet high and held maces and spears in their hands. They stared down at the worshippers with fierce, popping eyes.

In a small wing to the left of the main hall were the private living quarters of the Great Emperor. Here sat another image of him, in a more informal pose and surrounded by idols of his wives, concubines, children, and servants.

Food and wine were regularly served to the divine group. The realistic Chinese, like the ancient Greeks, gave their deities all the comforts of earth.

The Great Emperor Toong Ngauk may have been the reigning deity of the temple, but to the rank and file Sungkiangite, the most famous occupant of the Ngauk Miau was Yang Lau-ta. He presided in the spacious right wing of the temple and it was to his quarters that people went with lanterns hunting runaway souls of the sick. Besides his power over souls, this god carried immense influence in the Chinese almanac, there being days set aside when everything must stand in awe of him. Marriages, haircuts, and theatre going were, among other things, taboo on those days.

Old Master Yang (the *lau-ta* was an honorific equivalent to "old master") had once been a magistrate at Yangchow, in upper Kiangsu. As the legend went, his yamen caught fire one night and instead of running out to save himself, he tried to reach the yamen prison and save the inmates. He didn't succeed and was burned to death, but his action was so meritorious that he was deified. Since gaining the seat among the gods, he had been represented by idols in a number of temples in Central China. There was, in fact, a smaller Taoist temple outside the East Gate of Sungkiang with Yang Lau-ta ensconced therein. But the Ngauk Miau was his most celebrated residence in the prefectural city.

To make Old Master Yang feel at home, the temple wing that housed him was designed like a typical Chinese magistrate's yamen. There were great iron-studded gates, with a carving of the overgreedy te facing them. After crossing two open courts the visitor stepped into the Hall of Justice, almost as gloomy as Toong Ngauk's throne hall. Yang Lau-ta sat here as he had at Yangchow, surrounded by his red-coated lictors. His face was painted jet black in evidence of the ordeal through which he had passed to immortal fame. So well known was this facial characteristic that it had become a popular standard of comparison in Sungkiang. Mothers could be heard scolding children for dirtying their faces "as black as Yang Lau-ta's."

Hanging from the rafters above Old Master Yang's head was a gigantic abacus, four feet long and equipped with counters the size of hen eggs. The magistrate god was said to take the calculator down every night to judge souls. He sat in judgment at a table in the middle of the hall, fifteen feet from the throne where his image rested in the day. To prove this to credulous Sungkiangites, the temple priests pointed under the table to a slight depression in the stone floor, which they said came from years of nightly pressure by the god's feet.

Souls to be judged at night lined up between Old Master Yang and a "magic" brass mirror that stood in a wooden frame facing the table. The mirror was kept hooded during the day, but the god removed the covering

when he got ready to judge. In the mirror were reflected the sins of the souls and Old Master Yang would add them up on his big abacus—or so said the priests.

The temple yamen's private apartments lay behind the justice hall, across another open court. A second black-faced image of the Old Master reposed in the front room of these quarters. It was arrayed in red-silk robes and ceremonial headdress and sat behind an altar. The majority of Yang Lau-ta's worshippers prayed to him in this private sanctum and it was here especially that the insect hunting was done.

In one corner of the room, to the god's right, was an image of his son, also in red robes. The women of the family—the god's two wives and his daughter—were half hidden behind a curtain in a smaller chamber. They wore jewelled headdresses and sat at a long table, a wife at each end and the daughter on one side. Two idol amahs stood by in attendance. These maids were said by the priests to have once been two virtuous Sungkiang widows who never remarried, thereby securing for themselves this opportunity for immortal servitude to a god's family.

Old Master Yang was among the leading Sungkiang deities—Taoist and Buddhist—who participated in the semi-annual outings arranged for them by the solicitous Chinese. In the spring they went to gaze at the blooms in the lotus ponds outside the East Gate. And in the autumn they visited the gardens in the western suburbs to smell sweet olive blossoms. These were grand and noisy occasions. Young Lau-ta, the Great Emperor Tong Ngauk, S Siang Kong, and a half-dozen other local immortals would be mounted in open sedan chairs (the gods' secondary, or private-apartment idols, were used), with red umbrellas held over them. Each divinity had his own procession of gongs, reed instruments, lictors carrying boards inscribed with his name and insignia, and a line of priestly retainers. All the processions joined into one immense parade which wound through the crooked streets. Great crowds turned out along the line of march to watch the spectacle.

While the other gods contented themselves with sniffing the sweet olive or feasting their eyes on the lotus blooms, Old Master Yang's nature outings led to some rather awkward social duties—awkward unless one had the Chinese point of view. These duties grew out of the fact that the Taoist temple outside the East Gate sent its idol of Yang Lau-ta to the outings as well as did the Ngauk Miau. Courtesy demanded some kinds of special recognition between the two black-faced images of the same god. So when the procession went to the lotus ponds, Old Master Yang dropped in afterward for tea with himself at the East Gate temple. And when the nature trail led to the western suburbs, the tea scene was repeated on the way back at the Ngauk Miau. The Chinese saw nothing inconsistent in this sort of thing.

In the midst of these routine Sungkiang goings-on, Mother Soong had her dream. Mother Soong (no relation to Charlie) was a housewife who lived near the Ngauk Miau. Her only daughter had recently died of smallpox, just after reaching marriageable age. The dream was about the dead girl. In the vision, Mother Soong claimed, Old Master Yang appeared and said he had selected the daughter's shade to be the wife of his son.

Mother Soong, naturally, was overwhelmed by the honour of having her daughter deified through marriage to a god's son. She rushed over to the Ngauk Miau as soon as she awoke and told the glad tidings to the high priest there, demanding at the same time that an image of her daughter be added to the group of idols in Old Master Yang's private apartments. But the high priest was quite cool toward the whole idea. Not to be rebuffed, Mother Soong entered suit against the temple to enforce her demand.

The hearings were held before the Leu magistrate and debate was long and heated. Sungkiang teahouses lost interest in all else—Burke's medicine and S Siang Kong's headache included. After much solemn deliberation, the magistrate decided in favour of the woman, ordering the Taoist high priest to install an idol of the dead Soong girl. The order was duly carried out and the new image, richly garbed in silk and wearing a jewelled headdress fit for a member of a god's household, was placed at the table with the two wives and daughter. Mother Soong proceeded to march to the temple in triumph and burn incense before her immortalized offspring.

The case got completely out of the hands of local teahouses and spread all over the Sungkiang prefecture. People came from as far as Shanghai to see Old Master Yang's new daughter-in-law. In incense sales alone, the Ngauk Miau must have profited handsomely from these incursions and the high priest probably blessed Mother Soong's nocturnal revelations—if he hadn't inspired them himself.

15

Rivals in Christendom

DESPITE THESE HEATHEN DIVERSIONS and his own medical labours, Burke was beginning to make some progress with the gospel. But it was slow.

He had preached his first sermon in Chinese five months after going to

Sungkiang. It was at one of the chapel services in the native parsonage. There were only a few listeners, for the stigma of the character offence was fresh. He struggled along, though, trying to make his points simple and concrete. He always strove for simplicity in his preaching, even after his language improved, because he knew he would be talking to the common people. The haughty literati were never met in the chapel rooms or the market-places.

"Why do you worship a piece of wood?" Burke began. "Would you bow down and worship this table? It's made of the same stuff your idols are made of. God made man, yet man goes and worships a man-made image.

"Some people worship a cat. They do that in a distant country called Egypt. What do you think of that? Imagine setting up your old house cat and bowing down to it? Isn't that stupid? Yet you worship wood, which is even more silly.

"Your ancestors once worshipped only Zaung Ti [the historic Chinese supreme being, loosely translated Heavenly Father]. Your classics record it. But now you bow down to hundreds of pieces of wood. Only the Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus, can do you any good. Jesus came to earth and lived as you and I. It is His teachings I want to tell you of, because by them you can live a new life in which your hearts will be happy."

Burke early learned the value of invoking the Chinese classics when possible on any point he wished to put across. It was somewhat analogous to the Leu magistrate's use of foong-s. The common people of China may never have read a character in these classics, but they held as profound a respect for them as did any scholar in the land.

Burke had some other points to make in this first sermon; then he ended, as he and other American missionaries were prone to end:

"In the Country of the Flowery Flag where I come from, everyone worships Zaung Ti and His Son. Because of that, there is no misery or sin in that country."

And fortunately, or not, there was no one in the congregation to bring up "Boss" Tweed or Jesse James.

It was not an outright effort to delude the Chinese, this identification of America with all that was good and perfect. Patriotism and perspective played a large part in it. American missionaries, like any other nationals, placed their own country above others. And when they had come all the way to China, home pastures looked even greener, both by distance and by comparison with the lower standards of Chinese life.

When Burke sat down, Zung rose and exhorted. The old Methodist exhorter system was put into good use in the mission field. Native exhorters always followed foreign missionaries on the pulpit, to summarize the sermons

and drive home arguments which the latter had hazed with their limited vocabularies.

The effects of Burke's first preachings seemed nil. Even after the fire, when he had some standing in the community, there was little to encourage him. Children still played tag between the chapel benches, men argued over business deals, and people came and went as they pleased during the sermon. If he lost his temper over this disorder—and he did sometimes—the Chinese didn't understand. They were just as clamorous and unruly at their temples, theatres, and such other congregating places, which in the West normally elicit rapt silence. It was simply an expression of their extreme individualism.

Nor did the Chinese give an indication of seeing the light of the gospel in an emotional burst, *à la* Georgia camp meeting. All Burke could do was preach on and hope some of the seed he appeared to be so uselessly scattering would bear fruit.

He had been in Sungkiang two years before he got his first convert, a silversmith named Waung. And Waung was no emotional case. He came to chapel services a few times, concluded that there was something worth while in Christianity and began visiting Burke for private instruction. These instructions continued for nearly a year, when one day Waung said quietly he was ready to profess his new faith and be baptized.

It was through Waung that Burke secured his first real foothold outside Sungkiang. A few months after becoming a Christian, the silversmith moved to his wife's home village of Tunglemiau (local dialect spelling), five miles from the prefecture capital. Here he supervised the establishment of a mission station, renting a house for the chapel and employing a teacher for a Christian day school. Years later Waung moved again, this time to the city of Changyen (locally called Tsangyi) near Hangchow Bay, and was the nucleus of Christian activity there.

Waung's part in setting up the station at Tunglemiau was typical of one method used by missionaries in branching out over the country. A Christian native, such as the smith, or a man sufficiently interested would be found living in the new place where a station was wanted. This person would serve as the mission "contact" there. He would organize meetings in his home or a rented building when missionaries visited the place. Presently a chapel would be set up, with a primary school attached. A number of these outstations would then be joined into a circuit and regularly visited by missionaries, who preached in the chapels and inspected the schools. When the outstation was more developed, a resident native preacher would be appointed to take full charge—as Soon did in Kunshan.

It is not to be imagined that Buddhists and Taoists were Burke's only competitors in these activities. The Roman Catholics had been on the field,

off and on, since the days of Soon's ancestor-in-law, Zi Kwang-kyi. The sections around the Yangtze mouth were the strongest positions the Jesuits had in China, which was only natural, considering that Zi's home was there. Tides of war and persecution had temporarily dislodged them since Zi's time, but they came back.

There were a score of little Catholic chapels within a five-mile radius of Sungkiang when Burke opened the first Protestant station there, but there were no foreign Catholic missionaries living in or near the city. Native priests were in charge and French fathers occasionally came from Siccawei to inspect.

The Catholics operated their missions differently from the Protestants. They didn't carry the gospel aggressively to the masses by street preaching and tract sales. They concerned themselves with their own members, striving, as is the Catholic policy everywhere, to keep the faith alive in successive generations of converts. Most of their chapels were in the rural districts, small hamlets, or farming communities. Here entire populations usually were Catholic, grown up around their chapels. The few chapels and one larger church in Sungkiang were surrounded by Catholic families also, but the faith was not actively fostered beyond these limited bounds and the great proportion of the city had never heard of the Christian religion.

As intimated earlier, there was no noticeable love lost between the Romanists and the Protestants. The two Christian groups were far more at odds than any two heathen brands of faith. The protestant missionaries, in fact, classed their Catholic colleagues along with the heathens, a circumstance partly attributable to ofttimes Romanish laxity regarding their converts' ancestral worship, as well as to their image- and ritual-filled services. One Southern Methodist returning from China on furlough in 1890 got the following off his spleen in an article published by the *Wesleyan Christian Advocate:*

> "She [the Roman Catholic Church] is the most subtle, the most dangerous, the most successful instrument of the devil for the corrupting and enslaving of the human mind and heart that you can find on this earth; for she is 'Satan's handmaiden arrayed as an angel of light.' Natives turned Catholics have worse chance of salvation than the heathen, because of the blindness of their guides and the utter insufficiency of their church to furnish them the true soul-saving religion."

The Catholics, on their part, were genuinely contemptuous of their rivals, considering them ignorant rabble rousers, utterly lacking in all appreciation of ritualistic beauty and religious tradition. Even the name they gave themselves in China—*Tien Tsu Kyau* (Heaven's Lord Religion)—struck an exalted

chord in comparison with the Protestants' name—Yasoo Kyau (Jesus Religion). The designations expressed the kernel of the distinction between the two groups, one emphasizing bare Christian gospel and the other, impressive ceremonials.

Burke could never bring himself to join wholeheartedly in this Christian feud. Perhaps it was a subconscious reminder that his grandfather, Richard Elliot Burke, had been a good Catholic in County Cork before he left Ireland for America. Had Richard not met and married a pious, rock-willed Scotch Presbyterian named Mary Rowan Elliott, the Burkes might have remained Catholic. But Mary would have none of the papists and the couple compromised on Methodism, hardly a fair concession to extract from the young Irishman.

Whenever Chinese asked Burke to explain the difference between Catholicism and Protestantism (as puzzled Celestials continually did ask), he had a stock reply ready:

"Da doong siau yi (Alike in big things; different in small matters)." Chinese could always be wrapped up in concise little phrases like that, half as wordy as English.

The young Georgia minister had made a second attempt at friendship with the fathers at Siccawei, inviting them to stop in for tea with him on their next inspection trip to Sungkiang. But he met with the same cool response.

"C'est impossible!"

These strained relations reached a crucial stage a short time after Burke began doing evangelical work at Loktiauwan (local dialect spelling), a village eight or nine miles west of Sungkiang. There was a Catholic chapel near the village, with a farm community of converts around it, but Burke had no intention of invading this Jesuit sphere. He confined himself to the real heathens in the village. Among these he soon developed a dozen likely candidates for Methodism. One in particular, a young farmer named Li, had invited the big missionary to his rude earth-floored home to meet his family and have a meal. After that, the minister sent word ahead to Li whenever he was to visit Loktiauwan.

Li, as it happened, was anxious to marry a certain girl in his neighbourhood. She worked in the rice fields near him during the planting season and the two sometimes met each other walking home at dusk. (There were few restrictions against prenuptial meetings among Chinese peasants, in contrast to higher classes.) The girl's family approved of the match, for Li was well thought of in Loktiauwan. But when the betrothal was announced, complications arose. The girl had been betrothed as a child to a youth in the Catholic community and now his family began pressing for marriage. Its claims were not legally binding, however, because written marriage con-

tracts had not been exchanged between the two parties at the time of betrothal.

At the height of the controversy, Burke made one of his periodical trips to Loktiauwan. As his houseboat came up to the teahouse landing, he saw Li and an older man waiting on the shore. The latter was introduced as the father of the girl Li wanted to marry. Both men were excited and began telling the missionary the details of the marriage dispute.

"I have learned now that the Tieu Tsu Kyau [Catholic] family is planning to have my daughter kidnapped," the father revealed.

Li added that if the girl could only be hidden in a safe place until marriage arrangements were completed (Chinese marriages, with their dependence on lucky almanac dates, etc., were never matters of a moment's notice), all would be well. He wanted Burke to take her to Sungkiang and keep her at the mission home.

The missionary pondered awhile. He didn't like mixing into affairs like this, but Li and the father appeared to have a just case. The Catholic family's kidnapping plot smacked of underhandedness too, something Burke could never tolerate. Furthermore, Li had been a good friend. Yes, he would take the girl and keep her until Li was ready to marry.

That night the houseboat was rowed to a point in the canal near the girl's home and she was hustled aboard, dressed like an old woman. At the mission Addie took charge of the frightened peasant maid. In initiating her into the delights of a hot bath and foreign soap, the surprised missionary's wife discovered a square piece of paper covered with several hundred silkworm eggs. The girl had been carrying them next to her body to hurry their hatching. Addie promised not to throw them away, to the girl's immense relief. She was given a place to sleep and, in return, she performed the functions of an amah around the house.

On finding the plans thwarted, the Catholic family was beside itself. It entered suit in the Leu magistrate's court (Loktiauwan was in the Leu yoen), demanding that the girl be produced and compelled to carry out the childhood betrothal. While waiting for the hearing—and quite ignorant that Burke figured on Li's side—it was busy lining up what it thought would prove the trump card: foreign Catholic support in court. Roman missionaries stuck by their converts, right or wrong, and were notorious—far more so than the Protestants—for bringing political pressure to bear on local officials.

When the hearing opened at the Leu yamen, the petitioners were on hand first. Prominently displayed among them was the tall, black-cassocked figure of one of the French fathers from Siccawei. He was ready to play his role of intimidation. The Leu magistrate no doubt knew what he was up against as he sat behind the long, raised judgment table. The table was littered with

books, seals, brushes, ink, and paper. Standing in waiting were the official's secretaries, clerks, and interpreters while lictors with whips and chains—their instruments of punishment and torture—lolled around. A Chinese unicorn was pictured on the wall behind the table and near the picture was an inscription exhorting the magistrate to be merciful.

At that point, Burke, Li, and the girl's father strode into the court. The surprise was complete on all sides—magistrate, plaintiffs, and defendants, including Burke. He nodded pleasantly at the French priest but got an icy stare in return. The magistrate immediately took on more poise. With the big American taking part, he felt he had small cause to fear the Frenchman's designs. He ordered the petitioners' notary (licensed notaries served as attorneys in Old China) to read his petition. The reading done, the magistrate curtly dismissed the case because of the lack of a written marriage contract. Seeing he was cleanly checkmated, the French father stalked out without a word, followed by the Catholic family.

The gratitude of Li and his prospective father-in-law was unbounded. They dug into their meagre resources and deluged the mission home with gifts of candies and fruit. These expressions were crowned when Li appeared at the home one afternoon two weeks after the court hearing. He was dressed in his rough blue peasant's wrap-skirt.

"The time has come for my wedding," he informed Burke, "and I have obtained my family's consent for you to perform the ceremony in the Christian manner."

Burke started to protest, as he usually did when people pressed favours on him. Then he saw the genuineness of the young farmer's gesture and a warm feeling rose in him. With it was a certain excitement too, for this would be the first time he had ever married a Chinese couple.

The formal wedding announcement came a week later, an unfolded slip of red paper inscribed with black characters and inserted in a wide red envelope. As Chinese marriage announcements were a polite request for a little money to help defray expenses if one attended the feasts, or simply as a gift if one didn't, Burke wrapped up a dollar and twenty cents in red paper and sent it to the Li family. It was customary to send two pieces of money, one of which must be at least a dollar, and though the thrifty Chinese got by with a dollar and one cash, magnanimous foreigners were expected to do better.

Burke arrived in Loktiauwan the morning of the wedding with his Methodist ritual book in his hand. It was the Chinese translation of the rituals, of course, and Burke had gone over the marriage ceremony with Kwe not less than twenty times. Members of the Li family were at the teahouse landing to meet him and escort him to the groom's home. The

marriage and most of the feasts would take place there; in contrast to America, the bride's family had little to do with the wedding outside of providing sufficient dowry.

The Lis might have acquiesced to a Christian service, but they had no intention of discarding the bright pageantry of a Chinese wedding. Nor was Burke sorry. He hadn't had an opportunity before to view wedding customs from such close quarters.

The humble grey brick farmhouse was hung with red cloth and two giant paper lanterns flanked the doorway. They would be lit for the night's feasting. On each lantern was printed the fat character meaning "long life and happiness." Inside the house more lanterns—glass ones dangling silk braids—hung about. In the room where the ceremony would be performed there was a table set with two tall pewter candlesticks. A pair of red candles burned in them. Scrolls decorated the walls. Except for the bare earth floor and the pigs and chickens running in and out, the rude atmosphere of the place had almost vanished.

The bride came in a gaudily decorated red sedan chair, carried by four men. Never again would she ride in such luxury—not until her funeral anyway. Four musicians walked in front, blowing their inharmonious tunes, and firecrackers went off along the way to scare off bad luck. The matchmaker was the official escort. She was an old woman of the village.

Young Li was in the room when the bride entered. She was led in by the woman and her face was hidden behind a red-silk veil. She wore an extravagant headdress loaded with glass beads and red tassels. Li was no mean sight himself. He had borrowed a scholar's satin gown and tasselled hat for the occasion—the one occasion when the poorest man in China is allowed the privilege of wearing the official dress of the graduate. Yet despite his clothes and the occasion, Li's face drooped unhappily. Chinese custom required the groom to assume the air of one in deep sorrow. Otherwise, bad luck would attend the marriage.

The bride and groom stood in front of the table, while Burke faced them on the other side. He read the service and, when he had finished, the couple clasped their respective hands and bowed formally to the missionary, moving the clasped hands up and down rapidly—as Chinese do in certain forms of bowing. Li moved his own, but the bride had her arms manipulated by the old woman. In a purely Chinese marriage, the ceremony would have included worship before the family ancestral tablets, but this was dispensed with for Burke's sake.

The big missionary boarded his houseboat for the return to Sungkiang feeling supremely happy. His hands were full of cakes and other sweetmeats and a crowd of friendly people, members and friends of the wedding families,

saw him off at the boat landing. They shouted warm invitations to come back soon. He couldn't help thinking how different it was from another send-off peasants had given him once, to the accompaniment of curses and mud.

16

Circuit Rider in a Teahouse

CIRCUIT RIDING was a Methodist term never meant for use in China. There was something decidedly incongruous between the picture of John Wesley on horseback with saddlebags and that of the missionary floating along by canal boat. Nevertheless, "circuit riding" it was called by the old Southern Methodists in China.

The country's canals were (as they still are) her only reputable highways. They crisscrossed the empire and, in sections like low-lying southern Kiangsu, branched out to every town, village, and farm community. During his third year in Sungkiang, Burke struggled for weeks drawing a chart of only the main waterways in the Shanghai-Soochow-Sungkiang triangle. When completed, the map looked like the sort of web a thoroughly drunken spider might spin.

Burke had rented the full-time use of a houseboat for his itinerant work. It was a large one with a two-section cabin and powered by two long fishtail sculls. The vessel was moored in a canal fifty yards from the new mission compound, with its three-man crew living on board. The young missionary learned to reckon his departures by the two factors controlling boating in the seaboard regions—tide and wind. He usually started out on the early morning ebb or flow, depending upon the direction to be taken. Often the starting hour would be so early that he boarded the vessel the night before with his *poo-ke* (bedding roll).

These canal trips could last one day or, if the winds and tide were bad and the circuit long, they could drag out three or four. Addie occasionally went with her husband and then it wasn't so lonely at night. After prayers with the crew, the two read to each other or played anagrams, the latter being the favourite missionary pastime of the era. Burke's diary record of one of these trips in February, 1891, with Addie along, went as follows:

Wednesday, February 19—On boat tonight waiting for tide.

Thursday, February 20—We were at the same place this morning that we were last night. Such was the shallowness of the canal that we could not ke [start]. We ate breakfast on the boat, then I went back to the house after some things. Between ten and eleven, when we found that we still could not ke, we both went to the house and played beanbags. We could not get off sooner because of the passing of a multitude of boats which had been laid up the night before. We got off about twelve. Had a zung foong and made a quick trip to Tsingpu. Went to the chapel and while I was preaching Addie was inside teaching two of Mr. Sung's girls to crochet. Went back to the boat with Addie, then went to the West Gate and into the city to sell books. Sold thirty-one books and forty calendars. On getting back to the boat, we ke'd for Tsuikakauh [local dialect; post office spelling, Chukiakio] and spent the night on the boat there.

Friday, February 21—Preached and examined school, then went back to the boat and gave out a lot of medicine. Started for Kauli [local dialect] about twelve o'clock. Got there and sold books and preached. Left Kauli before dark and went a little way out and tied up for the night. We played some anagrams after dinner and prayers.

Saturday, February 22—Aroused boatmen about three this morning and had them start. But the canal was shallow and we were blocked by a grounded boat. Tide finally came and we reached home this afternoon.

The reference in Friday's entry to tying up for the night near the town of Kauli was not without meaning. China's rivers and canals were infested by *jang-dau* (bandits) and it took both persuasion and extra pay to entice boatmen away from a town after dark if the weather was clear. Much of the pirating was done by active troops of the Imperial Army. On leave at night, they reversed their uniforms, commandeered small skiffs, and roamed for prey. The commanders knew what went on, but winked at it, unless some luckless soldier was caught. Then off went his head. Otherwise, it was to be expected that the poor soldiers would try to augment their wretched pay in any way possible. It was in good Oriental military tradition. It also contributed to the classification of soldiers at the bottom of Old China's social ladder.

Burke ordinarily let his boatmen use their discretion about venturing into open country after nightfall. Now and again, though, he would be in some special rush—as on the footboat trip to Soochow—and argue and pay the captain to risk pirates. Under the latter circumstance, a brush with jang-dau was assured sooner or later. And it came.

The young minister had left Sungkiang one morning intending to stop a short while in Tsingpu, then go on to Kauli, where he had an engagement with a native Christian friend the next morning. In Tsingpu, however, he gave way to entreaties to stay till dark and show his magic lantern in the chapel there. The lantern, a new acetylene type, and a set of Holy Land slides had become a regular part of his itinerant equipment. To the Chinese, it was literally magic and when Burke worked in a sermon while throwing pictures on the wall, he for once got awed attention.

It was nine o'clock before he was finally able to leave Tsingpu. The moon was brilliant and the lau-da, joinded by the other two boatmen, protested more vigorously than usual about rowing to Kauli before day. It would be asking for jang-dau. But Burke was adamant. He had made a definite engagement to be there in the morning and nothing less than the personal command of the Lord could keep him from carrying out a promise. So the houseboat got under way.

For the next half-hour the young minister occupied himself in trying to change a camera plate that had stuck. As precaution against the bright moonlight, he wrapped a blanket around himself and camera while he worked. All was peaceful until two small boats shot out of the shadows by the canal banks. They grappled on both ends of the houseboat and five men leaped aboard. Burke heard the thumps of their straw-sandalled feet striking the deck and the cries of the boatmen:

"Jang-dau! Jang-dau!"

Then two of the bandits were coming down the short flight of steps into the cabin. They carried paper lanterns which they had hastily lighted after boarding the mission boat. As they held the dim light aloft, expecting to find some wealthy mandarin to victimize, a frightful apparition began unfolding before them.

Burke, his mind more concerned with the safety of the sensitive plate than anything else, was slowly extricating himself from the blanket. In the eerie lantern light, the shrouded, moving hulk of the 220-pound missionary seemed like some shapeless, slouching monster. Before the startled bandits could recover from their initial shock, the minister's bearded head, hair tousled, broke into sight. Taking in the situation at a glance, Burke bared his teeth and shook the little cabin with a maniacal bellow, at the same time making as if to lunge at the intruders.

The bandits didn't bother about their boats. The two foremost men scrambled out of the cabin into their fellows, screaming:

"The King of Hell comes!"

And all five leaped into the shallow canal and splashed to shore.

There were other memorable incidents in store on the canal circuits and

one which left the young minister less composed than did the bandits. This was at a city where a resident native preacher had charge of mission work. Burke had come out from Sungkiang to inspect things and was spending the night at the preacher's home. He seldom slept on the houseboat in a place where he knew someone.

During the early part of the evening, Burke sat chatting pleasantly with the preacher and his wife. She was a fascinating young Chinese woman, with soft round features and almond eyes. She had been to a mission school in Shanghai and could speak English with a bewitchingly broken accent. When bedtime came, the two left Burke in the parlour, where he unrolled his poo-ke on the stone floor and lay down in his clothes. The parsonage was too small to have a guest room.

He had been sleeping less than an hour when suddenly he was tensely awake. Light footfalls were approaching across the room. They paused at his head and a figure knelt down. Fragrant Eastern perfume enveloped him and smooth fingers touched his forehead. Then the broken accents of the preacher's wife whispered:

"I love you."

Burke felt around madly for the matches and candle he had laid on the floor beside him. Finding them, he struck a match and lit the candle. He didn't dare look at the young woman. Instead, he got up hurriedly and walked toward the door.

"Please, you must go, ma'am," he said, his eyes on the doorway. He was quite terrified. Suppose the husband should wake and discover her here. Perhaps he already was awake and on the way.

"Hurry," he added somewhat less gently, as she hesitated.

The young wife left without a word. Burke shut the door behind her and made sure the latch was in place before going back to his bedding. He slept no more that night. At breakfast, he greeted his host and hostess nervously. But everything appeared as usual, except that the woman had little to say. Burke started not to mention the affair even in his diary. Finally, though, he made a brief and cryptic note at the end of the day's entry:

"Had a strange experience last night. Have had few if any stranger."

In extending the canal circuits to a city or town where there was no native Christian "contact" to pave the way, Burke started in on the principal teahouse. This was the corner drugstore, the courthouse steps, and the town hall of a Chinese town. One might go on to describe it as the saloon, restaurant, gambling house, barbershop, theatre, and newspaper. A Chinese teahouse, especially a big one, was all these to some extent. There was nothing quite like it anywhere else in the world.

In the course of a day, a fair proportion of a town's population passed in

and out of its teahouses. They were most crowded twice during the day. Before seven in the morning, serving a breakfast of steamed bread balls, rice, and tea to market-bound farmers and town workmen. And early in the afternoon, when businessmen relaxed there from lunch to trade news and gossip. At irregular intervals, the proprietors engaged a public story-teller to entertain the guests. For the illiterate these stories, drawn invariably out of the country's romantic past, were the sole means of learning Chinese history and thereby understanding Chinese drama. Thus school might be added to the list of designations for a teahouse.

So it was that Burke told his boatmen to row to the principal teahouse when he made his first evangelistic trip to Changyen the previously mentioned city near Hangchow Bay. Like most large Chinese teahouses, this one turned out to be a two-story structure facing the main canal. The establishment proper was on the second floor, the ground part being largely kitchen, with a few tables scattered about for poorer patrons. A narrow iron-grilled balcony ran across the front of the second story, overlooking the fetid canal. Behind the balcony, eight pairs of tall windows, hinged on pivots in floor and ceiling, opened into the tearoom. The small lattice squares of the windows were paned with the usual thin, translucent oyster shells.

When the little gangplank was in place to the teahouse landing, Burke walked off the vessel with his tracts and calendars and entered the building. The ever quick-gathering crowd of curious followed him. A broad staircase, the risers faced with green-and-white glazed tile, led to the second story.

At the top, there was a single large room occupying the entire floor. A score or more square wooden tea tables, supplied with round-top stools, stood in the front and middle portions of the room. Chinese sat at half of them. It was not yet time for the afternoon rush. In the middle of the room a line of wooden posts supported the rafters. Canaries whistled in cages hung from pegs in two of the posts. Off to one side, a barber was shaving a man's head. The latter sat stoically on a stool, eyes closed and hands on knees. On the opposite side of the room was a low balustrade, partitioning off the teahouse proprietor's office and some half-dozen chairs and individual tables reserved for his guests of honour. The proprietor was sitting at his desk. He was a short, chubby person. Servants hovered about in the back of the room. There, also, was an earthen charcoal burner, with a big iron kettle of water boiling on it.

Burke threaded his way past the tables to an empty one by the tall oyster-shell windows. Heads turned to stare as he passed the occupied tables. One of the waiters in the back, not so startled by the sight of a huge, bearded foreigner as to forget his duties, came up with a steaming hot towel. Burke

took it and mopped his face and hands in the prescribed style. He had learned to enjoy steamed towels as much as the Chinese did. When he finished, he handed the towel back and ordered a pot of tea.

The waiter put tea leaves in a porcelain pot and poured in boiling water from the big kettle. He brought the pot and a handleless cup and set them on the table, at the same time handing Burke a bamboo slip check for two cash. The missionary, meanwhile, had spread his tracts and calendars face up on the table. He poured himself a cup of tea and sipped it, waiting for the Chinese tea drinkers to start drifting over, as he knew from experience they would. They had to see what kind of pictures and books the foreigner had put out on his table.

When Burke thought enough people were gathered around, he put down his teacup and began a brief exposition of the gospel. Finished, he picked up a handful of tracts. These, he said, told more fully about the teachings of Christ. He explained something about the calendar pictures too, then offered the printed matter for sale at its small nominal price. The Chinese responded in a most gratifying way, clearing off all the literature and calendars and leaving a pile of cash on the table.

Burke was on the verge of preaching again—God seemed to have provided real fertile soil here—when he felt a vigorous tapping on his shoulder. Turning round, he saw the chubby proprietor standing behind him, a half-wild look in his eyes.

"Yang-sien-sang (foreign teacher)," he burst out, "there are so many people up here that the floor is about to collapse! Please do something!"

It was Burke's first hint of the sensation he had caused. Seated at the table he could see only the immediate fringe of men around him. Now he stood up and saw that the room was a solid mass of people, with more pushing up from the stairs. The proprietor had got to the minister only by going out on the grilled balcony and coming in at the window by the table. Nor was the fat little man exaggerating about the floor. It was sagging noticeably.

The big missionary acted quickly. Getting up on his table, he held up both arms.

"My good brothers!" he shouted. "I want to invite you to come with me to my houseboat outside. I have a very strange foreign thing to show you there. Please lead the way and I will come behind you. Don't crowd too much."

It worked. Chinese curiosity was sufficiently piqued. The crowd began moving downstairs and out to the boat landing. An expectant question hummed from mouth to mouth:

"The foreign teacher says he has a strange thing to show. What thing can it be?"

As Burke walked to the boat, he racked his mind for a way out of the problem he had set himself. His promise to show the people something had been an impulse based on nothing particularly concrete. But he couldn't disappoint them. If it were only night, he could give a magic-lantern show. The magic lantern. That was it! He would take it out and try to describe its function in detail. The people had never seen an apparatus like it and he would put in enough verbiage to cool off their curiosity.

The lantern came out of its case and Burke proceeded to dismantle it on the houseboat deck, in front of the throngs standing on the shore. He had been careful to have the gangplank drawn aboard after getting on the boat so that the vessel wouldn't be swamped. As he took apart and displayed individual pieces of the lantern, explaining their uses, he remembered something. The lens. The first day he had the lantern he had taken the lens out and used it to make a fire with the sun's rays. That might interest the crowd here.

He asked one of the boatmen for a pipe taper. Holding the thin brown paper roll in one hand, he held the lens in the other and concentrated the sun rays in a white-hot point on the tip of the taper. Blue smoke began curling up and Burke gave the smouldering tip a quick puff, as the Chinese do to get a flame for their pipes. The taper caught. From the people came exclamations of wonder:

"Veritably a strange thing."

"This priest is a better magician than the Taoists."

Burke was a great success.

Someone in the crowd was now asking to come aboard the houseboat. He was short and chubby. Burke recognized the teahouse proprietor and had the gangplank thrown across for him. The little man came over. First, he thanked Burke profusely for getting the crowd out of his teahouse. That done, he assured him that the establishment had been brought everlasting fame through the foreigner teacher's condescension to make use of it. And, finally, he wanted to invite Burke to be his guest that afternoon and hear the storyteller he had engaged. Naturally, he went on, this plain Chinese narrator could not equal the eloquent foreign one. Had he known that the latter was coming to Changyen, he wouldn't have engaged the local artist.

Burke was amused by the comparison. It was the first time he had been put on the basis of a storyteller. But the teahouse proprietor, of course, meant no blasphemy. He was going out of his way to be polite. Moreover, Burke wanted to hear the storyteller. So he accepted the invitation.

The proprietor took precautions this time against any possible wrecking of his place. He let the second-story tearoom fill up normally before he took the big foreigner in the building. After Burke was up the stairs, he paid

two strong-armed farmers to stand at the foot of the staircase and keep anyone else from going aloft. In the tearoom, the proprietor had the missionary sit with him in the honour section behind the low balustrade. A waiter brought hot towels, teapot, cups, and a dish of watermelon seeds.

Presently, the storyteller appeared. He wore a long-sleeved jacket and a black skullcap. His queue, lengthened by extra hair platted on the end, dangled almost to his ankles. In one hand was a small brass gong, the size of a bread plate, and in the other a porcelain teapot. He was not an old man, but he walked with all the pomp and deliberation of a senior Hanlin scholar. He sat down at a table that had been placed for him at the rear of the room. between the tables of the regular patrons and the charcoal burner. Afte adjusting his skirt, he raised the teapot and drank a mouthful from its spout. He washed the tea around in his mouth a moment and spat it out on the floor. Then he cleared his throat noisily and spat again.

Suddenly he was a different character. He lost all his austereness and devoted himself to a bit of banter and *siau wo* (small talk) on current town topics. He drew a folding fan from one bagging sleeve and used it alternately to fan and to waggle in gesture. For the latter, he snapped the fan shut with a flip of his wrist and fingers. He smiled and spat in the most engaging manner as he talked.

His introductory remarks concluded, the storyteller picked up his gong, which he had laid on the table, and struck it with a stick. He discarded some of his levity.

"Today," he announced, "I am going to tell you of the amazing encounter between Woo Soong and the terrible tiger."

This story, it so happened, was from the Chinese novel, *S Hoo* (*Water Margin*), a favourite source for Chinese storytellers. *Water Margin* actually was a collection of separate, but connected, short stories rather than a novel. It concerned a band of gallant brigands who operated in a mountain fastness of China during the chaotic political period of the thirteenth century. These heroes, like Robin Hood and his Merrie Men, were friends of the poor and oppressed, robbing and killing the rich and wicked government officials. They had such names as Double-Tailed Scorpion, Sword-Grasping Devil, and Small Whirlwind and their experiences were one gust of blood, thunder, and wine—especially wine.

The story chosen by the Changyen storyteller was somewhat different from the general run of *S Hoo* tales, because it told of a fight between a man and a beast instead of combat between men. But it was popular among the Chinese, who never tired hearing anything about the dreadful *lau-hoo* (tiger). The storyteller gave his gong another beat as he started into the narrative. These strokes kept up regularly throughout the tale and, together

with the narrator's own cadence, gave a distinctly rhythmic touch to the performance.

Woo Soong was the Friar Tuck of the bandit heroes, a prodigious fellow who had entered Buddhist priesthood to escape detection for a political assassination. At the time of the tiger episode, he was on his way to his native yoen, cudgel in hand. The trip was taking several days by foot and Woo Soong could walk farther in a day than the average man could in a week. One day he came to an inn on which hung a signboard:

"If you drink three cups of our wine, you won't be able to cross the mountain ridge ahead."

(The storyteller struck his gong and held up three fingers.)

Woo Soong was less interested in the warning than in the fact there seemed to be good strong wine here. He was hungry too, so he went in and ordered three cups of the wine and several pounds of beef. This downed, the big priest placed a second order for three cups of wine and several more pounds of beef. The innkeeper refused the wine order, however, reminding his voracious guest of the sign outside.

(The storyteller spoke with both the booming tones of Woo Soong and the squeaky voice of the innkeeper.)

Whereupon Woo Soong got up and shattered a table with one blow of his cudgel.

"If you don't bring my wine, I'll break up this whole inn like that," he bellowed, sending the frightened innkeeper running after the wine.

Woo Soong drank twenty-one cups of the wine (and ate a dozen more pounds of beef), then started groggily up the mountain ridge. Half-way up, at a crossroads, he saw a sign warning travellers there was a ferocious tiger, on the ridge. The beast already had accounted for thirty men, the sign stated. But the drunken priest merely snorted and went reeling on, dragging his cudgel behind him like some Neanderthaloid brute.

(Here the storyteller paused, picked up his teapot, and drank from the spout. He cleared his throat and spat, wiping his mouth and chin with the palm of his hand. He was nearing the climax of the story, but he was in no fret to get there.

(Just then he happened to hear some coolies chanting "hi-ho, hi-ho," as they carried loads off a barge in the canal outside. He seized an opportunity to digress. Rising from his stool and walking around the table with the closed fan over his shoulder like a coolie's carrying pole, he remarked:

("Listen to those coolies and their 'hi-ho.' Aren't you glad you're sitting here out of the sun drinking tea?"

(This bit of digression, it should be said, only added to the general distraction which had been going on all during the story itself. Noisy vendors

were hawking foodstuffs from table to table. Waiters passed around hot towels or filled teapots with boiling water. Business deals were being closed —heatedly and with gestures—at two or three of the tables. The barber was shaving another man's head. And in a corner by the tall windows two oldsters were bent over a game of chess. Yet none of this appeared to affect the storyteller's poise. Nor was his art going unappreciated. Chinese minds have a remarkable capacity for multiple engagements at one time.

(Now, the storyteller had resumed his narrative.)

Woo Soong staggered along the mountain path and entered a thick forest. Coming upon a large moss-covered boulder in a clearing, he decided to sleep awhile and lay down on the stone (Chinese preferring hard to soft beds any day). Before he could fall asleep, he felt a blast of wind and an enormous tiger came crashing through the trees into the clearing. The accompanying roar shook the mountain ridge.

(The storyteller crouched on the floor, waving his fan behind him to represent the tiger's stiff, lashing tail, and emitting sounds calculated to resemble those of the big cat.)

Woo Soong broke out in cold sweat as the tiger prepared to spring, but he somehow managed to roll out of the way when the beast did bound at him. The tiger sprang again and again, but the bulky priest always miraculously escaped by dodging.

(The storyteller was leaping and sidestepping around the floor like one possessed.)

The tiger finally gave the thing up as hopeless and turned with a roar of despair. When Woo Soong saw this, he grabbed his cudgel, whirled it aloft and brought it down with all his might.

(The storyteller whacked the table with his fan.)

But the blow missed and the cudgel split in two against the ground—though not without shaking the mountain and blasting the leaves off surrounding trees. The tiger was enraged by this and began his attack all over again. Woo Soong had himself more in hand now, however. He tossed aside the broken half of the cudgel in his hand and seized the tiger by its loose forehead skin with both hands, pressing the big cat's head to the ground. Then he kicked it in the eyes, which made the animal roar and scoop out a hole in the earth with its front paws. Whereupon Woo Soong stuck its nose in the hole and held it in that disgraceful position while he began belting it with his right fist. After about seventy blows, blood was streaming from the tiger's eyes, mouth, nose, and ears and it lay panting for breath. Woo Soong then picked up the broken half of the cudgel and beat out the animal's brains.

There was no clapping by the tea drinkers as the storyteller concluded.

Chinese never express approval so blatantly as Westerners. Altogether, the performance had taken a full hour and a half. Having laid the tiger low, though, the storyteller tucked his fan in a sleeve, picked up his gong and teapot, and rose to go. He stalked across the room toward the staircase, looking, as he walked, even more mandarinlike than he had before combining the roles of narrator, actor, and acrobat.

Burke thanked the teahouse proprietor and started back to Sungkiang on the houseboat. It had been an instructive day.

17

Old Brothers Erupt

THE LATE SPRING OF 1891 gave Burke his first real taste of that violence and strife which were to mark most of his next half-century in China.

Kwe had come to the mission home one May morning with an oblong sheet of paper in his hand. He appeared quite excited.

"Mr. Burke," he said, "a very bad situation is developing. You and your wife must go to Shanghai at once."

He held out the paper. "This poster and hundreds like it were stuck up anonymously in Sungkiang during the night. Listen and I will read it to you:

> " 'China is betrayed and our people will be ruined by the collusion between the Manchu authorities and the Christians. It is a fact that the Roman Catholic Church women abduct children to take out their eyes and intestines and cut off their hearts and kidneys. With these parts of children, they make medicines.
>
> " 'On the third of this moon, two female child thieves went out near Sungkiang and abducted a child by drugging him. The child's mother saw the act and called out to him, but he was unable to speak, looking stupefied. On apprehending the two abductresses, there was discovered on their persons two bottles containing drugs for stupefying children. The female thieves were taken to the magistrate's yamen, but the Roman Catholic Church priests sent a bribe of five hundred taels to the official, who returned the two abductresses in sedan chairs to the church. This

clearly shows the magistrate's intention of exterminating our Chinese race and of assisting the barbarian thieves. The hearts of the people rebel at such an outrage.

" 'Now, thousands of people of Sungkiang, do you, on the twentieth day of the moon, with united hearts and combined strength, destroy the Roman Catholic church and the Protestant church and all the properties owned by them. The Protestants are no more to be trusted than the Catholics."

Burke ran a palm slowly across his beard. He had never been presented a problem like this. He didn't want to expose Addie to needless danger, yet he was equally opposed to running away to Shanghai unless flight was fully warranted. Kwe had said the posters were anonymous and that in itself weakened their effect in his mind. He must know more about them before he made any decision. The Leu magistrate should be able to tell him something.

The big minister walked to the yamen at a fast gait. He long since had abandoned the use of sedan chairs and card bearers. He once went so far as to tell the Leu magistrate he wouldn't use such formalities with the president of the United States himself. Whether this impressed the magistrate was not clearly evident, but he never showed disrespect toward the missionary because of the latter's suspension of extra ceremony. This May morning was no exception and Burke found himself courteously received. He skipped more ceremony by coming directly to the point. Matters seemed too urgent to waste time asking about all the members of the magistrate's family. He pulled the poster out of a coat pocket and addressed the official's secretary.

"These were found posted in Sungkiang this morning and I thought his Excellency could advise me if there is any actual danger."

The secretary translated the query into Mandarin and the magistrate took the poster. When he had read it, he looked up irritably. It was the work of the wretched and troublesome Kolaohui (Old Brothers Society), he said. Similar incitements to riot were appearing throughout the Lower Yangtze Valley and the Nanking viceroy, Liu Kun-yi, already had instructed his local officials to take necessary steps to preserve order. Burke had nothing to fear, the Leu magistrate promised. There was no need for him to take his wife to Shanghai.

The magistrate was as good as his word. The next day troops from the Imperial garrison set up a camp in a field near the mission and patrolled the area constantly. The same was done at the Catholic mission. A strong guard also was thrown around the Sungkiang powder factory, one of the most important powder dumps in the province. As a final measure in the virtual

declaration of martial law, celebration of the Dragon Boat Festival, due at that time, was banned.

Except for the anonymous posters, there was no further sign of trouble in the prefectural city and Burke was on the point of thinking the Kolaohui had been taken too seriously, when news of rioting came from Wuhu, far up the Yangtze. Posters there, as in Sungkiang, charged the Catholics with mutilating Chinese children for medical purposes. It was reported that kerosene-oil tins stuffed with little bodies—minus eyes and viscera—had been dug up on Catholic premises. A mob started out, but authorities were able to control it before great damage was done.

On May 14th, the celebrated Nanking riot broke out. Burke read about it in the *North China Daily News* a few days later and was more than ordinarily interested because of the coloratura role played by an acquaintance of his, the Reverend D. W. Nichols of the Methodist Episcopal mission (not to be confused with Methodist Episcopal, South, in those days of intra-denominational discord).

Nichols was walking outside the West Gate of the city, armed with a revolver (some missionaries were a bit more drastic than others), when a servant ran up and said a mob was threatening to burn down the new mission hospital. On reaching the hospital grounds, Nichols found a tumultuous crowd of several thousand people storming the gateway. The leader, oddly enough, was a satin-gowned mandarin, holding a fan in one hand and a red flag in the other. He was standing on the outer fringe of the mob, directing rather than actually leading.

The missionary drew his gun and charged the scholar. Seizing him, he took several turns of the man's pigtail around his hand and dragged the hapless fellow through the centre of the rioters to the hospital gates. Here he kept hold of the queue and held the mob off with the gun. Despite his loss of dignity, the scholar tried to urge the people on and finally he slipped a knife out of his sleeve. Nichols saw the move and promptly laid him out with the butt of the pistol. Troops arrived on the scene a moment later and dispersed the crowd. The officer in charge wanted to behead the leader on the spot, but Nichols told him to take the unconscious man to the yamen and cut it off there.

Foreigners in Central China began taking serious notice of the situation after the Nanking incident. Nanking was the seat of one of the four great viceroys, as well as the headquarters of the Imperial southern fleet. If order couldn't be preserved there, what would happen in places where Manchu authority was less in evidence?

As the riots spread along the Yangtze, it became apparent there was more behind them than Catholic atrocity stories. Well-dressed mandarins with

little red flags always directed the rioting. And Chinese scholars were not ones to swallow or be upset by the lurid children's-eyes-into-medicine tales.

In reality, these anti-Christian disturbances were part of a clever revolutionary scheme. The riots were not directed at the Westerners so much as at the Manchus. The Old Brothers Society, in league with a camarillo of anti-Manchu literati, hoped to embroil the government with the foreign powers. While the Manchus were occupied thus, the revolutionists would lead an open revolt to push the already-tottering usurpers off the Dragon Throne. They reasoned that the powers would then gratefully recognize the new government.

To carry out this plan, the organizers revived the same child atrocity stories which had set off the so-called Tientsin Massacre twenty years before, when French citizens had been slaughtered and a new cathedral burned. These stories were a convenient means of stirring up popular hatred, for Chinese were as fond of their children as any other race. And the Catholics were especially vulnerable, because of their extensive orphanage and foundling work. When children did die in their care, it was easy to suggest they had been killed and mutilated to be used as medicine.

The Kolaohui's part in the revolution idea was almost purely a matter of grudge against Manchu authority in the Lower Yangtze region. Following the close of the Taiping Rebellion, thousands of disbanded Imperialist troops had joined the society and their government pensions became the organization's major source of income. The pensions soon lost their character, though, and turned into virtual bribes to keep the society pacified. By 1890 the Nanking viceroy, Tseng Kwo-fan (a retired Imperialist hero of the rebellion) was paying the organization fifty thousand taels (more than $50,000) monthly. The throne repeatedly ordered him to stop this outlay, but Tseng refused and he was too popular (naturally) for Peking to do anything about it. When he died in the autumn of 1890, however, his successor, Liu Kun-yi, put the throne's economy order into action. So the Old Brothers were out for revenge.

The Kolaohui had, like some other Chinese secret societies, sprung up as a revolutionary body in the seventeenth century, during the first years of the Manchu dynasty. But its vigour dwindled, and after the influx of disbanded soldiery in 1865 it changed its political colouring for an economic one, becoming a sort of military benefit association. Many active members of the Imperial army joined, as did the veterans. Besides the government "pensions," benefits were derived principally from banditry, throatcutting, kidnapping, and other coarser forms of outlawry.

The organization was made up of numerous branch societies. Each branch had its dragonhead and vice-dragonhead and was designated by the name

of a hill and a hall. Meetings were held clandestinely in lonely mountain temples, for secret societies were banned by the Manchus. And, though the impotent government might fear them, have some of its own troops as members, and even pay tribute in the form of pensions, there was always the chance that it might strike unexpectedly one day.

To become an Old Brother a man had first to prove that neither he nor his father was a sedan-chair carrier, barber, or actor, the three lowest groups of Chinese society (outside of soldiers, but they didn't figure, since soldiers made up the bulk of the Kolaohui). The actor clause was amended for the Tientsin branch, because of the Thespian preponderance in that city's population.

On the secret meeting day, candidates for membership in a branch were brought to the mountain temple and initiated in solemn rites. The ceremony always concluded with the oath of membership and when the candidates came to the part where they repeated:

"If I turn traitor, I will die."

The dragonhead would cut off the head of a cock and say:

"Like this!"

Then the initiates were introduced to the members and all drank some of the cock's blood to seal their brotherhood. Finally, the new members received their membership certificates, a square piece of white cloth, printed with the hill and hall of the branch, a secret code, and a poem dedicating them to the overthrow of the Manchus. This last item was kept even during the period between the Taiping Rebellion and 1891, when the Kolaohui no longer actively pursued its political aims.

Except in some localities like Sungkiang, the Imperial government didn't take the Old Brothers' 1891 conspiracy too seriously until the riot of Wusüeh, a station on the Yangtze not far above Kiukiang. Here the first foreign lives were lost. Two Englishmen, a missionary and a customs officer, were set upon by a mob and had their heads crushed slowly between two millstones. The legations at Peking made immediate strong protests to the Tsungli Yamen (or Foreign Office) and the Manchus, who saw through the Kolaohui scheme to entangle them with the powers, became worried lest the society succeed.

Accordingly, Viceroy Liu was commanded to take severe measures. He dispatched two *taotai* (a taotai ranked above a prefect, administering a circuit of cities and possessing both civil and military authority) with green arrows to investigate the opening riot at Wuhu. The green arrows indicated that the officials had been delegated power of life and death without trial. It was obligatory that the taotai procure results and, sure enough, they turned up two poor devils whom they charged with being the ringleaders of the

Kolaohui. These men were summarily executed on June 2nd, to the accompaniment of much publicity.

Whether the victims were leaders of the Old Brothers or whether the cases were manufactured to impress the protesting powers was never certain. The riots did stop, it was true, though probably because of a large government bribe to the secret society rather than because of any execution of its leaders.

Burke had nearly forgotten the Kolaohui and its threatened riot in Sungkiang when he awoke one morning in July to hear Addie screaming for him. She had gone into the yard early to pick flowers for the breakfast table.

"Will! Will!" she cried. "They're putting some horrible heads outside there!"

Burke flung on his clothes and ran out. Some men were just taking a ladder away from one of the mission gateposts. On top of each of the two posts was a wooden crate, with a human head clearly visible through the widely spaced slats. The heads were doctored with lime, but they were in an advanced state of decomposition.

"Who are you and why did you put those heads up there?" Burke shouted angrily.

"We are from the Leu magistrate's yamen," one of the men answered calmly. "We were sent here to display the Old Brothers' heads."

The big missionary felt a little sick. "Are those the heads cut off in Wuhu a month ago?"

"They are," the man said matter-of-factly, walking away with the other men.

Burke decided to pay the Leu magistrate a visit that morning.

Addie couldn't eat anything at breakfast and refused to step out of the house. Kwe threw some light on the matter when he came for Burke's Chinese lesson. He explained that the heads no doubt were being paraded throughout the Lower Yangtze Valley for exhibition in each of the places from Wuhu to Shanghai where riots had threatened foreign lives and property. The idea was to impress foreigners with the dispatch of government justice and to warn natives against further violence.

On making a close inspection of the heads, the missionary and his teacher found a square piece of cloth tied on each one. Kwe identified them as Kolaohui membership certificates. They presumably labelled the dead men as members of the Branch of the Hall of Everlasting Happiness and the Hill of Purple Eminence. But Kwe shook his head sceptically.

"Members of the society are usually known to memorize what is on their certificates and burn the cloths up immediately," he commented. "It is a death penalty to be discovered with a secret society certificate."

Burke saw the Leu magistrate later in the morning. He thanked him for

going to the trouble of sending the heads around to the mission, but acquainted him with Addie's reactions. The frank mandarin marvelled at the weakness of Western female stomachs and promised to take the gruesome exhibit down. That afternoon the heads were transferred to the Catholic church, where they stayed two days, then continued their wanderings toward the coast.

18

The Pagoda's Shadow

IT WAS FORTUNATE that the Kolaohui disturbances died away when they did. Addie was going to have a baby. The tempo of Christian work among Sungkiang women slackened off as autumn deepened into winter. Then one gusty January day in 1892, Burke bundled his wife in a *s-mi* (raw silk) quilt and took her to Shanghai on the houseboat. There she stayed in a warm foreign home, under the care of a physician.

On Monday, January 25th, Burke calmed himself enough to scrawl a few notes in his diary:

"Young Burke startled his little world about one-thirty this morning. The doctor came about four-thirty or five. He made an examination and reported it would be some little time before he made his appearance. Well, the young fellow, after causing his mother great pain, put in his appearance about three this afternoon. He was not a pretty looking object at first, but after his bath and dressing, he appears to be pretty fine looking. God is good."

The missionary brought Addie and the baby back to Sungkiang in triumph. No event in China rivalled the birth of a son, especially if he was the first child. A man's standing soared as a result. In their idiomatic expressions, Chinese called a son "ten thousand pieces of gold"; whereas a daughter went by only "one thousand pieces of gold." A son promised the all-important continuation of the family line, as well as security and retirement for the father in old age.

Although Burke didn't estimate his offspring in such materialistic terms, he was as proud as any Chinese father. His first act on returning to the prefectural city was to send out small baskets of red-dyed eggs to his friends.

To this customary manner of announcing a son's birth in China, the friends responded with gifts.

The baby was to have two names, one in English and the other in Chinese. The former would be William, after his father. For the Chinese one, Dr. Allen's ming (formal given name), Lok-tsz (Enjoyer of Wisdom), was selected. Burke's Chinese surname, Boo, was retained, of course, and the child's full Chinese name would be Boo Lok-tsz. By this two-language naming, the baby would do double duty, carrying on his father's name as well as honouring a friend of the family.

When Dr. Allen baptized the child in Shanghai the next May, however, he somehow failed to use the English name in the ceremony, pronouncing only "Boo Lok-tsz." Because of this technical detail, it has remained debatable whether Burke's oldest son can properly regard himself as "William."

In one of his waves of goodwill following the baby's arrival, Burke initiated himself into the rites of *faung-sang* (liberating life) on a bountiful scale. Faung-sang was a practical Chinese interpretation of the Buddhist injunction against harming any animal life. Men went about with supplies of live fish, frogs, or snakes, ready to sell them to penitent-minded people. Chinese believed that by buying a fish and letting it loose in a canal a person would be offsetting some evil he had done in the past. The liberating act could serve also to store up a good deed for counteracting a future trespass. At any rate, it would save a person from one of purgatory's torture cells.

The instance in which Burke figured took place at a midweek prayer service in McLain Chapel. The missionary was just closing the meeting when a man walked in with a covered basket over his arm and started down the centre aisle offering live chicken snakes for sale. Hastily pronouncing benediction, Burke stepped down and explained to the man—not without good Irish temper—that he was overstepping his bounds by selling snakes for faung-sang inside a Christian church during service. But, as remarked, the new father was exuding too much goodwill to be angry long, and this, together with his natural love for animals, soon had him outside the chapel bargaining the salesman out of his snakes—all six of them. They agreed on a hundred and fifty cash (about fifteeen cents) and the reptiles were dumped into a reed sack. Burke carried them to a near-by field and let them go. He watched until the last one had slid away, knowing that the faung-sang salesman was not above following him and recapturing the snakes if possible.

Burke's generous venture into faung-sang naturally made teahouse headlines and was no doubt responsible for his encounter with the trustee of the big, seven-storied *tah* (pagoda) east of the mission compound. This magnificent structure towered a hundred feet high and was so near that its shadow

fell over the mission home in the early mornings. People could climb to the top by a flight of stone steps winding up the centre. Landings on each floor opened out on wooden-railed terraces which girdled the pagoda. Brass bells hung from the eaves of all seven roofs and tinkled in the breeze.

The pagoda had been erected in memory of a famous Sungkiang Buddhist saint, the function of a pagoda being somewhat similar to that of its Indian prototype, the stupa. In contrast to the twin pagodas of Soochow, scholars living in the neighbourhood of this monument had always succeeded in their examinations and held high offices. Its beneficent influence was supposed to extend to other fields of endeavour as well, for Chinese pagodas were held to act like a great electric tractor, drawing down every felicitous omen from the sky, so that the five elements (fire, water, wood, earth, metal) would be at the service of the people. Nevertheless the big tah, like all China's religious objects, was going to ruin. Some of the wooden rails were broken off and steps in the staircase wobbled. Its repair depended on public contributions, but though a Chinese would admit a tah was a good thing to have around it was hard to squeeze a penny out of him, so long as his own luck was holding.

The day after Burke bought the snakes, one of the Buddhist trustees of the pagoda appeared at the mission home.

"The big tah has bestowed much good fortune on you, hasn't it?" the trustee asked confidently.

"How is that?" the missionary retorted.

The Buddhist looked surprised. He pointed out how the pagoda's shadow fell over the mission compound every morning, thereby concentrating the structure's beneficent force in that quarter. It was obvious that the Christian's blessings, particularly the birth of his son, were attributable to this factor.

Burke may have partaken of Buddhism in freeing the snakes, but here he drew the line.

"That tah has nothing to do with my blessings," he launched out at the trustee. "It is nothing but brick and mortar. What good fortune I have or anyone has comes by the grace of Zaung Ti. He alone can help people. He could strike down your tah tomorrow and it wouldn't made a particle of difference in the luck of anybody."

"Z-kuh, z-kuh (It is so, it is so)," replied the flustered trustee when Burke stopped for breath. He nodded and smiled in ever-polite Chinese agreement, then backed off, bowing as he went. Foreigners would always be an enigma to him. Here was one who had bought a man's entire supply of snakes to faung-sang, yet he wouldn't recognize the efficacy of a pagoda's shadow.

The care of a baby cut in some on missionary work, but Addie like any good mother, put her child first. She didn't feel so badly about it because

the woman's mission board was going to send a missionary to live in Sungkiang and take full charge of the woman's work. Already a trained Chinese Biblewoman was there to do home visiting. Addie still was able to have the weekly Bible readings at the mission house and baby William proved a bigger attraction than the foreign home. It was amazing to the Chinese to see an infant so clean and white and every visitor wanted to handle him, much to Addie's fright. It was the same when she and Burke carried the baby out walking.

"Bak le! bak le! (So white! so white!)" The peasants constantly exclaimed and reached out to touch him with their dirty hands.

Yes, William was a hit in Sungkiang. Chinese were extremely fond of children and a foreign baby seemed to charm them utterly. Missionaries stationed in China's interior were known to say that one foreign baby was better protection than ten rifles.

The real trials of motherhood came when the baby was sick. It was before the day when a specialist was needed for every symptom, but occasionally little William did come down with something that looked serious. Then there was no doctor nearer than Shanghai, a day's trip by boat.

Such an occasion happened four days before the child's first birthday. He awoke late that night with high fever and nausea. Neither Addie nor Burke could diagnose the trouble and decided to start for Shanghai immediately. It was midnight and the weather was drizzly and cold, but the boatmen were roused and the baby carried aboard swaddled in soft blankets. The boat had gone less than two miles, though, when it grounded. The tide was coming in and they waited, but for some reason, the tide that morning was not high enough to float the vessel.

Addie was frantic. As the cloudy, grey dawn broke, she and Burke sat huddled in the cabin by an oil stove, the sick baby wrapped up between them. They could do nothing but pray and they did pray impassionedly. And then the miracle was done. The child began improving. By eight o'clock, he seemed so well that the trip to Shanghai was abandoned altogether. The parents picked him up and walked back home, leaving the boat stranded where it was.

Another child-raising crisis came when William was two. Burke and Addie had carried him out on an afternoon stroll in the country and were returning to the mission compound when they stepped in for tea at the home of a church member. In opening the conversation, the missionary put the customary question about the health of the convert's family. The latter said they were all well except his baby son.

"But he is much better now," he added. "Wait and I will let you see."

William was playing around his mother's chair when the proud Chinese

father came back in the room with the son in his arms. Burke took one look at the baby and yelled:

"Addie! Get William out of here!"

But she had already grabbed her child and started out of the house.

The Chinese baby was in the last stage of smallpox, with scabs peeling off the pustules on his face. True, it was the convalescing stage. The baby was out of danger himself. But that was all the father had considered. He wasn't in the least concerned over the point that this final phase of the disease was the most infectious.

For that matter, Chinese used children in this contagious stage for inoculation purposes. A peeling scab was removed and stuck up the nose of a child to be immunized against the disease. If the child was strong—and usually only healthy children were subjected to this "preventive"—the resulting case of smallpox generally was light and, on recovery, he might be immune to further attacks. All too often, though, the case induced was not light and the child died.

19

A Scholar at Home

CHINESE SCHOLARS who had passed their examinations, but had not been appointed to office, nevertheless designated their homes "official residences." There were over four hundred such residences in Sungkiang, for that city was a recognized literary centre. Most of the expectant mandarins would wait all their lives without office, so limited was the supply of appointments, yet their pride held on and they never permitted themselves out of their own restricted circles.

To approach these literati on anything like familiar terms, one must be steeped in Chinese classics from early childhood, for that was their upbringing and all they knew. They spent their days sipping tea in their grotesque rock gardens, absorbed in contemplating the philosophical *Anelects* or composing poetry in the manner of their beloved Li Po. When foreigners failed to measure up to their long-bred expertness in these matters, the scholars unhesitatingly branded them ingorant barbarians.

Most missionaries despaired of ever doing anything with this arrogant

class. A few, like Dr. Allen, tried and achieved appreciable results, though only at great expense in time and effort. Burke didn't despair, but he refused to go about the problem as Allen did. Had he done so when the fire episode gave him an entree in the person of Tsau, he might have built a strong foundation among the local gentry. But he saw no reason to sacrifice service to the thousands of common people in Sungkiang for the sake of a supercilious handful.

Then one day in 1893 the unexpected happened. A half-dozen young gentlemen approached Burke with the proposal that he open an English class for them. They would gladly pay for their instruction.

The same thing was taking place at all the foreign mission stations, for the fever of the "new learning" was beginning to spread. The young literati of China saw their country lying helpless before an aggressive European civilization and, regardless of the superiority their fathers might claim for Confucian dialectics, the younger men realized they must turn to Western scientific culture to meet the forces threatening them. The key to this culture was English and the only ones in China to teach it were the foreign missionaries.

It might be added that the incentive to acquire new learning was in no small way abetted by the corruption within the old. As the Manchu treasury shrank from outlays for the empress dowager's pleasure palaces, the public examination system rotted. Degrees which sold for eight or ten thousand dollars in periods of relatively high government morale now went for a paltry twenty-five. And when some poor scholar did win his diploma honestly, he more than often found his prospective office already filled by an oaf who had the money to buy it outright.

Burke welcomed the opportunity to teach the young scholars who came to him and refused to take any compensation for it. He had been only too anxious for a means of reaching this level of the people. He held three classes a week, giving a short course in the rudiments of grammar first, then starting the six men reading—the Bible, of course. It was fair enough. He planted his religion and they got their English—King James Version.

As was to be expected, one of the six class members would stand out in Burke's estimation. He was a young siu ze (bachelor of arts) named Lok Kwe-liang. Lok was only five years younger than the missionary and the two somehow struck off a congenial note together from the beginning. Not that there was any particular basis for congeniality between a Georgia minister and a Confucian academician.

Lok belonged to a rich landowning family and his early ambitions had been no different from those of any other son of the gentry. He would take his bachelor's degree at the annual examinations in the prefectural city, his

master's at the triennial competitions in Nanking, and if his ability held out, he might be among the six thousand candidates who reached the doctorate examination given triennially at Peking. Then, of course, there was the dream of admission to the Hanlin Academy, if he was among the top third of those passing the Peking examination. To Hanlin members went the honour of compiling the dynastic history. But even if he didn't become a Hanlin and a historiographer, he might be appointed to a high administrative post—maybe a governorship.

Things started off well enough. He stood his bachelor's examination when he was nineteen. He was given a sentence from one of the *Four Books* (Confucian classics) on which to write an essay, then was given the same text to compose an original poem. He sat for three days in a little individual stall in the Sungkiang examination hall doing this. He wasn't locked in, as scholars were in the higher examinations, and was free to go home at night, but it was a grinding three days nonetheless. He passed easily, though, for he had prepared hard for the test. Not only had he memorized every sentence in the *Four Books*, together with its meaning and the book, page, and line where it occurred, but for the year preceding the examination he had written an essay a day on those sentences. He took minute care with the selection and drawing of every character, because the form of old Chinese learning was far more important than the content. The form was the content.

Before going to Nanking to try for his master's, Lok was required to stand a preliminary test of some sort in Sungkiang again. He went as confidently to this as he had to the siu ze competition. While he was working in his stall, a friend ran across the courtyard and asked to see his essay. But Lok refused to cheat and made the friend leave.

The examiner saw the visitation and later called his friend up to look at his essay. Then he called Lok and asked for his work, expecting to find it similar to the other. He evidently was disappointed when it wasn't, for he shoved the essay roughly back at the young scholar.

"Kyi! (Go!)" he said, spitting the word out with all its aspirated venom.

An outright slap could have wounded Lok's feelings no more. Only coolies were spoken to with such abruptness. It was unheard of between scholars. And he was a siu ze graduate. If "kyi" were used at all, it at least should be prefaced by "*tsing* (please)." To Lok, the examiner's rudeness epitomized and drove home what he had previously observed of the deterioration of ancient Chinese virtues under the Manchus. He suddenly found himself hating both the alien rulers and the transformation of Chinese tradition under them. He lost all ambition to become a part of that system.

Lok didn't return to his stall to finish his essay. He walked out of the examination hall and went home. He brooded there in his rock garden for

four years before he came to any definite decision to pursue the new learning. That was when he and five friends came to Burke.

As the personal friendship between Lok and the missionary grew, the young Confucian sometimes called at the mission home between class days. They conversed on a variety of topics. Christianity was not brought up unless Lok asked about it, for Burke never forced his religion on people at private meetings. The conversation often dealt with the growing tension between Japan and China over Korean suzerainty, a sore issue for more than a decade now. Lok was confident, as were most Chinese, that when war came, the new and powerful Chinese fleet would make short work of the Japanese. Li Hung-chang, the northern viceroy and China's senior statesman, had taken the responsibility of rebuilding the navy and was loud in its praises, particularly when there were any Japanese within earshot.

One of Lok's visits to the mission compound fell on the afternoon of Burke's thirtieth birthday, June 12, 1894. At lunch that day, Addie had brought out a cake with thirty candles on it and most of it still was intact, so the minister offered some to his guest. Lok was not nearly so interested in the foreign delicacy as he was in the candles remaining on it.

"What are these?" he wanted to know. "Do you worship this cake?"

When Burke explained, Lok was curious about birthday customs in general. "Do Westerners begin birthday recognition so early as the thirtieth always?"

"Much earlier," the minister answered. "In fact, the birthday of a man of thirty is not made over so much as that of a child."

"Is that true? Strange indeed," the young scholar remarked. "Here in China, you know, very little attention is paid to any birthdays earlier than the fiftieth. Children's birthdays are hardly noticed. But perhaps the Western idea is a good one."

The next week a servant from the Lok home delivered a red slip of paper inscribed with an invitation to a feast. Beside the usual formal invitation was written:

"A delayed youth birthday celebration."

Addie, of course, was not invited. Old China was primarily a man's world. Even the women of the households where dinners were held rarely appeared before the guests except in a serving capacity. They had their own table in another room and were not expected to invade the male domain with their chatter.

On the day of the feast, the servant from the Lok home came again to announce that the hour of eating would be six and that a sedan chair would be sent for the minister. But Burke declined the chair and walked instead. He carried a paper lantern, ready for the return trip through the unlighted

streets. The home entrance, at which he presented his card, was a plain doorway, little different from those of the bourgeoisie living roundabout. He left his lantern inside this entrance and was led by a servant across a bare open court to a second door, more ornate than the one on the street. Passing through he was confronted by a seven-foot boulder of Tahu Lake rock, looking like an enormous piece of honeycombed slag. This barrier served as a screen, hiding all that lay beyond. The missionary followed the servant on the narrow path around the boulder and was in the Lok rock garden.

Chinese rock gardens were meticulously planned to appear as haphazard and natural as possible. The Lok garden was quite typical of this effort. Little paths wound romantically through disordered piles of the porous Tahu rock (this rock from the lake near Soochow was transported all over China for gardens, so much was it admired by the Chinese). The arrangement was such that only a bit of the garden could be seen at a time. Each twist in the paths opened up new and different formations of rocks, "surprises" which delighted the Chinese garden lover. A tea pavilion stood atop one hillock of rock, overlooking a small pond green with lotus leaves. A dainty, stone-balustered bridge spanned one end of the pond. Except for the lotus and several large trees overhanging the place, there was no free-growing vegetation in the garden to soften the grotesque rock designs. The only flowers were a few potted chrysanthemums. Chinese saw no beauty or reason in open flower beds.

A building faced with tall pairs of window-doors stood on the other side of the rock maze. Burke was ushered in here and found himself in the main reception room. He sat down on a carved chair near the entrance and looked about. The room was elegantly done. As Lok later explained, it was copied after the cabin of a mandarin houseboat. The square ceiling beams were curved to resemble the rounded boat roof. Two latticework doorways, cut in the shape of giant vases, led into the "cabin's" rear compartment. A velvet-cushioned settee, like the one in the Leu magistrate's parlour, stood between these decorative doorways. Porcelain slabs set in the wall behind were glazed with landscape scenes. In front of the settee, two footstools and a pair of brass spittoons rested on a small rectangular throw rug. The floor was made of heavy wooden planks, stained, but bare except for the small rug. Three brass lamps with glass chimneys and porcelain shades were suspended by chains from the ceiling at the front, centre, and rear of the room. At the four corners were pairs of embroidered cloth-shade lamps.

Lok came in now with his father, a suave, moustached mandarin. He had once been a magistrate in Hupeh Province, but was now retired and living handsomely on the rents of his rice lands. After the usual polite tug of war, Burke was lodged on the settee, to the left of the elder Lok. Tea was served

and the three waited for the remaining guests. Chinese were prone to arrive late for dinners. They soon began coming in, however—the five other English-class scholars and two more friends.

The round feast table was set in the rear compartment. Lok invited the guests to take off their outer garments and relax in their cotton pants and jackets. They did, for Chinese went about eating with a gusto not best achieved in their full-sleeved silk gowns. Guests and hosts now battled genially, but vigorously, for four or five minutes over who should occupy the "high" seats, the seats farthest from the entrance ranking higher. Burke was finally forced into the "highest" seat, directly opposite the entrance, since the party was in his honour. Lok and his father fought their way to the "lowest" seats and the others took the intermediary places.

There was no tablecloth of any sort. Each man's place was supplied with a white porcelain ladle, or spoon, a saucer, and a pair of red-bone chopsticks. When the diners were seated, servants began bringing in the opening cold dishes, or hors d'œuvres, and setting them on the table. Six of the dishes were uncovered and displayed such edibles as ham, pork ribs, smoked fish, preserved crab, century eggs, and dried pork. The seventh dish had a lid on it and Burke discovered why when the guest next to him partly raised the cover and invited him to try some. The dish was full of live crawling shrimp.

Burke had never run into such a dish in his seven years in China, but he refused to be abashed. He invited the guest to eat first and carefully watched him reach under the lid with his chopsticks, draw out a wriggling shrimp, dip it in a dish of black soybean sauce and thrust it in his mouth, all in a few deft movements. Burke tried. He got through the initial steps all right, though not so deftly, but somehow his mouth wouldn't close quickly enough and the shrimp squirmed out on his lower lip. A chill or two pricked his back, then he got the defiant little crustacean in and clamped down on it stoically. He didn't try any more.

The so-called "main dishes" were next placed separately in the centre of the table—shark's fins, fresh ham, whole chicken, whole duck, more ham, whole fish, and mutton. After each dish had been sampled by all the guests, it was moved aside to make way for the succeeding one. Then came the courses termed "hot dishes"—shell shrimp, bird's-nest soup, sliced chicken, clam sinews, kidneys and pork brains, bamboo sprouts, pigeon eggs, and roast duck.

Burke was hoping the courses would come to an end. It wouldn't have been so bad if the Chinese didn't have an almost irritating way of constantly forcing him to eat. The guest at his right and the guest at the left picked up food with their chopsticks and laid it on the minister's saucer—and he was too polite not to eat it. Everyone reached into the same dishes with their

chopsticks, put the sticks and food in their mouths and reached back into the dishes with the sticks—a cycle which would clash with most modern hygienic laws. But the Chinese enjoyed themselves immensely, chewing loudly, sipping soup from their porcelain ladles, spitting out bones on the table and floor and belching thunderously—the latter being a particularly acceptable indication of gastronomic satisfaction. Now and then a guest would rise, stretch, and walk around the room a bit.

Hot rice wine, served in a small pewter pot, was drunk during the meal in individual thimble-cups. Burke turned his cup down at the start and Lok didn't urge any wine on him, knowing that intoxicants were against Methodist principles. Instead, he had a servant bring tea for him.

The dessert followed the last "hot dish" and it virtually stopped the feast. Conversation and belching suddenly ceased as a servant brought it in on a platter and made a place for it in the centre of the table. It was an eight-precious-rice pudding, but not the sort the feasters were accustomed to. The top of the glutenous delicacy glittered with candles—thirty of them. This was Lok's *pièce de résistance.*

"This is the Occidental birthday custom," the young scholar announced, breaking the awed silence. "It is specially for our honourable teacher, Mr. Burke, who observed his thirtieth birthday last week. Foreigners, you know, recognize their birthdays years before we Chinese do. But I think it is a good idea. Please, now, I invite you to eat." And Lok gestured at the lustrous pudding with his ladle. The lighted candles were taken out by the guests as they ate.

After the dessert came the staple course—rice. It was served in bowls the size of three English teacups and the Chinese miraculouly stored away three, four, and five heaping servings. They raised the bowls to their mouths and shovelled the rice in with the chopsticks. Burke could scarcely manage one serving. Chinese capacity for rice after a full meal always amazed him. When he had finished his one bowl, he followed the native custom of dipping his chopsticks in a sort of salute to each of the men still eating and saying, "man yoong (eat slowly)." Then he put his sticks on the table. He had learned not to lay them horizontally across his empty rice bowl. That, for some reason, was considered too polite and someone would certainly put them down on the table for you.

The rice wasn't all. There remained an end-up course of fruit and nuts—pears, oranges, and pomelos; sugared peanuts, apricot kernels, walnut candy, and watermelon seed. And tea.

When the feast was over, the guests began slipping quietly away. That was the proper way for a polite guest to leave. It was considered rude to let the hosts know one was going, for that would entail escorting the guest to

the street door. Burke knew this etiquette, but he was too conspicuous to succeed at it. So it was at Lok's. The young scholar spied him leaving and, over the big missionary's protests, saw him to the door. It probably was fortunate that he did, because Burke would surely have lost himself in the rock garden had he tried it alone. Lok led him on a bypath skirting the maze.

20

The Dragon Crumbles

BURKE'S SABBATICAL was due in 1894, but the mission was short-handed and he agreed to put the home furlough off another year. He did decide, however, to take his family on a summer vacation to Japan. Addie's health was none too good and she needed the rest. She had two babies now. A second son, Gordon, had been born the preceding December.

A month after Lok's feast, the little missionary family boarded a ship at Shanghai and sailed for Kobe. It was mid-July and a climax was brewing in Sino-Japanese relations. The Tonghaks, the new Korean religious sect, had begun their rebellion that spring. Why they had suddenly, after thirty years, thought to avenge the execution of their founder was probably best known to Japanese empire builders. At any rate, Japan became righteously concerned over the "peril" threatening their citizens in Korea and prepared to dispatch an expeditionary force to "help" the Koreans preserve order. The Chinese, too, were sending troops; though at the personal behest of the Korean king and as an expected duty toward a vassal state (Korea had paid tribute to Peking for two hundred years).

Meanwhile, the Koreans had suppressed the rebellion by themselves. Yet the Chinese and then the Japanese forces began arriving in Korea. The Chinese agreed to a proposal that both "protecting" armies depart simultaneously. But the Japanese were curiously stubborn. The Chinese must withdraw first. Finally, the little men of Nippon lost patience and threw off their veil of righteousness. They broke into the royal palace at Seoul in the night, abducted the queen and her children, and later killed her Majesty. Then they further intimidated the king into agreeing to reorganize his country to suit Japan's purposes. About the same time a Japanese warship,

without declaration of war by Japan, sent a torpedo into a Chinese troop transport en route to Korea.

These aggressive acts occurred only a week after the Burkes had sailed from Shanghai. Burke attended a mission conference at Kobe, then took his wife and babies to a cool mountain resort near by. They were resting quietly there on August 1st, when China and Japan exchanged formal declaration of war.

The *Wo-men* (Dwarf People) have proved "unreasonable" and must be "punished," declared his Imperial Chinese Majesty Kuang Hsü. In retrospect, these were confident words from a potentate backed by a medieval bandit army. But the Manchus were counting heavily on their new navy.

Burke left Kobe with his family on September 11th, as the fleets of China and Japan were jockeying into position for the decisive Battle of the Yalu River, fought six days later. The harbour at Nagasaki was mined when the ship called there on the way to Shanghai and a Japanese naval launch guided it through the mine field. The Chinese fleet was yet to be tested and the Japanese apparently were a little apprehensive in the wake of old Li Hung-chang's blusterings.

News of the Chinese fiasco on the Yalu was slow in drifting down to the Yangtze Valley. Burke had been back in Sungkiang a week when Lok called at the mission home with the story.

"China has truly been betrayed by the depraved Manchus," he announced woefully. "The Pygmy Nation has disgraced us."

The truth of the matter was that the betrayal had been as much the fault of certain depraved Chinese officials as of the Manchus. True, there was the celebrated case of the Empress Dowager Tzŭ Hsi's using a fifty-million-dollar naval appropriation a few years before to rebuild her summer palace (now sometimes called "a woman's fifty-million-dollar whim"). But since then, Chinese themselves had practised "squeeze" on both naval and military funds to a remarkable extent. Li Hung-chang's own hands may have been clean, but he certainly knew what was going on. The most notorious squeezer of them all, as a matter of fact, was his own son-in-law, Chang Pei-lun, whom Li had appointed his chief of ordnance supply.

Two years before the war, Ordnance Chief Chang had been ordered to purchase from Krupp's a large supply of heavy shells for the ten-inch guns on China's two new 7,000-ton ironclads, the *Chen Yuen* and the *Ting Yuen*. The order failed to materialize, however, and the two cruisers—conceded by foreign naval observers to be better than anything Japan had—went into action on September 17th with exactly three (!) ten-inch shells between them. One of these three struck and nearly sank the Japanese flagship, the 4,000-ton belted *Matsushima*. The smaller guns of the ironclads, as well as

those of the rest of the Chinese fleet were only slightly better supplied with shells—except that they were filled with light, practice charges. Otherwise, Japan's Asiatic dreams might have floundered in the Yalu.

More evidence of the peculations of Chang and his subordinates came later at the defence of Wehaiwei. Fort Itao, commanding the approach to the port, had a hundred and four rounds of shell. Only four were found to be filled—one with powder and three with sand! Furthermore, the sighting mirrors of the eight-inch, disappearing Armstrongs had been stolen and the breechblocks were not in order.

While the collapse of Li's much-vaunted navy was a surprise, the deterioration of the anachronistic Chinese army was expected. The soldiers were more concerned with looting civilians in Korea and Manchuria than in fighting Japanese and, with few exceptions, the commanders executed retreats before enemy attacks developed. There wasn't even a hospital corps attached to the Chinese forces. Before the year was over, the modernly equipped, drilled, and officered Japanese were masters of the entire Manchurian peninsula of Liaotung and were investing several North China ports.

Central China now began worrying. Thus far, Nanking had gone along placidly on the theory that the war was North China's. The Southern Fleet, which, like more ten-inch shells, might have changed the aspect of the Yalu battle, had remained serenely anchored in the Yangtze all this while. The armies here had likewise been but mildly interested bystanders. But now there were some frenzied troop movements to defend the vulnerable Yangtze mouth regions against invasion. Canal boats were commandeered by the thousands for transport. They would creep along the narrow waterways in serpentine trains two and three miles long, every vessel brimming with umbrella-carrying soldiers.

Burke got entangled with such a boat train about nine o'clock one night, when he came into Minhang on a circuit preaching trip. Two officers boarded the mission houseboat and wanted to seize it for military use. The missionary was able to talk them out of it, but another pair, not so amiable, came on later and ordered the vessel seized.

This time the big minister's Irish temper flared. He leaped on the boat train and made off up the line of vessels, jumping from one to the other until he reached the commander's boat. Here he stepped boldly into the cabin and demanded his houseboat back, together with written orders that it not be seized again. His demeanour must have been rather uncompromising, for the commander complied hastily and with "ten thousand humble pardons" for causing the foreigner any inconvenience.

The fighting stayed north of the Yangtze and prostrate China sued for peace early in 1895. The grafting Chang was banished and Li Hung-chang

himself was demoted. Specifically, Li was deprived of his two highest decorations, the Three-eyed Peacock Feather and the Yellow Riding-jacket. Nevertheless, Li was still the only statesman in China the throne would trust as envoy to the peace conference at Shimonoseki that April. As though the humiliation of having to accept Nippon's terms weren't enough for the old Hanlin mandarin, a Japanese fanatic tried to assassinate him and did succeed in wounding him.

Japan's victory in 1894–1895 brought a sombre observation from Sir Robert Hart, distinguished British head of the Imperial Chinese Maritime Customs:

"Japan wants to lead the East in war, in commerce, and in manufactures and the next century will be a hard one for the West."

But no one paid much attention to the prophecy.

Burke temporarily lost interest in Sino-Japanese affairs about this time, for Addie was bearing another child. The baby came on May 19th. A third son, Edward.

As soon as Addie was strong again, she and her husband began packing for the voyage to America. The delayed year's furlough was to begin that summer. To Burke there seemed something unbelievable about the past eight years. They might have been eighty, so much had taken place. The change in himself was not the least. He had left Macon alone, a youth of twenty-three. Now, he was returning, a man of thirty-one, with a wife and three children.

21

Righteous Harmony Fists

WHEN THE BURKES returned to China in 1896, the enlightened classes of the country were in the midst of their violent reaction to the war with Japan. There was little hatred of the Japanese. Rather, the feeling was one of self-condemnation. Defeat at the hands of the despised "dwarfs" had shaken the Chinese out of their lethargy more than all the previous drubbings by the Western powers. The cry for "new learning" rose higher. Foreign mission schools were bursting and an ever-increasing flow of students were going abroad to study—hundreds of them to Japan!

Politically, the invigorated movement against the old order was taking two courses—one for simple reform of the existing Manchu structure and the other for overthrow of the infirm dynasty and establishment of republican government under pure Chinese control. One of the principal revolutionary groups was the Tungmenghui, led by the idealistic Cantonese, Sun Yat-sen. Sun was out of the country most of the time with a price on his head, but his secret society remained intact. It was particularly active in Shanghai, where it counted among its members none other than Charlie Soon, minister of the gospel.

Soon was at the pier to meet the Burkes when they arrived from America and invited them to his home for dinner the next day. He was no longer the poorly paid Southern Methodist missionary at Kunshan. In fact, he was no longer a missionary, having resigned in 1890. But he kept his preacher's licence and remained active in Christian work. He taught a Sunday-school class and was a moving spirit in organizing the Chinese Y.M.C.A. His major enterprise immediately after quitting the mission was printing Chinese Bibles for his former employers. He set up a small commercial printing house and was soon making more money than he had ever made as a missionary. On the side, he used his press to turn out volumes of revolutionary circulars and pamphlets for the Tungmenghui. Lately, he had acquired a new interest—flour milling. A wealthy Chinese family had built a mill in Shanghai and, rightly judging that Soon's American-bred directness would produce profits in modern business affairs, had selected him as manager, a post he held the rest of his life.

Soon entertained his college friend and wife at his new house in Hongkew, not far from Dr. Allen's "official residence." Though he didn't tell Burke then, his house also served as one of the secret meeting places for the revolutionists. It was a large home and justifiably so, for the Soon family was beginning to swell. There were now two girls, Eling (sometimes, Ailing) and Chungling (sometimes, Chingling), and a boy, Ts-vung. Among the missionary friends of the family, the son was best known by his baptismal name, "Paul." Soon explained to Burke that he had especially named T.V. (Ts-vung was and still is called by the initials of his two-syllable Chinese name) after the first Christian missionary in hopes the son would take up where he (Soon) had left off. Soon often exhibited throes of conscience about resigning from the mission.

There was no question about Soon's religious sincerity, any more than there was question of his desire to help his country through the revolutionary movement. It wasn't necessary for him to follow his religious and political activities to the extent he did, because he had a secure and comfortable income. The religious side exhibited itself most positively in the home,

where the increasingly pious Mrs. Soon abetted her husband in making the household toe the Southern Methodist line. Prayers were held daily and cards and dancing were strictly forbidden. And on Sundays, no games of any sort.

Burke was impatient to be back in Sungkiang, so he started for that city the day after Soon's dinner. He was pleased with the progress he saw when he arrived. The general school and church work, which had been carried on in his absence by another foreign mission member, was thriving under the new impetus of the new learning. In addition, the women's programme had expanded under the direction of the missionary sent down by the woman's board. A house had been built for her on the compound and a girls' school had been opened. Burke's hopes for a big Christian centre at the station he had set going looked promising.

There was one sad note to the return. Kwe was dead. Tuberculosis finally had claimed the frail teacher. A new teacher was employed, but he never filled Kwe's place. The language was less of a problem now, though, and the loss was not so noticeable in that respect.

Lok paid a visit to the mission home as soon as he learned of Burke's return. He had kept up his study of English and wanted Burke to start another class—for himself and a dozen other scholars this time. Lok carried with him all the enthusiasm that was stirring the liberal elements of China. The future looked bright to him. China was awakening. Corruption and weakness were doomed. Lok wasn't certain whether reform or straight revolution would be best, but that wasn't important. The essential point was that change was already in the making.

The forces for this change reached a crest on June 11, 1898, when Emperor Kuang Hsü issued the first of his famous reform decrees. The young monarch had been as sorely disturbed as anyone by China's plight and was convinced that a turn to Western reforms and culture—as Japan had done—was the only answer. He gathered scores of foreign books, including a Bible, in his private quarters. He had a miniature railroad built in his garden and he tinkered with mechanical toys. But more important, he was captivated by the ideas of certain reformists, led by Kang Yu-wei. Kang envisaged sweeping changes in the monarchy and Kuang Hsü co-operated beautifully. He brought out new edicts apparently as fast as Kang could think them up. The old educational system was junked; a new university was provided for at Peking; railroads were to be extended; art, science, and agriculture were slated for radical modernization—all good ideas, but projected with bewildering speed and little practicality.

Opposition to the liberal surge in China was by no means dead, however. The Manchus saw their privileged status threatened and the conservative

Chinese literati were horrified by any thought of changes in the established order. Two factors now played into this opposition's hands. One was the ineffectiveness of the reform leadership—directed as it was by the weak and inexperienced Kuang Hsü and his visionary adviser, Kang—and the second was the sudden intensification of European aggression.

With China's impotence laid absolutely bare by the Japanese, the powers seemed to have lost any remaining hesitancy about snatching what they wanted of the country. These territorial and economic inroads, clothed in various brands of treaties, came in quick succession between autumn, 1897, and summer, 1898. Germany took Tsingtao, Russia leased the Kwantung Peninsula (thereby plucking the principal fruit of Japan's 1895 victory and assuring the Russo-Japanese clash to come), American capital was sunk in the Hankow-Canton Railway, the French seized Kwangchowan, the British leased Kowloon and Weihaiwei, and declarations of non-alienation were forced from China over the Yangtze Valley, the southern provinces, and Fukien. Moreover, there was talk about partitioning China completely among the Western nations.

Secretary of State Hay's open-door principle—commercial equality among all nations in China and the preservation of China's territorial integrity—was laid down the following year, 1899, but it came too late. The Chinese, maddened over Western encroachments, were fast losing their liberal faith.

The reaction against the new learning officially set in on September 22, 1898, when Empress Dowager Tzŭ Hsi came out of retirement in her naval-appropriation summer palace and cut short her nephew's Hundred Days reform spree. Kuang Hsü was deposed and kept virtual prisoner on a picturesque little lake island outside Peking's Forbidden City walls, while the dowager began her third regency on the Dragon Throne. One of her first acts was to have fifty-three of Kuang Hsü's favourite eunuchs beaten to death in the palace courtyards, because they had approved of the recent reform edicts. (Chief Adviser Kang luckily made his escape.) Then she scrapped the edicts and went after all reformists with a vengeance, beheading and imprisoning from one end of the empire to the other. Anyone with "dangerous thoughts" (that is, a person with even mild interest in Western ideas) was a marked man.

The once bulging mission schools emptied overnight. Students, their reform ardour cooled, resumed the Confucian classics and the old public examination halls filled again.

Some scholars, though, refused to be terrorized back into the traditional rut. Lok was one of them. He had stopped attending the English class, as the other twelve scholars, for there was no point in foolishly inviting trouble.

But one day he slipped into the mission compound dressed in peasant's clothes, with a basket of vegetables over his arm as though coming from market. Burke didn't suspect who he was.

"Treat me as a peasant," Lok whispered, after making himself known. "Let us talk here in the yard, in the manner, say, of a man contracting with a farmer for some yard work to be done after harvesting season. But let the talk be subdued, else the Old Buddha's [empress dowager] agents may dispatch me to my ancestors in undignified haste."

They walked out into the yard.

"The situation is intolerable," Lok continued. "I have come to tell you good-bye temporarily. Tomorrow Voong Zung-tse (Voong was one of the English-class members) and I are leaving for Japan. There we will study, preparing ourselves for the time when it is ripe for us to return and serve our country. That time will not be far off, I think. China cannot long be repressed like this."

Lok did go to Japan, as did many other like-minded students from all over China. His Confucian bachelor's degree was practically useless in the modern Japanese education system, but with the smattering of mathematics and science Burke had taught him (Lok had been subjected to a Leclanché hot seat) along with English, he was able to enter a Tokyo normal school. On the other hand, his mastery of the flowing Chinese ideograph gave him an easy means of livelihood. Japanese could never match the artistry of practised Chinese scholars and there was a great demand for them as scriveners.

Another friend of Burke's also was affected by the reactionary terror. This was Charlie Soon. His revolutionary activities had been known before, but nothing much was done about such things during the period when new learning was in favour. Now it was different. The Tungmenghui and fellow organizations dug deeper underground. Some of the members left the country. Others, including Soon, took advantage of a convenient device proffered by the opportunistic Portuguese. For a "special service fee," Portuguese consuls would issue anyone a Portuguese passport. Arming himself with one of these documents, Soon was prepared, should he be arrested by the Imperialists, to claim extra-territorial immunity from Chinese laws.

While the dowager and her cohorts were witch-hunting reformists, an eccentric organization was gaining force in the inner recesses of Shantung Province. It called itself the I Ho Tuan, or Righteous Harmony Fists (though it has been translated half a dozen ways). Both from this name and from their gymnastic mode of fighting, members of the society came to be known among foreigners as Boxers. They wore red sashes and claimed various magical powers, chief among which was invulnerability to firearms.

The exact origin of the Boxers was obscure (as everything is in China), though good authorities believed they were first an ultra-patriotic, anti-Manchu society like the Kolaohui. The overgreedy imperialism of the West in 1897–1898 resurrected them. They blamed China's condition on the foreigners as well as on her alien rulers—the Manchus. Their most violent hatred was centred on Christianity, a foreign faith which they charged was uprooting the Chinese social system.

Through some adroit dealings, the reactionary Manchu noblemen behind the throne were able to line up the Boxers, turning their entire energies against the foreigners. It remained to win the dowager to a scheme for active alliance between the Manchus and the Fists. This was accomplished by a unique exhibition of Boxer prowess in one of the great courts of the Forbidden City, according to one account.

A Boxer brave, naked to the waist and holding his arms in the prescribed magical positions, stood in the centre of the square. Taking careful aim, one of his fellows fired a musket point-blank at his head. The brave not only failed to collapse, but he spat the bullet out of his mouth.

From that moment, Tzŭ Hsi was a confirmed Fist, though she never admitted it openly and later denied she ever was associated with them. Fantastic as it was, she and most of her Manchu advisers were willing to risk war with the world on the basis of this simple trickery and other equally absurd claims of the Boxers. It bore witness to the incredible ignorance which existed within the Imperial palaces of multi-walled Peking.

22

Missionary in the Ranks

IN THE AUTUMN OF 1899, while the Boxers were fermenting, Burke was appointed to Shanghai as presiding elder of the mission district there. It was an important post, but he hated leaving Sungkiang.

His new headquarters was Moore Memorial Church, on the corner of Hankow and Yunnan roads, a block from the canal (now Yu Ya Ching Road, where the present church building stands) bordering the racecourse. The parsonage was on Yunan Road, next to the church. Around the corner was McTyeire School, the Southern Methodists' prize school for girls. A

high wall separated the back yards of school and parsonage, but the Burke boys learned to climb a tree in their back yard and make faces at the Chinese girls—when their father wasn't looking. One of the girls in the school was Eling Soon, Charlie's oldest child.

The foreign colony of Shanghai at that time was growing steadily. The census in 1900 showed a total of 6,774 non-Chinese. The British led with 2,691, then came 978 Portuguese, 736 Japanese, 562 Americans, 525 Germans, 176 French, and the rest divided among ten or eleven nationalities and mixtures. It was more truly a cosmopolitan city than Paris or New York, where a number of nationalities might live, but authority was vested in only one. In Shanghai, no *one* nationality ruled exclusively, least of all the hosts—the several hundred thousand Chinese who lived in and around the foreign concessions. The International Settlement was managed by a council of English, Germans, and Americans. The French had an area of their own. Police were English, Irish, French, Sikhs, and Chinese. There was a French hotel, a Russian bank, and an American post office—to name things at random. If foreigners got into trouble, they went to their own consuls, being immune to Chinese law. Chinese in the Settlement, however, had to answer before a Mixed Court, presided over by a Chinese magistrate, but having a British consular official sharing the bench to see that foreign interests were taken care of.

Along toward the middle of May, 1900 (May is a notorious month for riots in China), the Shanghai foreign colony began taking moderate interest in Boxer activities in the north. Some native Catholic communities had been attacked near Peking and anti-foreign posters were appearing in the capital itself. The foreign legations there finally grew apprehensive to the point of having guards brought up from Tientsin on May 31st.

When the situation worsened, the British admiral, Seymour, set out from Tientsin on June 10th with his ill-fated relief expedition. After fighting combined Boxer and Imperial forces for half the eighty miles to Peking, he retreated with his little band of fifteen hundred men back toward Tientsin, but could get no nearer than an arsenal building twelve miles from the port.

Meanwhile, the Boxers attacked the foreign settlement in Tientsin and had it not been for several thousand Russian troops who had arrived too late to join Seymour's expedition the colony might have been wiped out. As it was, the Russians held out until the main allied forces, in ships anchored off the coast, blasted the Taku forts and relieved the city and Seymour's beleaguered expedition.

The Chinese government protested vehemently about the attack on Taku and on June 20th declared war on all the allied nations—which was virtually declaring war on the rest of the world. On the same day the old German

diplomat, Baron von Ketteler, was murdered on a Peking street and the Boxer-Imperialist siege of the legations began in earnest. Four days later, the throne decreed the extermination of foreigners throughout China:

"Whenever you meet a foreigner, you must kill him; if the foreigner attempts to escape, kill him at once."

By now, Shanghai foreigners were taking full notice of the situation. The colony's old volunteer companies, dating from the Taiping Rebellion, were dusted off and put on emergency footing. American residents then decided to form a company of their own and issued a call for volunteers.

American missionaries in Shanghai split hotly over the question of volunteering for military duty. The majority opposed the idea, piously declaring they had come to China as messengers of peace and would take up arms under no circumstances. God would protect them. Burke and a few others admitted the peace errand, yet saw the remainder of the problem somewhat differently, if not more realistically. The chances of the Boxers spreading southward seemed all too imminent. And when they did come, no mercy could be expected, judging from incidents reported in the north. For Burke, therefore, it boiled down to the simple duty of preparing to defend his family and home from threatened danger. He trusted God well enough, but he was convinced also of the dictum that "God helps those who help themselves." So he turned up at the organization meeting of the American Rifles Company on June 23rd.

The American volunteers were supplied uniforms and equipped with Martini rifles, long bayonets, belts, and pouches. Then followed several days of intense drilling to prepare the company for the general parade of all Shanghai volunteer units at the racecourse on June 28th. Drills were held on the grounds of the Anglo-Chinese College, Dr. Allen's school on Quinsan Road.

The captain of the Rifles was a businessman. He had come to China at the same time as Burke (both arriving on the *Yokohama Maru* the same day, in fact), but the two had little else in common. Businessmen and missionaries were mutually distasteful in China, to put it mildly. This factor, added to the captain's nervousness over the short time in which he must whip the company into some semblance of military order, no doubt accounted for the rather inharmonious scene between him and Burke on the second morning of drill.

Burke was in his place with his rifle promptly enough, but he happened to turn around to say "howdy" to Bonnell—also a volunteer—just as the captain gave the order to shoulder arms. The Georgian saw the rifles going up and hurriedly faced back to the front, raising his own gun. It wasn't quick enough for the captain, though.

"Get that God-damn rifle on your shoulder!" he barked.

The gun stopped where it was, half-way to the shoulder. The big missionary glared at the captain, colour mounting to his broad forehead. Then without a word, he walked out of ranks, laid his rifle against the wall of the college building, and went home. That night he wrote a chit to the captain, stating that he was willing to make the sacrifice of volunteering for the defence of the colony, but under no conditions would he be cursed at. Burke's Irish spirit was strong to begin with and twelve years of missionary independence at Sungkiang had done nothing to undermine it.

The captain measured up most creditably. He sent a chit back by the same servant who had brought Burke's, begging the minister's pardon and promising it wouldn't happen again. At drill the next morning, he apologized before the whole company.

The first parade of the combined Shanghai volunteer units went off impressively. American, English, French, German, Japanese, and others marched together on the field at the racecourse. It caused great excitement among the Chinese, who interpreted the display as preparatory to an attack on them. Drums in the forts of the native city beat to arms and much explaining was necessary to calm the Chinese officials.

Natives around Shanghai were equally concerned over prospects of a Boxer invasion of that region. They were frightened lest the Fists should take it out of them for living in proximity to the foreign devils. Chinese newspapers, delighting in rumours then as now, made capital of native tension by frequently reporting the approach of a Boxer force, when there were none within five hundred miles. One morning this vernacular press blazed out with a report that the Boxers had captured Woosung and were marching on Shanghai. Terrified natives rolled up their bedding and began streaming southward by the thousands. Few foreign homes had servants that night. This sort of thing got on the foreigners' nerves and brought demands that the native press be muzzled.

All this while, most high Chinese officials in the country were making every effort to keep the Boxer outbreaks localized in North China. They shared none of the Manchus' illusions about defeating the world with bands of ill-armed fanatics, especially after China's pathetic show against Japan five years earlier. Telegrams were sent privately to the viceroys advising them to ignore the throne's anti-foreign decrees. Old Li Hung-chang, who had been sent to Canton as viceroy after his demotion in 1895, publicly stated it was the duty of viceroys to protect foreign life and property. Li's statement came three days after the throne had declared war on the powers and also was in direct contravention to the Imperial decree ordering foreigners killed on sight. There was little unity of purpose in China.

The Nanking viceroy, shrewd Liu Kun-yi, was as determined as any that Central China should remain peaceful. In a meeting with the foreign consuls of Shanghai, he guaranteed the preservation of order in the Lower Yangtze regions if foreign troops confined their military operations to the north. Thus for the second time in forty years, China was divided in fighting the powers. For in 1860, Imperialist forces and foreigners had collaborated against the Taiping rebels in the south, while they fought each other in the north.

Liu Kun-yi issued stern orders to his prefects, which they in turn published:

> "All civil and military officers are required to provide protection to missionary and other foreign property and let all beware of the punishments in store for lazy and incapable officers who fail in their duty."

The prefects didn't fail. Combing the *North China Daily News* on June 27th for news of the interior, Burke happened on a small item about his old station, Sungkiang. It was written by J. L. Hendry, the missionary who had succeeded him there.

> "We hear of rowdies and ruffians who would gladly stir up trouble for a chance of looting, but they fear the officials, known to be our friends. Yesterday the prefect called and assured his friendship. He offered to send his two gunboats to guard us."

The Sungkiang scene rushed nostalgically to Burke's mind as he read this. He wondered how the portly Leu magistrate was reacting to the crisis. Certainly in a way best suited to the Leu magistrate's personal interests.

In the late afternoons, foreigners in Shanghai had a habit of gathering in groups in the Public Gardens on the Bund to discuss events of the day. The hectic Boxer period found these groups as vociferous as any in Union Square. The Boers were forgotten for the time being as self-styled opinionists launched into various phases of the China affair. One common topic was the partitioning of China. She should be divided up at once between the powers. As a letter-to-the-editor writer expressed it in the *North China*, "only the West has proved capable of just rule for the Chinese." The latter, of course, didn't attend the Garden debates. A sign outside the gate read:

"DOGS AND CHINESE NOT ALLOWED."

While Shanghailanders drilled and talked, the Boxers were cutting bloody capers in the north. They demolished isolated mission stations, torturing and

killing foreign and native Christians. The latter were especially sought after by the Fists, who viewed them as Chinese traitors and called them secondary devils. The Boxers delighted in tying live victims to posts and scooping out their hearts with a sharp knife. Or they tried crucifixion, as that was the manner in which Christians said their founder had died. The climax to Boxer atrocities came in the middle of July, when foreign missionaries were massacred wholesale at Paoting, a Christian centre south of Peking. Altogether, in various parts of northern and south-western China, the Boxers and their associates accounted for two hundred and thirty-three foreign missionaries, including their families.

More sustainingly dramatic than the various missionary persecution incidents was the siege of the legation quarter at the capital. It had gone on unremittingly since June 20th, with a small but brave international guard holding out against overwhelming Chinese forces. The allied relief army was bogged down for weeks in Tientsin, mopping up Chinese resistance there and ironing out military and political problems contingent on a large international expedition. The British were for letting the Japanese do the fighting, as their home bases were near and they could put a sizable army into the field quickly. A plan was offered whereby Japan would send 100,000 troops to China in return for British loan considerations. But the Japanese weren't quite ready for full-scale action against China, even under British auspices.

Finally, 25,000 internationals moved out from Tientsin under the command of Count von Waldersee. Rather, all were under his command except the American force, who would have none of the high-ranking German. There was some fierce and spectacular fighting along the way, for the Boxers were still so permeated with their "invulnerability" that they came charging up to the muzzles of the invaders' guns. They also tried to deflect bullets and bayonets with conjurerlike passes. On the other hand, some of the Boxer bands and units of the regular Chinese army possessed good modern field pieces. But Peking was occupied on August 14th and the eight-week legations siege ended. The empress dowager and her court escaped to Sian, the ancient Chinese capital in Shensi.

Thanksgiving services were held in Shanghai for the relief of the legations. Dr. Parker was the speaker at a prayer meeting of the Southern Methodists. Shanghai foreigners, however, were by no means convinced the Boxers were stamped out and would not yet break out in the Yangtze Valley. There was little faith in Viceroy Liu's promises, despite evidences to the contrary. British residents especially were so insistent on more protection that their government decided to divert some Indian detachments to the Yangtze port. These Indians had been en route to the north when Peking fell. Liu protested

the infringement on his authority; nevertheless, the first batch of foreign troops was landed at Shanghai on August 17th.

Burke took his sons down to the Old Ningpo Wharf to watch this first contingent disembark. Crowds of cheering foreigners and silent Chinese were on hand as the British transport, *Duke of Portland*, came alongside with the 30th Bombay Infantry—better known as the 3rd Baluchis—aboard. The big khaki-clad Indians lined the ship's rails, laughing and shouting at the shore crowds. Then the pipes of the regiment struck up "The Campbells Are Coming" and it was hard for Burke to believe the pipers were sons of Ind.

The gear was unloaded first—kits, tents, chests, ammunition—and piled high on the wharf. A hundred and fifty wheelbarrows and their pushers were clustered about to carry the stuff to the Yahloong Cotton Mill, near St. John's University, where the regiment was to be quartered. While this transfer got under way, the swarthy Balûchis sweating in the hot August sun, marched off the ship, led by pipers and drummers. The Chinese spectators stared open-mouthed at the huge fellows.

William, Gordon, and Edward were so taken with the sight that Burke was compelled to bring them back for the landing of the second Indian regiment three days later. This time it was the Gurkhas, the famous border fighters. They were shorter than the Baluchis, but quite as effective looking. As they marched on shore, sunlight glistened on the bayonets of their Lee-Metford rifles. At each man's hip hung the historic Gurkha kukri, a curved razor-edged knife. A Maxim gun brought up the end of the marching column. It was no doubt some similar column that inspired Hilaire Belloc's stinging couplet on British imperialism:

> Whatever happens, we have got
> The Maxim gun, which they have not.

The other powers, unwilling to leave the protection of Shanghai and the rich Yangtze mouth entirely to the British, started bringing in their own forces now. The day after the Baluchis landed, the French put ashore a force of French sailors and Annamese tirailleurs. These were followed in a short time by detachments from all the nations involved with China, and Shanghai's foreign garrison swelled to eight thousand, more than the entire foreign population of the port before the crisis.

On September 22nd, a general review of foreign troops was staged for Count von Waldersee, the commander in chief of the Peking expedition. He was stopping briefly in Shanghai after finishing up the northern campaign. The local American Rifles, however, followed the example of their countrymen in the north by ignoring his presence. It was the only foreign

unit that refused to take part in the review. The rest marched with much show—French, Japanese, Annamites, Germans, Rajputs, Sikhs, the various local volunteer outfits, etc.

The American company, instead, staged a shooting match, in which Bonnell won a cup. The missionary proudly exhibited it to his friends, and at the annual mission conference, to the home bishop. The bishop censured him sharply. Winning a trophy in a shooting match was tantamount to gambling, he told the crestfallen marksman.

The tension in China had eased considerably by late autumn, though it was another year before the final peace protocol was signed at Peking. And so ended the Boxers' bid, with which the blindly reactionary Manchu court believed it could undo in a fanatical flash all that European imperialism had built up in sixty years. As it was, the dowager had learned her lesson. The West couldn't be shut out. If China didn't seize Western enlightenment, it would be forced upon the country. So on January 28, 1901, seven months before the peace protocol, she issued a decree announcing her intention to begin a scheme of reform.

23

The Jerusalem of China

SHANGHAI WAS NO HAVEN of virtue before the Boxer crisis and the new sediment of adventurers, gamblers, and camp followers settling there in the wake of the foreign troops took nothing away from its celebrated tourist name, Paris of the Far East. Heavy drinking was proverbial; gambling, a major industry; opium, a legitimate business; prostitutes, a hallowed institution.

As these plain facts pressed into Burke's once-serene conscience, his sermons to the Chinese began losing their references to the West, particularly America, as the embodiment of Christian culture.

"American" didn't have an altogether nice connotation on the China Coast. In Shanghai, along the Bund or near the Astor House, ragged rickshaw coolies—who wouldn't know Burke from a lascivious sea captain—were always running up to him and saying:

"Master wanchee nice Melican girl? My can do chop-chop."

In those days "American girl" was the blanket term for any white prosti-

tute, regardless of specific nationality. There were good grounds for this, of course. Many women-of-the-trade had migrated from California's Gold Coast and still did. They came mostly on Japanese steamers—which got to be known as "the girl ships"—because the Nipponese captains would let them pay for their passages at the end of the voyage—by which time the girls usually had the fare ready.

Responsible Americans in Shanghai naturally were riled by the wholesale stigma on their country's name, but the problem wasn't one to be swept aside easily. Shanghai's "light ladies" were a time-honoured institution. Established in the colony's early days, before wives and daughters were brought to the Yangtze outpost, these adventuresses, many of them lovely creatures, were practically inviolable—as an institution. They could be seen riding along the Bund in open carriages, fashionably dressed and holding lacy parasols. They nodded pleasantly to the best gentlemen, who doffed their hats gallantly in return. On Saturday and Sunday afternoons, they sat on the broad verandas of the clubs, sipping cool drinks and chatting merrily with the members.

So it was that Shanghai stood aghast when, in 1906, the first United States Court was set up and Judge Lebbens Redman Wilfley presumed to investigate these sacred Delilahs. Judge Wilfley subpœnaed the madams of the eight "American houses," whereupon four of them immediately claimed their other nationalities and one later was proved non-American. Meanwhile, the girls who were American made a frantic rush to marry Europeans or Chinese and lost their citizenship. One girl went so far as to advertise in the *North China Daily News* for a husband, suffixing the notice with the terse enjoinder: "No Americans need apply." For his unorthodoxies, Judge Wilfley was venomously criticized in the Shanghai clubs and an attempt was made to impeach him.

Two factors might account for the moral laxities of Shanghai foreigners—volumes of idle moments and lack of any effective local public opinion to compel the maintenance of social standards. The idleness was due both to the lethargy which foreigners in China borrow from the Orient and to the cheapness and efficiency of Chinese servants. There was never much left for the foreign "masters" to do, and that could be put off until tomorrow. Business hours were ten to three, with two hours off for tiffin.

The energies thus accumulated found few of the educational and entertainment outlets of the homelands and, as a consequence, poured themselves out in varieties of eccentric behaviour and at the club bars. Not that drinking was relegated to off hours. Some of the foreign business houses had their private stocks and in one large bank "boys" (Chinese servants sixty years old would still be called "boys" by foreigners) walked around behind their

masters with highballs handy. It was not uncommon for a young businessman to go to pieces in five or six years of this empty, alcoholic existence and returning ships carried a fair percentage of them back home in strait jackets.

The sins of the West always smote Burke most vividly in the spring and autumn, when from his church windows he could look out on the full colour of Shanghai's racing season. Gamblers of all nations collected at the racecourse across the canal. Those without regular quarters paid fantastic rents for vacant lots near the track for their games—they knew they would get fantastic returns from the money-glutted Shanghailanders. The colony's social cream turned out on race days, strolling about in the last word of fashion (the imitative genius of Chinese tailors and the cheapness of labour and material combined to keep Shanghai foreigners among the best-dressed people in the world).

Then there was opium.

Whenever Burke met his missionary friends in the Garden during the Boxer days, he could partly sympathize with the anti-foreign Fists. For there anchored in plain view off the Bund were the famous opium hulks of Shanghai, two old sailing ship hulks with Noah's ark roofs. In them was stored the opium which the British grew and manufactured in India for Chinese consumption. One of the dismantled sailing vessels, ironically enough, had brought the first Southern Methodist missionaries to Shanghai from Hong Kong a half-century before.

Even while the Manchus and Boxers were combining to toss out the Western intruders the latter were expanding their Chinese opium markets. There was nothing under cover about it. Routine reports appeared in the papers, like this one in the *North China Daily News* on June 26, 1900:

> "Messrs. D. Sassoon Sons and Company kindly inform us that they have received telegraphic advice that the Indian government will sell in 1901, each month, 2,000 chests of Patna and 2,000 of Benares opium, making 48,000 chests in all, or 3,600 more of Patna than in 1900."

It had been sixty years since Britain forced opium importation on China in the so-called Opium War of 1840 (which, incidentally, also led to the opening of Shanghai as a treaty port). Now, more than sixty tons of British Indian opium alone reached China weekly, which meant an annual revenue of nearly $20,000,000 for the British Indian government—because Indian opium production was a government monopoly. Cultivators in Bengal and the United Provinces received licences and subsidies to grow poppies on 600,000 acres of land set aside for that purpose, while government factories at Patna and Ghazipur processed the gum, four-fifths of it to suit Chinese taste. Then it was sold at monthly government auctions—as indicated in the

above news item—to a strange tribe of Asiatic Jews, Parsees, Mohammedans, and Hinds. These traders did the actual delivering and selling to China, thereby keeping Britain's hands technically unsoiled and building huge fortunes for themselves.

The profitable retail opium business in Shanghai didn't go without its slice to the government of the International Settlement—often referred to in those days as the Model Settlement. In the four years Burke was stationed at the port, some twenty thousand establishments were paying licence fees to sell the drug. Eighteen thousand of them were equipped with pipes and lamps for smoking. The licence revenue amounted to about $70,000 annually.

Reform-minded persons of the day were especially enraged over the notorious evasion of the woman's clause on opium licences. This clause, prohibiting women from entering an opium smoking den, had been printed on the licences by the Settlement Council in a righteous moment, but police records continued listing over three thousand regular women inmates of dens. Asked to explain, the police blandly pointed out that when a licence was issued to the keeper of an "opium brothel," the woman's clause was erased.

The Chinese smokers who paid the profits of the business were mostly from the poorer classes. It was the predominance in China of these classes, with their attendant misery, that made the country such a natural field for the drug. As De Quincey explained his own addiction: "What was it that drove me into the habitual use of opium? Misery—blank desolation—settled and abiding darkness." And what less than mass misery could be expected in a land of poverty, plagues, tuberculosis, and medieval medicine?

But though the poorer classes supported opium, the price of the drug was never made to conform to their earnings. Opium was expensive. The government monopoly and the unscrupulous traders saw to that. A thimbleful of moderately good opium (enough for one or two smokes) cost fifteeen cents, which was more than a coolie could make in a day. As a result, coolies sometimes smoked a vile mixture of pipe scrapings and charcoal.

Opium smoking and other forms of native vice in the International Settlement at the turn of the century centred on Foochow Road, a block over from Burke's church. That fact could be readily guessed from the repeated references to S Mo-loo (Fourth Horse Road)—the popular Chinese name for Foochow Road—in sermons by Shanghai's clergy.

The first night in the parsonage, Burke had noticed the dull red light of a licensed opium den glowing on the corner of Foochow and Yunnan roads. To him, it represented the evil glow of hell itself. He watched it from his bedroom window for weeks. Then one night his curiosity got the better of him and he walked over to see what a den might be like.

As he stepped in he was conscious of a dimly lit interior with a haze of smoke hovering about. It was hard to see distinctly for the first moment or two. The opium fumes were sweet and sickish, somewhat more concentrated than those wafted under the little footboat's cowling on that first trip to Soochow. Just inside the entrance was a desk, behind which the denkeeper sat. Piled on the desk in front of him were pipes, some thimble-cups for measuring out opium, and a jar of the drug itself, thick and dark like hard molasses. Off at one side was a charcoal stove, with an iron pot of opium boiling slowly over it. (Wholesale opium, arriving in Shanghai in balls six or eight inches in diameter, was broken up by retail dealers, mixed with water and given a final cooking.) When this reached the consistency of that in the jar, it would be ready for smoking.

As Burke's vision cleared, he made out the details of the smoking chamber beyond the desk and stove. There were no tables, chairs, or other prominent furnishings. Only a low wooden platform, a foot high and about six feet wide, built out from the walls of the room. The platform was covered with mats and divided by partitions—scarcely six inches high—into smoking sections. Each section accommodated two smokers, lying on their sides with a kerosene lamp between them. The sections were filled to capacity. Business was normal that night.

"Wanchee look see?" the denkeeper inquired, standing up and smiling toothily at the big foreigner.

Burke replied in Shanghai dialect, an ability which always seemed to please the Chinese in the port city. Foreigners there seldom bothered to learn a single word of the native language, adding to their arrogance in Chinese eyes.

Together the two entered the platformed room. The smokers were talking freely. It was early in the night and most of them had just begun on their pipes. The first effects of the drug were stimulating. Not until a man had smoked three or four pipes was he ready to drowse off into fanciful dreams. The hopeless addicts were easy to pick out. They were given away by their "opium faces," colourless and withered, with listless eyes.

Burke stopped in front of a man who was sitting up preparing his opium for smoking. He was kneading the little pellet with his fingers, pinching and smoothing it into the proper shape and firmness. This preliminary operation took ten minutes or more for a meticulous smoker.

"How long have you been smoking opium?" the missionary inquired.

"About two years," he answered.

"What is your business?"

"I am a clerk in a food store."

"What do you earn?"

"Twenty dollars a month."

"And how much do you spend for opium in a month?"

"Perhaps ten dollars."

"Have you a family?"

"Yes, a wife and four children."

"Is it not hard to support them properly and yet spend ten dollars for opium?"

"Very hard."

"Then why do you use opium?"

"The foreign smoke [a common Chinese term for the drug] is very comforting. After three pipes I can go home and sleep in great luxury."

Burke shook his head sadly. Chinese fatalism depressed him. But it didn't discourage him. He never despaired of these people. There was always hope of showing them the truth and his interest in them was too great for him to give up.

The man had worked his opium while he talked and by now had prepared the dark little pellet to his satisfaction. He picked up his pipe and pressed the opium ball over the tiny hole in the solid-looking bowl. Then smiling politely at the missionary, he reclined on one elbow, half facing the lamp which burned in the middle of the section. The man on the other side of the flame was just finishing a pipe. He had taken only mild interest in Burke's questions.

The food clerk held his pipe by its thick bamboo stem and moved the bowl close in over the lamp. The surface with the opium stuck on it was tilted three-quarters down, so the heat of the flame could strike the pellet. As the bit of drug began to melt (opium is not ignited), the smoker put the pipe stem in his mouth and sucked deeply, drawing air through the porous pellet. He held the fumes in his lungs half a minute it seemed, then exhaled slowly. He did this two more times, then the pipe needed reloading—which meant ten or fifteen minutes of kneading again. Opium smoking wasted both time and money.

The denkeeper had been watching Burke's interest. Now he spoke cordially in Chinese.

"I invite you please to partake of one of my poor pipes," he said.

Burke thanked him politely, but explained that his religion didn't permit the indulgence. As he left the den, though, he tendered his own invitation:

"I invite you to come to my humble church on Hankow Road next Sunday and hear my poor preaching. I will explain more fully why I do not use the foreign smoke."

The denkeeper, of course, displayed his proper Chinese courtesy by accepting warmly, but he never turned up at Moore Memorial.

With all its moral looseness, one might suggest that Shanghai needed missionaries more abundantly than did the strictly heathen interior cities of China. The truth was that Shanghai *had* the greatest and most varied collection of missionaries in any single spot on earth. They came from practically all nations, faiths, and creeds: Protestants, Roman Catholics, Greek Orthodox, Jews, Buddhists, Hindus, Mohammedans, and a few curious ascetics and mystics who defied cataloguing. The strife and jealousy among them naturally reduced their general effectiveness and they were fairly well obscured by the city's worldly glamour. For the tourist, the Shanghai scene was fully reflected in "Paris of the Far East."

Nevertheless, it is interesting to recall another name bestowed on Shanghai. At the end of a stirring conference of Protestant missionaries there in 1890, the mad international port was momentously dubbed the Jerusalem of China, because it was destined to be to Christianity in China what Jerusalem was to Christianity in the world.

24

One-Man Rescue Squad

AN URGENT LETTER CAME from the Loktiauwan farmer, Li, in the winter of Burke's second year at Shanghai. His little sister, fourteen years old, had been lured away by kidnappers. He had information that she had been sold to a certain Chinese brothel on the S Mo-loo. Would his Christian friend please rescue her from this degradation? He gave the girl's full name and said she could be identified by a mole over her left eye.

Burke tucked the letter in his inside coat pocket and took a rickshaw to the American Consulate General, which was then on the Hongkew side of Soochow Creek, near the Astor House. There he saw his friend, John Goodnow, the consul-general, and asked him how to go about rescuing the girl.

"I think you should go to the magistrate of the Mixed Court and get him to issue an order for her release," Goodnow suggested. "I'll give you a letter to him."

Burke went to the court the next morning. The magistrate was reluctant about the matter at first. Brothel-keepers paid high protective fees. Then the big missionary produced Goodnow's letter and the magistrate issued the order.

To expedite things, Burke decided to serve the order himself. Regular Chinese officers of the court were too apt to pocket a bribe from the brothel-keeper and report they could not find the girl. The minister located the house Li had named and walked in. There was a small dingy hallway, with a narrow staircase leading to the second floor. The stairs took three sharp turns to reach the upper landing, where it was almost too dark to make out the steps. From the landing, a door opened on a long windowless hall, lighted by two dim lamps. Twelve or fifteen curtained entranceways lined both sides. Some of the girls and their amahs were in the hall. It was early for business. As the bearded Georgian stepped through the door, a chorus of excited squeals met him:

"Nga-kok-nyung le! Nga-kok-nyung le! (Foreigner comes! Foreigner comes!)"

More girls and amahs popped out from behind the curtained entranceways. It was a rare treat to have a foreigner visit a cheap native brothel. They clustered around Burke, laughing and tittering. They reeked with the strong-scented powder that was caked on their bodies—Chinese prostitutes seldom bathed, simply added more powder.

This was more than the missionary had counted for. He had thought he could find the brothel-keeper without meeting the entire staff of the place and being mistaken for a patron. He wished he hadn't been so hasty about coming. There was even a distinct impulse to break and run, but he was determined to see it out.

"Where is the keeper?" he asked one of the amahs. "Tell him I want to see him."

The keeper appeared. Burke showed him the court order and described the girl.

"Yes, I bought this daughter of a Loktiauwan farmer, but she ran off only yesterday," the keeper said.

The missionary naturally didn't believe him.

"Will you have all your girls line up here in the hall so I can see for myself?" he requested.

The keeper looked hurt, but he knew it was useless to argue with a foreigner. He ordered the girls to line up. The light in the hall was so dim that Burke picked up one of the lamps near him to hold up as he walked slowly down the line of girls, peering into each of the young, over-rouged faces. None of the girls could have been over eighteen and some seemed hardly in their teens. They had been kidnapped, like Li's sister, or sold by destitute families. Theoretically, they could buy their freedom when they had paid for their cost and upkeep, but actually this was quite impossible. The keeper held the girls in permanent debt by simply overcharging them exorbitantly for the

tawdry silk dresses he bought them. Most of the girls probably were resigned to their fate, for women in Old China were reared in the belief that they had been created solely for man's benefit. But some of them did try to escape when the keepers were too cruel. It was not uncommon to see a little slave girl break away from her amah (each girl was given an amah who served both as maid and guard wherever she went) on the street. If she was caught, her body would rack for days from the keeper's cuffs and lashes.

Burke looked carefully, but there was no girl with a mole over her left eye. Then he put the question to the girls directly:

"Which of you is Li me-me (little sister Li)?" he asked, standing off with the lantern, "Do not be afraid to tell me, for I am here to free her."

None of the girls answered. Then one of the amahs behind the minister spoke up:

"Foreign teacher, the keeper told you truly. The girl you seek did escape yesterday. I was her amah and I have many bruises on me because of my negligence."

There seemed no further need of continuing the search in the brothel, so Burke gladly left the place. It would have suited him to drag the keeper away and let all the girls escape, but that was hardly practicable. He had little patience left for the Model Settlement's Christian government for permitting this white slavery to go on.

Outside the brothel, the minister hailed a rickshaw to take him to the Door of Hope. If Li me-me had escaped, he might find her there, for the Door of Hope was a refuge for runaway slave girls. It had been founded by a missionary woman, Miss C. Bonnel, who got the Mixed Court to agree that any girl managing to escape her captors and cross the threshold of the refuge could not be molested. Dozens of girls did get there every year, often just ahead of their irate owners, who were obliged to come to a fuming halt outside the entrance. The little runaways received treatment for their oft-times battered and diseased bodies and, if they had no good homes to go back to, they were put in school at the refuge.

Burke reached the Door of Hope and Li's sister was there. There was nothing the matter with her except a wrenched arm and a few minor bruises. A letter already had been sent to her family in Loktiauwan. The girl told how she had slipped away from her amah late in the night and crept down the brothel's dark crooked staircase. In the street, she found a kind rickshaw puller who took her to the refuge.

A year and a half later, in August, 1903, Burke was faced with a rescue problem of another sort. It was during one of the ever-recurring revolution scares and four of his Epworth League members had been arrested on anti-Manchu charges while on a Christian deputation to Nanhwei, a town south

of Shanghai. The young men were being held by the Nanhwei magistrate until he received orders from the Nanking viceroy about their disposition—death by beheading, if determined guilty.

Burke went to see Goodnow again at the Consulate General and explained the case.

"I know these young chaps well and they're no more revolutionists than I am, but they're liable to be beheaded just the same," he pointed out. "I'm going down there to try and get them out and I thought it might help to carry a letter from you to the Nanhwei magistrate outlining what I have told you."

The consul-general stroked his chin.

"I'll be glad to do it for you, Burke," he said, "but you know what people will say if they find it out: 'Missionaries using the power of foreign governments to interfere in China's domestic affairs.' That's been used a great deal to criticize the missions adversely."

"Oh, that's a lot of bosh!" Burke snapped. "And anyway, interfering or no interfering, these young fellows' lives are at stake. That's the only thing that bothers me."

"All right," Goodnow laughed, "if that's the way you feel about it, I'll write the letter for you."

The minister took the letter and went to Nanhwei by boat. He found the four Epworth Leaguers sitting dismally in the squalid prison of the magistrate's yamen. Being strangers in the town and without much money, they hadn't been able to bribe the jailer for bedding (prisoners in China usually did that or brought their own bedding), so they sat on the damp earth floor of the single-room prison. The other prisoners and a shallow trough for natural functions were in the same room.

The Nanhwei magistrate was a paunchy person, somewhat like the Leu magistrate in Sungkiang. And, like the latter, he found himself in a dilemma because of Burke—except there was no easy middle course such as the Leu magistrate had taken. He felt he would incur foreign wrath (and that was no light matter this close after the Boxer episode) if he didn't comply with the missionary's demand that he release the four men immediately. And if the viceroy sent a death order after he had set them free, that would be bad too. He begged Burke to wait until the viceroy had acted, but Burke wouldn't hear of it. So finally, he decided to gamble on the viceroy's verdict and release the men.

Scarcely had Burke got back to Shanghai with the Epworth Leaguers when the magistrate received the viceregal order to execute them. The official cursed his fate. Apparently thinking Goodnow had more to do with the four men than Burke did, he wrote the consul-general, requesting their

return. Goodnow turned the letter over to the missionary, who wrote the magistrate that he still couldn't accept the revolutionary charges against the young men and wouldn't reveal their whereabouts—they were hiding in their respective homes in Shanghai.

The magistrate then wrote directly to Burke, pleading for the return of the prisoners. He explained that he would be dismissed from office and degraded if he couldn't carry out the viceroy's order. But Burke stood firm. He refused to return the Epworth Leaguers unless there was satisfactory proof of their guilt.

At last the magistrate, almost insane by now, came to Shanghai in person. He saw Goodnow and Burke, but to no avail. The latter's only concession was to propose that the four men be tried in the American Consular Court, where evidence could be heard impartially. But the Chinese official opposed the idea and called the Shanghai taotai in on the case.

Growing a trifle worried from the magistrate's determination, the Epworth Leaguers engaged a lawyer to advise them. For a modest fee of five hundred dollars, he made the very sensible suggestion that they take a ship to Japan and stay there until everything smoothed over. Which they did. The Nanhwei magistrate, meanwhile, was duly relieved of his office and reports circulated that he actually did go mad.

25

Japanese Drama

BURKE AND ADDIE had increased their little brood since moving to Shanghai. Son number four, John, was born in February, 1902.

That was the year the big missionary saw his first automobile (one of the two Oldsmobiles imported into Shanghai in 1902) and went bolting across Haungjau Road like a panicked bison. Street cars, too, came on the prosperity wave that struck the colony after the Boxer trouble. Natives thought the trolley wires were inhabited by demons, which wasn't a bad conception at all.

Burke saw a good bit of Soon in those days. The minister-flourmiller's family had grown also. There were five children by 1903. A third girl, Mayling (sometimes, Meyling), and another son, Ts-liang (John), were the two additions. Chungling had joined her elder sister at McTyeire.

Soon's great ambition was that his children, like himself, have an American

education. He talked about it often with his college friend, who, of course, encouraged him and promised to help when time came for the oldest, Eling, to go to college. The time came somewhat sooner than Burke had anticipated. He was sitting in his parsonage study one Tuesday morning in May, 1903, when Soon called to discuss the subject. The diminutive Chinese, with his American-acquired directness, went straight to the point:

"Bill, I want Eling to go to America next year for her college work."

"But she's only thirteen!" Burke protested.

"I know," Soon agreed, "but she will be fourteen next year and after a year's tutoring or special work in the States she should be able to enter regular college. She is fluent in English and has had good training at McTyeire."

Burke nodded. Eling had had good training at the mission school, because she had been an exceptionally bright pupil. She had entered the school when she was only five, years younger than the other beginners. And fourteen or fifteen wasn't early for starting college. Curriculums weren't so advanced as today.

"I guess you're right, Charlie," he admitted. "Suppose I write Colonel Guerry for you? You remember my speaking of him and my hope that you could send Eling to Wesleyan?"

"That's what I wanted you to do, Bill. I would appreciate it very much."

Colonel DuPont Guerry was a close friend of Burke's, as well as president of Wesleyan Female College in Macon. Wesleyan, like Emory, Trinity, and Vanderbilt, was a Southern Methodist institution and boasted among other things of the fact that it was the first chartered college for women in the world. As soon as Charlie had gone Burke wrote Guerry about Eling. He outlined his long association with Soon, telling of the latter's early connection in the mission and stressing his continued status as a Southern Methodist minister.

Late that summer a reply came from Guerry. He was quite warm toward the idea of enrolling the daughter of a Chinese Christian minister. It would be a new departure for Wesleyan. The only non-white students who had attended the college were a few American Indian girls. But Guerry felt certain all would work out well. Eling could live with his own family until she got adjusted to dormitory life. And judging from what he knew of McTyeire's standards, she could probably enter the college right away as a sub-freshman.

Burke lost no time in showing the letter to Soon.

"This makes me very happy!" the Chinese exclaimed. Then, suddenly turning serious, "Now, the problem of getting her safely over there. I can't go myself and I don't want her to go alone."

Burke rubbed a palm across the side of his bearded chin and said hesitantly, "Well, Charlie, I'm expecting to go on furlough with my family next May or June and, if you'd like it, I'd be only too glad to have Eling go along with us. We'll be going right to Macon and can look after her all the way."

Soon accepted the offer gratefully.

Burke's furlough actually was due in 1903, but as with the first furlough, he had been prevailed upon to extend the time an extra year because of the shortage of missionaries in the field. That winter he wished he hadn't agreed to the postponement. Addie came down with one of polluted China's ever-present scourges—typhoid fever. For weeks she lay in the parsonage, hardly alive. Burke gave up all his duties to stay by her, and a trained nurse was engaged to take his place at her bedside when he had to sleep. Finally, in the early spring, the weary, fever-ravaged patient was able to sit up, then to get up and go for short drives in a carriage. The doctor thought that by May she could stand the ocean trip home. The three weeks of clean salt air would build her up.

Meanwhile, two events in 1904 had upset the Far East somewhat more than usual. The first was the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War. On the night of February 8th, with no advance declaration of war, Japan had struck a crippling blow at the Russian Pacific Fleet. The czar's proud warships were anchored unsuspectingly in the outer road of Port Arthur, on the tip of Liaotung Peninsula, at the time. Admiral Starck, the Russian commander, was entertaining his officers ashore in honour of his wife's birthday. The Russian torpedo boat flotilla had gone out on patrol at seven o'clock that evening, so when the Japanese torpedo boats roared out of the darkness at eleven o'clock, the Russians mistook them for their own craft returning. The Japanese were able to send flight after flight of torpedoes crashing into the anchored fleet at point-blank range.

Haughty, powerful Russia was stunned. St. Petersburg, still in the process of delivering an answer to Tokyo's last note, screamed "treachery," "piracy," "bad faith," "breach of international law." But only the French were sympathetic and echoed the charges against the Nipponese. Other Western nations, particularly the United States, were almost apathetic. One American international law expert, Professor Amos Hershey, went so far as to point out in his *International Law and Diplomacy of the Russo-Japanese War* that "the general practice of nations, at least since the sixteenth century, show conclusively that declarations of war prior to the outbreak of hostilities have been comparatively rare and altogether exceptional."

The second event that disturbed Far Eastern equanimity in 1904 was the passage by the American Congress in April of stricter Chinese exclusion

laws. To Charlie Soon, expecting to send his daughter to the States, this was far more discomforting than the Russo-Japanese struggle.

Chinese labourers had been excluded from the United States since 1882, owing to resentment of their cheap labour by certain sections of the country. Ten years later, Congress renewed the exclusion act, adding provisions requiring the registration of all Chinese in the nation, no matter what their occupations. In 1894, a ten-year treaty was signed with China embodying this new act. And on April 27, 1904, after China had refused to renew the humiliating agreement Congress extended and tightened the exclusion laws anyway. China protested hotly and relations between the two countries were strained.

The immigration restrictions were still directed at labourers and did not prohibit entrance to Chinese officials, businessmen, or students, but America seemed hostile even to these legally accepted classes. At least it appeared that way in Shanghai, where newspapers were playing up reports of forced and humiliating detention of high-class Chinese entering American ports.

In view of all these things on the verge of Eling's departure, Soon was *fah-juh*, to use the Shanghai expression for being at one's wit's end, until he thought of a trump card. Burke tried hard to dissuade him, but Charlie's mind was strong once he got it set. He went around to the Portuguese and paid them their special service fee for a passport for Eling like the one he had used to protect himself from the Imperial executioner. As a Portuguese "citizen," Soon argued, Eling would not come under the Chinese exclusion regulations and would run no risk of detention by American immigration authorities.

Burke decided to sail on the Pacific Mail steamer *Korea*, scheduled to leave Shanghai on May 28th. He and Soon booked passages, reserving two adjoining cabins (there were only cabin class and steerage accommodations then). Burke and his three older boys would occupy one cabin, while Addie, baby John, and Eling would have the second.

Excitement and bustle reigned in the Soon and Burke households during the first weeks of May. Missionary friends of both families took a great part in the preparations. They did all the packing for Addie, who in her weakened condition was not allowed to tire herself. At the Soon home in Hongkew, Mrs. J. W. Cline, a Southern Methodist neighbour of the Chinese family, supervised the tailoring of Eling's foreign wardrobe. Up to that time Eling had worn only native clothes.

May 28th was a bright spring day. It was too early for Waung-me. Friends and relatives gathered in crowds at the public jetty on the Bund, as passengers for the *Korea* prepared to board the tender *Victoria*. Large ocean vessels didn't come up the Whangpoo, but anchored in the Yangtze, at Woosung.

One group waiting for the *Victoria* to load were Burke, his wife and four

children, Soon and Eling. Charlie was going as far as the *Korea* to see his daughter off. Mrs. Soon and the rest of her family had not come to the jetty. In less demonstrative Eastern fashion, they were content to say their good-bye and well-wishing before the girl left home.

Eling stood slim and sedate in one of her new foreign dresses. Like most Chinese girls at fourteen, she looked more serious than her age would warrant. Her black hair was plaited down her back, with black ribbon bows at top and end of the braid. Nothing in her quiet, reserved manner gave away the excitement and fear fluttering at her heart. Even her eyes, bright and intelligent, gazed calmly ahead. She carried about her all the poise and restraint that a hundred generations of careful rearing could produce in a gentle Chinese family. Her mother had seen to that.

Of the Burke children, only baby John approached Eling's outward serenity. He stood stolidly by his mother, holding on to her hand. His three brothers, clad in knee-pants suits, high black stockings and black caps, romped in and out of the family group. Twelve-year-old William led them through their antics, particularly when some fourth party was marked for grief. Once he reached out and jerked Eling's pigtail as he raced by behind her. She shook her head fretfully. But when Gordon, intent on the pigtail, bumped into his father, the latter ordered a prompt halt to "all this tom-foolery."

It was an hour and a half's ride to the Whangpoo mouth, where the *Korea* stood, deep in water with her 7,000-ton cargo. The principal item of value in that freight happened to be 538 boxes of opium, the duty from which would enrich the United States Treasury by about $250,000.

Soon was able to go on the ship with the Burkes and his daughter and stay some time, for there was considerable delay in the sailing. The baggage was late coming aboard and the medical inspection dragged on hopelessly, because instead of answering the doctor's calls, passengers were always off making their own inspections of the ship. Finally, at three o'clock—the steamer was due to sail at noon—a steward appeared on deck with a Chinese gong, beating the signal for all visitors to reboard the tender. Eling and her father parted with a simple exchange of good-byes.

The *Korea's* passengers were lined along the promenade deck rails as the little *Victoria* churned off. From both vessels rose shouts and a sprinkling of white handkerchiefs. At that moment, the great ocean ship spoke with a deep, quaking blast. Some of the passengers started, then laughed at their momentary fright. With Eling, the sudden shock of the ship's whistle seemed to go deeper, upsetting the trained balance of her emotions. Burke looked down to see her sobbing softly. It was the first and only time he ever saw her betray her feelings.

A belated lunch was served as the steamer got under way. Afterward, the adult passengers, slightly frayed from the turmoil of the past few hours, retired to their cabins or lolled around on deck and in the lounge. Addie took John to the cabin with her to rest, while Eling and the older boys stayed on deck.

Burke selected a soft chair in the lounge and opened a copy of the *North China Herald* which he had brought aboard with him. The weekly was filled with news of the Russo-Japanese War. The Japanese had just captured Kinchow in a feint on Port Arthur and foreign military experts continued to be confounded by the successes of the little islanders. In an editorial, the British journal heartily defended Nippon's declaration of war, pointing out that "Japan's future existence depended on the arrest of Russia's aggression on Manchuria and Corea." That was what Japan had said too.

Eling being the only Chinese girl in cabin class, and attractive at that, was soon the favourite of the passengers and officers. They spoke to her whenever she came by and she smiled shyly in return, then resumed her poise.

On the third night at sea and the eve of arrival at Kobe, passengers gathered on deck after dinner for dancing. The lounge piano had been taken out to a corner of the promenade, at a point where the deck made a wide insweep, and the five members of the ship's orchestra were seated around it playing waltz strains. A dozen couples were dancing when Burke, Eling, and the older boys came along. The big missionary moved over toward the fringe of onlookers with the intention of spying a moment on the "devil's doings." As he approached with his charges, Eling was spotted by one of the ship's officers. Thinking he would be nice to the Chinese girl, he stepped forward and asked her to dance with him.

"No, thank you, I cannot," Eling answered, shaking her head.

"Well, there's no better time to learn. Come, I'll teach you," the officer persisted.

"No, it is not right for me to dance," she replied firmly.

"Why?"

"Because I am a Christian and Christians do not dance."

Whereupon the young officer beat a hasty retreat.

Addie was running a light fever when the *Korea* put in at Kobe. Neither she nor her husband thought seriously of it. The strain of the departure may have caused a slight relapse of the typhoid, but there was plenty of sea air and rest ahead to have her fit again before the ship reached America. So she came up on deck when the Chinese gong sounded time for the port medical examination. The Japanese were such suspicious people; if she stayed in her bunk they might think she was seriously ill and detain the whole ship. Kobe quarantine officers were famous for that.

The examination went off smoothly in cabin class. Down in steerage, however, a Chinese passenger had died the day before the *Korea* reached Kobe. The ship's physician had diagnosed the case at that time as acute pneumonia, but the Japanese quarantine officer brushed the doctor's opinion aside and, sucking in his breath with a determined hiss, pronounced the death "suspiciously like plague."

Whether it actually was bubonic plague—a psychopathic fear with all Japanese health officers then—was never settled, but that wasn't important to the Nipponese. The ship and everyone aboard must go in quarantine before being allowed to proceed to Yokohama, the next port of call. It was not to be a simple quarantine. All passengers would be taken ashore and immersed in disinfectant at the quarantine station bathhouse, while the *Korea* would be fumigated fore, aft, and amidships. These ceremonies were set for the following day.

In the dining saloon that night, Captain Seabury tried to soothe his passengers' nerves. He pointed out that the Japanese were prone to run their newly got Western knowledge into the ground at times, but that, except for some inconvenience, their methods were harmless. He advised everyone to wear old clothes to the bathhouse, in view of the rather rugged germ-freeing treatment the garments might undergo.

Heeding this advice, the passengers arrived at the bathhouse in the morning smelling strongly of mothballs. They had dug deep in their trunks for dilapidated clothes. Women and men were segregated, in deference to non-Japanese standards, and clothing was gathered up. Individual wooden tubs were filled with steaming medicinal-smelling water and the passengers were told to bathe. Afterward, they were given cotton kimonos and sat around until the longer process of degerming their clothes was done. It made no apparent difference to the Japanese that these clothes were not the "contaminated" ones hanging in the passengers' cabins.

Japanese with disinfectant sprayers were putting the finishing touches on the ship, when the "purified" passengers returned. Three of the fumigators stood out against the sky on the boat deck, where they climbed up the ventilator pipes and sprayed once down each of the crooked openings.

Burke might have enjoyed all this comic-opera diligence more had Addie's condition not grown worse. She came back from the bathhouse ordeal with a high fever and the ship's doctor ordered her to stay in her bunk. The *Korea*, at the same time, was kept in quarantine. On the fourth day Burke, storming within himself at the delay that was keeping Addie in the hot, dirty port, went to the quarantine officer on the ship.

"Why are you being so silly about this thing?" he exploded. "You know there's no need to hold up the ship like this!"

The little Japanese bowed, clenched his teeth, and drew in a polite hiss, "Ah-h-h, so sorry," he said at the end of the intake, smiling and placid, "but new regulation forbid ship go before ten days."

And that was that. Burke went away fuming. Missionaries who had lived among the fluid, normally reasonable Chinese could never appreciate humourless Japanese rule-book logic.

When the ship was released on the tenth day and proceeded to Yokohama, Addie was too weak to get up. Both Burke and the doctor were genuinely alarmed by now and it was decided to take her off the ship and put her in a hospital.

A passenger friend went to the Yokohama General Hospital as soon as the *Korea* docked and made arrangements. He came back with a horse-drawn ambulance and Burke helped carry his wife on a stretcher to the vehicle. After seeing her safely to the hospital, he returned to get the children and baggage off the ship.

The problem of what to do with Eling was a hard one. Soon had entrusted her in his care all the way and he hated to let her continue the trip without him. On the other hand, he didn't want to delay her and there was no way of knowing how long Addie's illness might force him to stay in Yokohama. Eling herself was quite willing to go on alone. She had a plucky spirit. This, plus the fact that there was another Southern Methodist missionary man and wife, good friends of Burke, on the *Korea*, decided the matter. He left Eling in the couple's care.

Burke and his boys spent the first night at the hospital. The next day a missionary friend came from Tokyo and took the children to his home there. Burke remained with Addie. She clung on desperately for more than two weeks, then died on June 30th, a month after her thirty-ninth birthday. She was buried in Yokohama.

26

Welcome to America

THE AFTERNOON the *Korea* sailed from Yokohama, Eling left her lonely cabin to go visit with the missionary family in whose care Burke had left her. They were not in, but the cabin door was open, so she sat down to wait. The missionary and his wife soon came down the passageway. As they approached, the wife spoke out loudly:

"You certainly won't put her in a detention home," she declared. "I'm staying right here with her to see that you don't."

This dual display of female vigour apparently discouraged the officer, for Eling did not go to the detention home. But neither did she go ashore immediately. She stayed on the *Korea* until that ship was ready to sail out again, then she was transferred to another ocean vessel in the harbour, then to a third and a fourth. The missionary family whom Burke had asked to watch her had left as soon as the *Korea's* gangway got in place, bothering only to tell the girl they were going. Miss Lanman alone, anxious as she was to reach her ailing father, stuck by. She went with Eling from ship to ship.

Another fortunate thing for Eling was the presence in San Francisco of Clarence Reid, Burke's first host in China and the missionary who had married her father. He had been stationed at the California port the year before as superintendent of Southern Methodist work among Orientals on the Pacific Coast. Burke had given Eling a letter to him in Yokohama and Miss Lanman made one short trip ashore to deliver it. Reid was distressed to hear of the strait his old friend's daughter was in and telegraphed the mission board at Nashville. The board, in turn, took the case to Washington. And finally, after three weeks of shuttling around in San Francisco harbour, Eling set foot on America.

Soon's daughter was not the only respectable Chinese who drew inhospitable treatment from American officials that summer—though she had more reason to be, with her Portuguese papers. In Portland, Oregon, Chen Chin-taio, education inspector of two South China provinces, who was bringing fifteen students to American colleges, told newspapermen his party had been subjected to "all sorts of humiliating treatment," including answering childish questions in arithmetic ("How many is two apples and two apples?"). If this kind of thing didn't stop, Chen threatened, he would recommend to his viceroy that students in the future be sent to England.

Of course, the activities of Chinese living in the United States could not be calculated to curry much respect for Celestials at that time. While Eling was floating about the harbour, San Francisco's Chinatown was having one of its perennial tong wars. The See Yups were out after the Chinese Educational Society. Among sensational developments was an attempt to poison Fong Ling, a See Yup traitor. His wife, Ah Sow, had served him arsenic soup in a tin bucket, but Fong was too smart to take it. A few days later, another tong, the Hop Sing, joined in the fun and seven Hop Sing men were arrested for tearing the queue off a Suey Sing man's head. And so it went. The fact that the participants in these tong frays were not always representative Chinese could not be expected to impress the average American. No more than could the "American girls" of the China Coast fail to give the average Chinese his general idea of American womanhood.

Burke, all this while, was en route to San Francisco on the steamer *China*, with his four motherless boys. The *China* had called at Yokohama the first week in July, a few days after Addie's death. Burke's wretchedness was lightened somewhat by the presence of Dr. J. W. Cline and his family, who had taken the *China* at Shanghai. Cline and Burke had been old friends and missionmates. Mrs. Cline, the same who had helped outfit Eling in foreign clothes, took charge of baby John. Her own daughter, Mary, was about the same age and the two played together.

Fortunately, the *China's* passengers couldn't see newspapers at sea, else the trip would have been nightmarish. Headlines then were crying, "American Ships at the Mercy of Russian Fleet." Russian raiders had appeared in the Pacific, east of Japan. Shipping circles were tense and insurance rates climbed. A crisis came when the English steamer, *Knight Commander*, was sunk by the Russians. The *Daily Graphic* in London described the sinking as "an outrage of the most gratuitous and barbarous kind."

With the exception of lone voices like that of Jack London, the world was decidedly against the "great Russian bully." Even the *Wesleyan Christian Advocate* went out of its way to suggest that Japan was not the heathen nation Russian would paint her. Said the Southern Methodist organ:

"Russia is trying to represent the present war as a contest between heathenism or Oriental paganism and Christianity; but it is a question whether Japan is not fully as Christian as Russia, if not more so."

"So there!" the *Advocate's* editor might have added.

When the *China* put in at San Francisco on July 25th, Eling was at the wharf with Reid to meet it. She had been on shore three days, but hadn't started for Georgia. Reid had shown her a cable telling of Burke's departure from Yokohama and she had decided to wait. The news of Mrs. Burke's death had hurt, for, like Miss Lanham, Addie was the type of missionary whom people grew to adore. Nevertheless, it was nice to join Burke and the boys again. The minister was glad to have her. She knew how to look after John much better than he did.

As they boarded the train to cross the continent, Burke looked forward to pointing out the sights of America to the Chinese girl. He would lose some of his sorrow in her reactions of wonder and delight. But he was badly disappointed. He had mistakenly judged Eling on the "Oh-lookee-gee-whiz!" basis of American children. The serious little daughter of the East took in everything he showed her without a murmur. He might as well have been trying to entertain a plaster mannequin for all the pleasure he got out of it.

In Macon, a throng of sympathetic friends was at the station to greet the travellers when their train pulled in on the night of August 2nd. It wasn't

exactly a happy home-coming for Burke. Not only had he lost Addie, but his father had died since he'd last been home.

Eling, naturally, was quite a source of interest to Maconites. There was some divergence of opinion about having a Chinese girl enrolled at Wesleyan. The *Macon Telegraph* recorded her arrival in some detail the next morning:

> Miss Eling Soon, the Chinese girl who was detained aboard ship at San Francisco while on her way to Wesleyan college, arrived in Macon at 12.30 this morning in company with Rev. W. B. Burke. Rev. Mr. Burke had been on his way for some time from Shanghai. It will be remembered that Mrs. W. B. Burke died at Yokohama on the trip home. The Chinese girl, when delayed at San Francisco, awaited the arrival of Rev. Mr. Burke.
>
> Miss Soon is the daughter of a Chinese Christian mother and was reared at Shanghai. Her father desired to complete her Christian education in America and qualify her for Christian work among her own people in China.
>
> "As a child she was a product of our own missionary work," said President Guerry of Wesleyan yesterday. "Mr. Burke, our missionary, was glad to have her come to the United States with him on his visit home this summer. He, of course, preferred Wesleyan college for her, where so many of his sisters and nieces graduated."
>
> Rev. Mr. Burke wrote to President Guerry and readily made arrangements for the girl to come as the daughter of a Christian minister and made provisions for her under the rules of the college.
>
> When Rev. Mr. Burke reached San Francisco the Chinese girl was added to his company and she thus came to Wesleyan without traversing the continent alone. The girl is said to be quite a bright one.
>
> "Of course she will not force herself or be forced upon any of the other young ladies as an associate," said President Guerry in speaking further. "They will be free and can conduct themselves as they see fit. I have no misgivings as to her kind and respectful treatment."
>
> Miss Soon is the first Chinese girl to become a member of the student body, so far as President Guerry's information extends, but it is well known that at different times Indian girls have attended Wesleyan.

Eling lived with the Guerrys the first year, as the Colonel had promised, and the family was greatly taken with her. She was just as warmly accepted by the Wesleyan students. There was no need for her to "be forced upon any of the other young ladies." The other young ladies forced themselves upon her instead, and called her "charming" in a college publication. She

began sub-freshman studies the month after her arrival. And on Sunday mornings she marched with the other young ladies down the long hill to Mulberry Street Methodist Church, South—the "Mother of Georgia Methodism." Before the next year was out, she had exchanged her pigtail for the high pompadour hair-do of the day.

Besides doing well in her studies, Eling found time to visit in diplomatic circles in Washington. This was made possible by her uncle, B. C. Wen, who came to the capital in January, 1906, on the Chinese Imperial Educational Commission. Once she was received by President Theodore Roosevelt and remembered to bring up the subject of her treatment by the immigration officials. Roosevelt said he was sorry.

Eling attended Wesleyan five years, graduating there in 1909. By that time her two younger sisters had followed her to Macon—Chungling, to begin regular studies as a freshman, and Mayling, who was only nine years old, to be tutored until she was able to enter Wesleyan in 1912. The following year, after Chungling had graduated, Mayling went to Wellesley College in Massachusetts, where she could be nearer her brother T.V. at Harvard.

An interesting side light on the Soon sisters' Wesleyan days was the presentation on Saturday evening, May 15, 1909, in the college auditorium, of *The Japanese Girl*, an operetta in two acts. Among Miss Fitch's vocal pupils taking the parts were Eling Soon, who played the Japanese emperor, and little Mayling, who was the emperor's attendant. On the backs of the green paper programmes in the audience's hands were printed the Japanese national anthem:

> May our gracious Sovereign reign a thousand years,
> Reign ten thousand, thousand years.
> Reign till the tiny pebble grows into a mighty rock,
> Thick velveted with ancient moss.

27

Addie's Young Friend

ELING'S FIRST SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHER at Mulberry was an attractive young woman of twenty-eight, with dark-auburn hair done up on top of her head. She was introduced to the Chinese girl as Miss Leila Gerdine, a friend of the late Mrs. Burke.

Perhaps it would have been more correct to say Miss Gerdine worshipped the late Mrs. Burke. When Addie and her husband came to Macon in 1895, to spend their first furlough, the beautiful missionary wife taught the girls' Sunday-school class at Mulberry and Leila Gerdine had been a member of it, just as Eling was now. Besides having her for a teacher, Leila saw much of Addie at both the Burke and Gerdine homes, for the two families lived within two blocks of each other on Orange Street and were good friends. Once Addie spent the night with the devoted Gerdine girl, bringing her two baby boys, Gordon and Edward, along to sleep across the foot of the bed.

Altogether, Leila was charmed by Addie's quiet beauty and inspired by the example of her life—a life which seemed so noble in contrast to the dancing and the card playing and the other frivolities of Macon society. Leila was a sophomore at Wesleyan at the time and had been accustomed to joining her friends in these minor sins, but the missionary wife was a reforming influence. One night after a round of gay social parties, the picture of Addie toiling among the heathens suddenly burst out in Leila's developing conscience and she took out pen and paper and wrote Mrs. Burke a note. In it she penitently confessed the vanity of her ways and said she wanted to lead a Christian life of service.

"I feel I must get away from Macon and my old companions if I am really to start a new life," the serious young college girl added. "What shall I do, Miss Addie?"

Addie got the note and had a long talk with her young friend the same day. She made mention of it in her diary.

"A note came from dear Leila today. She was in distress concerning her life. Later I talked with her and advised her to go to Scarritt. I promised to write her every month from China. God has touched this child's heart-strings and I am glad."

Scarritt Bible and Training School (now Scarritt College for Christian Workers at Nashville) was a Southern Methodist institution for young ladies at Kansas City. Leila left Wesleyan and enrolled there in the autumn of 1896, as her missionary patron had suggested. She took the regular two-year Bible study course and stayed an extra year to study nursing. All the while, Addie kept her promise of writing monthly. The letters came on yard-long sheets of Chinese stationery and Leila's schoolmates would cluster around excitedly to listen as she read them. Addie always filled her letters with fascinating scenes and customs of China.

When Leila returned to Macon, she launched into church work, visiting the poor and sick and teaching Sunday school. Her brother, Joe, had just gone to Korea as a missionary and she liked to think of him as representing

the family on the foreign front, while she fought for Christ at home. She also found time to have a kindergarten in her home. She loved children. Then came the shocking news of Addie's death, at the very time Leila was looking eagerly toward the day when she would see her beloved friend and counsellor.

Burke had wandered about aimlessly the first few weeks back in Macon. For some reason, he shaved off his beard. Nothing seemed very interesting. Nothing except his boys. They were all that remained of his Addie. He loved them more than ever. Mother Burke was a great help. She had taken her grieving son and his children under her wing from the moment they reached Macon. The big boys were started in public school, but Burke didn't know what to do with little John, almost three now.

"Why don't you put him in Miss Leila's kindergarten?" Mother Burke suggested one day.

And he did.

Morning and noon he walked down Orange Street hill taking John to the Gerdine home and going for him. This kept up through the winter and spring. Leila felt a deep heartache for the lonely missionary. He was the only man who came to the kindergarten. Mothers or Negro nurses brought and came for the other children. Little John became her favourite.

Burke, on his part, always stopped a few minutes to talk with Miss Leila or her father, but he wasn't conscious of any particular feeling for the auburn-haired young lady.

Then it struck him one June day. He was turning in the Gerdine walk, on his way to get John. Leila was standing on her porch, John in her arms, waiting for him. Suddenly he knew he was in love with her. Why hadn't he thought of it before? He needed a wife and his boys needed a mother. He wouldn't have considered marriage with anyone else—Addie's memory was too sacred. But Miss Leila was different. Somehow he didn't feel guilty about being in love with her. She had loved Addie dearly herself. And she would be good to the children.

Eling began suspecting things that summer when she saw Burke outside the classroom door at Mulberry every Sunday morning. He came there to meet Miss Gerdine and take her into church. After church, he saw her home and sometimes stayed for dinner. He met her at prayer meetings on Wednesday nights also and walked home with her. Early that autumn he proposed.

Leila knew it was coming, of course, but she wasn't prepared. As a young girl, she had stoutly resolved on three negatives so far as marriage was concerned: she would never marry a widower; she would never marry a preacher; and she would never live in a foreign country. Now, all three

turned up at once and the early inhibitions pulled violently. She accepted the ring and returned it the next day in tears. Then she wrote a note accepting again, only to call a friend after she had mailed it and have her ask Burke to return it unopened.

"I returned it to her with love," Burke wrote in his diary, adding, "but I telephoned her tonight and arranged to see her tomorrow night."

Leila kept the ring that night.

The wedding was on October 26, 1905. It was in Mulberry church at six in the evening. Leila had always wanted her wedding at the twilight hour. The ceremony was performed by her uncle, Bishop W. B. Murrah—also Methodist. The bride's sister, Ella, was her only attendant and Burke's brother, Ed, was the best man. The church was crowded, for both families were well known in Macon. When the service was over, the couple got in a carriage and rode to the railway station. Mother Burke came behind in another carriage with Gordon, Edward, and John. William had been entered in a Mississippi boarding school several weeks before. He would not go back to China. But the rest were off.

The family, with its new mother, sailed from San Francisco on November 4th. It was Burke's fifth ocean crossing and Leila's first, but both were equally seasick most of the way.

They reached Yokohama on the twenty-first. Leila and Burke were strangely quiet as they walked with the children to the cemetery where Addie was buried. They had brought along a vase and flowers for the grave. As she stood by the stone slab, thinking of the saintly woman who had given her life so far from home, tears brimmed in Leila's eyes and she swallowed hard. She felt unworthy of filling the place, yet she wanted to believe that, had Addie chosen a successor, it would have been Leila.

The wharf at Shanghai was lined with Burke's foreign and Chinese friends when the ship docked on November 30th. He left his wife and boys in the port the next day and took a launch (China was progressing by degrees—no more foot-boats) to Soochow, where he was to be stationed. A house had been rented for him and his family in the Konghong section of the city and Burke wanted to make sure it was all right before he brought Leila there.

The house was a Chinese one, like the one Burke and Addie had lived in their first year together at Sungkiang. It was comfortably furnished with foreign things and there was a big stove ready for the approaching winter. Burke selected a room he thought Leila would like for hers and bought a can of blue paint (not lacquer this time) to paint the walls. Blue, he knew, was Leila's favourite colour.

Soochow was not a pleasant place at that time for a young woman fresh from America. There was more anti-foreign feeling there than there had

been since the Boxer days. Among other irritants, the foreign devils were building a railroad from Shanghai. To the educated classes, it represented another step in the West's imperialistic designs on China; to the common people, it was disturbing foong-s. Leila had been in Soochow only a few weeks when some tersely worded posters appeared in the city:

> "All foreigners remaining in Soochow this midnight will be beheaded."

There were twenty-five foreign missionaries of various Protestant denominations in Soochow at the time and they all met in Dr. Park's home early in the evening for a night of prayer together. Leila was terrified at first, but as the prayer service went on, some of the faith and courage of the older missionaries supplanted the fear. She felt pity for the blindness of the heathen people, who would persecute those who had come far and sacrificed much to save them. It was as Addie had felt after being spat on and stoned that first year she was in Soochow. Midnight came and went and nothing happened. The missionaries gave thanks. God had answered their prayers.

Leila taught Gordon and Edward the first year, before they were sent to Miss Jewell's Boarding School in Shanghai. In addition, the young missionary wife had her own lessons in Chinese to learn. The teacher engaged for her was named Yao. He was a precise old scholar; without a word of English to his credit. He and Leila used the what-is-this-called system. She would learn the name of every piece of furniture and the fixtures in the living room, then move on to the dining room. Leila had her first experience with Chinese frankness from Yao, who would solemnly announce in the middle of a lesson that he must urinate. A function he accomplished in plain view in the courtyard.

Leila learned something else about the Oriental mind during her first year in Soochow—its imitativeness. It was while she was teaching her cook how to make French fried potatoes. She happened to have a sore foot at the time and was wearing a bedroom slipper on it as she sat at the kitchen table peeling and slicing the potatoes. She had a shoe on the other foot. Next day she came into the kitchen to watch the cook prepare the dish. He was sitting at the table peeling and slicing and he wore only one shoe.

"What is the matter with your foot, da s-voo (cook)?" Leila asked.

"This is the way to prepare the potato dish," he replied soberly.

One trouble with da s-voo was that he'd seen so much of foreigners' unaccountable ways (he'd worked for two other missionary families before coming to the Burkes) that nothing amazed him any more. He carried out every order without question, no matter how silly it might seem. It was this resigned state of mind which ruled da s-voo the night Leila gave her first

dinner party in Soochow. Some missionary friends had been invited and the young wife was anxious to make a good impression. Burke, not forgetting his unhappy affair with the Reid's cook, offered to take charge at the table, but Leila was confident she could manage.

Da s-voo donned his white gown and served (few missionary families had a number-one boy to do this, as did the more pretentious foreign households in China). Everything went off well until time came to put the fruit on the table.

"Koo-tse pa la de-ts laung," Leila told the cook.

Da s-voo didn't murmur. He left the dining room and went upstairs to Burke's clothes closet. Burke and the other missionaries suspected the trouble and had all they could do to keep straight faces. Leila couldn't understand the sudden silence at the table. Then the cook reappeared. Neatly folded over his arm was a pair of Burke's dark-serge trousers. He laid them ceremoniously in the centre of the table.

Koo-tse meant "fruit" all right. But with a different tone inflection, it also meant "trousers." Leila's evening was ruined.

Chinese church congregations were as much a revelation to Leila as they had been to Burke. In the first place, she had to learn to sit on the women's side of the building. When women had begun going to church, the missionaries were forced to concede to the ironclad old Chinese propriety of not mixing sexes in public. Benches on one side of the aisle were for women; those on the other, for men. On communion days, women came down to the altar first, then men.

As she was sitting in the little Konghong chapel her second week in Soochow, listening to her husband preach, Leila was shocked to see a peasant woman stroll in with a hen under her arm. The hen was in a productive mood and after the woman had taken a seat, it proceeded to lay an egg in her lap. The proud fowl took a circuit of the lap and announced its feat in the usual spasm of raucous clucking. Leila looked nervously at Burke, expecting to see him do something drastic. But he kept right on preaching. And no one else seemed to pay any attention to the disturbance. Hardly had the hen calmed itself, when one of the loyal churchgoers sitting on the front row stood up and held out his brass teapot.

"Mr. Burke," he called, "I want to go out a minute and fill my teapot. It's empty."

"Go ahead," Burke said, looking a little irritable this time. Then he resumed his sermon. Again no one paid any attention—except Leila.

On another occasion, when Burke accidentally knocked his Bible off the pulpit table, the whole congregation laughed loud and long—except Leila. Humour in China seemed as inverted as everything else, but it was warm and wholesome humour.

China could be cruel to a new foreign resident and it was to Leila. Her health broke completely after the second year. The mission doctor thought it was malaria and gave her a liberal dose of quinine, knowing no more than she did that she was allergic to the medicine. She rolled out of bed unconscious and great welts came up on her body. A few months later, Burke decided to send her home with the children for a rest. He wanted to get Gordon and Edward to school in America anyway.

Leila stayed a year in Macon, then came back in 1909 with John. She came with renewed determination to beat China this time. That will was bolstered by a supreme happiness the following year, when a daughter was born. Burke was happy too. He'd wanted a girl. She was named Caroline.

28

Queues Fly

BESIDES A DAUGHTER, the year 1910 brought another happy event for Burke—appointment back to his old station, Sungkiang.

Sungkiang was the same two-story, black-roofed city of narrow streets and smelly canals, but it had diminished in political stature. The mushrooming port of Shanghai was fast eclipsing it in that respect. And now that a railroad was being built through from Shanghai to Hangchow, Sungkiang stood faced with the mortifying prospect of becoming little more than an outer suburb of the once obscure fishing village (which Shanghai originally was). Even now at night the lights of the great port cast a pale glow on the horizon north-east of the ancient prefecture city, visible evidence of Shanghai's growing ascendancy.

While Sungkiang had shrunk relatively, the Southern Methodists had expanded. The mission compound measured some twenty-five *mou* (over five acres) and there were two large brick homes on it, with a third going up. Tong's hybrid Ningpo-roof house was gone. The new buildings were foreign, corrugated-iron roofs, for foong-s was no longer a matter of grave concern. Schools in the compound were thriving. Burke's old boys' middle school was in an enlarged Chinese building inside the morth wall. On the east, the mission grounds had bulged across the original boundary street to envelop an acre or so of property, on which a new girls' boarding school, a modern brick building like the new homes, had recently been built. It was called the Susan B. Wilson School, in memory of Bishop Alphaeus Wilson's

wife. There was also a woman's Bible school, the Hayes-Wilkins Bible School. With the arrival of the Burkes, the foreign missionary personnel reached a peak in number. There was another family, the George Loehrs, and four women workers, Mrs. Julia A. Gaither, Miss Alice G. Waters, Miss Sophia Manns and Miss Bess Combs. There also was a Y.M.C.A. couple, Mr. and Mrs. William Stewart, studying the language.

Although the expansion had gone on while Burke was stationed in Shanghai and Soochow, he had the satisfactory feeling of having had a part in it. For when land was to be purchased or buildings put up, he had gone to Sungkiang to supervise it. He still was the best-known foreigner there and could get things done with a minimum of delay. Now he was back in complete charge of the work and he was glad. Sungkiang, after all, was his city. In a way, he felt, he had discovered it.

China's political atmosphere in 1910 had that tinderbox quality which could only augur events of far-reaching proportions. The intrepid empress dowager, Tzŭ Hsi, had died two years before. For fifty-six years—since she was taken into the harem of Emperor Hsien Fêng in 1852 as a concubine of the fourth rank—she had asserted herself, sometimes wisely, sometimes stupidly, but always indomitably. With her death, the Ta Ch'ing (Great Pure) dynasty of the Manchus was wholly decadent, deprived of any vestige of its glories under such mighty monarchs as K'ang Hsi and Ch'ien Lung. Reform forces had seized advantage of the enfeebled throne to push forward their gains (in 1906, the dowager had reluctantly signed an edict preparing for constitutional government). Provincial assemblies met in 1909 and now, in 1910, a provisional national assembly convened. But this progress toward democracy was too slow for China's countless revolutionary societies, which smouldered behind the doors of their secret meeting rooms throughout the country.

The merchants and peasants in Sungkiang teahouses sensed the tension in the air and discussed it in subdued tones. They were largely sympathetic with the idea of revolution. Not from the idealistic viewpoints of the little minority of radical students in China. Constitutional theory meant nothing to the masses. But the masses did know the existing Imperial régime was overburdensome with taxes. That was sufficient and real enough to warrant its overthrow. The right to overthrow unjust rulers had traditionally been the prerogative of Middle Kingdomers.

Burke had scarcely time to strike up a warm acquaintance with the new Leu magistrate (the old portly chap had been superseded some years before) when, in October, 1911, the revolution came. There was a dramatic prematureness about the outbreak. Of course, there had been a prelude in the insurrection which began in Szechwan Province earlier that year over a

railway fund dispute. But the incident which set off the main performance was the explosion of a bomb in a Chinese house in the Russian quarter of Hankow. This was on October 9th. Raking around in the wreckage, police found more bombs, unexploded. They also found a huge supply of revolutionary flags and badges, and documents revealing that the outbreak was not scheduled to take place until the following April.

Thinking to nip the matter there and then, Viceroy Jui Cheng in Wuchang, across the Yangtze from Hankow, spent October 10th executing and otherwise incapacitating radicals. The revolutionists accepted the early challenge, however, and hastily marshalled their forces. Fires broke out in Wuchang that night and Imperial troops mutinied. The leading mutineer, though none too enthusiastic about it, was the viceroy's own military aide, Li Yuan-hung, who casually informed Jui that he was sorry, but the revolutionists had elected him their general. Li helped his old patron escape, then proclaimed his intention of overthrowing the Manchus. Within a few days, the Wuhan cities (Wuchang, Hankow, and Hanyang) were in the hands of the People's Army.

In a panic over the initial successes of the insurgents, the throne was driven to the humiliating resource of recalling Yuan Shih-kai, the former northern military chieftain whom it had forced into retirement three years earlier. A cabinet government was formed and Yuan made premier. At the same time, Li Yuan-hung, despite reverses in late October, proclaimed the establishment of a republic in Wuchang, with himself as president. The fever of revolt was now spreading rapidly, picked up by secret societies all over the land.

Burke awoke on the morning of November 3rd to find Sungkiang in a dither. The Leu magistrate and all the other Manchu-appointed officials, military and civil, had fled during the night. The local Tungmenghui leader, General Niu Yung-chien, had assumed command of the Chinese garrison forces. In Shanghai, the revolutionists had accomplished a similar coup, hardly more bloody. The Imperialists let go with some cannon, but judging from the few wooden shells which fell in the German Concession, the fighting wasn't particularly dangerous.

Following this shameless sell-out of Imperial authority in the rich Yangtze mouth region, the Tungmenghui set up its own republic (independent of Li Yuan-hung's Wuchang affair) under the adroit management of the veteran diplomat, Wu Ting-fang. Then a campaign was launched to capture Nanking. But the commader there, General Chang Hsün, was of a sterner breed than most Imperialists. Old-fashioned and illiterate soldier that he was, he fought savagely for three weeks before he was compelled to withdraw northward on December 1st. The Old Tiger (as Chang Hsün was called) was not gone for good, however.

China was now successfully split into three camps. There were republics at Wuchang and Nanking and the throne at Peking, the latter virtually under the dictatorship of Yuan Shih-kai. Fighting gave way at this point to more typically Chinese talk feasts. In the midst of the talking, though, the elusive Tungmenghui hero, Sun Yat-sen, arrived on the scene. He reached Shanghai on Christmas Eve. He'd been in the western United States, en route to China, when the revolution broke out in October. He immediately turned around and started on the longer eastward route via New York, London, Paris, and Singapore—explaining that he had to collect money for the new republic. Sun was inaugurated provisional president of the Nanking junta on January 1, 1912, taking his oath at the tomb of Hung Wu, founder of the Ming dynasty.

After a bit more fighting between the Imperialists and revolutionists north of Hankow, Yuan Shih-kai engineered a non-resistance ultimatum to the throne from the forty-six Imperial commanders in the field. This naturally forced the throne's abdication. This took place on February 12th, bringing the Manchus to a final and ignominious end in China after two hundred and sixty-eight years of rule.

The abdication edict delegated Yuan (he had more or less dictated it) to establish a Chinese republic. This turn of events brought frowns from the other republics at Wuchang and Nanking, but they could do little about it. The strength of Yuan's position (the army commanders' defection applied only to the Manchu throne, not their military patron, Yuan) was too great. Sun Yat-sen "magnanimously" resigned his provisional presidency in favour of Yuan and Li Yuan-hung was named vice-president. Sun was always left out in the cold by the practical politicians of China.

The Nanking group first held out for a southern capital (Nanking), but Yuan was able, with the help of a spectacular "mutiny" of his troops in Peking, to prove that he must remain in the north to "preserve order." He was inaugurated in the northern capital on March 10th, taking his oath under the new five-stripe flag of the republic—one stripe for each of the races in the old empire (Chinese, Manchu, Mongol, Tibetan, and Moslem).

In Sungkiang, the transition of authority had been in no way so hectic and confused as it was on the national stage. Under the supervision of General Niu, a new local government quickly took shape. The prefecture was abolished and a single magistrate took office in place of the two magistrates of the Imperial régime. The ceremonious trappings of the old era were discarded too. The new magistrate rode about in a plain sedan chair without special dress and with no bright-coated lictors prancing around him. *Vive la démocratie!*

The favourite pastime of the revolutionists during the first few months of

control in Sungkiang—as in other places in China—was queue cutting. And here one found a curious phenomenon. The queue, originally imposed on the Chinese by their Manchu conquerors as a badge of subjugation, had grown into a cherished institution. It was a revealing example of the habit-mindedness of the race. There was no apparent attempt or desire to recall that before the Manchus came in 1644, Chinese wore long hair and took such pride in its glossy blackness that they called themselves the "black-haired people." Scholars and peasants alike objected to cutting off their pigtails simply because it wasn't customary. It wasn't proper to depart from ancestral ways.

But the revolutionists wanted nothing of the old order hanging around. Besides, they said, queues were unsanitary. Officers from the magistrate's yamen prowled through the streets and market places with great shears or knives, slashing pigtails indiscriminately. The magistrate himself came out in his chair once a day to preside over these street shearings, lending them what dignity he could. Which wasn't much, so far as the average queue-loving Chinese citizen was concerned. Many a poor innocent farmer, who had never heard of the revolution, found himself rudely nabbed and clipped as he came to market. This public disgrace sometimes sent a man running off, sobbing with mortification. Men tried winding up their queues and hiding them under their hats, but the shearers always took off hats the first thing.

Burke's native preacher in Sungkiang at the time, a conservative old fellow named Hyui, was so distracted at the prospect of meeting a shearer in the street that he asked the missionary to cut off his queue for him.

"It will save my mien koong (face) to have you do it," the troubled man pleaded.

Burke took out his sharp pocket knife—he'd never lost his old aptitude for whittling—and solemnly disengaged the long braid. Then he wrapped the hair up in a sheet of red paper and gave it to the preacher. Hyui took the package tenderly, thanking the missionary again and again.

In May, 1912, another sabbatical rolled around for Burke and he prepared to take Leila, John, and little Caroline to America. While the family was in Shanghai, the day before sailing, Soon and Eling called. It was the first time Burke had seen them since the revolution. Both had been thick in political activity. Eling—now a pretty young lady of twenty-two—was Sun Yat-sen's secretary and her father was one of the Cantonese idol's chief confidants. Sun had made Soon's home (moved from Hongkew to the French Concession) his own from the moment he arrived in Shanghai. As a favour, Burke was asked to take a few small presents to Chungling and Mayling at Wesleyan. He was glad to do it, of course.

Tragedy was waiting for the missionary on this furlough, as on the last.

This time it didn't strike on the way home, but held off until the family was happily settled in Macon, reunited with the three older sons. It held off until only a week before Christmas. Then, even while the presents were being wrapped and laid away, Caroline died of diphtheria. God truly worked in mysterious ways. But Burke's faith held strong.

29

A Friend Passes On

AMONG THE INCIDENTS prior to Burke's return to China in 1913 were the Wesleyan commencement exercises. The missionary attended them to see his old friend's second daughter, Chungling, graduate. The trip back to the Orient with Leila and John began shortly afterward.

If Burke had thought the Chinese would have their new republic greased and working by the time he got back, he was disappointed. Shanghai was in a turmoil that July. The port was the headquarters of Sun Yat-sen's counter-revolution against Yuan Shih-kai. And the most feverish spot in the city was the building on Kiukiang Road where Sun had his private office. Charlie Soon was in charge there. Burke wanted to call by to see him and tell him about having seen his daughter graduate, but Cline, the missionary friend, advised against it. Soon was too busy these days to see anyone.

"I went over there last spring, long before the fighting started, to try and get Dr. Sun to speak to the school," recalled Cline, who then was president of the mission's Soochow University. "First I met Soon's private rickshaw coolie at the street door. He was the outer bodyguard. If he hadn't recognized me, I would have got no further. After him came another bodyguard, posted at the stairway. On the second floor, a secretary stopped me outside a private office, then he went in and came out with Eling. Eling was as far as I got. Soon and Sun were having an important conference with party leaders inside. But Eling was as nice as she could be and after learning what I wanted, she said she would arrange it, and she did. A mighty smart and efficient young lady, that Eling. She's going to get somewhere in this world."

Impressed by Cline's story, Burke scratched out a chit to Soon, instead of trying to see him. Then he took the train to Sungkiang with his family. No more houseboat travelling in this part of China.

Sun's counter-revolution resulted from his and his Tungmenghui associates' under-estimation of Yuan Shih-kai's ambitions and resourcefulness. One

reason the Tungmenghui people at Nanking had acquiesced so readily to Yuan's assumption of the presidency in 1912 was that they believed the northern militarist could be controlled by the dominant political party in the Cabinet and the legislature—just as in other democratic countries. With this in view, the Tungmenghui had transformed itself from a secret revolutionary society to a political party after the American model. The new party was called the Kuomintang (variously translated "People's party" or "Nationalist party") and proceeded to gain a majority in the Cabinet and Parliament. Kuomintang control also existed in many of the provinces, where local revolutionary heroes (most of them old Tungmenghui men like General Niu) held on to the power they had seized.

At this point, Yuan began unmasking, cautiously at first. He started his play by removing some of the revolutionary heroes in the provinces and substituting his own military men. He operated by two favourite Oriental methods—bribery and assassination. The latter brought him more or less out in the open when Sung Chiao-jen, the Kuomintang organizer, was shot and killed in Shanghai in March, 1913. Sung was boarding a midnight train for Peking, where he was expecting to become premier and wrest the power away from the ambitious Yuan.

On top of this suspicious-looking assassination came Yuan's negotiation of a hundred-million-dollar foreign loan in April without consulting the Kuomintang-majority Parliament. And finally, in July, Yuan boldly and openly tried to replace the local revolutionary governor of Kiangsi Province, Li Lieh-chun. Li objected and three other provincial heroes—fearing the same fate if Li should be ousted—joined him. Whereupon Sun Yat-sen proclaimed that "Yuan must be punished by force" and the counter-revolution was on in the Lower Yangtze Valley.

The trouble with Sun was that he was not realist enough to gauge the spirit of the people. He expected them to rise up and fight for his visionary principles as they had in 1911. He didn't realize that the people's sentiments in 1911 were directed against the Manchus rather than in favour of his idealistic republican schemes. And now that the Manchus were gone, the people wanted peace and order established. Peking was far away and they didn't care whether one Chinese political factor or the other ruled there. Aside from some radical students and the Kuomintang, there was no enthusiasm for his resumption of hostilities in 1913.

The merchant guilds of Sungkiang were especially opposed to the idea of fighting, because Sungkiang was likely to be one of the main battle areas. General Niu kept a large body of troops quartered there with the apparent intention of waiting for Yuan's northern armies to come down and fight. Deciding to influence this strategy, the merchant guilds looked about for

the necessary inducement. The least controversial source was the public orphanage, so $20,000 was transferred from its account to Niu's and the general obligingly led his soldiers to fight for Sun's ideals at Lunghwa, twenty miles away.

Niu was defeated, as were the other "punish Yuan" forces, and the counter-revolution expired weakly. Nanking was the principal sufferer—as it always was and always would be. Savage, pigtailed Chang Hsün (the Old Tiger, still sentimentally loyal to the deposed Manchus, refused to discard his queue) captured the city in Yuan's behalf and allowed his troops to indulge in an orgy of looting, burning, and raping. After thus taking full revenge for his defeat by the revolutionists in 1911, Chang went back north again, leaving Yuan's lieutenant, Fêng Kuo-chang, in Nanking as governor of Kiangsu.

Sun Yat-sen, meanwhile, hurried to Japan. Charlie Soon and his family went with him. While the Soons were temporarily exiled in that country, living under an assumed name, Eling married H. H. (Hsiang-hsi) Kung, an Oberlin College graduate who was secretary of the Chinese Y.M.C.A. at Tokyo. She had first met him on a visit to New York City, while she was a student at Wesleyan. The Kungs were a wealthy Shansi banking family, lineal descendants of Confucius—H. H. himself being the seventy-fifth in line. It was the second marriage for the young Y man. His first wife (chosen for him in an old-fashioned child-betrothal match) had died.

When Soon and his idol, Sun, returned to Shanghai in 1915, Chungling had taken Eling's place as the revolutionist's secretary. This pleased the Southern Methodist Soons well enough until their second daughter and Sun unexpectedly eloped to Japan one day. Chungling was only twenty and the Cantonese, fifty. Worse than that, Sun had a wife his own age and three children by her. True, he hadn't seen much of her in his years of flitting about the world for the revolution, yet that didn't make his marriage to Chungling an entirely justified act. Chungling could be forgiven. She was young and devoutly stocked with political ideals. Sun was a natural hero to her. But Soon and his wife never got over it.

Some time after this, Soon's boyhood benefactor, General Julian S. Carr, visited Shanghai on a pleasure trip and the two came to Sungkiang to spend a day with Burke. The little Chinese looked ill. He was suffering from the stomach cancer which was soon to be fatal to him. Only once did he mention Chungling's affair:

"Bill, I was never so hurt in my life. My own daughter and my best friend."

Charles Jones Soon—stowaway, missionary, flourmiller, and revolutionist—a fabulous character in retrospect—died on May 3, 1918, little realizing that his children and their mates one day would rule China.

30

Lok Comes to Roost

SUNGKIANG CREPT SOMEWHAT out of its ancient ways during the first years of the Republic. A foreign newcomer might not have noticed it. The streets and houses retained their dirty, ageless appearance. But Burke could see it. Western felt hats started cropping up on men's heads and tea was served in cheap foreign drinking glasses instead of dainty porcelain cups. Occasionally, a local resident would appear in Western clothes, outlandishly tailored by natives, with trousers of black satin and a frock coat touching the ankles. It was a hasty, awkward seizure of new culture, but fortunately it didn't go very far.

The foreign hats gave Burke a bit of trouble at first. He always had sanctioned the wearing of the black native skullcaps in church, because Chinese customarily wore them in their homes and at their own temple ceremonies. But when men began coming to church in wide-brimmed Stetson models, he balked.

"You cannot wear foreign hats in church," the missionary had told the first offender.

"But I wore a hat last Sunday and you said nothing," the man argued.

"That was a Chinese cap. That was different," replied Burke.

"But head covering is head covering, is it not?" the Chinese persisted logically.

"I know, but in America we don't wear such hats in church, so the same should apply in China," Burke pointed out.

"Do men wear skullcaps in church in America?" the man then asked, off on a new tack.

"No, they wear nothing on their heads in church, but that has nothing to do with it. It just is not proper to wear that kind of hat in church," Burke concluded with a certain note of finality.

The man took off the hat and subsided.

The hats and tea glasses were not a direct result of the political upheaval of 1911. They were simply the consequence of that inevitable osmosis which takes place between any two juxtaposed cultures. They would have come, revolution or no revolution, once the new railroad was built. The railroad had picked Sungkiang out of the interior of China and set it down in Shanghai's backyard.

Prime evidence that the new Republic was not much responsible for

changes was the total disregard of its social edicts. The Gregorian calendar was instituted, but Sungkiangites kept right on figuring by the moon; Christmas and January 1st were proclaimed popular holidays, but Sungkiangites still prepared the god of wealth's feast on the fourth night of the First Moon. And, after the little flurry of queue cutting, the republicans became too busy fighting among themselves to bother enforcing these matters.

No, changes were in progress, but they hadn't penetrated very deeply under China's four-thousand-year hull and they weren't to be hurried by legislation. The individualistic Chinese adapts himself to modern ways with surprising speed when he wants to (witness China's crowded trains), but he doesn't like being prodded into anything. In contrast to the Japanese, Chinese seem to possess minds of their own.

It was about this time that Burke had a head-on collision with Chinese superstitions of the dead—these superstitions being among the deeper, unchanged qualities of Sungkiang, the Republic notwithstanding.

The incident was brought about by the death of Yui Sz-tso's wife. Yui was a church member and a teacher in the mission boys' school, so Burke felt no doubts that the man would see that his wife was given a proper Christian funeral. Under this impression, the missionary went to Yui's house for the funeral feast. While eating, however, he began hearing the unmistakable sounds of reed horns and Taoist incantations coming from the rear of the residence. On being questioned, Yui admitted that native funeral rites were in progress. Whereupon Burke rose from the table.

"If that is the kind of Christian you are, I will have to leave," he said and left the house.

Late that night, Yui came knocking at Burke's door. He was most penitent. He hadn't wanted the heathen service, he explained, but his family forced him to submit to *lau-kwe-kyui* (old custom). Now he was sorry he had been weak, and if Boo Sien-sang (literally, "Teacher Burke," but usually translated "Mr. Burke") would accompany him home, he would prove his sincerity.

Yui led the way with his lantern (electric street lights finally came to Sungkiang a year or two later) and on reaching his home, went directly back to the room where the dead wife was. The body lay in its heavy wooden coffin, which was sealed and resting in the centre of the room. Ceremonial candles were burning around it and near by was the wife's "spirit tablet"—a wooden framed piece of silk inscribed with her name. The spirit tablet would take its place among the others in the family's ancestral hall, where worship ceremonies were regularly held. (Chinese believed a person possessed three spirits. One which stayed with the body in

the grave, a second which inhabited the spirit tablet, and a third which went to heaven, hell or purgatory, wherever it was destined.)

As Yui and the missionary entered the room, the only other person there was Yui's young brother, a lad about sixteen. Disregarding him, Yui stepped up to the spirit tablet and tore it from its fastening, saying at the same time:

"Boo Sien-sang, I show you in this manner what kind of Christian I am. I am going to give this worthless scrap of silk and wood to you to throw away."

If one of the wife's spirits *was* in the tablet, it evidently leaped out and into the brother, for that young man stared in horror at Yui's profane conduct, then let loose a yell for help. Not wishing to cause a scene in the home at that late hour, Yui picked up his lantern and, tucking the tablet under his arm, led Burke into the street and toward the mission compound. But the boy found himself a lantern and caught up with the men. Shouting that he was going to tell the dead wife's family (who lived on the route to the mission), he tried to run past the two.

Burke had had about enough of this pestilence, though, so he reached out in the narrow street and grabbed the youth by the shoulder. Then he lifted the boy's lantern and blew out the light, leaving him almost helpless in the black, ill-paved thoroughfare. The boy could not keep up with the fast-pacing missionary and Yui—much less get ahead of them. The spirit tablet reached the mission compound without more trouble and was added to Burke's endless collection of trinkets, knick-knacks, and other souvenirs. He never threw anything away.

Lok reappeared on the Sungkiang scene in these early republican years. Burke had seen him only twice since the day he disguised himself as a peasant to come and announce he was going to Japan. Lok had written numbers of times, though. The last letter came in September, 1915, informing the missionary that Lok was returning to private life in Sungkiang. He was discouraged with the political situation, he said, and especially with Yuan Shih-kai.

President Yuan's ambitious manœuvrings, it might be mentioned, had swung straight in the Imperial direction as soon as Sun's counter-revolution collapsed. He had outlawed the Kuomintang, dissolved Parliament, and put China under his military dictatorship. Then, in 1915, he began inspiring certain spokesmen to suggest and then beg him to reinstate throne rule. In respect to existing "democracy," Yuan decided to put the question to a public vote that autumn. Meanwhile, he flooded the country with propaganda to cushion its jolt back into monarchy.

Burke learned from the Lok family which train the scholar would come on and went to the station to meet him. Lok arrived bringing his wife and

three children—a girl and two boys. Ironically enough, the train he had taken was one of Yuan's propaganda devices, decked on both sides with huge photographs of the president and posters inscribed with glowing praises of his imperial timber.

"Do you know this man?" Burke asked, chuckling and pointing to one of the pictures.

"No, no," Lok laughed, wagging an open hand in front of his face. "He is known only to the gods, from whom he descended."

Lok was heavier than when he had left for Japan. He was forty-six now. His pigtail was gone, of course, and he wore a pair of Japanese horn-rimmed spectacles. Except for these, there was nothing to give him away as the Japanophile he had been after the 1894–1895 war. And he definitely could no longer be classed in that category. He had been cured by Nippon's recently unmasked intentions toward China's independence.

On returning from Japan after the Boxer year, Lok had started teaching school. There was an increasing demand for foreign-trained teachers once the empress dowager had been beaten into the conviction that the new learning was desirable. And this trend was more marked, naturally, after 1906, when the old classical examinations were abolished and a new educational system, modelled after the Japanese (which in turn came from America), was set up. When the revolution broke out, Lok was principal of a large middle school at Nanking. Being identified with the radicals, he was given a magistracy under the Republic and appointed to Kauzung (local dialect spelling), near Nanking.

All went well until the fire-breathing reactionary, Chang Hsün, roared into Nanking in the counter-revolution. Not content with purging extreme radicals, the Old Tiger decided it would be pleasant to bring back the Manchu days in full colour. So he ordered all officials in his domain, which included Lok, to come kowtow before him and start growing their queues back. This huffed the Sungkiang scholar and he resigned.

The following year, because of Lok's knowledge of Japanese, the Peking government deputized him to accompany a Chinese educational mission of fifteen thousand students to Japan as financial supervisor. He kept an office in Tokyo and the students were enrolled in schools throughout Japan. Each student was allowed fifty-two dollars a month and hospital expenses.

It is interesting to observe that, even while this cultural exchange was going on between the two countries, Japanese militarists were preparing to deliver their notorious Twenty-one Demands on China. Japan appears to possess a genius for the sheep's-clothing act. The demands, devised to make China a Japanese colony stocked with Japan-owned resources and army, were presented to President Yuan Shih-kai early in 1915 and acceptance of

a slightly modified version was forced from Peking on May 8th—thereafter known in China as National Humiliation Day. Students scurried back to China in protest and Lok, disgusted with the turn of events abroad, as well as with Yuan's personal ambitions at home, quit public life. He had spent too many of his formative years with the classics to find much satisfaction in modern power politics.

Back in the relative quiet of Sungkiang, he was able to revert to the old scholarly pleasures he had left, but of which he could never rid his system. He became a polished old-type gentleman again, living bountifully off the family rice lands. He meditated on the *Analects* by the pond in his rock garden and he met other scholars at poetry teas—where all sat for hours reciting prepared verses or composing on the spot. One of his favourite haunts was the little balcony overlooking the main courtyard of the S Miau, the Buddhist temple of S Siang-kong (whose cracked head had never been repaired). Here in the cool of an early autumn evening the scholars sang ancient classical odes. This was life as he wanted it. Let the world go asunder.

Burke and Leila were invited to eat a meal at the Lok home a few weeks after the scholar's return—the Chinese had learned to invite wives to functions by this time. At the end of the meal, Leila stayed to talk with Lok's wife, while the two men retired to the little pavilion atop the rocks. It was during the time of the voting on whether China should return to a monarchy and Lok had a copy of the ballots which had been used in the referendum at Nanking (specially chosen electors went to the provincial capitals to do this voting). He showed it to the missionary. It was foolproof. There was a single square to mark in and it was after the words, "I vote for a monarchy."

"You see why I have no confidence in that man, Yuan," Lok commented.

Lok, however, had thoughts on his mind that day more serious than Chinese politics. He apparently had been devoting a moment or two to religious matters during his new-found philosophical time.

"I would like very much to understand more of this religion which is capable of gripping a man of your will so strongly," he began, "yet I find its writings so distasteful that I cannot cultivate them."

"What do you mean?" Burke asked.

"This Bible," Lok explained. "I read some of it in English, you remember, when you were teaching our class, but I must admit now that I could understand nothing of it in that language. Since then I have many times tried reading from the Chinese translation. But always I am disappointed. The style is no good. It is too simple and vulgar. Though I am not a Buddhist I can enjoy the beauty of the form in which its poetical prayers are written. And I can also appreciate the writings of Lao-tse, though I cannot subscribe to the degeneracy of Taoism. But to read the Christian Bible is impossible.

Tell me, why was it translated into the common language instead of the vung li?"

It was useless explaining that the classical vung li was out of reach of the vast majority of Chinese; or that a clear, literal translation was not possible in that archaic, allusion-filled language. Old Chinese scholars had no patience with literalness or clarity. They wanted pure style, the vaguer the meaning the better. The acme of their art was the ability to draw an ideograph combination never seen before and the meaning of which could be taken a half-dozen ways. When a scholar came upon such a character in his readings, he would sigh ecstatically and lick his chops with real sensual satisfaction. Burke knew all these things and found it hard to answer Lok.

"It is not the style of the Bible which makes for understanding Christianity," he finally said speaking slowly and gazing into the lotus pond. "The important thing is the feeling within a man's heart. He must first be conscious of his innate sinfulness and his inability to liye a righteous life in his own power. He must feel the need for God's help. Then fine writing, the arts, and everything mean nothing and he is willing to cast all aside for the spiritual peace Christ alone can give."

Lok studied the words, nodding his head. Burke's belief in the total depravity of man's nature and in the need for outside, or divine, guidance to live in accordance with right principles was difficult to grasp. It was quite contrary to his own Confucian philosophy, which credited man with self-contained powers of regeneration. Man was innately good, not hopelessly sinful.

"I cannot feel that I am a sinner at heart," the scholar rejoined after some thought. "I make many wrong steps, I admit, but I know they are wrong and can right them next time. That I can and do do within myself. I feel no need for guidance other than my own reason."

"Then you cannot understand Christianity. You have not felt the need for it. That must come first."

"Am I thereby lost to the heaven promised to those who believe in Christianity?"

Burke's gaze wandered to the little stone bridge. Then he answered quietly:

"That I cannot be judge of, my good friend. I am only a man with earthly knowledge."

He made no attempt to press Lok toward Christianity. Burke was the sort of minister who believed a person was saved when the time came for him to be saved. Not before. And too much forcing of a man of Lok's intelligence might drive him away. He was no ignorant peasant who could be frightened into anything by prediction of consequences like Taoist hell halls.

As both a graduate scholar of the old régime and a retired official of the Republic, Lok was immediately established in the top bracket of Sungkiang

society. Nor did he spend all his time in literary pursuits. He took advantage of his position to participate in local civic matters. He joined relief and welfare organizations and sat on the magistrate's advisory councils. His disillusions in wider fields of public service had by no means extinguished his social spirit. He may have been somewhat more subdued, but he was still the person who had rebelled against the empress dowager's blind reaction in 1898.

Burke's relations with the local gentry improved considerably with Lok's return to Sungkiang. The scholar saw to it that his missionary friend was invited to public gatherings and consulted on civic projects. Lok argued, and successfully, that here was a foreigner who had dedicated his life to the service of the Chinese; therefore, why should he be made to work alone as a missionary, rather than as part of the city community, co-operating and being co-operated with?

Lok's first large accomplishment in this respect was having the Sungkiang Public Orphanage trustees, of whom he was one, elect Burke superintendent of the institution.

"We want you to take it not as a part of your regular mission work," Lok said, when he called to ask the Georgian to accept the nomination, "but as it is, an independent public institution, supported by Chinese donations.

"An orphanage certainly deserves the good management which a conscientious foreigner like yourself can give. I am sorry that I must admit it, but Chinese are not strictly honest in matters like these, as you well know. Where a Chinese handles public funds, there will be squeeze. It is customary and to be expected. With you in charge, it will be different. There will be greater public confidence and the institution will prosper. You will allow no such deplorable situation, for example, as that in which orphans' money was used to bribe soldiers to leave the city."

There was nothing Burke could do but accept.

31

War, Heresy, and Students

THE YEARS OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR were full ones for Burke. Besides the public orphanage, he was shouldered with a new mission institution—a young men's Bible school. It was an adjunct of the mission's university at Soochow and was designed to train students to fill the rapidly multiplying pastorates in the Southern Methodists' Lower Yangtze domains.

Much of the mission expansion was around Sungkiang, along the canal circuits Burke had pioneered a quarter of a century before. The former prefecture capital was no more simply a part of the Shanghai mission district. It was the centre of a full-fledged district of its own, alongside the Shanghai and Soochow districts. The compound which had been started by Burke on the little plot of Taiping rubble now wore the aspects of a large institutional plant, with its church, four foreign mission homes, girls' and boys' schools, and Bible schools. The mission personnel had changed again somewhat. The Loehrs had been replaced by the Reverend Lorenza D. Patterson and his family, and there was a new mission language student, the Reverend Sidney Anderson. There were changes too among the single women missionaries, including Miss Nettie Peacock, who was fresh from Burke's native home, Macon.

There was new happiness for the Georgian in his home too. Another baby had arrived in the summer of 1915, Leila's second child and Burke's fifth son. He was named James. John, meantime, was a strapping boy studying at the Shanghai American School. He came home on week ends, usually bringing school friends with him. Sometimes the boys rented an open boat and went sculling on the canals. John was an expert with the Chinese fishtail oar.

Despite the joys of work and home, Burke's mind was not altogether easy these years. The war was far from Sungkiang (if one didn't count Japan's bouts with Germany in Shantung), but his three grown sons were in it. With America's entrance, they had volunteered, Edward in the navy and Gordon and William in the army. The latter two were in the first A.E.F. contingents shipped off to France.

Another and closer war, however, was threatening to upset any tranquillity Burke might have. It was breaking out within the mission itself. Not among Southern Methodists alone, but in all Protestant missions. It was the echo of that violent dissension which had been going on in home churches since the turn of the century—the dispute over higher criticism. It was late reaching the mission fields, because they were so distant and because missionaries were naturally more uniformly conservative and slower to react to changes. But now it had come and the liberals and the fundamentalists began raging as they did in America. The temper of the fundamentalists was neatly concentrated in this comment published in a missionary journal of the day:

> "Higher criticism is about the wickedest flank movement on the gospel the Devil has ever done!"

Whether the metaphor was inspired by news from the Western Front is difficult to prove, though reasonable to conjecture upon.

The issues at stake in this church war were the so-called fundamentals of the Bible—matters like creation, miracles, the virgin birth, and the literal resurrection of Christ. The advances of science, particularly the establishment of evolution, had demanded a new interpretation on these things and the liberals were willing to attempt it. But the fundamentalists stood rigid or drew deeper into shells of bigotry. For them, the Bible must be accepted literally and in its entirety as the revealed truth of God. So there was an impasse.

The fundamentalist standard-bearer in the Southern Methodist mission in China was a law professor at Soochow University. This man had got his law early (and through a little-known correspondence school) and his religion late (past forty), a situation which apparently can breed—in his case at least—religious fanaticism. Some features of this exhibited themselves in his treatment of students. Besides compelling them to attend Sunday school, church, and Epworth League, he made minute investigations of their religious lives. He had reports of these inquiries published in the mission's records. This is a typical one:

> "Students now church members, 8; students who have not yet joined the church, but have a consciousness of sin and of need of a saviour and who believe in Christ, 52; students who have a consciousness of sin, but have no plan for being saved and want instruction, 8; students who have a consciousness of sin, but have other plans than Christianity, 26; students who have no consciousness of sin, 6; students who believe they have no sin, 7; students who have no answer, 12."

Dr. Gallup might have thought of another variation.

The occasion for the Southern Methodist law professor's break with the more normal mission members was a feast. And the quarrel was not strictly one of higher criticism.

It came during a period of increasing co-operation between government school officials and missionaries in Soochow. The possibility of some joint educational programme seemed likely and a feast was proposed to talk it over. Representatives of both sides met to plan the feast and all went smoothly until the question of wine came up. One of the Chinese representatives matter-of-factly suggested a certain brand and asked the missionaries if they had any other preference. The law professor was among the mission representatives.

"We will have no wine of any sort," he snapped.

The perplexed Chinese representatives pointed out that a feast without wine was no feast. But the professor merely tightened his lips. Then the Chinese proposed simply that they have their wine and the missionaries

abstain. The two other missionary representatives were inclined to approve this compromise, but not the law professor.

"We will not take part in any feast where one drop of wine is served," he dictated.

He was so rude and stern about it that the Chinese politely withdrew from the discussion. The feast was forgotten and educational co-operation set back several years.

Once he'd thrown the first wrench, the professor began disrupting the mission in earnest. He sat down and wrote a form letter to each member of the mission board at Nashville and to the lay leaders of the home church:

> DEAR FRIEND:
>
> You have doubtless already learned to some degree of the distressing conditions that obtain on the mission field with reference to destructive criticism. I have, as fully as I could, both talked with Dr. Rawlings [head of the mission board] and Bishop Lambuth [bishop in charge of the China mission], and written to them and to lay friends in the United States concerning the serious situation as I have seen it in our mission during the eight years that I have been a member of it in China.

Having planted these little seeds, he and like-minded persons in other Protestant missions banded together into the Bible Union of China. This organization held its first meeting on Kuling, a summer mountain resort up the Yangtze, and set forth its aims in the following manifesto:

> We, the undersigned, are constrained to band ourselves together as an association to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints. This faith we hold to have been revealed in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, whose integrity and authority as the inspired Word of God we most fully accept. The fundamental doctrines of this faith we hold to be set forth in the Apostles' Creed, accepted according to its original and obvious meaning.
>
> We note with anxiety the divisive character of much of the recent teaching in certain theological seminaries of the West. We feel that the state of both the Christian and non-Christian world demands unity of purpose and steadfastness of effort in preaching and teaching the fundamental and saving truths revealed in the Bible.

Now that he was thoroughly obsessed with the idea of purging the mission field of heretics (as liberals were called), the law professor appeared before a meeting of the Southern Methodist missionaries to announce he was going to follow up his form letters to home church members and leaders by making a special trip to the United States. He was going personally "to

bring to the church these questions relating to the orthodoxy of members of our mission."

"It is my purpose, the Lord willing," he continued, "to go to the United States to be present at the May meeting of the board of missions and there to present to them first, such facts as I possess which tend, as I think, to show that missionaries representing our church in China have tenets of faith which differ radically from the fundamental teachings of our church as set forth in her *Discipline*; further to try and present to them the attitude which our presiding bishop took relative to these and similar questions while in China [Bishop Lambuth was an extremely tolerant person]; and then possibly also to try and present these matters to the laity of our church."

The other Southern Methodist missionaries were getting a bit tired of the professor's trouble making, however, and adopted the following resolution:

> Whereas Brother —— is expecting to return to the homeland in the near future, and
>
> Whereas neither the bishop in charge nor the board of missions has given him permission to do so,
>
> Therefore, be it resolved that we disapprove of his leaving the field.

But the professor carried his mission-purging campaign to America anyway. He took along a list of the missionaries whom he had found lacking in proper faith. In each individual's case, he named some specific "heresy"—something relating to virgin birth or miracles or creation that he claimed to have overheard in conversation or found revealed in letters. He solemnly charged one person, for example, with having expressed certain doubts as to the literal interpretation of the floating-axehead miracle in the Old Testament. Fortunately, the mission board recognized him for the fanatic he was and made no effort to push the charges against the missionaries.

Because of what he termed insufficient co-operation from the Southern Methodists at home and abroad, the professor, on returning to China, pulled out of the church and formed his own religious sect. It was bitterly reactionary, equipped with its own seminary. Letterheads used by the new organization had boldly printed across them: "Anti-Evolution—Anti-Catholic—Anti-Premillennial."

Despite his failure successfully to put across an inquisition within the Southern Methodist mission, the professor caused no small amount of discord among the members. Many were strongly conservative in their beliefs, and though they disapproved the arch-reactionary's methods, they could not bring themselves to denounce his position. There were liberals in the mission, however, who denounced both the professor's actions and his beliefs, and clashes with the conservatives inevitably developed.

This was the second mission rift Burke had been confronted with and it seemed more serious than the early one between educationalists and evangelists. But, as in that case, he was determined not to enter the dispute.

That decision didn't keep him from being thoroughly conservative in his thinking, though. The old doctrinal environment in which he had been raised had made its marks deep. He was a fundamentalist. No doubt of that. And the argumentative energy which he refused to expand against liberal associates in the mission occasionally found its way into letters to impartial friends. A portion of one such letter went as follows:

> The bodily resurrection of Christ was a mighty fact to the founders of the Christian Church and they were willing to die for it. The metaphysics of the resurrection does not interest me at all. I do not think that it is possible for anyone to say what changes took place in Christ's body when it arose.
>
> You cannot make me believe that this little band of comparatively unlearned men [the Disciples] could have believed anything else than that He had come out of that tomb and had been walking and talking with them. They had not become learned in the arts of sophistry and were not trying to make the shadow of a dream appear a real fact. As Peter said, "We cannot but speak the things which we saw and heard." And they could not have been thinking of spiritual facts, but must have been referring to a plain historical fact, and so the church has regarded it all these centuries. though there have been men from the first to doubt it. Any doubt on the question these days is no new modern discovery found by men "by the light of that special and peculiar revelation of His ways and of His truth which He has given to this generation."
>
> Well, I have said enough. I hope that we may not be stirred up over this thing. There are so many things that ought to engage us now.

And many things *were* coming up at that time to engage the missionaries' attentions. They were mostly non-religious. With the meeting of the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, China experienced something of a metamorphosis. The voice of youth began to awaken this land of sagas. Nineteen hundred and nineteen was the year of the Student Revolution.

Yuan Shih-kai had died of frustration in June, 1916, after his designs to become emperor crashed. Despite the fact that the "vote" for monarchy had been unanimous in 1915, growing popular opposition throughout the country had compelled Yuan to keep postponing his coronation. With his death, however, the sole remaining strong leader in China was gone and the

country split into the armed camps of his military protégés. or war lords—the men he had placed in charge of the provinces.

Japan took advantage of the confused situation to start a subtle attack. Her blunt militaristic policy was promising to go awry, for the United States was beginning to frown darkly on the Twenty-one Demands. The new and craftier plan which the Japanese put to use after Yuan's death was one of financial intrigue. A collaborator was found in the infamous Anfu Clique, the political group which succeeded Yuan in power at Peking. The legendary Nishihara was sent over as agent for Japan's government-encouraged bankers and began making his lavish yen loans against Anfu pledges of Chinese industrial and mining resources. China's sovereignty was quietly being signed away.

In the midst of these dealings, the Peace Conference sat and the Versailles document was drawn up. Among other matters, the treaty transferred German properties and rights in Shantung to Japan without qualification. China felt, rightly enough, that the Allies had sold out on her. The Chinese delegates refused to sign. Then rumours went out that the Japanese-contaminated Anfu government at Peking would force the delegates to sign.

As these rumours developed, excitement swept over China, especially in the schools. Students were thoroughly awakened to the political situation. They decided to hold giant demonstrations against both Japan and the Anfu collaborators on May 7th, which, as previously remarked, had been named National Humiliation Day in memory of China's capitulation to the Twenty-one Demands. The mission schools were as fervent as the rest, and in Sungkiang a delegation of students asked Burke to give them a holiday on the day set for the demonstration. They were very polite about it. But Burke shook his head and said church schools couldn't participate in politics.

"However," he added, looking off into the distance at nothing in particular, "if all the students go out on the demonstration and don't attend classes, I will naturally be obliged to close my schools that day."

And that was what he was obliged to do, except that it lasted longer than one day. Students in Peking on May 7th had forced their way into the residence of one of the leading pro-Japanese Anfuites and badly mauled him. The attackers were thrown into prison and sentenced to be executed. When news of this spread, students everywhere in China continued their day's demonstration into a prolonged strike. They went into the cities, speaking in market-places and temple squares, calling on merchants, trying in every way to arouse the people against the traitorous Anfu government.

They succeeded. The chambers of commerce and merchant guilds declared a nation-wide shop strike, not to be lifted until the imprisoned Peking students were released and the pro-Japanese cabal dissolved. For ten days

banks closed, business halted, and government revenues stopped. Peking then capitulated: releasing the students, dismissing some of the traitors, and instructing the Paris delegation not to sign away Shantung.

The students weren't satisfied, however. They pressed on with their anti-Japanese campaign, chiefly by organizing boycotts of Japanese goods. Such goods already stocked in stores were in many instances taken out and publicly burned. Japanese shipping and export firms went into bankruptcy by the score. To add to her troubles, Japan was faced with the loss of the Nishihara loans, backed as they were by only the promises of the now-discredited Anfu régime. The loans were lost in the end, and at the Washington Conference, three years later, Japan also was forced to abandon all realization of the Twenty-one Demands, as well as her grip on Shantung. But, though Japan signed the Nine-Power Pact at the conference, pledging herself to observe the territorial integrity of China, she signed with her fingers crossed. She had no intention of letting a small matter like an international treaty bar her permanently from her "divine mission" of dominating Asia—and the world, for that matter.

Thus it could be said with no little emphasis that the youth of China, by its sincere frenzy in 1919, played a major role in frustrating Japan's third great expansion bid (counting the war of 1894–1895 the first and the Russian war of 1904 the second). In addition, China's youth set democracy and national self-consciousness working in China to a greater degree than any other force had done—even the Revolution of 1911.

In 1920, Burke took Leila, John, and James to America on furlough. He spent the afternoon before sailing from Shanghai with the Soons. Eling had come in her car to pick him up at the old Allen home and take him to the Soon home in the French Concession. Mother Soon was there, as well as Eling's husband, Dr. Kung, and Chungling and Dr. Sun. Charlie Soon was gone, though, and the bright, genial place he had filled in the family group was almost depressingly vacant—at least to Burke.

Mother Soon had a package she wanted Burke to take to her second son Ts-liang, who was a student at Vanderbilt. Burke was going through Nashville on the way home, so he was glad to oblige.

After sitting awhile at the Soons', Chungling said she wanted Burke to see her new home on Rue Molière, and all except Mother Soon drove over in the Kung car. While having tea there, the missionary tried to talk to Dr. Sun, but it was difficult. The revolutionist's mind was apparently so occupied with idealistic political goals and confused schemes for renewing civil war that he only grunted yes and no to Burke's questions.

Dr. Sun was in semi-retirement at the time, having been chased out of Canton after a short term as self-proclaimed president of China there. Much

of his time was spent composing his masterly but nebulous essays and lectures which were to be collected into the Kuomintang Bible, *San Min Chu I.* Chungling helped in preparing the English translations.

Later that same year, 1920, Sun returned to Canton at the invitation of the young Hakka general. Ch'en Ch'iung-ming, who had cleared out the doctor's opposition. The following year Sun announced the new South China Republic, with himself, of course, as president. Shortly after that he turned against his benefactor, General Ch'en, because Ch'en wouldn't join in a civil war. Dr. Sun could never get along with anyone very long. It was only after his death in Peking in 1925 that he, like most national heroes, acquired his halo. He was a genius undoubtedly, and like many geniuses, not the person one would choose for a drinking companion.

32
The War Lords March

FOR THREE DAYS the dull thud of battle drew nearer to Sungkiang. The first sounds had been barely perceptible, but they steadily grew in volume and in number until the windows of Burke's home began rattling —ever so slightly. Then on the third night, past midnight, there was a muffled explosion and the windows shook. The retreating forces had blown up the big steel railroad bridge between Sungkiang and Shihhutang to the west.

Until August, 1924, the war lords had kept their fighting well out of range of the rich Shanghai zone. The reason apparently was a fear of tangling with the powerful Western interest there. But now the shooting had come and Sungkiang was in the thick of it.

The Kiangsu-Chekiang war had been brewing when Burke returned from his furlough with Leila and James. It actually was part of the larger struggle between the so-called Chihli political faction headed by Marshal Wu Pei-fu and the Anfu-Fengtien group of the satin-suave little Manchurian ex-bandit, Marshal Chang Tso-ling. The armies of these two war lords had clashed in the spring of 1922 on the North China plains, with Wu coming off victor. Chang retired temporarily to his northern haunts, preparing for another sally.

The immediate cause of the hostilities between the provinces of Kiangsu and Chekiang was the graft-fat office of the Shanghai-Sungkiang defence commissioner, a fine plum for the one who controlled it, with its arsenal and

illicit opium revenues. Though it would seem this office should logically go to a Kiangsu appointee (it being in Kiangsu Province), the Chekiang war lord, General Lu Yung-hsiang, took it upon himself to name his brother-in-law, Ho Feng-lin, to the post in 1923. Marshal Wu took the side of the Kiangsu chieftain, General Ch'i Hsieh-yüan, in the dispute over Ho's appointment, while Marshal Chang pledged his support to General Lu. To confuse matters more—though to the detriment of General Lu—General Sun Chuan-fang chose to come up from Fukien Province with a barefoot, but hard-hitting army of Fukienese to join General Ch'i and attack the Chekiang forces from the south.

It was General Sun's forces which had steadily advanced on Sungkiang in the three-day battle for the strategic city. Casualties did not run very high on either side, except occasionally in close-quarter combat. The artillery action particularly had a certain civilized restraint about it. Guns were fired wide of their mark or at mutually agreed upon intervals, giving each side time to take cover before the other's barrage began. Most of the destruction was done to farmhouses or canal boats which had the misfortune of being in range. When it rained, both sides called it quits and raised their heavy oil-paper umbrellas —still standard equipment of Chinese troops.

There was nothing especially surprising about this sort of thing. In fact, it represented a logic and reasonableness which the Chinese come as near as anyone to attaining to perfection. Why should these mercenaries become vitally bloodlusty over the selfish purposes of their war lords? Most of the soldiers were recruited from famine districts and had joined the armies for the simple purpose of keeping from starving, but that was no reason why they should take the fighting too seriously. Instead, they took it more as any other mode of living and accepted death as fate rather than necessity.

On the morning after the bridge blowing, rifle and machine-gun fire broke out in the western suburbs. As the sharp clatter came closer, Burke walked to the tall iron gates of the mission compound with his new missionary colleague, the Reverend A. C. Bowen, and looked out into the Big Street.

Chekiang troops were fleeting eastward along the narrow throughfare. They came singly and in twos and threes. They wore tattered grey uniforms and most of them had straw sandals, though a few officers sported leather shoes. The oil-paper umbrellas were slung across the backs of a few. Burke saw several men throw their umbrellas on the street as they ran past. They were throwing everything else of any weight too—cartridge belts, bayonets, trench spades, and hand grenades. They had discarded their rifles long before. There was no thought of making further resistance.

The Fukien soldiers came in cautious pursuit. The twisting little street

made it difficult, for there was no way of knowing if or when the retreating troops would be preparing a sudden stand around one of the sharp corners. So the vanguard of the pursuers fired their rifles blindly along the street as they advanced, trusting that the bullets, ricocheting off the shop walls and flagstone pavement, would take care of possible ambushers. One of these bullets, singing around the corner just below the mission compound, sent Burke and Bowen ducking back behind the gates.

In the sky to the east smoke was rising. The retreating Chekiang soldiers in that part of the city were not in such haste and could pause to loot and burn as they evacuated. Once the Fukien troops were established in Sungkiang, the same thing could be expected on a larger scale. Chinese soldiers had not yet passed the pure brigand stage. For that matter, their unprincipled war lords expected them to pay themselves by looting. The only way a city could escape their marauding was to pay a substantial tribute to the commanding generals.

While Burke and Bowen were still standing near the street gates, a sedan chair was carried in the rear entrance of the compound, a smaller gateway opening on a branch canal. The man in the chair was Lok Kwe-liang. When the two bearers had set it down beside the missionaries, Lok stepped out. He had not aged noticeably in the nine years since his return to Sungkiang as a retired gentleman. He was wearing a thin black-silk gown. After a few formal observations about the weather and the states of Burke and Bowen's health, he came to the point of his visit.

"Sungkiang is faced with a crisis from four sides," he said. "The Chekiang soldiers are looting in the east as they depart and the Fukien troops will begin looting soon all over the city. In addition, I have learned that two other armies—those of the Kiangsu and Anhwei forces allied against Lu Yung-hsiang—are converging on the city from other directions. They will also want a share of loot.

"To meet this threat, there are scarcely any civilian leaders left in Sungkiang," the scholar continued. "The magistrate, of course, fled to Shanghai two days ago and most of the gentry followed him yesterday. With these gone, there is no way to raise sufficient money to bribe the armies off. To the few of us left must fall the task of trying in some way to protect the people of Sungkiang from the soldiers. I have come to ask if you will help?"

It was hardly a question to put to Burke. "Certainly," he said. "That is what we are here for. To help the people."

That afternoon, Burke, Lok, and two other gentlemen who hadn't fled the city boarded a handcar at the railroad station and, with two coolies working the double-bar lever, rolled westward. They were bound for the blown-up bridge, where, according to one of the Fukien officers in Sung-

kiang, the divisional commander of the victorious troops, General Zia Hung-hyuin, could be found. There were no trains running at all.

Fukien troops stopped the little handcar twice along the way, but released it when Lok produced credentials the officer had given him. When the party reached the bridge, they found hundreds of soldiers gathered there. The bridge itself gave eloquent evidence of the force of the explosion the night before. It was a two-span truss crossing a wide tributary of the Whangpoo. The span on the Sungkiang side had been blown completely and lay in the water, a shattered, twisted hulk of steel.

"We want to see General Zia," Lok said in Mandarin to a young officer who approached the handcar.

Seeing the big foreigner and three Chinese gentlemen, the officer was very polite and invited the party to follow him. He took them to the river bank and on to a gangway leading to a large houseboat. General Zia received them inside. He was sitting at a table spread with maps. Four or five members of his staff were with him. After introductions had been made and tea served, Burke explained the mission.

"We will be most grateful to you if you will order your troops to spare Sungkiang any undue suffering," the missionary said. Zia understood Shanghai and there was no need for Lok to translate into Mandarin.

The general studied the request, then replied, "We expect to be warmly welcomed by all the respected citizens of Sungkiang after having rid the place of the tyrannical Chekiang officials. If there is such a welcome, including, perhaps, a small gift of money to reward my soldiers' bravery, the city will not be molested."

Lok cut in here. "We will see that you have this welcome, general. Give us a few days to prepare, however,"

The general agreed to restrain his troops until the welcome was forthcoming. When the Sungkiang party left the boat headquarters, though, Burke turned to Lok with a puzzled expression.

"I thought you said there are not enough leading citizens left in Sungkiang to give an official welcome, much less raise money for the soldiers," the missionary said.

"Never worry," Lok said. "We will send a special messenger to them in Shanghai with a letter explaining the situation. Then they will return."

Burke had his doubts about this, but there was nothing else to be done. That night he and Lok signed a letter addressed to twenty-five of the refugees. Three days later the courier who took it returned with an answer.

"It is very regrettable," the letter pointed out, "but no trains are running and we cannot return to Sungkiang. Please present General Zia with our humble respects."

Of course, they could have come to Sungkiang easily enough by boat had they really wanted to, Burke thought bitterly.

When he and Lok went to General Zia, now set up in the Sungkiang military yamen, with this news, the latter showed frank irritation.

"Since no one receives us, my commanders and my soldiers are without face. I am afraid it will be quite impossible to control them. There may be much looting."

Missionary and scholar left the yamen in low spirits.

"There is only one hope," Lok said.

"What is that?"

"It is rumoured that General Sun Chuan-fang himself, the commander in chief of this Fukien army, is in his houseboat on the Whangpoo en route to Shanghai. If we can intercept him, he may want to build his face by ordering Zia to spare Sungkiang."

For the entire afternoon, Burke and Lok trudged up and down the banks of the Whangpoo, four miles south of Sungkiang. But there was so sign of a boat that might be General Sun's. On returning to Sungkiang at dusk, troops were swarming into town. Until he was certain no tribute would be coming, General Zia had kept the main body of his men camped outside the city. Now they were turned loose to go where they pleased and loot. To make matters worse, part of the Kiangsu army had reached the city. Both Fukien and Kiangsu troops had commandeered hundreds of canal boats to load with expected booty. The craft, mostly open farm types, jammed the principal canals from the West Gate to the western suburbs, two miles away.

Burke went to bed that night with a troubled heart. He wanted desperately to do something to stop the looting, but there seemed nothing he could do. His bitterness toward the refugee Sungkiangites returned. They were hardly a good example of the *noblesse oblige* credited gentry under ancient Chinese standards.

While he was lying there thinking about it, someone set up a terrific banging on the iron gates of the compound. The missionary threw on some clothes and started out. He thought it was the soldiers. But as he opened the house door, the gateman came padding up the walk with a lantern leading a young civilian. Burke recognized him as the son of Daung Tse-kau, a wealthy merchant friend and one of the few leading Sungkiang citizens who hadn't run off.

"Mr. Burke! Mr. Burke!" young Daung called excitedly, as soon as he saw the missionary in the doorway. "The soldiers are breaking into my family home. They will torture my father and force him to give them all his money. I was able to slip away and come to you. I pray you come help me."

Burke still had no idea what he could do about soldiers looting, but when confronted with a definite crisis his urge was to act. So he followed the young man to the Daung home.

The soldiers had battered down the heavy plank door of the house. Inside all was confusion. The women of the family were wailing loudly and the soldiers could be heard cursing and wrecking furniture. As Burke walked in, a man screamed out in high-pitched anguish. It was old Daung himself. The missionary found his friend pinioned in a chair by two soldiers, while a third had a headlocklike hold around his ankles. With his free hand, the third soldier was burning the soles of the old man's bare feet with a lighted pipe taper.

"Where did you hide your money?" the soldiers kept repeating.

Old Daung only screamed louder.

Burke strode up to the soldier applying the hotfoot and shook him by the shoulder. "Stop that!" he ordered sternly.

The soldier looked up, saw the towering foreigner and dropped Daung's feet. At the same time his two companions loosed their grip on the merchant's arms. The latter tried to stand up, then sat back with a loud groan.

"Why do you do this kind of thing?" the missionary demanded of the soldiers. The troops who had been in other parts of the house began gathering around. "What kind of *dau-li* (teaching or religion) is it to break into a man's home at this hour and torture and rob him?"

Burke suddenly found himself preaching a sermon, with a dozen or so soldiers paying rapt attention. He didn't realize it at the moment, but Daung's home was in the section of the city turned over to the newly-arrived Kiangsu troops. Had the men he was lecturing been Fukienese, with their strange dialect, he would have got nowhere.

But these soldiers understood and soon were nodding their heads in agreement with the big missionary's ethical arguments. Yes, it was rather a mean trick to treat an old merchant as they had done. A half-hour later they were gone. They carried a few little things off with them, things they had picked up before Burke appeared. They couldn't be expected to drop their loot as well as their villainy. That would hardly have been in the spirit of Chinese compromise. And it was uncertain whether they stopped their looting altogether that night. Daung was satisfied, though. Jubilantly so, in spite of his blistered feet.

Next morning Lok came to the mission with the news that the Anhwei army was expected in the city that day. He said too that the Anhwei general, Sz Tsing-nyok, and the general of the Kiangsu division, Bei Pao-san, would share control of Sungkiang with General Zia.

"There will be great confusion truly with this division of authority," the

scholar predicted, as though there weren't already. "I am in despair over the fate of our people here. The Anhwei troops will join the others in looting. And local rogues are taking advantage of the situation to rob on their own account. I myself was stopped on the street by a young rascal this morning and had I not been very *hyoong* (fierce) with him, he would have taken my gown off my back. It is terrible."

Burke could see only one line of action—a direct one. "We must bring all three of the generals together at a conference and appeal to their sense of decency," he said. His success at reasoning with the soldiers at Daung's had inspired him with volumes of confidence.

Lok was less hopeful. "But how will we go about it?" he wanted to know.

"We will go see each of them and arrange the meeting. However, let us make Zia the second or, better, the last mán to see."

The two men made the rounds of the generals. They went to Bei and Sz first and these two commanders proved, as Burke had hoped, more agreeable than Zia. When they had approved the conference idea and agreed on a time, the Fukien general was forced to fall in line or lose face.

The conference was held at the deserted magistrate's yamen. Burke headed the Sungkiang citizens' delegation, made up of Lok, Daung—who had to be carried in by his servants—and the two gentlemen who had gone on the handcar. After tea was served, the big missionary put his elbow on the little tea table to the left of him and leaned forward slightly toward the generals.

"The people of Sungkiang are suffering at the hands of your troops and the complete lawlessness brought on by the war," he said. "My old friend, Mr. Daung here, one of the most respected citizens of the city, was tortured by soldiers who came to loot his home one night.

"We cannot offer you money to keep order," Burke went on with a frankness that startled Lok, "because there is no money here for that purpose. The rich men have run off to Shanghai. The treasury of the public orphanage has funds, it is true, but that is no longer at the disposal of military commanders, as it was in the past. I have the responsibility of that money now. Even so, I cannot believe that you good gentlemen would take food from the mouths of orphans simply to acquire wealth for yourselves. Nor do I believe that you will permit the general lawlessness to continue in the city. The people of Sungkiang are your countrymen and, as their leaders, you should look after their well-being."

Like the looting soldiers at Daung's, the three generals nodded their heads in the face of Burke's convictions. Even General Zia seemed impressed. The three commanders sipped their tea and went over the problem. Burke's

very frankness apparently had been enough to shock them out of their amoral attitudes. Lok and the three other committeemen voiced some opinions. Finally, the generals agreed on a plan of declaring martial law in the city. Inspectors would be appointed with authority to shoot anyone found robbing or in any way disturbing the peace.

This ended the troubles in Sungkiang—rather, they were ended after two soldiers were shot by the inspectors. But it was a different story in the countryside roundabout. The soldiers, frustrated in their depredations on the city, fanned out into the rural districts for their booty and raping. As a result, hundreds of farmers and their families began fleeing into Sungkiang, bringing only their bedding and a few small valuables.

Burke turned the large mission compound into a refugee camp. The church was filled first. Benches were removed and the people spread their pallets out on the floor. When the church could hold no more, the school buildings were filled. When this was done, the people were allowed to drift out into the mission grounds. Here makeshift mat sheds were hurriedly thrown up, for that autumn was a wet one.

With the mission compound packed to its capacity of three thousand and more people still coming from the ravaged countryside, Lok took a hand. He came to the compound the second morning after the refugee deluge and threaded his way through the people and mat sheds to where Burke was standing, supervising the placing of more sheds.

"If a foreigner can do this for the Chinese," the scholar said, waving a hand toward the crowded human spectacle, "assuredly a Chinese can make some effort for his own countrymen. Please send the new refugees to my home. I can quarter as many as five hundred in my garden and courts."

Burke's eyes lighted warmly. Lok might not profess Christianity, but he had the spirit of the Master.

Most of the refugees had brought enough food to last several days. After that, feeding them became an additional problem. It was met by Lok's suggestion that a relief committee of himself and the mission workers make daily rounds soliciting rice from local merchants. This was done and the merchants co-operated bountifully.

By the end of October, peace and order had been restored in both country and city and the refugees went back to their homes. As those in the mission compound rolled up their bedding and prepared to leave, many of them sought out Burke and kowtowed to him—against his loud protests and much to his discomfort. Chinese are a grateful people.

The compound had hardly been cleared of the mat sheds and the lawn patched up, when war struck again.

This time it was brought on by one of Lu Yung-hsiang's (the deposed

Chekiang war lord) generals, Chen Yao-san. General Chen returned secretly from his refuge in Japan and came disguised to Sungkiang, where his former troops—bought over by General Sun—had been quartered. With the aid of a little cold cash, he revived his old men's loyalty and sprang a coup.

General Sun immediately launched an attack from Hangchow, where he had set himself up as war lord in place of Lu. His troops swept up through Sungkiang as they had on the first occasion and Chen fell back on Shanghai. Again most of Sungkiang's gentry fled to the port metropolis and the rural refugees poured into Burke's mission compound. The mat sheds were stuck up once more. They were hardly enough protection this time, for it was winter and the dampness was chilling. To add to the discomfort, a few inches of snow fell, followed by rain, which turned the ground into cold black slush.

The afternoon of the day the rain began, a small mat-covered farm boat bumped against the canal landing near the front of the mission and one of the two men aboard leaped out without waiting for the craft to be moored. He ran up the stone steps to the Big Street and crossed over to the compound. Inside he half walked, half ran through the lines of refugee sheds to Burke's home.

"Boo Sien-sang, Boo Sien-sang (Mr. Burke, Mr. Burke)," he called as he started up the brick walk to the door.

Burke came to his study window, which opened on the front of the home and asked the man what he wanted.

"The soldiers are in Litahwe [local dialect spelling]," the Chinese cried, coming up under the window the missionary had raised. "They are looting and torturing everybody. It is much worse than anything they have done before in these parts. I was sent here by the headman to beg you to come help the village. Only you, Boo Sien-sang, can turn away the soldiers."

Burke pulled down the window and got his coat. Litahwe was a farm village eight miles south-west of Sungkiang. He had preached there often and had many friends in the place. He was certain the messenger was exaggerating the trouble, but he felt he must go. It was the first time one of the country places had made such an appeal to him. He couldn't turn it down.

Outside, he told the Litahwe man to wait there while he went to the Sungkiang military yamen. General Zia had re-established himself there, he being the commander who had again led General Sun's forces from Hangchow to oust the rebelling Chekiang men. He was in supreme command this time, without Kiangsu or Angwei generals sharing authority. He could have curtly told Burke to mind his own business. But he didn't. The minister found him quite pleasant. No doubt Burke's handling of the situation before had won the Fukien commander's respect. And then, too, few men ever held

for long a dislike for Burke, despite his sometimes unswerving convictions.

When Burke told Zia about the Litahwe man's report, the general slapped both hands on his knees indignantly—whether sincerely or not is up to one's opinions of Chinese generals of the war lord period.

"I gave strict orders to my troops to refrain from such conduct," he said.

"In that case, general," Burke put in, "you of course would be willing to give me a written copy of those orders to take to Litahwe."

The general wasn't one to be caught short in such a matter.

"I will certainly do so," he declared, "and I will give you an armed guard to escort you to Litahwe and return."

Burke started to protest about the guard, then thought better of it. It wasn't that a small guard would be much protection against many undisciplined troops, but it might help and at least it would add considerable authority to the written orders.

It was dark by the time the missionary was ready to leave the yamen and General Zia agreed to have the guard and written orders at the mission at daybreak, ready to go to the village. On the way home, Burke stopped at Lok's home and told him what was up. Lok immediately said he would go along. He suggested a houseboat he used for the trip, as the rice-field paths were almost impassable from the rain and slush. Since the mission itself no longer kept a houseboat regularly in these days of railroads and launches, Lok sent a servant out to rent one.

The rescue party began gathering at the mission at six in the morning. General Zia's men were the first to arrive. When Burke finished his bath (a cold bath before breakfast, winter or summer, was a daily ritual with him) and came downstairs, he found them pacing around on the porch. There were two lieutenants, armed with wooden-holstered Mausers, and two privates with rifles. One of the lieutenants smiled as Burke stepped out and said in broken Shanghai dialect that they were ready to start. He showed the missionary the general's orders—authorizing the arrest of any Fukien soldier found looting.

Burke invited the men to have some breakfast with him, but they declined politely, saying they already had eaten. After the missionary had eaten, Lok arrived in his chair and the party went to the boat landing where the houseboat was tied up. Burke carried a lunch basket with him. The Litahwe messenger and his companion were waiting at the same landing in their farm boat. They would lead the way and announce the arrival of the rescuers. A cold drizzling rain was drifting down as the two boats cast away.

During the trip on the houseboat, the guard made it a point to be dramatically alert. The two privates stood at the cabin entrance with rifles ready. The lieutenants made small carbines out of their Mausers by attaching the

wooden holsters to the guns as stocks. They rested them, cocked, in their elbow crooks as they sat in the cabin. Knowing Chinese carelessness with firearms, this vigilance bothered Burke much more than any thought of encountering danger en route.

As the boat approached Litahwe, a dark wisp of smoke could be seen curling up from the black roofs near the village's one pagoda. Fire always seemed to add to looting soldiers' pleasures. Fortunately, the rain would keep it from spreading. Nearer the village, Burke and his party heard an occasional rifle shot. It could be either terrorizing or simple murder.

When the rescuers reached the village teahouse landing, a small group of people were gathered waiting. They began telling their troubles while the houseboat was still in process of being moored. Soldiers, they said, were going from house to house. There were not many. Probably fifteen or twenty who had chosen Litahwe for their depredations. But more might come later, the villagers said, because the countryside around was full of them.

At that moment, a gunshot cracked out just north of the teahouse.

"Come," Burke said tersely, "I want to go see what this business is."

Lok and the four guards followed the big minister off the gangplank and through the group of people to the street. They walked in the direction of the shot. It had stopped raining, but the street was a mess. Mess or no mess, however, the street would normally have been crowded with marketers at this hour in the morning. Now it was deserted and the stores boarded up.

The scene of the shooting was around a corner. Five soldiers were standing at the door of a house. A man, apparently the man of the house, was on his knees before the troops. Two women wailed in the background. The soldiers had already sacked the place, for they carried bundles of stuff, but they seemed disappointed over the haul. They were compensating by scaring the wits out of the man. One soldier would assume command and give the order to shoot him and another would back off and level his rifle. Then, as the women's wails and the man's entreaties reached a crescendo, the other three soldiers would intercede. It was great sport. The shot heard at the boat landing had probably been fired in the air as a further jolt to the man's nerves.

The rescue party took in the scene, then one of the lieutenants hailed the looters. They looked around, snatched up their bundles, and made off. The guard fired several times before the five disappeared around the corner, but the shots went wild. The shooting and the sight of the running soldiers apparently had good effect, however, on the other ten or fifteen looters in Litahwe, for they joined the first five in flight. Burke and the others walked across to the edge of the village and saw them splashing off across the wet rice fields. The guard fired a few more wild shots.

Word of the rescue party and the looters' flight quickly spread through Litahwe. When Burke got back to the teahouse with Lok and the others to decide what was to be done next, several hundred people—apparently the entire village—began gathering around. They stood in a rain-soaked vacant lot next to the teahouse. Both men and women were there, hardly distinguishable except by their faces, for all were padded fat in quilted cotton jackets and wrap skirts.

Suddenly Burke was conscious of a general movement among the people. Then he saw that all the women were on their knees in the mud puddles. They were kowtowing to him.

"Don't do that," Burke protested. "What is the matter?"

One of the men in the teahouse came over to where Burke stood in the doorway. He was the village headman.

"Boo Sien-sang," he said, "the soldiers have gone, thanks to you, but we are afraid they will be back in greater numbers when you go. If they do come, our women and children will again be at their mercy. So will you take our women and children back to Sungkiang with you and watch after them until peace comes? We know they will be safe there."

Burke saw the headman was desperately in earnest.

"Have you enough boats to carry them?" he asked.

"No, the soldiers took all our boats in the first war last autumn. They will have to walk."

The missionary turned to Lok.

"I am going to take them," he said. "We can start out in the morning. It is too late now for some of these old ones with little feet to reach Sungkiang before night. But you may return in the houseboat now. There is no need for you to remain here in the village all night."

"I shall stay," the other replied simply.

The Litahwe people quartered their guests in the village temple. Rice straw, dry but not so clean, was laid on the damp brick floor under the popping eyes of a Taoist deity. The villagers then brought out their best cotton quilts—unwashed for years—for covering. There was plenty of hot tea and, toward dusk, a simple meal of rice, greens, and bits of pork.

Before going to sleep, the missionary asked the two lieutenants if they'd mind checking on the presence of any looting soldiers in the village. He was afraid some might have tried to slip in after dark. It had begun to rain again and the officers and two riflemen made cone-shaped paper coverings to hold over their candles as they walked through the street. All was well.

Burke waited until the guard and Lok were settled in the straw and their candles blown out before he got on his knees for his nightly prayer. Somehow he couldn't do it while the candles were burning, flicking weird

shadows about the dust-covered altar and the towering images of the gods. It was a setting for meditation with the devil rather than with his God. The darkness made it better.

The same slow chilling rain was falling next morning. The women with their children were ready in the temple yard when Burke awoke. There were three hundred in all to make the eight-mile trek across the muddy fields. After a breakfast of steamed bread and tea, Burke, Lok, and the four-man guard led the march out of Litahwe. A dozen or so men of the village also came along to help with stragglers. Walking in single file on the foot-wide paddy paths, the procession stretched out nearly a quarter of a mile.

Burke's leather shoes proved the first stumbling block. They began slipping and skidding the moment he stepped on the slick black mud. One of the Litahwe men saw a practical solution, however, and ran back to the village to get an extra pair of straw sandals. These he tried to fit over the soles of the missionary's shoes, but the size twelves defeated any such purpose. The resourceful peasant then ran again to the village and got another pair of sandals. He fixed the two pairs into a single oversized pair which could fit over the shoes.

Word of this passed up and down the line of refugees and caused much enjoyment. War and looting soldiers were forgotten with the idea of Boo Sien-sang needing two regular-size straw sandals on each foot. Chinese humour could never be downed.

33
The Burke Legend Grows

WATER BUFFALOES SLOSHED as usual through the flooded rice fields around Sungkiang that spring. The war and fire and looting of the past autumn and winter were only bad memories.

Chen's abortive coup played into Sun Chuan-fang's hands. There was a bit more fighting against the Shantung chieftain, Chang Ts'ung-chang, who had ousted Kiangsu's General Ch'i; then Sun wound up in the old viceregal capital at Nanking, where he ruled as governor and war lord of the five provinces of Kiangsu, Chekiang, Anhwei, Fukien, and Kiangsi. Peace and order were restored under the apparent stability which dictators diffuse. And in a sense, there was real peace and order in Sun's local sphere—in the sense of any comparison with what was going on in other parts of China.

The period marked a crest for the mission at Sungkiang. Burke's activities during the provincial wars had added worlds of face both to himself and to his work, and Methodist strength grew accordingly. Fortunately, a new church building had been completed just before the 1924 hostilities, and it took care of the expanded congregation which would have overflowed McLain Chapel.

Burke felt proud and happy over this church. It was built on one of the city's few remaining Taiping-rubble lots, directly across the Big Street from the old chapel and bordering the chief canal. The new building, with its wide corrugated roof and square crenelated bell tower, dominated western Sungkiang. There were two floors, the main auditorium occupying all of the second. Below were rooms for Sunday school, Epworth League, women's societies, and other enterprises of a large institutional church. A handsome pipe organ had been donated by a friend in Macon.

The new Sungkiang magistrate appointed by General Sun was a large fat Chinese named Wu. Burke called on him soon after he moved into the yamen, and the following day Wu called at the mission. In those polite exchanges of tea and small talk, a genuine brand of friendship took root between the official and the missionary.

In his physical aspects, Wu reminded Burke of the portly Leu magistrate of the old Imperial days. He had the same black moustache that drooped down around the corners of his mouth. But, on the other hand, Burke, devotee of Dickens that he was, couldn't help finding something of Pickwick about Wu. His plumpness aside, the new magistrate had that rare combination of warm geniality and precise manners which so characterized Sam Weller's good-hearted patron.

While the second set of refugees, including those from Litahwe, was still camping in the mission compound, Wu took over the job of collecting rice to feed them. He also kept energetically behind the military authorities until real discipline was restored in the armies around Sungkiang.

What impressed Burke most was the interest Wu volunteered in the public orphanage. The missionary had been forced to argue and cajole former magistrates into helping the institution, which was quite a sizeable responsibility now with its hundred and forty boys. Wu, though, one day took it upon himself to propose that the local government should appropriate two thousand dollars annually from its rice levies for the support of the orphanage.

Until Wu's action, the upkeep of the orphans had been a day-to-day worry, most of which rested on the missionary-superintendent's shoulders. He personally solicited funds from wealthy Sungkiangites. Or he prevailed upon the several rice merchants from whom he bought the orphanage food stores to forgo the usual profit for the sake of benevolence.

One of Burke's latest and more spectacular money-raising ideas had been to form a brass band with a dozen of the older boys. He had induced the orphanage trustees to put up the money for the instruments. An instructor was picked up and the band worked into some semblance of harmony.

To Burke's delight, Sungkiang took to it like the much-cited fish to water. It became a local fad to hire the foreign band to play for parades and other public affairs. The music was mostly a recognizable adaptation of Sousa, but it was loud and that was enough for the Chinese. The young bandsmen got as much fun from their efforts as did the public. By far the proudest members of the group were the two fourteen-year-olds who had charge of the bass drum—one strapped in front to share part of the weight and one strapped behind beating it. The right side of the drum had painted on it in bold black Roman capitals:

SUNGKIANG PUBLIC ORPHANAGE BAND

The left side carried the same message in large Chinese characters.

The great day in the orphan bandsmen's lives came about a year after they were organized, when one of the trustees died and the band was asked to lead the funeral parade. The boys wore white mourning cloth around their heads and marched in front of the sackcloth-dressed sons of the deceased. And the Big Street echoed with discordant but lusty versions of "Stars and Stripes Forever" and something which might have been the "Royal Welsh Fusiliers" but could have been almost anything else.

At the height of these crest days of the orphanage, when the band's receipts and Wu's appropriation kept its books in easy balance, the good magistrate's foot slipped. Sungkiang's public treasury turned up empty and Wu found himself in the damp dirt-floored jail of his own yamen. Luckily he had enough money sewed into the lining of his gown to win the sympathy of the jailer, and the next night he bolted.

He made straight for the Methodist mission compound. It was eleven-thirty or twelve when he reached the big iron gates. He probably hadn't walked, much less run, so far in years. Burke heard the furious pounding of Wu's fists against the gates. But the missionary for once couldn't hurry downstairs to see what it was about. He'd been in bed a week with a painfully swollen left leg—varicose veins brought on by too much walking around during the civil wars. Leila went down to the door instead. Wu had been let into the compound by the gatekeeper and was just finishing a final sprint across the grounds to the Burke home.

"Boo Sien-sang leh la va? (Is Mr. Burke in?)" the fat magistrate panted. His gown was soppy with perspiration.

"Yes, he is in, but he is sick," Leila said. "What is the matter?"

"I must see him at once. It is very important."

Two minutes later, Wu was seated in Burke's bedroom, his hands alternately on his outspread knees and gesticulating wildly as, with righteous indignation, he spoke his mind on the injustices of the Sun Chuan-fang administration. He was a cruel victim of political circumstances, he said, but he would be beheaded if caught. His old friend, Mr. Burke, would surely help him.

The Georgian was by no means convinced of the magistrate's innocence; nevertheless, he couldn't help liking Wu, embezzler or not. He decided to let the man stay at least that night. Kyung-san, the Burkes' cook, was waked and told to set up a cot in the attic. He was also pledged to secrecy about Wu's being at the mission.

Burke managed to hobble downstairs to his study the next morning and was there when the police came searching for Wu. The police chief was along. He had known the missionary for years and felt considerably indebted to him because Burke had several times given him quinine for his fever.

"Have you seen Mr. Wu, our late magistrate?" the chief asked politely.

Burke was faced with a real problem. All his life he had preached against lying—even little white lying—but now if he told the truth Wu was doomed. The thought of betraying the genial fat official was anything but pleasant. Wu rose in the missionary's mind in his best Pickwickian form. No, he couldn't turn him in. So Burke hedged.

"Why should I have seen Mr. Wu?" he asked. "This is hardly the place for him to be, is it? Anyway, I heard only last night he was in jail."

The chief was stymied. Of course, he knew the ex-magistrate was somewhere in the mission compound. Too many people had heard him racing through the street and banging on the gates. But the chief wouldn't consider the idea of embarrassing Burke now by going ahead and finding Wu there. However, he must make some show of doing his duty for the sake of his face and his career.

"Yes, there is no reason for you to have seen Mr. Wu," the chief concurred, "and I hope you are not offended at my rude intrusion on such silly business. But Mr. Wu escaped from jail late last night and I was ordered to overlook no place searching for him. I am very sorry I had to bother you, but, as you understand, I had to obey my orders. So you will not mind if I make a small search of your premises?"

The chief's face was perfectly poker. He gave no wink or any other such crude signal, but Burke could subtly sense that the search would be very small indeed.

"Please make yourself welcome," the missionary said with the best

Chinese courtesy. "You must come in with your men and have some tea first."

The chief and his men sipped tea with the minister more than an hour. They talked about innocuous items, including the fact that it happened to be the day for old Tsang Da Ti (the Great God Tsang) to eat chilled dog meat, which explained why it was so cold and gusty that early March day (Burke knew his Chinese almanac as well as any native). When the visitors rose to go, the chief thanked the missionary for letting him search the place and begged his pardon for having been forced to do so. Then he led his men off.

Later that day, however, Kyung-san told Burke there was an extra police guard around the compound. The chief wouldn't embarrass a friend by anything so crass as rooting Wu out of the mission refuge, but he had his Oriental patience. Wu would have to come out one day and, when he did, that was time enough to get him.

Meanwhile, Wu sat in the attic. Kyung-san brought him his tea and meals. Burke's lame leg sent the missionary back to bed, but ten-year-old James represented his father in the attic most of the day. The boy was fascinated by the fat jolly magistrate, who passed the time sitting on the side of his cot spitting watermelon-seed hulls on the plank flooring. And Wu seemed pleased to have the young American visit the otherwise lonely garret. Wu would stroke his moustache, raise a finger, and launch into a story. He was full of them—ghosts rising out of Tung-ting Lake, sea serpents, magic turtles, and always one about the ferocious lau-hoo (tiger).

The third day of Wu's attic interlude, Burke evolved a plan. He would have the magistrate dress up like a farmer and smuggle him out the back gate of the compound. There on the small branch canal a boat could pick him up and carry him to Shanghai. The minister had Wu come down to the bedroom to tell him the plan and Wu fell in enthusiastically with the idea. Kyung-san brought the peasant clothes, carefully stowed away under some vegetables in a marketing basket. Wu took off his gown and put on the rough pants, jacket, wrap skirt, and straw sandals. With some hesitancy he shaved off his moustache, and to complete the effect Kyung-san rubbed some dirt on his face, arms, and legs.

While this transformation was under way on the fourth morning, Burke picked two of the mission coolies to go rent an open farm boat and pick up a load of rice straw. The two servants rowed up the branch canal with the straw and stopped a few yards from the rear mission gate. Then one of them —whom Burke had picked because he was the fattest servant in the mission —left the craft and walked in. Farmers often peddled cooking straw to the mission like this.

Wu was all set. A few minutes after the fat coolie entered the gate—long

enough for a farmer to reach Burke's house, ask whether straw was wanted and be told it wasn't—the magistrate walked out and stepped on the straw-laden boat. He pulled up the bamboo mooring pole realistically and shoved off. The coolie who had remained on board operated the fish-tail sweep.

• Two days later, the coolie returned with the boat and straw. Wu had been safely delivered at Shanghai. Needless to add, the story got around the teahouses and to the police chief. But none of the Sungkiang people, least of all the chief, took offence. The missionary had won the bout and all honours were due him. Chinese appreciate a good display of adroitness. The Burke legend grew in Sungkiang.

Those who didn't appreciate Burke's activities so much seemed to be the leaders in Sun Chuan-fang's local political régime. They were strangers in Sungkiang and saw the missionary only as a meddling foreigner. The new magistrate who took Wu's place was one of these. He was a completely different character from his predecessor. He was lean and his upper eyelids drooped with a crafty glint. He spent most of the day reclining on a couch with six slave girls alternately preparing his opium pipe. Burke called by to see him, but Ting—which was the new official's name—didn't bother to return the visit. And Burke didn't bother to call again until he felt himself obliged to. And then he did it in not quite the orthodox way.

One of Magistrate Ting's first official acts had been to cut off the two-thousand-dollar orphanage allotment. The trustees, led by Lok, appealed in vain. Ting said the city couldn't afford to keep up such extravagance. The orphanage had got along somehow before the appropriation was begun. It could get along again.

At that point, Burke decided to go see Ting about the matter himself.

"Bak-bak-li (it's no use)," Lok said, when the missionary told him. "Ting's administration is not too cordial toward you because of the Wu affair, you know."

"I have a method," Burke replied.

Several days later, Burke marched through the Big Street at the head of his hundred and forty orphans. Immediately behind him was the twelve-piece brass band, blaring one of its Sousa adaptations. He led the boys to the gates of the magistrate's yamen, where he had them make a single file half-way around the yamen walls.

"Just stand there awhile," he told them.

Burke then presented his card at the yamen. The attendant came back to say Magistrate Ting was very busy. Burke visualized him smoking his opium pipe. He took a long breath.

"Please go tell Mr. Ting," he said politely but firmly, "that I have my orphans drawn up around his yamen with their band. If he does not return

the orphanage appropriation I will have them make a public appeal to the people of Sungkiang from where they stand. Sungkiang people are kind and generous and will be shocked to learn how their magistrate, Mr. Ting, who is not a Sungkiang man, treats the orphans of the city."

The attendant's jaw fell a trifle and he bowed and disappeared into Ting's quarters. Meanwhile, to lend emphasis to his threat, Burke went out and had the band strike up with a bit more of Sousa. A crowd began collecting to see what was going on in front of the magistrate's yamen. Burke was ready to make his speech on behalf of the orphanage fund, but he held it until he heard from Ting

The magistrate's reply was not long coming. It was written on a sheet of official paper, properly signed and sealed:

"The Sungkiang magistrate, this tenth day of the Sixth month of the Fifteenth year of the Republic, generously agrees to resume the appropriation to the Sungkiang Public Orphanage which was begun in the Fourteenth year of the Republic."

Burke smiled, put the paper in his pocket, and led the boys back to the orphanage.

34
"William is Dying"

THE FORCES WHICH were to shape the course of Nationalist China gained tremendous momentum in Central China during the two years of General Sun's dictatorship. They pulsed under the apparent stability of the war lord's régime. Students went about the country distributing leaflets and making speeches. Peasants were secretly organized. Labour unions strengthened in the Shanghai industrial area. Strikes became more and more frequent.

Sun's men didn't take these things too seriously. Fifth-columning wasn't the dramatic institution it grew into some years later.

Burke met General Sun in Nanking during this period. The missionary's second son, Gordon, had entered the American Foreign Service and for a few months was stationed at the old capital as vice-consul. Burke and James went up to visit him for a week and he arranged an interview with the war lord.

Sun was slim and wolfish looking, with the sallow complexion of an

opium smoker. But he had an engaging personality, as most of his kind had.

"Mr. Burke of Sungkiang, eh?" the governor beamed as they sat at tea. "In that locality, I think you are a more famous man than the governor." Then something like a twinkle crept into his eyes as he added:

"You doubtless remember my first magistrate in Sungkiang, Mr. Wu?"

General Sun's star, as those of most of the Chinese war lords of that era, fell as rapidly as it had risen.

Late in 1926, the Lower Yangtze regions began hearing amazing reports about a northward-marching army led by a young general named Chiang Kai-shek. His forces were variously called "Nationalists," "Reds," "Southerners," "Cantonese," and simply "Kuomintangs." The latter was probably as accurate as any, for Chiang's army was the army of the revivified Kuomintang party. Revivified after it had the astuteness to open its membership to the masses of enlightened students who had championed the spirit of nationalism in 1919. With the influx of this new blood, the party saw broader horizons. Sun Yat-sen, who still was nominal leader, organized a nationalist government at Canton—another one, it should be said. His more practical associates saw to it this time that former mistakes were not repeated.

Among those associates was T. V. Soong, Charlie Soong's eldest son ("Soong" rather than "Soon" had now become the accepted English spelling of the name). The young Harvard graduate had been selected, at the suggestion of his sister Madame Sun, to try to untangle the new government's financial disorders. This gave him a real chance to display his monetary wizardry. He soon would become full finance minister. More Soong influence, in the person of Eling's husband Dr. Kung, was in the north waiting to join the government when the Kuomintang's success became less questionable.

Meanwhile, Sun's military protégé, Chiang Kai-shek, trained a corps of smart young officers at the Whampoa Academy, near Canton. Money and guidance for this and other activities of the new Kuomintang came from the Soviet Union. Dr. Sun had tried to interest other governments first, but they couldn't be bothered with anything so unimportant—or even undesirable—as a unified national China.

In passing, it is also interesting to note that another protégé of Sun Yat-sen in those days—not to say one of the loudest howlers for a free, national China—was a well-built man with masses of immaculate black hair named Wang Ching-wei.

Dr. Sun had died in 1925, before the party army was quite ready to march. And there occurred a curious phenomenon. Instead of disintegrating, the Kuomintang emerged more unified than before. For the mortal exit of the party chief left a spiritual residue which inspired his followers as the live

Dr. Sun never had. In place of the inconstant revolutionist—who in his three-score years had subscribed to Christianity and atheism, democracy and communism, foreignism and anti-foreignism—now rose a synthesized and universal Dr. Sun who could bridge every interparty rift—and after the Japanese invasion, even they managed to invoke him on their side.

With this new inspiration and the Whampoa cadets, Chiang Kai-shek's army by early 1927 had established itself in Hankow and Changsha and was driving through Kiangsi toward Shanghai.

General Sun's forces, who had done so well against the Chekiang arm two years before, were no match for these Nationalists. They were no war lord's mercenaries, fighting for their board and keep. They fought with the sternness and discipline of deeper appetites. Not only the officers, but the men—many of whom were students—had imbibed the Nationalist spirit.

What was more, they had the people behind them. Farmers guided patrols over little-known trails. Skyrocket signals rose at night from behind enemy lines. And when the war lord forces were driven out of a city, thousands of Nationalist flags—a blazing twelve-point sun on a blue field—appeared miraculously over doors and houses. They had been made months before and hidden away until the promised day of deliverance. All this groundwork had been carefully laid by the student lecturers in the preceding two years. Their obvious success was directly attributable to the unprincipled conduct of the war lord soldiers. Chinese people can be patient only so long.

The consternation of the war lords—especially Sun Chuan-fang—over the Nationalists' onward rush was matched in no small way by that of foreign interests in China. The new Kuomintang government had pledged itself against imperialism in no uncertain terms. Incidents like the Shanghai Settlement police firing into the student demonstrators in May, 1925, had only whetted the anti-foreign sentiments of the party. And these sentiments seemed amply demonstrated in the heavy destruction of foreign property by the Nationalists at Hankow.

When the Southerners began threatening the Shanghai area, foreign authorities in the port city made plans for evacuating their nationals from the interior. The American consul-general, Edwin S. Cunningham, selected the newly popular radio as his medium. Practically all American communities—business and religious—in the Shanghai hinterland were equipped with receiving sets. Burke had rigged up a five-tube three-dialler just a few months before.

Cunningham proceeded to order all Americans in his territory to report to the Consulate General at Shanghai as soon as possible. Burke did so on one of his weekly trips to the port. When he presented himself, Cunningham

reminded him of the anti-foreign background of the Kuomintang and of what had happened at Hankow.

"There is every evidence that foreigners in this section will be endangered," the consul-general continued. "If they are, I want to send out the necessary warnings to Americans in the interior. Regular communications probably will be disrupted, but with almost all American communities having radio sets, I've decided to make use of that method. So I have devised a set of simple code messages to be given over station KRC at frequent intervals in case of trouble. I think you can remember them easily without having to write them down.

"The first message is: 'William is sick.' That will mean the situation is fairly dangerous.

"The second message is: 'William is sick and needs an operation.' That will mean the situation is serious and you should evacuate, or at least make all preparations to do so.

"The third message is: 'William is dying.' That will mean the situation is extremely critical and no time must be lost in evacuating to Shanghai."

Burke nodded at the end of each explanation. When Cunningham had finished, he said, "All right, Mr. Cunningham, I'll keep those in mind—but I don't think there'll be any trouble around Sungkiang."

The big missionary always had a feeling bordering on impatience for American consular officials who sat in rumour-rich spots like Shanghai and advised people in the interior what they should do. Sungkiang was his home; had been for forty years. He knew everybody there. It was ridiculous to think of being subject to any anti-foreignism there.

Chiang Kai-shek's men swept through Sungkiang and on to Shanghai late in March, 1927. Sun Chuan-fang's army and the Shantung-Chihli-Fengtien forces sent by northern war lords to help him wilted like so much underbrush in a fire. As in 1924, retreating troops ran pell-mell through the Big Street—only this time they were Sun's soldiers and those of his northern allies. Smoke rose in the eastern districts, marking the progress of looting. War lord troops remained war lord troops to the end.

Among the last stragglers retreating along the Big Street was a captain who had been wounded in the leg. When he reached the mission gates, he turned in and collapsed on the compound lawn. Burke had the man picked up and carried to the Bible-school dormitory, where he was put to bed and the wound looked after by Burke's Chinese associate, a foreign-trained physican named Yang Wei-han. Dr. Yang and Burke had a revealing interview with the captain the following day.

"Why did Sun Chuan-fang's army put up such a poor fight?" he was asked.

"Treachery!" The wounded man spat. "In the first battle west of Sungkiang, our commander sent a mission to the enemy to discuss the intervals of artillery fire. The little Monkey Men (term of contempt Northern Chinese sometimes used in reference to Cantonese) agreed to fire at three-minute intervals. We remained true to the bargain, but the Monkeys began firing at all intervals, wreaking devastation in our ranks."

Again, as during the 1924–1925 fighting, refugees poured in. The farmers weren't altogether certain about how the new conquerors—good advance notices though they had had—would really act. They had heard the Southerners were a real people's army, bent only on freeing the Chinese from the war lords—but the farmers were sceptical. So they came again to Burke's compound, in which they knew by experience they would be safe.

The entry of the Kuomintang army into Sungkiang produced results strangely different from those which followed any entry of war lord troops. There was no looting. The new blue-and-white Nationalist flags went up everywhere. Uniformed students with the army gathered groups of citizens in vacant squares and lectured to them on nationalism. One thing did impress Burke more than others, though. The tone of the lectures was definitely anti-foreign. But he passed it off with the thought that the students were not from Sungkiang. Sungkiang people wouldn't pay any attention to it.

It was then that the Nanking incident (March 24th) flared up to shock the world. Kuomintang troops entering the capital organized and led wild mobs—or at least some eyewitnesses said so—which went about shouting for the blood of the two hundred-odd foreigners—mostly American and British—in the city. Foreign homes were looted and men and women stripped. One foreign woman was shot twice through the body and another was raped. Most of the foreign colony finally found refuge either in Nanking University or in the Standard Oil Company godown on what was known as Socony Hill. The mobs pushed an attack on the latter and had not one British and two American warships in the river below opened fire with cannon and machine guns, there might have been considerable splattering of Occidental blood. The then American-owned *China Press* in Shanghai came out the following Sunday (March 27th) with a two-column eyewitness story of the Nanking "outrage" and described the participating Kuomintangs as "veritable fiends incarnate."

General Chiang Kai-shek, who was in the process of making his famous swing to the right, disclaimed all responsibility for Nanking. He said the violence was cooked up by the Communists in his party as a means of embarrassing him. He vowed severe measures against the Reds—and took them.

Whatever the real explanation for the Nanking affair, it jolted Consul-General Cunningham into telephoning Station KRC. That night Burke turned on his set and heard, between two recorded musical selections:

"William is dying! William is dying!"

There were nine foreign missionaries and two children at Sungkiang then —all in the Southern Methodist compound. They were Burke. Leila, and James; the Reverend C. R. Moseley (a young man just arrived in China) and his wife and baby; and four women missionaries: the Misses Nell D. Drake, Lucie Clark, Mary Culler White, and Cornelia Crozier. Burke, of course, was the senior at the station and therefore responsible for the others' safety. He came to a quick decision. He couldn't understand the reason for the consul-general's message (Cunningham had acted as soon as he saw the first wireless report from the American gunboats; no word of the Nanking trouble had reached Sungkiang), but he felt he'd better at least get the wives and children out. Moseley could go with them. He would leave it up to the single women whether they wanted to stay in Sungkiang or not. He himself had no intention of evacuating.

The four women elected to stay and the Georgian was glad, because they were a great help in the refugee work. After starting Leila and Mrs. Moseley packing a few essentials, Burke walked to the railroad station to see what could be done about transportation to Shanghai. The stationmaster said regular passenger service would not be resumed for some time, but there was a troop train due in from Hangchow the next morning. It was going to Shanghai and the women and children might be able to take it.

In the morning, the two wives and their children rode to the station in sedan chairs. Burke and Moseley and servants with the baggage followed on foot. The station was full of Kuomintang soldiers, distinguished by the twelve-pointed white sun buttons on the front of their caps. They were all armed—rifles, bayonets, pistols, bulging cartridge belts. They were patrolling the platform, occupying the waiting rooms, sprawled out on all the benches. But none seemed interested in molesting the foreigners. Burke led the way out to the pebbled platform, where the two women sat on their suitcases with their children.

The troop train would be a little late, the stationmaster said. At noon, when it still hadn't made its appearance, Burke went back to the mission to get some lunch for everyone. At four o'clock, the train finally chuffed in.

There were twenty boxcars jammed with soldiers and three passenger coaches only slightly less packed with officers and some men. Burke went up to the first coach and explained the situation to an officer on its platform. Two American missionary wives and their two children and an escort must get to Shanghai. Could they ride on this train?

The officer seemed to understand the dialect and disappeared into the coach to confer with his superior. He came back and said courteously, "They may come with us."

Inside the car every seat was taken, but two men got up to let Leila and Mrs. Moseley sit down. The latter held her baby while James sat on the arm of his mother's seat. Mr. Moseley sat on the baggage. The car was dirty and full of tobacco smoke. But the Chinese were very friendly. Several officers came over and smiled and tried to talk. One could speak Mandarin and Burke made out that he wanted to know how old James was. Burke told him. Then there were some more questions, some of which could be understood and some couldn't.

When the train started and Burke got off, he found himself wondering why American consuls should get so heated up about the Kuomintangs. It seemed rather ironic that the flight of the wives and children was being made possible by the very troops from whom they were supposed to be fleeing.

That night Burke heard for the first time on his radio something about the Nanking incident, but he immediately discounted it as more Shanghai gossip.

"Those are the wildest folks up there in Shanghai!" he exploded when he went over to tell the four women the news.

In Shanghai, the consul-general was much upset when Leila told him her husband and the four women were remaining in Sungkiang.

"They've got to get out of there, Mrs. Burke," he said. "Mr. Burke doesn't seem to realize the gravity of this thing. What happened in Nanking may spread to every foreign community in this section of China. I'm going over to the radio station and make a personal appeal to him. What time is he most likely to be listening in?"

"About six-thirty in the evening," Leila replied. "He usually turns on his set when he sits down to eat."

"Would you care to go along to the station with me?" the consul-general then asked. "It would be an unusual experience for you."

Leila was thrilled by the idea. She met Cunningham at the Palace Hotel and the two walked across Nanking Road to the KRC studio in the Kelly and Walsh Building. While she sat near the door, the American official took his place by the microphone and waited for the signal that he was on the air. When it came, he looked sternly at the disc-shaped instrument and spoke in carefully measured words:

"Mr. Burke in Sungkiang. Mr. Burke in Sungkiang. This is Cunningham. Mr. Burke, William is dying and President Coolidge is calling for you. Do you understand? President Coolidge is calling for you. You must come out with the four ladies."

Burke put down his fork and stared at the radio. If there had been anyone in the room to hear him, he would have said, "What in the name of common Christendom is the matter with Cunningham?" But there was no one else in the room—except his dog, Ah-zeu—so he just stared at the radio.

The situation in Sungkiang, instead of growing worse, seemed to be returned to almost normal. The city was still full of troops, but outside the few anti-foreign speeches there was no suggestion of danger for himself or the ladies. Leaving Sungkiang would mean leaving all his work. His orphanage, his schools, his church, and the refugees—many of whom still wouldn't leave the mission sanctuary. His duty undoubtedly was in Sungkiang with the Chinese. He couldn't run away and leave his native co-workers alone at a time like this. He hated the thought of running away under any circumstances.

But Cunningham had put the matter in such a way that it was hard to do anything except leave. Burke was a loyal American always and the "Coolidge" line had got under his skin. Well, perhaps there was a real danger he didn't know about. And there were the ladies to think about.

As the missionary took his eyes off the radio—which was now in the middle of a record—he noticed Ah-zeu looking at him from the floor across the room. Ah-zeu was a spotted grey pointer, who had originally belonged to Moseley but long ago had attached himself permanently to Burke instead. The dog seemed to sense Burke's feelings. He got up and came over to nuzzle his nose in the missionary's lap.

"Yes, old fellow, it looks like I'll have to leave you too," the missionary said, stroking the velvety top of Ah-zeu's head. "I sure hate to do it."

Burke went across the compound to the ladies' home first and told them about the radio call. They also reluctantly agreed they had better evacuate. Then the missionary walked to the railroad station. There the stationmaster reported another troop train going to Shanghai the next day. It was due in the early afternoon this time.

Back at the mission, Burke began getting ready to leave. Kyung-san helped and the two worked until after midnight. He packed into one suitcase the few things he would take with him. Other personal things, including many of his books, he put in boxes and trunks in the attic. The account books, papers, money, and other important items belonging to the schools and orphanage he put together to turn over to Dr. Yang in the morning.

The women missionaries prepared in the same way. In the morning, they and Burke attended opening classes at their respective schools. They casually told the students they were making a visit to Shanghai. They told the real reason to the principal co-workers and begged them to try to keep things running as usual. They would return as soon as possible.

The evacuees reached the station about one o'clock. The mission servants carried the seven or eight small pieces of luggage. Some of the co-workers came along to see them off. One of them was even going along to Shanghai with them if he could. He was a native preacher, whose regular station was at the Southern Methodist chapel in the Chinese section of South Shanghai. He had been in Sungkiang since the fighting began and now wanted to get back to his post.

The station was crowded with soldiers as before. They took even less interest in the foreigners than when Leila and Mrs. Moseley had gone, for James and the Moseley baby were real attractions then. The train was late again. When it finally did come at nine that night, there was some difficulty getting aboard.

Burke led the party, trailed by the servants with the baggage, to about the middle of the train, where the boxcars stopped and the coaches began. There were seven or eight coaches on this train. But they were either more crowded or the occupants were less friendly than before. When the missionary tried to get on the first car, he was waved back by troops who crowded its platform. The same happened at each coach on back to the last car at the rear. This one seemed strictly reserved for officers and wasn't so crowded. Burke was allowed to board it and the four ladies followed him, with the baggage shoved on behind. The Chinese preacher apparently had slipped into one of the forward cars.

The officers' coach, this time, was one of the third-class type, with benches running lengthwise along the sides and in the centre. Two of the women found seats. Burke and the other two women sat on the baggage just inside the car. The officers seemed friendly enough and Burke was soon in conversation with those who could speak the dialect.

Ordinarily, the trip to Shanghai by train took only an hour, but the long crowded troop train moved very slowly, stopping and starting all along the way. It was after midnight when it at last pulled in the Shanghai South Station. The North Station in the International Settlement, which was the usual terminal, had been burned in the recent fighting. The South Station was in the Chinese city, on that side of Shanghai next to the French Concession. Rickshaws or a carriage could be got to take them across to the Settlement.

But when Burke hailed some baggage coolies on the station platform and told them he intended going into the Settlement, they shook their heads. There was martial law in the foreign sections, they said, and a strict ten-o'clock curfew was in effect. Every entrance to the French Concession was barricaded with barbed-wire fences. No one could get through. Not even foreigners, unless they had special permits, which Burke didn't have. It

looked as though the mission party would be obliged to spend the night in the dirty station.

The Chinese preacher solved the problem. Turning up out of the crowds of soldiers leaving the train, he told the coolies to carry the baggage to the street and get a carriage.

"My church, as you may remember, is on the boundary of the Chinese and foreign cities," he explained to Burke. "The front door opens on this side and the back door into the French Concession."

The missionaries reached the church safely enough. It was so late, however, that they decided to spend the rest of the night there instead of trying to get across the concessions to the Southern Methodist headquarters in Hongkew. So they stretched out on the benches. Some slept, but one of the ladies rose and walked around the room when her bench got too hard.

Early in the morning, the preacher and his wife came in and invited the five missionaries to their little parsonage next door. There a hot breakfast was set out. It was still too early, after eating, for the barricades to be lifted, but the missionaries took advantage of the church rear door and went into the French Concession. Rickshaws were hailed and they rode to Hongkew.

Later that morning, Burke went to the Consulate General and reported his and the four women's safe arrival. Cunningham was inclined to be impatient with him for tarrying so long in Sungkiang.

"You should have known it was dangerous to stay down there after my first radio warning," he scolded.

"I didn't know any such thing," Burke retorted, a trifle irritable from the troublesome trip. "If you consular people could ever get to seeing any farther than Shanghai, you wouldn't have such wild notions. It was the Kuomintang troops who got us out of Sungkiang, you know. They couldn't have been nicer about it."

As Burke's furlough was due the following year anyway, he decided to send Leila and James on to America immediately. Conditions very likely wouldn't improve enough in a year for the consular authorities to advise women and children's returning to the interior. At least that was what Cunningham had intimated. So there was no point in their staying cooped up in temporary quarters in Shanghai. The Dollar liner *President Taft* was sailing in April and Burke got the two passage on her.

A lot of other business and missionary people had the same idea and the *Taft* and other ships leaving Shanghai for home ports were crowded. It was the first large-scale evacuation since the Boxer days, but there was a fundamental difference. The Boxers had been a small minority force with no basis for growth or survival. The Nationalists, from whom the foreigners fled in 1927, represented the emergence of an expanding wave of Asiatic

self-consciousness against which Western imperialism—business and religious—was utterly doomed. That was more than was realized at the time, of course. As during the Boxer crisis, foreign troops—mostly British—hurried to Shanghai. A flight of warplanes was based on the International Racecourse, in temporary straw hangars. By August of 1927, there were an estimated 164 warships of various nationalities in the Whangpoo and Yangtze.

Burke's mind, however, was occupied with Sungkiang. With his family out of the way, he wanted to get back to his work. He could see it disintegrating with no proper supervision. The orphanage might not be getting any subsidy during the change in local government. He called daily at the consulate general, but one of the consuls always gave him the same stock answer:

"The present unsettled conditions, Mr. Burke, simply do not warrant foreigners' return to the interior."

Burke would argue that the unsettled conditions were mostly in Shanghai itself and that it was safer to be in the interior. He had a point there too. For when Chiang Kai-shek turned on Kuomintang Communists with all his merciless fury, the port city underwent a reign of terror such as it had never known.

Shanghai was the centre of trade-unions, radical student groups, and real Reds. It was these leftists who had paved the way for the Kuomintang military triumph. But now circumstances were changed. Troops had to be fed, more had to be enlisted, victories had to be consolidated. The realistic Chiang needed Shanghai's capitalist gold more than he needed radical favour. T. V. Soong could arrange for the gold, but the price was extermination of the Reds. So Chiang began exterminating them.

The port's notorious and dreaded underworld gang, the Greens, was brought into the plot. Chiang had once been a Green himself. Together with the general's own secret police, the Greens launched the terror campaign. Young students, labour leaders, and real Reds were slaughtered by the hundreds.

In Hankow, where most of the leftish leaders of the party were congregated, horror was expressed and a separate Kuomintang government was set up. Chiang was repudiated. Among the bitterest repudiators was Sun Yat-sen's widow. Chungling had stuck much truer by her hero's ideals than the doctor had himself. She had witnessed with triumph the military successes of his army and had even ridden along with it in an American-built sedan chair. Now, the leader of that army and her husband's own protégé, Chiang Kai-shek, was turning against the cause—turning against it when it seemed within grasp. The shock drove Chungling farther left than ever, even to the point of seclusion in Moscow.

35
Ward has a Rival

A FEW DAYS AFTER Leila and James sailed, Lok turned up in Shanghai. He had come by boat. Train service still was disrupted. The scholar found his way to the Hongkew mission home where Burke was staying.

"The radicals are beginning to make much trouble in Sungkiang," Lok told his friend. "Many of them are in the interior now, since being driven out of places like Shanghai. In time they will be driven out of Sungkiang also, but now they are in control. They are trying to stop all your mission work—even the orphanage, in spite of the fact that I and the other trustees have pointed out to them that it was not a foreign institution.

"If you were personally in Sungkiang," the scholar continued, "your long and respected influence among the people would soon outweigh the radicals' efforts. They could not preach effectively against foreigners in Sungkiang if you were there to represent the foreigner. This is why I felt I must come see you."

It was exactly what Burke needed to direct his energy. He'd been groping for days for just this tangible reason to return to Sungkiang. If he remained in Shanghai another day now, he'd be no better than those who'd fled Sungkiang in the Kiangsu-Chekiang war. In fact, he already felt he was in their class. He remembered how bitter he'd been about their feeble transportation excuse for not returning.

He did not bother to see Cunningham. He saw nothing to be gained from another useless argument with that consular official or any of his aides. Instead, he scratched out a chit closing:

> ". . . and I can feel nothing else but that it is my simple duty to return to Sungkiang. There is nothing mock heroic in this decision to leave Shanghai against the safety advice of my government's representatives. I came to China to devote my life to the service of the Chinese people and when the time comes that I must choose between my personal comfort and the needs of those whom duty has bound me to serve, the choice is plain to me. I sincerely hope my action will cause no bother."

That afternoon scholar and missionary caught a launch going up the Whangpoo as far as the town of Minhang. There they spent the night on

the bare floor of a native inn. Next morning they rented an express boat to take them on to Sungkiang.

They arrived late in the afternoon. Everything seemed peaceful except near the landing where Burke and Lok were to disembark. There, in the space under a memorial arch, a crowd was standing listening to a youth in Nationalist garb. He was reviewing the crimes of Western imperialism from the Opium War to the sweatshop factories of modern Shanghai. Foreigners to the last man must be driven from the soil of China.

At that moment the student caught sight of the tall, bald missionary walking up the stone steps of the landing. He was a stranger in Sungkiang and knew nothing about Burke. All he saw was a foreigner. Fine. Now he had something concrete to give the crowd. He pointed a finger in the direction of Burke and shouted:

"There is a foreigner! He represents what I have been telling you. Catch the devil and beat him!"

The crowd turned. They had been whipped into a fair state of excitement and might conceivably have done some damage. But the people on the outer fringe of the throng changed the situation immediately by loudly passing the word back:

"This is no foreigner. This is Boo Sien-sang. He's a lau Soongkaung nyung (old Sungkiang man)."

Sungkiang was completely in the hands of the radicals, however, and the news of the frustrated attempt to have Burke attacked only infuriated them. So they added his name to a blacklist of eighteen prominent Sungkiang gentlemen, including Lok, whom they branded as "landlords." The victims would be publicly disgraced, It was a typical Communist trick.

The ones who had drawn up the blacklist apparently were young zestfuls who were subordinate to the actual local leaders of the Kuomintang. When Lok found out about the matter, he went directly to the chiefs. They weren't Sungkiang men either, but he knew one of them well from the old revolution days at Nanking. Lok pointed out the injustice of the list and the chiefs agreed to remove his name as well as those of Burke and all the others except one chap, whom even the scholar had to admit was rather an unregenerate Scrooge.

This unfortunate fellow was paraded up and down the Big Street barefooted and wearing a paper duncecap. A Kuomintang man walked behind holding the end of a rope which was noosed lightly around the landlord's neck. Two other party men carried signs describing him as a symbol of avaricious capitalism. But the episode won no sympathy from the respectable elements of the city.

The out-of-town radicals didn't abandon their antipathy toward Burke.

He received two notes threatening his life and Lok begged him to ride in a closed sedan chair when he left the compound. But he sniffed disparagingly at the idea and continued walking through the streets as he always had.

On one occasion, he ran squarely into a parade which the radicals had organized among some local public school students. The marchers carried Kuomintang flags and white banners inscribed with denunciations of foreigners. The students chorused out the denunciations in rote at frequent intervals for the benefit of illiterate bystanders. When Burke came abreast of the young marchers, they bowed respectfully to him as they passed, saying:

"Boo Sien-sang, hau (an equivalent of How do you do, Mr. Burke)."

Such was the normal reaction of the people among whom Burke had already spent two-thirds of his life. They knew him as one of them, who spoke their language and helped them in time of trouble. They could quite consistently be anti-foreign and pro-Burke, a fact which finally impressed itself upon the out-of-town radicals, and halted any further attempts to dislodge Burke.

As a matter of fact, there was only one more small brush between the local Kuomintang leaders and the people of Sungkiang over Burke. This really had its origin at a feast given by Daung Tse-kau.

Daung was the merchant whom Burke had saved from the foot-burning looters in the first Kiangsu-Chekiang war. Ever since his harrowing night, he had been considering some suitable way in which he and the Sungkiang public in general could express their appreciation to the missionary. Shortly after Burke's return from Shanghai in 1927, Daung thought of a way and invited a dozen Sungkiang gentlemen, including Lok, to his home for dinner. There he proposed his plan.

"I think the people of Sungkiang could in no better way show their gratefulness for the services Mr. Burke has rendered them than by erecting a pavilion to his memory," Daung told his guests.

A chorus of "hau" (good) answered him.

"I have thought an appropriate site for this memorial to our friend would be on the small hill south of the Doo Mo-loo (Big Horse Road). Here it would be seen by all. I also propose that the entire hill be converted into a public garden to provide proper upkeep for the memorial in years to come."

Again "hau" rose from the table.

"Now, as probably the greatest single beneficiary of Mr. Burke's good deeds," Daung continued, "I shall donate the bulk of the cost of the memorial. However, I wanted your approval and perhaps some additional contributions to make it truly an expression of gratitude by the Sungkiang people."

Lok was elected to tell Burke about the pavilion project. It wasn't an easy

assignment, for the missionary bucked stormily. There was no sense in the idea, he argued. It was very nice of Daung to want to do a thing like that, but if he had to do something, why not do something practical such as building a stone gateway for the orphanage? There was a real need for that and it would certainly serve a more useful purpose than a pavilion stuck up on a hill. He was so insistent that Lok took the matter back up with Daung.

But the merchant would not hear of anything so inconspicuous as a gateway for the orphanage, which was stuck away on a little side street. Chinese love display. And Daung had plenty of Chinese vanity. If he was sponsoring a memorial for a benefactor, he didn't want his sense of appreciation to go unseen. At any rate, Daung won and the pavilion went up on the Big Horse Road hill.

It was a dainty little hexagon-shaped structure with a pointed tile roof which swooped up at the eaves in six graceful flanges. A bronze crane, with outspread wings and stretched neck, stood atop the roof point. Around the pavilion was a stone platform encircled by a stone balustrade. Three flights of wide stone steps led up from the Big Horse Road at the bottom of the hill. Four little stone lions sat on posts guarding the approach of the last flight. Half the sides of the pavilion itself were walled up, making a shrinelike interior in which a black stone memorial tablet was ensconced. The inscription which had been cut in the tablet in long vertical lines of characters was headed:

A Monument in Memory of an American Missionary

The inscription went on to describe Burke as "a man of high ideals" who had "rendered a great deal of service." The period of the Kiangsu-Chekiang war was taken up in some detail:

> During September and October of the Thirteenth year of our Republic the war broke out. Unfortunately Sungkiang's position made the city the focus of the dispute. The inhabitants here were in dread and fear and many of them moved to Shanghai. Mr. Lok Kwe-liang declared, "Sungkiang is in danger. If all of us should move away, who will defend our city?" Then he visited Mr. Burke and asked him for aid. Mr. Burke responded to the request in a most generous way. He called his friends together and established an institution as a shelter for women and children. Mr. Burke was elected president and Mr. Lok vice-president. In a short time flocks of people came and they were provided with food, sleeping quarters, and medicines. During this critical time, the most dangerous event happened when the Chekiang troops were evacuating eastward and the Fukien army was coming in

from the west. Hundreds of boats sailed up and down the canal outside the city and the armed soldiers marched through the streets and firing was continuous. At this time of danger, the magistrate fled. There were several different groups of soldiers entering the city. The Fukien troops under General Zia Hung-hyuin, the Anhwei troops under General Sz Tsing-nyok, and the Kiangsu troops under General Bei Pao-san. Orders came from different heads, so there was confusion and a great tumult prevailed. The merchants stopped their business, the soldiers crowded in the streets and the rogues took this opportunity to do many harmful things. During these days of difficulty, Mr. Burke and Mr. Lok were busy in the streets doing service for the people. They asked the military leaders to punish the rascals and to control the soldiers. They also tried to help and comfort the people who suffered. Mr. Lok is a native of Sungkiang and it is no wonder that he should do what he could to defend the city and help his people. Mr. Burke is just a foreigner here, but he saw the urgent need and acted with promptness even at great risk to his personal safety. His unselfish nature and courage are admirable. It must be remembered that during the period of the Hung Yang [Taiping] Rebellion in the Ch'ing dynasty, Li Hung-chang asked the American, General Frederick Ward to come and relieve Sungkiang, which he readily did. For this, we pay respect to him even to this day. Now Mr. Burke is also an American gentleman and has brought the spirit of God's love and has sacrificed for the sake of brotherliness. His service has been even greater than that of General Ward, so we, the people of Sungkiang, who have received this favour, have built this pavilion in Mr. Burke's honour, not only that we may show our respect and appreciation, but that we may show his merit clearly to the generations yet to come.

The pavilion was dedicated in a formal ceremony. Present were the local gentry, members of the mission from Shanghai and Soochow, a crowd of common people, and above all, Sungkiang's new Kuomintang-appointed magistrate. About the only person who should have been there and wasn't was the honouree himself. Burke had pleaded a long-made previous preaching engagement at Loktiauwan. And he did leave Sungkiang in the direction of that village.

Not all the local Kuomintang leaders, however, had been won over like the magistrate. The day after the dedication, the following item appeared in Sungkiang's party newspaper:

"The memorial pavilion which was erected on the south side of the

Big Horse Road to the name of Mr. Burke is considered as only a bit of flattery and ought to be altered so as to do honour to the name of Sun Yat-sen."

This precipitated a full crisis between the Sungkiang gentry and the radical Kuomintang men. The moderate party people, of which the magistrate was one, tried to work out some compromise. The best answer seemed to be to erect another pavilion to the memory of Dr. Sun and leave Burke's memorial as his Sungkiang friends wanted it. The magistrate officially approved this idea and it was referred to the provincial Kuomintang headquarters.

To help the provincial group make up its mind, a petition was drawn up and signed by twenty leading Sungkiang citizens, including Lok and Daung. It opened:

"The purpose of this petition is to beseech and, if possible, obtain protection of a memorial pavilion which was erected by the people of Sungkiang in memory of the Reverend William Burke and to inspire others to imitate his example in the future."

There followed a long résumé of Burke's services during the civil wars.

"No one but Mr. Burke could have done these things and they were witnessed by many," the petition stated. "Many other things he did which we are unable to report. Because of these many things, Mr. Burke became crippled and for three months was unable to walk. It was during distress like this, when killing and robbery were on all sides and when the people were helpless and in despair, that Mr. Burke acted the part of deliverer and was a blessing to them all. As an expression of their gratitude and esteem they made voluntary gifts of money and erected a memorial pavilion on the Doo Mo-loo Hill. The people have not thought of such a thing as trying 'to flatter a foreigner.' What they did was an expression of their highest, noblest thought and feeling. The merit of Sun Yat-sen was very great. None before excelled him, nor will any who follow him be greater. We ought to erect a memorial to Dr. Sun and there are many notable places in Sungkiang where a memorial can be erected to his honour; but we ought also to have respect for the wishes of the people who erected this memorial to Mr. Burke. By doing so, the wishes of the people will be regarded and others will be encouraged and inspired to imitate the example of Mr. Burke."

The petitioners followed this with a special letter to the new governor of Kiangsu, Miau Ping, and one to Niu Yung-chien, chairman of the provincial legislature—the same General Niu who had "borrowed" the orphanage funds during the counter-revolution, but he was a Sungkiang man and would put his weight behind the wishes of the petitioners.

All these efforts apparently had their effect. The Kiangsu *Provincial Gazette* came out with an editorial urging the preservation of the Burke memorial. The provincial party headquarters referred the problem to the central party headquarters at Nanking. After only a short delay, the secretary of the central headquarters wrote as follows to the provincial headquarters:

> "The erection of a memorial to Sun Yat-sen need not interfere with the memorial pavilion erected to William Burke. Since this Mr. Burke was zealous in doing social work for the people, let his memorial pavilion remain undisturbed. Please inform the Sungkiang Party Headquarters of our decision."

36

New Nationalism

DECEMBER 1, 1927, in Shanghai marked one of the more auspicious nuptials in history—that of Mayling Soong and Chiang Kai-shek.

Most of the background of this marriage has become fairly familiar reading—Chiang's eight years' persistent courtship and Mother Soong's vehement opposition on the grounds Chiang wasn't a Christian and hadn't been properly divorced from his first wife. (It is interesting to note that all three Soong girls were wooed by men who had been previously wed in child-betrothal affairs—a fact which in itself identifies the sisters and their mates with the transition from the old to the new in China.)

There also was opposition from Madame Sun. Chungling had been quoted in the first years of the courtship as saying she'd rather see her little sister dead than married to Chiang, whose youthful romances with pretty Cantonese belles were the talk of that southern port. Chungling, like most leftists, had the capacity of applying morality with emotional abandon rather than any logical consistency. Since Chiang's turn to reaction, of course, the second Soong sister's stand against the marriage was even more

bitter. However, Chungling was never the real obstacle Mother Soong was. Modern China hadn't torn up all the old roots. Parents, especially an old mother, were respected. More than that, Mayling knew another case of elopement would kill Mother Soong.

So, first, Mayling saw to it that Chiang got a proper divorce. The Christianization problem was tougher. The general was a solid sort of character and wasn't willing to become a Christian—at a moment's notice. He did promise to study the Bible and decide later, a compromise which apparently pleased the mother well enough. But there was one other thing Mother Soong wanted—a Christian marriage ceremony by a Southern Methodist minister.

Mother Soong might as well have wished for Charlie's resurrection. There was a clause in the *Discipline* of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South strictly forbidding—on "Scriptural grounds"—any marriage after divorce.

Bishop W. N. Ainsworth, the new home bishop for the Southern Methodist missions in the Far East, was in China at the time and Mayling was anxious to get him to officiate, both for her mother's and for her own sake. Ainsworth had been president of Wesleyan College the year Mayling was enrolled there, and she had lived in his home like a member of the family. But the bishop knew his *Discipline*.

A prominent Chinese Southern Methodist minister and longtime friend of Mother Soong, Dr. Z. T. Kaung (now Bishop Kaung), was next asked. He was, of course, bound by the same disciplinary restriction, not to say the example of his bishop. The Soongs made one more attempt to get a Christian minister—this time a Shanghai Episcopalian bishop. He declined too. Then finally, and one would think rather bitterly, the family got the services of the Chinese Y.M.C.A. secretary, Dr. David Yui. He performed the Christian ceremony at the Soong home. Afterward, a more glittering civil ceremony and reception, attended by thirteen hundred persons, was held in the ballroom of the Majestic Hotel.

Burke, from Sungkiang, viewed all these developments of Mayling's marriage with mixed feelings. He admired Chiang as a military leader, but he, like Chungling, felt the general's morals weren't as fine as they should be for the husband of Mayling. He felt too that Charlie would have disapproved, as in the case of Dr. Sun. The missionary's disappointment, however, was countered by the open way in which Mayling had gone about the thing. There had been no eloping to Japan. And now that she had married Chiang. Burke forgot some of his earlier prejudice in the belief the general would be made a godlier man by the new union.

The summer after Chiang's marriage, Burke spent his sabbatical leave in America. He found it pleasant to be back in Macon awhile. He had a grand-

son now, Edward's boy. And besides his own immediate family, Macon and not-far-distant Atlanta were generously sprinkled with nieces and nephews, who thought the world of their "Uncle Will." He lived with Leila and John and James in a small bungalow in north Macon and spent warm afternoons in the porch swing, helping James and a neighbour youth with their high school Latin. William came from New York Christmas to make it a full family reunion—except for Gordon in China.

It was nice for a year—this being with family and around old haunts—but when someone suggested retiring—now that he was sixty-five—Burke became restless. His heart and mind were back in China already. He combed papers and magazines for news of developments there. It hurt him to hear jokes or mean criticism about the Chinese people, who were fighting for national rights against such tremendous handicaps of space, population, language, selfish leaders, and vicious neighbours. The missionary had expressed some of his thoughts on the subject when he first arrived in Macon on the furlough. They appeared in an article written by Willie Snow Ethridge for the Sunday Magazine of the Macon *Telegraph* on September 16, 1928.

"If China can just have peace now for twenty years, she will accomplish great things," he told his interviewer. "But Japan isn't going to let China become united if she can help it. So China will have to fight Japan before she can be a free self-respecting nation. China is now suffering patiently until she can build up her army and the spirit of her people so that she may have victory when she does fight. Some people believe she will be ready to fight Japan in ten years—but I don't know."

Mrs. Ethridge got another interesting observation out of Burke, this time on missionary work.

"The Chinese are difficult subjects to convert to Christianity at best," he said. "They are satisfied with the religion they have. Most of them are ancestor worshippers and they have the idea it would be disrespectful to accept a new religion. We try to make them see that they should revere their ancestors and worship Christ, but it is very difficult."

This statement somehow reflected forty-one years of experience—forty-one years since he had stood on the deck of the *Yokohama Maru*, exultant with youthful energy and confidence over the task of converting China's millions. The energy and confidence were still there, but they were tempered by understanding.

Burke returned to China in the autumn of 1929. He went back alone. Leila's health was poor and it seemed best for her to stay in Georgia to make a home for James while he was in school.

A few weeks after the missionary reached Sungkiang—it was unthinkable

now for the mission conference to assign him anywhere else, regardless of the migratory policy of Methodists—he saw good evidence for his faith in Mayling's influence over Chiang Kai-shek. The generalissimo (as he was being called) became a Christian—and a Southern Methodist at that. Dr. Kaung, the Chinese minister who had been cheated out of the privilege of marrying China's strong man, made up for himself by doing the baptizing. Afterward he told a rather classic story about the whole affair. He told it in an article appearing in Hong Kong's *South China Morning Post* on January 17, 1941 (whether thirteen years mellows one's memory is, of course, debatable).

> "One night in 1928 I dreamed a dream, that Chiang sat on my right hand and his wife on my left and across our laps lay a dark green steamer rug; we were out motoring somewhere. About three months later, I received an urgent telegram from Madame Chiang asking me to go to Nanking immediately. I arrived there early the next morning. Madame Chiang wanted me to talk salvation to the General, but he was too busy with state affairs. Madame Chiang suggested that we go for a motor ride as it was impossible to talk anything in the office except national affairs. There were three cars; we entered the second, and the General invited me to take the centre seat. Thus he sat on my right hand and Madame Chiang on my left. Up till then I did not recall my dream, but when a servant placed a steamer rug across our laps it came back to my mind. Riding around Nanking, Madame Chiang urged her husband to accept the Christian faith by formal baptism, saying that I was leaving for the United States soon and would not be back for some months. General Chiang replied that he had just finished reading the New Testament and he was beginning to read the Old Testament. He added that he wanted to learn more about the Christian religion before entering the Christian Church. I agreed with him and told him that if he were ready to be baptized when I returned from America, I should be happy to do so. While I was in America, a civil war broke out between a rebellious general and the Central Government. . . . [Chiang] was trapped near Kaifeng by his enemies, surrounded, with nearly all the ways of escape cut off. His headquarters were by a railroad siding. In this predicament, he went to a small country church and prayed earnestly for God's help, promising that he would accept Christ as his Lord if he were delivered. His prayers were answered; a heavy snowstorm broke and held up his enemies' advance, and reinforcements arrived two days later. Thus his life was not only saved but an apparent defeat had been turned into victory. Then it was that he made up his mind to accept

Christ. When I returned from America, I was asked to baptize the leader of China into the membership of the Christian Church."

Some cynical critics of Chiang's conversion—taking note of the eight million-odd Methodists in America and China's need for American support in the inevitable clash with Japan—said, "There's Methodism in his madness." But there were many, Christian and non-Christian, who would vouch for the generalissimo's sincerity.

Chiang Kai-shek has been called an "Old Testament Christian," which was roughly consistent with the vengeful cruelty of his campaign against the Kuomintang's Communist dissenters. After their Hankow government crumbled, they had kept up a tantalizing guerrilla resistance against Chiang's Nanking régime. The generalissimo finally drove the "bandits"—as he called them—into the south-east, where he built a virtual death ring of pill-boxes around them and tried to exterminate them—but the Reds escaped in their now-famous "long march."

Chiang's methods may have been a bit Oriental, but they were the expression of a genuine and urgent desire to unify and strengthen China against a supreme Japanese attack—an attack which would make 1894, 1904, the Twenty-one Demands, and Nishihara look infantile. Chiang knew that attack would come because he knew Japanese mentality. He had gone to military school in Japan in his youth and listened to the little men's humourless talk of their divine mission to rule the earth. And he must have sensed that the opening phase of the supreme attack on China was set off by the bomb which exploded on the railway outside Mukden on the night of September 18, 1931—the signal for the Nipponese hordes to overrun the Chinese provinces of Manchuria and set up their little puppet state of Manchukuo.

Violent anti-Japanese movements developed in China following the Manchurian invasion. Shanghai was the centre of them, for Shanghai was the hotbed of anti-Japanese feeling. Not the least of the reasons were the thirty thousand Japanese residents in and around the Hongkew section—which had been dubbed "Little Tokyo." Posters on windows, doorways, walls, and telephone poles shrieked: "Boycott Japanese goods!" "Arm yourselves and fight the Japanese!" "Down with Japanese imperialism!" "Kill the Japanese!" And toward the end of January, 1932, open violence had been precipitated by angry Chinese mobs of workers and students.

When the Japanese Navy took up the challenge, its landing parties were met by the Cantonese Nineteenth Route Army, a semi-independent but nonetheless determined outfit which had quietly prepared positions around Shanghai during the preliminary civilian violence.

News of the hostilities caused much excitement in Sungkiang. Twenty-five or thirty people gathered on the veranda of Burke's home daily to listen to the radio news. The missionary would tune in the Chinese-language station in Shanghai and throw open the French windows leading on to the veranda. The mission schools were forced to close, as the patriotic students were in no mood for study. Nor did Burke much blame them. His terse diary notation the day he first heard of the fighting in Shanghai had been:

"The Japanese formally started their devilment last night."

The gallant resistance of General Tsai Ting-kai and his Nineteenth Army to the overwhelming force of ships and men which the Japanese threw into Shanghai already is legendary. When Tsai finally was compelled to withdraw early in March, his popularity had momentarily eclipsed Chiang Kai-shek's. Patriots and liberals the world over berated the latter for not bringing his army to the aid of the brave defender and starting a full-scale war with Japan immediately. These critics, of course, were blind to the somewhat fragile political factors involved in Chiang's relations with Tsai and the fiery Canton faction. But above all, the Nanking generalissimo's reason for not involving China then—or on several other provocative occasions before 1937—in a general war was his realization that the country was thoroughly unprepared for any such venture.

So the generalissimo hurried on with his Old Testament policy of unifying and strengthening China for the inevitable battle to come. Boys and older men were drafted to military service. Burke watched these Kuomintang conscripts in Sungkiang training on what had been the drill grounds of the old Imperial garrison. They went smartly through modern manœuvres with rifles and machine guns, a far cry from the theatrical war games of the Tiger and Dragon teams a half-century before.

The Georgian, who in his spare moments corresponded for the *North China Daily News* (so that he could get the paper free), wrote the following story on these martial aspects of his city:

> "Sungkiang is getting quite military minded. The firemen of the city, who were enrolled about three months ago, have developed into full-fledged soldiers. Rifles have been given to them and they are given regular military drill. Citizen drill squads have been established and it is proposed to enroll males from eighteen to forty. Five schools, as they are called, have been established in different sections of the city and there are 120 men in each school. When these have received their drill they will be relieved and another 120 taken in, until all of the required age have had their drill.
>
> "There are also schools throughout the country districts and each

man there is to furnish $2 for his uniform. Last week there was quite a tempest in a teapot at a little town about five or six miles from here. The majority had provided their uniforms, but a minority did not feel able to spend $2 and made an uproar which caused the sending of guards from this city to quiet things.

"The men here seem to be in earnest and one can hear the trumpet calls to drill at 4.30 a.m. daily."

Meanwhile, the Kuomintang government tried to build up the spirit of nationalism among the people. The strong anti-foreign tone had been dropped with the squashing of the extremists in the party, but, of necessity, there had to be some reduction of former subservience to foreigners if a real brand of modern nationalism was to be achieved. So one of the government's permanent measures was a ruling that no foreigner could head any educational institution in China. This struck at Burke's orphanage superintendency and he had to give it up. But in his case it simply meant having the same responsibilities under the title of "inspector."

These kinds of expressions of nationalism met Burke's all-out sympathy until they touched on church singing. It was becoming increasingly popular to put hymns to Chinese music. Translating the words into Chinese had never brought a murmur from Burke, but the idea of changing the tunes in his Methodist hymnal was a little too much. He wouldn't protest to the Chinese, but his displeasure was so apparent—he never sang when a native-tune hymn was called for—that his co-workers in Sungkiang were careful not to include more than one of these hymns a month on the programmes they arranged. Even then Burke would grumble about them to his foreign colleagues.

"Hymns just don't sound like hymns when you stick music like that on them," he would say.

On February 19, 1934, at Nanchang, Chiang Kai-shek launched his rather idealist New Life Movement. Mayling was credited with much of its inspiration and details. New Life was to be a social regeneration based, as Chiang put it in his Nanchang speech, on the ancient virtues of China—virtues lost through modern materialism and contact with the degraded West (and degraded it appeared in places like Shanghai). To give the people a concrete idea of what was required to realize New Life, Chiang had the following twenty-one points published:

"Punctuality, struggle against illiteracy, work and acquirement of knowledge, encouragement of sports and games, good all-round education, promotion of hygiene, increased production, encouragement of defence, collection of refuse, census, encouragement of voluntary help to police,

irrigation, building and upkeep of roads, protection of nature and tree-growing, encouragement of the use of domestic wares, insurance and savings-bank systems, establishment of sick-relief funds and invalid insurance, struggle against famine and disasters, fight against opium and gambling, assistance to the air force protection, and support to the natural sciences."

It was an ambitious programme and one that brought titters from the worldly-wise—Chinese and foreigners—in the treaty ports. But the leaders of the movement, especially Mayling, soon let it be known they weren't fooling. That spring an arbor day was substituted for the day customarily reserved for burning paper ghost money on grave mounds and the money burning banned. Conservatives were shocked, and although plenty of ghost money was sold and burned that day (bans in China seldom mean what they do in Japan), a start had been made. Students from all schools—mission schools joined in enthusiastically—paraded to predesignated sites to plant trees. In Sungkiang, Burke's orphanage band led the parade.

Students naturally were the mainstay in educating the public toward New Life. They marched often in the streets with white banners inscribed with such slogans as:

"Work harder and spend less."
"Acquire habits of orderliness."
"Be frugal."
"Be ready to die for China."
"Be vaccinated against smallpox."
"Start a swat-the-fly campaign."

Burke soon had his first experience with a popular modification of the last item. Sungkiang's public school authorities organized a swat-the-fly contest and asked the missionary if his schools would join in, which they did. The rules were simple. The student who brought in the most dead flies at the end of the contest day would be given a penny for every hundred flies—not a high divisor when one considers China's fly-breeding capacity.

Judging was held on the grounds of one of the public schools. Long board tables were set up and the contestants came at the end of the day with glass jars packed with dead flies. They were dumped out on the tables, methodically tabulated by official counters, then burned in a bonfire built for that purpose.

The winner was a lad from Burke's middle school, a fact partially explained by the penny bonus the missionary had promised his pupils for every twenty-five flies they caught.

In Sungkiang, the New Life health campaign only supplemented the local

campaign Burke had been carrying on ever since science discovered bacteriology. He had lost all his early apathy about flies and mosquitoes, once he learned of their germ-carrying proclivities. But the Chinese were hard to convince. Danger from something they couldn't see was a bit far-fetched for these people. The missionary battered at them with illustrated lectures, using his magic lantern and a set of slides explaining flies, mosquitoes, and germ cycles. One night an old peasant sitting near the projector stood up and called Burke's attention to the enlarged fly which had just been thrown up on the sheet screen.

"What is that, Boo Sien-sang?" he queried loudly before Burke had time to talk about it.

"That is a fly," Burke said.

"My, I'm glad I don't live in the country where they have flies that big," the old peasant commented, shaking his head.

Under the stimulus of the New Life Movement the government pushed forward with programmes of education, opium abolition, and public works. Burke observed with interest the progress being made. China really seemed to be awakening into a modern nation. He wrote an article for the *North China* early in 1936 telling about some of the developments in and around Sungkiang which had impressed him.

> "The government is going right along with its educational improvements. I was interested in some facts given me by our superintendent of education. They are determined to put over compulsory education. They are beginning four trial zones. In these all the children between the ages of nine and twelve must study a half-day for one year. A teacher is to have fifty pupils in the mornings and fifty in the afternoons. In this way one teacher will be responsible for 100 pupils.
>
> "This appears quite rudimentary and crude, but it is the beginning of what is going to work a great change in China. Besides this work for children, there is to be compulsory work among the adults. In the Sungkiang District are 815 divisions called *pau*. Each pau has a head and is subdivided into ten small areas called kya, also with a head, and each kya is made up of ten families. By means of these divisions with responsible heads, they hope to get every adult from sixteen to forty-five years of age to study from two to three hours a day. They have prepared a textbook of 1,000 characters which will be furnished free of charge. They will utilize, without remuneration, any in the pau who can read to act as teachers for the illiterates. This is also just a beginning, but it has possibilities.
>
> "The government is determined to do away with opium smoking.

Recently the police were active in seeking out addicts. I have never seen anything like this effort. The work seems to be more one of persuasion just now. The addicts are urged either to register or to break the habit. After the 15th, there is to be no more persuasion, but any unregistered person caught using the drug will be severely dealt with. Only those who have money will be able to keep up the registration and not many will be able to stand that, for these registrations will have to be periodically renewed and the fee will be doubled each time.

"I see many improvements going on over the country. The new motor road to Siking has been completed and in a few months there will be a further extension to Zosen. In the spring, parties may go direct to this beautiful spot by bus or their own cars, instead of taking the tiresome train and boat trip. In a few years this whole country will be threaded by roads.

"Last week a project was put on here to impress the public with the communal responsibility of each individual. A piece of canal was chosen on which voluntary work of dredging was to be done. Employees of the various public bodies of the city and students of government schools were assigned portions of this canal for dredging and were given three days in which to do the work. The equality of the sexes has been stressed in these later days and was emphasized in this project by the girls being assigned work as well as the boys.

"One has to take off his hat to the Chinese, for in spite of political disturbances and financial collapses, they are still forging ahead."

The Japanese militarists observed this forging ahead too and saw their dreams of conquest breaking up against a unified Chinese nation. So they stored up more American scrap iron, speeded up their war factories, and pushed their imperialistic tentacles through Jehol to the very gates of Peking.

37
Patriarch

THE PEOPLE OF SUNGKIANG celebrated Burke's seventieth birthday the day he was sixty-nine—which was good and proper, since the logical Chinese consider a person one year old at birth.

There was a carnival spirit in the mission compound the whole day. The Chinese co-workers for once overruled Burke's protests and the schools took

a holiday. After the students had lined up in front of the Georgian's home and sung a song to him, they played ball and romped on the compound the rest of the day. Friends, meanwhile, came in every minute, it seemed, bringing presents wrapped in red paper. They bowed and said "koong-shi" (congratulations) and stopped awhile for tea. Some friends who didn't come personally sent their red-wrapped presents by servants.

There was every variety of present. Silver loving cups on carved teakwood stands, silk embroideries, small ornamental statues of Lau Zeu Sing (the god of old age) and cakes and fruit. The gifts came in from all the surrounding towns and villages where the missionary had visited and preached —Loktiauwan, Litahwe, Changyen, Tsingpu, and a dozen others. The Sungkiang magistrate sent a pair of blue scrolls, sprinkled with gilt flecks, and inscribed by himself with black characters expressing appropriate sentiments about longevity. Many other scrolls some quite as ornate came from members of the local gentry.

The day ended with a feast at Lok Kwe-liang's home. The scholar had made the date months in advance. It was to be a special feast, he said. He wanted it as both a celebration of the birthday and a commemoration of the first birthday feast he had given the missionary thirty-nine years before. And as Burke walked through the grotesque rock garden to the "boat room," his mind was filled mostly with the earlier event. So much time had slipped by, yet so little was changed.

The feast itself only strengthened this impression, for with sentimental zeal Lok had arranged everything to be as suggestive as possible of the first dinner. There were ten men to fight over their seating order again, though none were the original ten except the scholar and missionary. There was an opening course of live shrimp again too. Burke passed them up entirely this time because he had a sudden fear his plates (which he had had less then six weeks) wouldn't negotiate the wriggling creatures.

When the dessert course came, Burke had already anticipated what it would be—an eight-precious pudding with candles, except this time there were eighteen candles outlining the two two-stroke Chinese numerals seven and ten. Lok rose to speak now as he had done the first night.

"This is a most happy occasion for me," he began. "Thirty-nine years ago, Mr. Burke honoured me by eating a birthday feast at my home. At that time, there was this difference, though. I was following the Western custom of celebrating a man's early birthday. I was also following the Western custom of observing the day a year after it really occurred.

"Tonight, however, it is Mr. Burke's seventieth birthday by Chinese count. And in China, seventy has always been a most honourable age, for it is well into the second cycle of a man's life. So this celebration is proper by

old Chinese custom—not Western. This is as it should be, because Mr. Burke can no longer be considered a Westerner. He is an old Sungkiang man. He was in Sungkiang when most of the people now living here were small children, or not even born. And during his life here, he has done nothing but labour for the good of the Chinese.

"I have made only one small exception to Chinese custom tonight. That is the candles on this pak-pau-van. This, as you know, is a Western idea. But I like it. I had one prepared like this for the feast I gave Mr. Burke on his foreign thirtieth anniversary. This one is a little more Chinese than that one was because, you see, 'seventy' is written in Chinese characters. In the first one, I used the foreign method of putting one candle for each year. There were thirty candles on that one and it was very pretty."

Later that same year Burke was the principal of another anniversary. The four young Epworth Leaguers whom the missionary had saved from the viceroy's death decree in 1903 came to Sungkiang to give a public feast in his honour on the thirtieth anniversary of the incident. They were respectable citizens now and one of them—Huang Yen-pei—had an important post in the government. The feast was held at Sungkiang's famous Tsieu Bak Z (White Wine Gardens), in the large dining hall called the Sih He Doong (Snowy Sea Room).

After the feast, the four men presented Burke with two handsome porcelain prints in teakwood frames. One of the prints showed photographs of Burke and the four taken at what was represented to be the time of the Nanhwei rescue (though the picture of Burke used was actually taken years later). The other porcelain carried pictures of the men and minister as they looked in 1933. As a special gift of his own, Huang had had ten thousand illustrated booklets of fifty pages each printed up with English and Chinese texts. The booklets sketched Burke's life and work in Sungkiang and they were distributed to all the missionary's friends and acquaintances. For the theme of the booklet, Huang chose a quotation from the old philosopher Lao-tse:

"The most virtuous do not regard themselves as such."

Burke, in these first years of Kuomintang rule, became the liaison between the local officials and the Frederick Townsend Ward Post of the American Legion in Shanghai. The post, being named for the Taiping Rebellion hero, naturally had taken a large interest in Ward's tomb at Sungkiang. Improvements had been made on the shrine and grounds and, during the pre-Nationalist period, members of the post had conducted several pilgrimages there on the Fourth of July. The war lord officials had co-operated nicely. The magistrates (even Ting) had attended the services conducted by the pilgrimage party and a guard of honour from the local

garrison blew taps and fired a three-round salute. Burke always interpreted for the American speaker brought down for the occasion.

When the pilgrimages resumed in the Nationalist period, however, the Kuomintang officials at first refused to have any part in them. General Ward, they argued, had taken the side of the alien Manchu government and should therefore have no respect from loyal republican Chinese. But Burke, for whom the American adventurer held a romantic appeal as well as a patriotic attraction, convinced the new magistrate that Ward had helped save China from a worse tyranny than the Manchus and, in addition, he should be admired for his spirit of courage. So the Legion ceremonies went on with undiminished colour under the big missionary's arrangements.

These patriotic duties, however, were a very minor part of Burke's activities at seventy. He still preached once or several times weekly and ran his schools and orphanage. His day began at five-thirty with his cold bath. At eight-thirty, after breakfast and opening prayers at the schools and orphanage (there was school in the latter also), he spent an hour or more—dependent on the number of visitors who might interrupt him—studying Greek and Hebrew as zealously as he had at Emory and Vanderbilt. The rest of the day was filled with any number of items: going over account books with his native co-workers, holding a preachers' meeting, preparing a sermon, tinkering with the one-cylinder pump engine of the mission's new artesian well, and doling out quinine, castor oil, and calomel to ailing natives. An hour's rest period after lunch was reserved for reading and a nap, and in the late afternoon he sometimes went several rounds of golf with one or two other missionaries on the half-miniature course he'd built on the compound. Burke's junior colleagues at this time included the Reverend John C. Hawk, who lived in Sungkiang with his family, and another group of single women missionaries.

There was rarely a day that Burke didn't visit the orphanage. That institution had taken first place in his heart. Every one of the hundred and forty bright round faces that greeted him at the gate held a personal interest for him. He usually chose a time for his visits when the boys were playing in the large front yard. They could see him coming on the opposite side of the canal which bordered the yard, and by the time he'd crossed the stone bridge leading to the gate they were crowded around waiting to bow respectfully and sing out "Boo Sien-sang, hau!"

There was always a note of expectancy in their shrill voices, because Burke never failed to bring something for them—a rubber ball, marbles, or best of all, a discarded ribbon spool from his typewriter. He would toss whatever it was out in the yard and grin broadly as he watched the young fellows scramble for it.

The boys in turn regarded the old missionary as a godfather. Long after they were apprenticed out to trades or sent to college—whichever might be their individual need—they kept in touch with him, a fact which pleased him no end. Occasionally a distinguished silk-gowned man passing through on the train from Shanghai to Hangchow would take time to stop off in Sungkiang just to visit Burke. He would be one of the orphans, who'd made good, coming to see his old patron. When he left he usually gave the minister a gift of money for the institution. Sometimes, however, an orphan didn't turn out so well, and then Burke was as pained as if one of his own sons had turned rascal.

The orphanage band, by this time, was a much-improved musical organization, thanks largely to itself, in a way. One of its first members, who'd been inspired to go on with the study of music after leaving the institution, had now returned to Sungkiang as the band's new instructor. He was not only more talented than the original bandmaster, but the band was closer to his heart. He made the young musicians practise to their limit—and like it. Another factor in their improvement, however, undoubtedly was the smart brown uniforms in which Burke had outfitted them. So improved were they in looks and quality, in fact, that the missionary stopped one day in Moultries music store in Shanghai and bought Strauss' "Roses from the South" for them to learn. He complained of its expense in his diary that night, but added that it would be worth it if the band could learn it. And they did, creditably enough.

Hardly any wedding or funeral of consequence took place in Sungkiang now without the orphan musicians. Burke fixed a set rate of fees for its services. Fifteen dollars for the whole band and eight for half. This was just the base rate, of course. Chinese were expected to, and did, double those figures with a tip. The wealthier the family the bigger the tip. At one wedding it was fifty dollars.

The band also came in handy for repaying benefactors of the orphanage. A local physician was one of these. He had given his services and medicines many times, but would take no money for them. Burke finally hit on the old Chinese custom of presenting him a memorial board to hang up in his home. The board would be inscribed with some sentiment about the physician's benevolence. After getting a well-known local chirographer to draw the characters, Burke assembled the hundred and forty orphans with band to deliver it. Four of the boys marched in front holding the board for everyone to see. Behind came the band and the rest of the orphans. The physician lived only a few hundred feet from the orphanage, but the presentation parade went down the full two miles of the Big Street to the West Gate and returned before reaching his house. There they hung up the board with

suitable ceremony and the Strauss waltz. The physician, to put it tritely, was pleased as Punch.

Burke's general success with the orphanage was so well recognized that he had no more trouble getting official support for the institution. The Kuomintang government allowed it a regular part of the Sungkiang rice rentals. This was not quite enough to cover total operation costs, but the private contributions and the band made up the rest, with enough over to bank for a rainy day.

One of the private benefactors was the then acting president of the Executive Yuan and minister of finance, T. V. Soong. He sent a thousand dollars as a memorial for his mother (who had died in the summer of 1932). With his usual mixture of brusqueness and reticence about such things, Dr. Soong wrote:

"Please accept this as my contribution on the condition that you do not make known the name of the donor."[1]

As Burke grew old and his health, vigour, and Christian service continued unabated, he could lay claim to that treasured summit in Chinese communal life reserved for patriarchs. There was not a person, low or high in Sungkiang or vicinity who did not know and respect him. Practical people that they are, Chinese put their esteem on an empirical basis and Burke's record had few kinks in it.

Old age in itself, of course, marked any man for honour in China. Chinese saw something superlative within the poorest peasant who could ward off the buffets of time and human error for a longer period than most of his fellows. If, with old age, a man combined the attributes of the greatest of Chinese virtues—benevolence—his influence went far indeed. Chinese now listened seriously to Burke's sermons—not because they were Christian teachings, but because they were the teachings Burke subscribed to. His example was proof of their efficacy.

Even those who had no particular inclination for religion of any sort expressed their belief in Burke himself. There was Yung Zak-sung, the energetic young Sungkiang businessman who had monopolized the bus transportation system on the new motor roads to near-by towns. Yung learned that the old missionary occasionally used his buses on circuit trips, so he told his drivers never to charge him a fare.

Whenever Burke walked out in the streets or about the countryside (which he did daily to keep up the three-mile-a-day average he had set for himself—and for which he bought a pedometer), men in teahouses or old crones in doorways pointed him out with their good-humoured Chinese blatancy. Two phrases always marked these exclamations about Lau Boo Sien-sang (Old Mr. Burke):

"O-yo, sung-ti ja le! (Oh my, his body is very strong!)"

"Dzung-jeu tsu hau! (Always doing good deeds!)"

Even Lok, longtime friends that he already was, was impressed by the people's estimation of Burke. The scholar came to the mission one day wagging his head merrily.

"Mr. Burke, no one else can aspire to virtue with you overshadowing them," he chuckled when he greeted the missionary.

"How is that?" Burke asked.

"Out on the street a moment ago, I saw an old beggar man with a little boy begging for him," Lok related. "Both the old man and the boy were crying piteously. I told my chair bearers to stop and I got out. I tried to persuade the man to let me send him to an old-age home and his boy to the orphanage. But he would have nothing of it. He said he needed a thousand cash a day to buy opium, so he must beg. I threatened to report him to the New Life authorities for not registering, but he cried so sorrowfully that I decided against it.

"As I turned away, a little country girl, who had been standing near by, asked me if I was a Christian. I thought that was strange and I said to her: 'Why? Do I have to be a Christian simply because I want to help my fellow countrymen? Everybody is capable of doing good deeds whether he be Christian or Buddhist.'

" 'No,' she answered, 'only Christians do good deeds to poor people, because Mr. Burke is a Christian.'

"So, you see, you take all the credit for any good deeds done or attempted in Sungkiang."

Burke hadn't paid much attention to the last part of Lok's story. He was bothered about the little boy who had to beg for the old opium smoker. He knew there were thousands of similar cases in China, yet when a specific instance like this was brought to his attention he always wanted to do something about it. Lok was a fatalistic enough Oriental not to take it too seriously. He had let the old beggar argue him out of the notion of helping the boy. So Burke casually asked Lok exactly where the incident had taken place. After the scholar had gone, he walked there. But beggar and boy were nowhere to be seen.

Any Chinese of Burke's age and long residence in Sungkiang would have been regularly attending the semi-annual feasts of the local old men's club (Thousand Years Club, it was called literally, because the combined ages of the score or so members amounted to that figure and more). It was not a formal organization, in which members were elected and initiated. When a man reached his sixties, he simply dropped around on the night he'd heard there would be a feast, paid his share of the meal and enjoyed the conviviality

of the other oldsters. After thus initiating himself, he would receive regular notices of subsequent gatherings from the secretary-treasurer (one being elected at each feast to make arrangements for the next).

Burke somehow never got around to considering himself as Thousand Years Club material. Not until some of the members finally called on him the day before one of the feasts and asked him to come. Then he was as pleased and excited as a boy bid into a high school club.

The feast was held, as it always was, in an ancient Buddhist temple about a half-mile from the mission compound. The eating hall was in a vacant wing of the building, but one could look through the entrance into the main worship room, where a big bronze Buddha squatted complacently on his lotus pad. It was a perfect spot for the venerable to gather, and Burke thought so too, incense and other heathen atmosphere notwithstanding.

There were nineteen present that night, most of them from Sungkiang, but a few from outlying farm communities. Landlord or farmer, they were one tonight, fraternized by the father of them all—Time. Many of them looked the part of traditional Chinese sages, with their stringy white beards and long-stemmed pipes. They used the pipes as staves, touching the ground with the bowl, which had a metal spike jutting off in line with the stem. Everyone asked each of the others his age and someone produced an abacus with which it was discovered that all their ages added up to 1,351 years. Burke took out his pocket diary and jotted the figure down.

In the course of the meal one of the guests—who had said he was eighty-seven and thereby the oldest man there—rose to make a speech. He introduced himself as a young loafer from near-by Mojau (local dialect spelling).

"I want to say a few words in welcome of Mr. Burke," he began. "He does not know me, but I have known him probably as long as any of you other gentlemen. I shall recall an incident which some of you may remember.

"In the old days, before the Republic, I lived in Sungkiang, inside the walled city. One night there was a great fire. Flames shot many li into the sky and we gave up the whole city as lost. All the people rushed out of their homes and there was much shouting and gong beating."

Everyone at the table had stopped eating to listen. The old narrator was doing an eloquent job with both his voice and his long-nailed fingers. Burke had suddenly realized that the story was about the midnight fire he had helped put out. It was hardly recognizable now, after nearly a half-century's storage in an imaginative Chinese mind.

"Out of the great crowd around the burning city ran Mr. Burke," the old fellow continued. "It was not possible to tell which was the fiercest—the great bearded foreigner or the hot flames. The people fell back from both.

"Mr. Burke went to one of the fire pumps and told the firemen to pump

no more, but only to keep the bucket line from the canal moving ten times faster. He took a bottle of strange liquid—some sort of fire medicine —out of his pocket and poured it in the tub of water. Then he grasped hold of the pump, which took four ordinary men to operate, and began pumping the magically charged water with terrific force. It sprayed over all the burning buildings and the fire ceased with mysterious suddenness, as though it had been dipped into the sea."

Burke tried to protest when the old Mojau man sat down, but it was no use. The story was too good to be doubted and the guests hailed their Methodist clubman's prowess.

38
Farewell

IN ONE SENSE, Burke was thoroughly assimilated into the communal life of Sungkiang. Yet deep within him, as he grew old, was the yearning to spend his last years with his loved ones in Georgia. No man of his sentimental attachments could have escaped that desire. But whenever the thought of retirement came, it conflicted violently with his Kantian sense of duty. He had pledged a lifetime of service to his Christ in China and there should be no retiring. This conflict of emotions showed itself plainly in a letter to one of his sons in 1934.

> I would like for you to explain my position to the folks at home. It is not that I do not want to see them and I would so like to be with you and help you as far as it is possible for one man to help another. I would like for us to understand each other. I gave myself for this work nearly fifty years ago. I have wanted to do only God's will. I am conscious of many shortcomings and the mistakes of my life have been many, still I have wanted to be Christ's representative here. I have been a poor one and have not done what might have been done for Him. Still I feel that I must stay here until He opens a way for me to leave. Just to drop the work here in order to seek a pleasanter sphere does not appeal to me. I feel somehow that my Father will show me the way and when He gets ready for me to lay this work down, He will make it clear to me. I hope that you will understand me. I just want to be faithful. It seems to me that my life has been largely made up of partings and good-byes, but I

believe that I am in His hands and He will take care of things. He has a whole eternity to set things right. I just hope and pray that He will give me a few years with you and other of my loved ones. At any rate I will trust Him and go forward. He has given me great blessings.

When, two years later, his sabbatical came round, Burke felt that God was now opening the way for retirement. He (God) had waited until regular furlough time, so there would be no hesitancy about leaving China. And once settled in Georgia, the old missionary felt the Lord would reveal definitely that He did not require him to return to the mission field. So certain was Burke in these thoughts that he announced his retirement.

A new missionary, the Reverend J. H. H. Berckman, came to Sungkiang with his family to take charge of the mission and Burke held an auction to sell off some of his household goods. A few things he couldn't bring himself to sell—his beloved books and his father's old roll-top desk, scarred and battered though it was after at least seventy-five years' service. He packed them in his attic with the hope one of his sons might come some day and get them.

He reserved passage on the *President Lincoln*, sailing from Shanghai on November 25, 1936. For the month preceding that date, there was nothing but farewell functions. The banker guild gave a feast at the new Sungkiang Club. Lok and young Daung (old Daung had died that spring) were joint hosts at another feast at the White Wine Gardens. Yung Zak-sung feasted the missionary at the new restaurant he had added to his bus business. General Niu—who had come to know the Methodist well in the last few years—entertained at his suburban home in Yieudong (local dialect spelling). And the magistrate sponsored a big farewell meeting and feast at the White Wine Gardens.

In reporting this last affair, the *North China Daily News* on November 25th said:

". . . at a farewell meeting to Mr. Burke, the mayor of Sungkiang, Mr. Li Lung, spoke enthusiastically and highly of Mr. Burke and of his many services to the people of Sungkiang. It was pointed out again and again that here was a man who not only preached the gospel of love and service, but practised it daily for fifty years. No matter who was in need, Christian or non-Christian, poor or rich, man or child, Lau Boo Sien-sang (so called by the people) in peace or in war times could be found giving aid. Although he studied his Bible in Chinese, Greek and English, his deeds of love and helpfulness interpreted the Christ he loves and preaches."

The Sungkiang railway station was thronged with friends and admirers when Burke took the train for Shanghai. The magistrate, the gentry, busi-

nessmen and peasants—all were there. The orphanage band played the Strauss waltz, then one of its old Sousa numbers, But probably the most original feature of the day was produced by the students of the local government schools, who filed by in hundreds, each with a peanut in his hand to give the missionary. Burke's love of peanuts was among his legendary characteristics around Sungkiang—even after he got his false teeth. He boarded the train with every pocket bulging and the overflow in one of his handbags. He would have left all his baggage rather than fail to carry off even one of those peanuts.

Burke thought he would escape this lionizing the few days he was in Shanghai waiting for his ship. But he was wrong. The port metropolis was not so cynical that it couldn't pause a moment to recognize someone so completely genuine as this old Methodist missionary. The *North China* sent around its famed Russian cartoonist, Sapajou, to do a sketch and its editorial columns—coldly British and rarely devoted to missionaries or their activities —appeared with the following tribute:

> "It is difficult to imagine that the Rev. W. B. Burke, who leaves today for his native Georgia, has spent fifty years in China, and four-fifths of that time in Sungkiang. Carrying his seventy-three years lightly Mr. Burke has made no concealment of the sadness with which he departs from a country where he has so many friends. The tributes paid to him at Sungkiang the other day were eloquent of the work which he has been unassumingly and devotedly accomplishing. They indicated appreciation of the labour of one who really has achieved understanding of the Chinese farmer and peasant who together form the backbone of the nation. Mr. Burke makes no secret of his faith in the future. Speaking with experience behind him he leaves with the conviction that the national spirit in China is far more sanely and securely developed than at any time during his residence here. There were times after the revolution when the farmers of Sungkiang hardly knew that the Emperor had gone or if they knew regretted the change of régime. There followed other times when they were completely indifferent to the doings of the Government, or, in certain crises, were inclined to vary apathy with some resentment. That has changed and, especially in the last few years, Mr. Burke has definitely discerned a real interest and confidence in the capacity of the authorities to handle affairs. Moreover, this closer bond between the farmer and the local officials has been marked by the evidence of a growing desire on that latters' part to raise the standards of the performance of public duty. Mr. Burke has the satisfaction of feeling that his optimism is more widely justified than

would perhaps have been thought possible not so long ago. In wishing him *bon voyage* it is appropriate, too, to express the hope that in retirement he may find great happiness to which pleasant memories of his Chinese half-century will make their full contribution."

Meanwhile, the American-owned paper, *Shanghai Evening Post and Mercury*, called its readers' attention to the fact that Burke was "a prominent figure in the business and social life of the city [Sungkiang] for 40 years. During his stay there he made great contributions to the building of schools, churches, and residences, and was a beloved figure in the Chinese community. His popularity was eloquently shown when many residents of Sungkiang, including the mayor of the city, paid high respect to his great service and charity work in a farewell meeting just prior to his departure. He was a great benefactor of the Sungkiang Orphanage."

In addition to press salutes, there were a number of dinners and parties given by Chinese and foreign friends, climaxed the night before sailing with a feast at the Pootung Guildhouse, arranged by the four former Epworth Leaguers and a past governor of Kiangsu, Dzung Dau-yi.

It was with no small relief that the old missionary finally stepped aboard the tender which would carry him down the Whangpoo a mile or so to the *Lincoln*. Friends who had come to see him off crowded the jetty and he took out his handkerchief to wave as the big launch cast away. But after a few flips, the handkerchief dangled absently. Burke had forgotten the present momentarily as the Bund began to unfold before him. It was the same Bund he had first sighted nearly a half-century ago, yet it was so different. The gaunt Chinese customs roof, the white colonial houses, and the old esplanade were gone. How the memory of them contrasted with the formidable skyline of the modern Shanghai Bund now before him, with its great round-domed Hong Kong & Shanghai Bank, its impressive Sassoon House tower, its roadway madly cluttered with rickshaws, automobiles, pushcarts, double-decker buses, wheelbarrows, two-section street-cars, and streams of coolies jogging under loaded shoulder poles. The fabulous port had grown to a city of more than three million people. There were a hundred thousand foreigners of all nationalities—though the greatest proportion were the White Russian *émigrés* who'd drifted down from Siberia and Manchuria after the 1917 revolution. These nationless settlers already were being augmented by European Jews, a migration which would reach flood stage when Hitler began marching in earnest.

The Bund slid slowly behind the Pootung shore as the tender churned around the wide sweep of the river. Burke put his handkerchief away sadly and turned around to look downriver. The Bund was gone—for ever, he thought.

39

The Bombs Fall

AS MIGHT HAVE BEEN EXPECTED, God failed to tell Burke not to return to China.

And once the old missionary had seen all the family and friends and had got over the first excitement of being back in Macon, he began to fidget. When Leila left their apartment to go to the Woman's Missionary Society meeting at Mulberry, two blocks down the street, he would sit still just so long, then walk to town. There he might stop in the old Burke bookstore and printing house (which his father had started as a side line to preaching and where Edward now was in charge of the printing) to see his son or read magazines. Or he might call on some business friends in their offices. But the latter usually managed to irritate him as much as he no doubt bothered them. They would start out pleasantly enough with:

"Well, hello, Mr. Burke. So nice to see you. Have a chair."

Then would come the inevitable:

"Now, what can I do for you?"

After a call on an American businessman, Burke would always think longingly of Sungkiang. Whenever he had gone to see old Daung, and even the up-and-coming Yung, they stopped whatever they were doing, called a servant to bring tea, and all but fought to keep the missionary from leaving after two hours of pleasant, aimless conversation. There had never been any abrupt "Now, what can I do for you?" to begin with.

No, American life had outgrown Burke. This was his sixth furlough to Macon and it occurred to him now for the first time that changes here had seemed more noticeable after each successive seven-year period. He had grown with Sungkiang, not Macon. His standard of comparison for Macon was the Macon of fifty years ago. That was when he had stopped growing with the Georgia city. And as it moved along in seven-year strides, he had always returned to find it further and further removed from the place that was his boyhood home. There were new buildings and new faces and, what he seemed most conscious of, an ever-increasing absence of old faces.

He did find real pleasure in his family. Edward's son was a husky lad now and a Boy Scout. Burke helped him with his Scout tests and one day, when the boy and some of his Scout troopmates were going to pass their fourteen-mile-hike test the grandfather elected to go along. They walked to the Old Red Mill, seven miles away, and back. The boys were dead tired, but it was only a nice stroll for the big missionary.

Except for incidents like this and a short trip to New York to see his other grandchild—William's little daughter, Florence—retirement in America was definitely not agreeing with Burke. His old habits stuck by him. Although there was no cause for it, he found himself turning used envelopes inside out to re-use them—as was commonly done in frugal China. He bought a new pocket diary for 1937, but the first thing he did was to mark the old Chinese lunar calendar dates over the corresponding Gregorian dates. Now and then, when called on to preach a guest sermon at one of the local Methodist churches, he would begin thinking in Chinese on the pulpit, and his delivery would become halting for a moment while he got his mind adjusted. Then there was the modern Methodist church in general to bother him. Old Mulberry wasn't the same any more. It was too institutionalized and complicated in its organization.

To add to his impatience with retirement in Macon, letters began coming from his Chinese friends and associates in Sungkiang. All of them spoke of how he was missed, or mentioned matters—like the orphanage—in which he knew he could still enjoy useful service. By now he was quite convinced God had never meant for him to retire. Writing to a friend in April, 1937, he clearly disclosed what was going on in his mind:

> "I have had letters from China and they all seem to want me to come on back. There is need for me over there and no especial place for me over here. I made the choice of going to China over fifty years ago and have been there too long now to be able to fit in anywhere else. And I do not feel old enough yet to stop work."

Leila could see all the evidences that her husband was unhappy and she felt a deep sympathy. It was the same as it had been on the last furlough, when there had been only a mention of retiring. Age had not weakened his overpowering sense of duty toward work. In fact, lack of work was speeding age. He already seemed to have grown several years older since returning to Macon. Leila had pictured a happy old age together in a small cottage in Macon, doing church work among the poor and sick. But she saw now that it could and must never be like that. Although her health precluded any thought of her returning to China, she took every chance to encourage her husband to try to go back.

There were more obstacles in the way of returning to China than Burke and Leila's decisions in the matter. Mulberry church—which had been supporting the missionary in the field—had taken his retirement seriously. It was with some relief that the church had left him off its budget, which was already badly overloaded by the depression. So when the old missionary

asked Mulberry if it would recommission him, he was gently, but firmly told no.

Toward late spring, however, the Methodist mission board came to the rescue. Foreign and Chinese church members in China had added their letters to Burke's own appeals for reinstatement and the board, impressed by the old man's determination to resume missionary work as well as by the value which the China mission put on him, decided to send him back at its own expense. Reservations were made for a steamer passage in September.

Burke regained all his energy and self-confidence immediately. The old familiar twinkle crept back into his eyes, He called around to see his business friends in their offices again and when they asked, "Now, what can I do for you?" he would say with no little casual importance, "I just thought I'd drop in and tell you I'm going back to China." Then he'd walk out like a proud cock.

Indicative of his revived spirit, and his general outlook on life, was a bit of correspondence he had at this time with his young son, James, then a senior at Emory University. James had reviewed a modern novel in his school magazine. The book was one of those rather stark tragedies about the girl who was too weak for her natural inclinations. When Burke read his son's critical efforts, he was provoked to some counter-observations.

> "I read your article in the *Phœnix*. I think that it is well written and I judge it is a correct estimate of the book, though from what you say about it I think that I will just take your word for it and not seek any further acquaintanceship. I know enough of the meanness and sin of the world without seeking to know more. The newspapers are quite full enough of such stories as the heroine of your book seems to make. I am too old to start out to blaze new trails, so outside of a few detective and Western tales that I may browse on, I think I will confine my fiction to Dickens, Scott and Thackeray, maybe George Eliot and Charlotte Brontë, or Hugo, Dumas or Verne. I guess I give myself a wide margin.
>
> "I was just attracted this morning to the Greek word ῥαστωνγία. It meant, originally, easily done, taking easy; and secondarily, indolence, laziness. It seems of a rather negative, harmless nature but Paul indicates that a man with such a character is a son of the devil and an enemy of all righteousness. After all, it seems to me that a drifter, a man who takes things easy, floats with the tide and just drifts, though a negative character, yet when there get to be many such in the world, it is hard to get anything really worthwhile done. They bar the progress of the right. In China the carp is figurative of energy and push. It is supposed to

breast the rapids and not just float with the tide, taking the way of least resistance. Hence among the scholars of China, it represents a man who has brooked no opposition and, in spite of difficulties, has won his degree."

That June, Burke and Leila went to Atlanta to see James graduate. Father and son afterward attended an Emory alumni reunion, where the missionary felt quite visibly superior—in his own modest way—as the next-to-oldest alumnus present. Following the general reunion, he visited the Chi Phi house for his fraternity's reunion, and there he was the oldest alumnus.

A month later, while still happily anticipating the return to China, Burke read about the shooting at the Marco Polo Bridge, outside Peking, on the night of July 7th. The incident impressed him at the time, but not too much. Peking was far away. Burke's perspective was that of a Sungkiang man. What happened in North China might be interesting, but it was nothing to get unduly upset about. However, the missionary did become more fascinated with the North China affair as it grew and grew to the proportions of a major battle. Then like a thunderclap, on August 13th, the war struck Shanghai. Now it was in home grounds and Burke read the papers and listened to radio news incessantly. Sometimes he shook his head and grumbled, half to himself and half to anyone who might be in the room with him.

"Those rascally Japs. They've got to be stopped."

The Shanghai battle had been going on less than a week when the missionary received a further shock. The mission board wired, saying that, owing to the hostilities, it was thought best to cancel Burke's return to China. The old man looked up questioningly at Leila, then read the telegram to her.

"I can't understand it," he said. "It looks like with trouble going on over there, I ought to get there all the quicker."

He wrote the board to that effect, but it did no good. The board wasn't willing to take the full responsibility of sending an old man into a danger zone. If Mulberry had been still sponsoring him, it would be different. He would not be so dependent on the board's decision. But Mulberry was not so foreign-mission conscious as it had been in 1887. So Burke sat at home fretting and watching the news on the raging battle of Shanghai.

He was sitting like that one evening, with his radio dialled to a station that would bring in Lowell Thomas, After the familiar commercial, the news commentator began his day's summary. He led off with an account of the Doomed Battalion, that valiant little force of Chinese troops who had been trapped in two Shanghai warehouses just across Soochow Creek from

the foreign section of the city. They were completely cut off, but they refused to surrender. Burke listened.

> "Today, above the warehouse stronghold their bullet-torn Chinese flag was flying defiantly," Thomas continued. "Then, watchers in the International Settlement noticed—the flag was being hauled down. Were they yielding? Was the battalion of the doomed surrendering? No, for instantly they saw another flag hoisted to the top of the pole, a great new flag of China. And later, the story was learned—how a fourteen-year-old Chinese Girl Scout had made her way through the battle line, amid whizzing bullets and crashing shells—stolen through the warehouse fortress—taking with her the largest Chinese flag in Shanghai. This she presented to the Battalion of the Doomed, and they hoisted it at once."

There was something more about foreign authorities in Shanghai being incensed over Japanese action in throwing shells across the International Settlement at the warehouses. Then Burke's neck and face suddenly tensed.

> "Meanwhile there was a havoc of sky bombardment at Sungkiang, a south-western suburb of Shanghai. A hundred air bombs blasted the place to tragic ruins, and destroyed the Susan B. Wilson School of the Southern Methodist Church. That American school burned and the home of the American missionary, the Reverend W. B. Burke, was wrecked."

Burke heard no more of the broadcast. Into his mind rushed thoughts of his beloved desk and books in the attic. He could see them being blown to bits. But he soon forgot that picture. He began thinking of Sungkiang, his city, being bombed. He had noticed previous reports of Japanese bombings behind Shanghai, but now for the first time he realized what it might mean. He saw the close-packed tile roofs of the old prefectural capital, as he had seen them so many countless times. There they spread, peaceful and defenceless, sheltering a hundred thousand innocent people. What death and devastation the Japanese must have dealt in showering their bombs down there. And the orphanage. What of the poor little chaps there? Why did the Japanese bomb Sungkiang? Why had they started this war? Why couldn't they live decently with their fellow human beings? Why couldn't he be back in Sungkiang, trying to do something for the wretched homeless people? Now he had bowed his head in silent prayer to his God. Over and over he repeated:

"O Lord, show me some way in which I can get back to my people!"

Newspapers the next morning carried the following Associated Press dispatch from Shanghai giving some more details of the bombing.

"An American Methodist mission was set afire and otherwise badly damaged by a raid of 20 Japanese planes on Sungkiang.

"Chinese sources reported terrible punishment was inflicted by Japanese air raids on the residential areas of Sungkiang, Soochow, Nansiang, Wusih, Changshu, and other interior cities.

"The raid on Sungkiang destroyed a large part of the Southern Methodist mission, which consisted of two churches, the Susan B. Wilson School for Girls, and a Christian education centre for adults. The Wilson school was set afire and almost completely destroyed, the residence of the Rev. W. B. Burke, absent in the United States, was demolished and much other mission property damaged.

"The Rev. J. H. H. Berckman, of Lakeland. Fla., superintendent of the mission, who was in Shanghai, said one of the mission's Chinese workers came in to report all property was in danger of being destroyed by fires started by Japanese bombs.

"Dead and wounded 'were everywhere,' the worker said, describing how 60 persons jammed into the mission's small dugout stacked like sacks of grain."

The annual meeting of the South Georgia Conference was being held in Columbus that autumn and Burke decided to attend the preachers' conclave. He certainly could not sit in Macon any longer. Moreover, he wanted to see Bishop Moore, who would be there.

Arthur J. Moore was one of the younger and more realistic brands of Methodist bishops. He was the new bishop in charge of foreign missions and had made his first visit to China the year before Burke retired. At that time Burke had been strongly attracted by Moore's vigour and spirit. Here was a bishop who did not mind visiting a mission outpost and living like a missionary. It was almost unheard of in the Southern Methodist mission field. Moore, in turn, had taken a firm liking for the veteran Sungkiang missionary. He had stayed in Sungkiang and seen Burke's work and influence in that city.

Moore was due to make another official visit to the China mission that November and Burke knew the Columbus conference probably would be the last chance to see him. He wanted to ask the bishop to make a final plea to the mission board to send him back to China. When they met, Moore was genuinely sympathetic.

"I'm going to do everything I can for you, Brother Burke," he told him. "If there should be anybody out there in the field in these times, it should be you. You are worth three of the young, inexperienced men we've been sending out lately. I'll make a special request to the board and see what can be done. It would be fine if we could make the trip out together."

If the Lord wasn't listening, one of his archangels was, because that same day at the conference, the Reverend J. S. Cook, pastor of the First Methodist Church of Americus, drew Bishop Moore aside a moment.

"Bishop," he said, "the leaders in my church are anxious to have the church send out its own missionary. I've just been talking by phone to them and they wanted me to ask you about it. If they can't get someone suitable, they'll use the money for some other purpose."

Moore blinked.

"Show me to the phone," he said. "I can tell the Methodists in Americus I've got the man for them and he's raving to go."

After the conference, Burke went to Americus to meet his new patrons. He felt at home with them at once. Americus was in the part of the state where he had had his first preaching circuits, before his China days. Furthermore, the people in towns like Americus appeared more real to Burke than people in bigger places like Macon. They were more like the Georgians he had grown up with—warm, friendly, religious. He felt at home too in the cream-brick church on the corner of Lee and Church streets. His new foster church had a strong quiet beauty, with its tall Corinthian columns and broad granite steps. He was asked to take the pulpit that Sunday and the congregation seemed to appreciate the old-fashioned religion he gave them. This time he did not think in Chinese. Rather, he thought as he had when preaching on the old Schley and Baker circuits.

There wasn't much time for enjoying Americus, though. Bishop Moore had taken passage for the two of them on the Canadian Pacific liner *Empress of Canada*, leaving Vancouver November 27th. Burke would meet the bishop at the British Columbian port. He set out alone from Macon to go by way of New York to see William's family again and also say good-bye to James, who was then studying at Princeton.

40
Into Desolation

By pushing up from Hangchow Bay in November, the Japanese had forced the Chinese to withdraw from their stubbornly held lines around Shanghai. Not only that, but the strong defence line running through Sungkiang was rendered useless and the Chinese fell back through Soochow toward Nanking, scorching the earth as they went. When Burke left his

ship at Shanghai on December 21st, the capital had fallen and the Japanese were well along in their wholesale rape and murder of the prostrate city, their spurious Bushido unleased in its full perverted savagery.

Shanghai was filled with refugees from the interior and more streamed in daily. Most of them carried nothing but their bedding, with no place to put it except in some vacant lot or on the sidewalks. But that was all right. Anything to be inside the Settlement and under the protective wing of the white man. How little they knew that the white man in Shanghai had the stamp of doom upon him already.

This exodus into Shanghai was not in the category of those during the civil wars. Then a man stood some chance of keeping both his life and property if he remained at home, and only the timorous fled. Furthermore, in the civil war days there was need for leading citizens to remain in their home towns to help preserve order, as had been the case in Sungkiang in 1924. But it was different now. The chance for surviving the rain of Japanese bombs and the indiscriminate butchery by Japanese soldiers was slight indeed. And if leaders did remain in town, they would be compelled to organize humiliating puppet governments to do the bidding of the conquerors. It was because of this particularly that respectable citizens in the interior got to Shanghai if they could and prepared to stay for the duration of the Japanese occupation.

Lok was one of them. He called on Burke the morning after the missionary arrived. He had kept in close touch with the Methodists in Shanghai, so he would know when his old friend reached the fort. On finding out that Burke would stay at the Reverend Sidney Anderson's home off Avenue Haig, the scholar made the date in advance with Anderson to see him. Lok had explained that he would go to the jetty to meet Burke, only he was afraid of showing himself in public places. He had heard the Japanese were beginning to round up prospective puppets for local governments in their New Order. He knew he was on their list, because he qualified both as a former official and as a scholar of the old school. Japanese preferred to use puppets who could win the quick respect of the conservative masses.

When Burke saw Lok, he noticed the old scholar was growing a beard. There were only a few short hairs hanging down from his chin now, but they promised to develop into the wispy object so traditionally prized among Chinese sages. With the beard and by removing his horn-rimmed glasses (which he did now when on the street—although he could scarcely see three feet without them) Lok could pass for someone ten years older. He had given himself another name too—"Ooong Tseh-jau." It meant "Stupid Immigrant." Later Burke found that he signed his letters simply "Stupid." Thus did the old Chinese subtly express his utter contempt for the invaders.

Many of Burke's other Sungkiang friends were in Shanghai. There were Yung Zak-sung, Tsung Kyung-oen, Kau Kyung-van, and a dozen more. Lok got in touch with them and arranged a feast at one of the large Chinese restaurants in celebration of the missionary's return. Burke found it good to be with them all again. It could almost have been like old times were it not for the war that had struck in his absence.

Being among Sungkiang friends only accentuated his worries about the terrible plight Sungkiang must now be in. These friends were the fortunate ones who had been able to get out to Shanghai after the first few bombings. What of the thousands of common people? Lok and Yung and the others didn't know. They believed most of them had simply fled into the country. The country was safer than the clustered roofs of towns and cities upon which the Japanese bombers dumped their *tso-dan* (exploding eggs). And the orphans? Lok and the others shook their heads vacantly.

Berckman had given Burke some account of what Sungkiang had suffered. After sending his family and the women missionaries to Shanghai, he had stayed on alone with his native co-workers until the bombs were raining all about his ears. One day there had been six raids. He helped dig a rude dug-out in the compound where thirty or forty people could lie to escape the shrapnel. When he did leave the city at last, he had to walk across country to Shanghai. A few days after he arrived one of the Chinese workers followed him to report the bombing of the mission. Since then there had been no word out of Sungkiang, and that was two months ago.

Had it been possible, Burke would have gone to Sungkiang the day he reached Shanghai. But it wasn't possible. One needed a Japanese military pass and the Japanese were not issuing passes to foreigners yet. The New Order was not so rosy as Tokyo propagandists were painting it. Nevertheless, Burke, abetted by Bishop Moore—who was likewise anxious to see the actual conditions of the mission's Sungkiang station—kept badgering the Japanese authorities for passes. Finally, on January 6th, the bishop wangled permission for Burke, himself, and two other missionaries to make a two-day trip to the old prefectural city.

They set out the following morning. The two missionaries going with them were Berckman and the Reverend J. H. Henry. They went by car, with Henry driving. The dirt road was crowded most of the way with Japanese troops and military vehicles of one sort or another. Between driving at a crawl through narrow openings in the traffic and stopping to show their credentials to innumerable suspicious officers, the mission party made little better time than a canal boat. It was late afternoon when they came in sight of the Sungkiang walls.

The ancient settlements looked the same as ever and in that fact Burke

allowed himself to be deceived into false assurance about the city. It was not until the car had entered the East Gate that the old missionary learned the truth. Those walls had become nothing but an empty shell, enclosing a vast circle of jagged walls and rubble. Even Bishop Moore, who, unlike Burke, had no special attachment for the thick expanse of black roofs that once had filled the scene—even the bishop groaned with incredulous horror. Where formerly one could hardly see farther than a few yards along the narrow cluttered street which snaked from the East Gate to the West Gate, now one could look straight across the mile separating the two gates, as though looking across an open field.

As the car picked its way slowly across the devastation, pausing frequently while a hunk of masonry was heaved out of its path, the four churchmen began noticing signs of life in the ruined city. At first the place had looked completely dead, but now they saw a few straw-mat shelters built here and there against a wall which had not been completely destroyed. Some people were creeping out of these hovels to see who might be in the car. They came out furtively, more like animals than human beings.

"They look like rats coming out of their holes," Berckman remarked.

"Brother Henry, I believe I'll get out and walk behind you," Burke said a few yards farther on. "I can make about as good time walking as you can driving over this mess and I want to see if I know any of these folks."

The missionary got out and hailed an old peasant standing off in the rubble by one of the mat shelters. The man looked at him suspiciously, then his wrinkled face suddenly brightened.

"Ah-z Boo Sien-sang? (Is it Mr. Burke?)" he asked.

"Z-kuh (It is)," Burke replied.

Others heard the exchange and began coming forward, calling excitedly to each other—"Boo Sien-sang we-le (Mr. Burke has come back)." The first old man had reached the tall missionary now. Tears were on his rough cheeks.

"O-yo, Boo Sien-sang," he cried. "If you had been here this terrible thing would not have happened to Sungkiang."

Fifty or sixty people were soon gathered around and began trailing Burke as he started walking behind the car. Farther along, more people joined the procession until there were several hundred following the mission party. Burke talked to those abreast of him. He learned there were less than a thousand persons in Sungkiang. A month before there'd been even less, but now they were beginning to drift back from hideouts in the country. But countless numbers were dead or had followed the Chinese armies into Free China.

They had crossed the city now and passed out the West Gate. As they approached the mission, Burke noticed that the destruction was considerably

less than in the city proper. The Big Street began to take its narrow twisting shape again and rows of buildings stood almost unscathed. The Japanese airmen had concentrated on the area marked out like a great round target by the walls. There had been just a few scattered attacks on the western suburbs, aimed at specific objects like the American mission.

Even at the mission, Burke was surprised. The destruction was not so bad as he had expected, though twenty-seven bombs had landed in the compound. His home, which he had thought was a pile of wreckage, turned out to be only ravaged by the concussion of a large bomb which had struck about twenty feet from it. But the ravaging had been thorough, with every window frame and door blown out and one wall sagging dangerously. The other mission house, which Berckman had lived in, was still fairly inhabitable. Its windows were broken and walls and furniture had been chipped by shrapnel. The women missionaries' home, the church and schools were similarly dishevelled—except the girls' middle school. Nothing but blackened walls remained of it.

As the four Methodists and the townspeople walked across the compound a small black dog—breed uncertain—raced out from the Berckman house and clambered about that missionary barking and whining.

"Well, if it isn't Muh-huh," Berckman laughed, roughing the dog's head. "I thought I was never going to see you again, fellow. Looks like you're the only one left around here."

Then turning to Burke, he added, "This is the little dog I had down here with me after you left, Brother Burke."

A broad grin spread over the old missionary's face as he forgot Sungkiang's tragedy for the moment. "Well, isn' he a nice little chap? Come here, sir." And Burke was down on his haunches chucking the dog's ears. "It's a pity a little fellow like you had to go through all this."

Burke did not know it then, but he had adopted another dog. There had been Moseley's pointer, Ah-zeu. Then the Hawks' big mongrel, Ang-li, had forsaken his master for Burke. And now, Muh-huh was in the first stage of being captivated.

It turned out that Muh-huh was not the only living creature at the mission. While the animal was still drawing Burke's attentions, an old Chinese wearing a peasant's wrap skirt came out of the gate leading to Berckman's yard. When he saw the missionaries, his cheeks furrowed in a smile which put all three of his teeth in view. He was Lau Pak-pak (Old Papa), the mission gatekeeper whom Burke had employed forty years before. The gatehouse had been made rather draughty by the bomb concussions and he had moved into the less damaged servants' quarters behind Berckman's residence.

Although it was nearly dark, Burke left the others at the mission and walked as fast as his seasoned old legs would take him to the orphanage. When he came in sight of the play yard across the canal, he began fearing the worst. The yard, once filled with romping boys, was deserted. The orphanage building itself seemed unharmed, but there was no sign of life anywhere. He crossed the stone bridge and came to the gate. It was locked and hope came back. Someone must be inside. He banged on the gate. A few moments later he heard footsteps padding, then a man's frightened voice asked:

"Sa nyung (What man)?"

"Boo Sien-sang," Burke answered.

"He is not here," the voice said in a bolder tone. "He has gone to America. Go away."

Hardly had the man got this out, however, when he hurriedly unlatched the gate and threw it open. He had recognized Burke's voice, but the fact was too incredible for his mind to grasp immediately.

The man at the gate was Voong, the orphanage superintendent whom Burke had left in charge of the institution. He was short with a round face. Before the missionary could ask any questions, Voong had answered them in several impassioned sentences.

"O-yo, it is good to see you, Boo Sien-sang. It has been terrible. There are only three of us here now. Myself and two of the boys. My assistants and some of the friends around the neighbourhood led the other boys out into the country. But none has returned. There is not much food left here."

That night Burke and the others in the mission party stayed at Berckman's house. The pantry and kitchen had been looted of canned food and cooking utensils, but the men had thought of that and had brought supplies with them. They built a fire in the living-room grate and boiled coffee and scrambled eggs. They sat by the light of the fire until after mindnight, talking about the ruin they had seen in Sungkiang. Finally they rolled up in their blankets and slept on the floor.

Next morning they began inspecting the mission buildings and found that all had been thoroughly looted. Burke went to his own wrecked home first and made his way to the attic. The old desk was still there, but the lock had been ripped off and many things were missing, including a set of tools, some metal trinkets, and worst of all, a huge tinfoil ball which Burke had spent years making. The large box in which he had packed his books and diaries and letters had been prized open too, but those precious contents were not carried off. They had just been scattered about on the floor. From another box, though, a lot of blankets and a quilt had disappeared.

Outside again, Burke walked around the house and discovered that his

daughter Caroline's first Christmas tree—which he had replanted in the yard and which had grown into a large cedar—had been snipped off close to the ground by a bomb splinter. It was losses like this that hurt the old missionary most.

After assuring Voong and Lau Pak-pak and the throng of townspeople who hung around constantly that he would be back permanently in a few days, Burke started out with the bishop and the others about noon to return to Shanghai. Before leaving Sungkiang, they drove to the Japanese garrison headquarters, which had been set up in the south-western part of the levelled walled city, and called on the commander. He hissed politely at the churchmen, had tea poured for them, and said in very broken English that he wouldn't mind Burke's coming to Sungkiang to live—if the missionary first got permission from the Japanese authorities in Shanghai.

The commader made the "if" sound so incidental that Burke reached Shanghai quite confident that he would have the permission and be back in Sungkiang within a week. In fact, he was so confident that he put off seeing about the residence permit until he had collected and packed the food and medical supplies he intended to take to the interior with him.

Now began one of the most exasperating delays of his life. The quarantine at Kobe was nothing compared with this. It began on January 10th, two days after the mission party had returned from Sungkiang, and it continued into April. Burke's brief diary entries during the period tell the story.

January 10—Bishop and myself called on Japanese consul-general to see about my pass.

January 11—Went to see the Japanese consul-general with bishop. Do not know if I will get permission to go to Sungkiang.

January 14—Bishop and others got to Soochow this A.M. I called on Mr. Kajiwara. Not in.

January 15—Went to see Mr. Kajiwara. Not in. Telephoned to Mr. Okizaki. He had gone to Nanking.

January 18—Mr. Kajiwara promised to help me get a pass.

January 19—Took passport photos to Mr. Kajiwara.

January 24—Went to see Kajiwara. No success. Says going back to Sungkiang "premature."

January 31—China New Year. Called Japanese consul-general. No result.

February 1—Went to see Colonel Oka. Had pleasant visit. Called Kajiwara, but did not go see him.

February 16—Went to Japanese Consulate General and also to see Mr. Kajiwara.

March 1—Called on Mr. Okamoto and got some hope of going back to Sungkiang.

March 14—Called on Japanese Consulate General. No go.

March 17—Called on Japanese Consulate General. No go. Tried to see Kajiwara. Not in.

March 21—Went to see Mr. Stanton and got a card from him to the new Japanese consul-general, Mr. Hidaka.

March 22—Went to see the Japanese consul-general. He was busy so had to delay.

March 30—Called on the Japanese consul-general. Got nowhere. Mr. Lok called. I called on Mrs. Niu.

March 31—Went to see Mr. Stanton. He told me to go to see Captain Otorie. Called and was told to come back tomorrow.

April 1—Went to see Captain Otorie. He sent me to see Mr. Sato. Mr. Sato told me to go see Colonel Nakayama at military headquarters.

By this time Burke's patience—never too elastic even with old age and fifty years in the Orient—was in shreds. Writing to his son, James, he said:

> "I have been here in Shanghai for three months now and have not yet been permitted to go back to my work in Sungkiang. There is so much for me to do there. I have been pulling four strings and would pull four more if I knew where they were. Whether I get to go back or not, the Japs will know that they have an old man on their hands, who if he has nothing else has stickitiveness and will not let them forget he is around."

A few days later, Burke's vanity was cruelly twinged. A woman missionary—yes, a woman—managed to get a residence permit for Soochow.

> "Miss Groves, a lady of the Baptist mission got through to Soochow this week" [he wrote James]. "I have not heard the details yet, but she must have used some cute methods. It takes a woman to do such things. I am afraid that I am too much of a lau-zeh deu [old honest head] to accomplish such a thing."

He'd apparently forgotten that he himself had admittedly been "pulling four strings and would pull four more," which wasn't exactly lau-zeh deu.

Nevertheless, the woman missionary's success (and she was a Baptist too, which didn't detract from the rancour) sent Burke back to Consul-General Hidaka with extra determination. Hidaka was rather tall for the average

Japanese. He was clean shaven and spoke excellent English, in contrast to most of his race.

"I am very sorry, Mr. Burke," he said, "but there still is nothing can be done at the present moment. The military authorities are unwilling for foreigners to go into interior."

Burke started to sound out about the Baptist woman, but he thought better of it. He sounded out, though.

"I can't understand you people," he began. "The Chinese have let me live fifty years at Sungkiang and now the Japanese won't let me go there at all. I'm already old and have lived out most of my life. I don't care about the consequences. My only purpose for going back to Sungkiang is to preach the gospel and help the poor people who are suffering. I would surely not try to incite the Chinese against the Japanese. I'm not interested in politics."

Hidaka winced. He was not a bad sort. If he could have, he probably would have given the old missionary the permit, but he couldn't. Japanese diplomatic and consular officials were helpless entities now that their nation was completely in the hands of the military. Their authority was countermanded at every fickle turn of a general's mind. So Hidaka shook his head.

"I think may be best you go back to see Colonel Nakayama and explain it to him as you have to me."

Burke was equal to it and presented himself at the colonel's office off Dixwell Road a few minutes after leaving Hidaka. Nakayama hissed politely, but he seemed to clench his teeth tighter than the consul-general.

"Please wait a little while longer," he said when the Georgian had finished.

"But I've already waited three months," Burke protested. "How much longer must I wait? Three more months?"

"Oh, no," the colonel replied, smiling almost pleasantly at the earnest old missionary. "Only a week perhaps. We have been studying your case."

Burke left the colonel's office feeling more certain of success. On the way back to Anderson's home, he stopped by the headquarters of the American Red Cross Committee for China and got a promise of a thousand Chinese dollars (still exchanging at about four for one American dollar) for Sungkiang relief work. The following day he saw Lok, who asked him please to have a look at his home and see what damage it had suffered when he got back to Sungkiang.

Nakayama was better than his promise. Three days later—on April 11th —he telephoned the missionary and said a military permit to live in Sungkiang had been granted and he could pick it up at the Japanese Consulate General. Burke made such quick time to the latter place that he was there before it had been informed about the military authorities' decision on the matter. He had to wait nearly an hour for the permit.

He was up at 4.45 the next morning to get ready to catch the 6.30 Hangchow train. Henry came by in a car at 5.15 to drive him and his baggage the four or five miles from Anderson's home to the North Station. He only just caught the train at that, because Japanese guards in the station stopped him twice to inspect his bags.

The train was practically empty except for a few Japanese officers and soldiers. It left promptly on time—which never happened with Chinese trains—and made the big circle around Shanghai to the south-west. On all sides lay acres and acres of ashes and crumbled walls, all that remained of once populous native sections of the city. Here and there in a heap of brick stood a concrete pillbox. These fortifications had been secretly built in innocent-looking houses. When the Japanese attacked, the houses were simply knocked down, baring the invaders to withering machine-gun fire. The Chinese were not as ill-prepared at Shanghai as some would claim.

41

New Order in Sungkiang

SUNGKIANG WAS BEGINNING to come out of its tragic daze, but not in a healthy sort of way.

Thousands of people had returned to the battered city in the months Burke was in Shanghai—although the population still was less than a third of its pre-war figure. Flimsy shops were being thrown up in the demolished business sections. And there was a general appearance of gaining vitality. And that vitality was no sounder than the thin composition boards and plaster out of which the new shops were built. Goods were scarce and prices had hardly begun their inflationary soar. Worst of all, the Japanese were filling public offices with a vicious set of puppets who, together with their overlords, were out to squeeze the people to the limit and beyond.

The invaders had failed miserably in their attempt to lure or force the old leaders back to their posts. Respectable citizens like Lok either remained in Shanghai or escaped into unoccupied China. This resulted in the puppets' being drawn from a class of Chinese who, in former days, had been the riff-raff of the community. They grovelled before the conquerors, on the one hand, and tyrannized their fellow countrymen, on the other. Their biggest source of income was their Opium Control Board—which con-

trolled opium to the extent of monopolizing its sale in shops which paid high premiums for the privilege.

But Burke had little opportunity for studying this New Order during his first few weeks back in Sungkiang.

The afternoon of the day he arrived—while he and Lok Pak-pak were still puttering over the problem of settling the old missionary in Berckman's house—two Japanese walked into the mission compound. One was in army uniform and had a black operating-room mask over his nose—a popular item with the over-hygienized Japanese. The other wore ordinary Western civilian clothes and was without mask. Burke saw them coming and hurried out on the porch to meet them. The man in mufti introduced himself as "Mr. Hashimoto, special Japanese inspector, please," and his companion as "Lieutenant Tobisei of Japanese Gendarme, please."

Burke invited them in and scurried about fixing some coffee. He would have had Lau Pak-pak make tea, but there was no tea in the house, and Lau Pak-pak wasn't so good at coffee; particularly his favourite, Maxwell House, of which he'd brought several pound tins from Shanghai. He would trust no one but himself with that. He was anxious to get off to a good start with the Japanese. Not for his or their sakes, but for the sake of those homeless and starving Chinese so in need of services he might render. The Japanese were here and he might as well try to get on with them. If he failed he might not be allowed to stay in Sungkiang.

The coffee was served on the round dining-room table. The visitors seemed to appreciate the hospitality, hissing and bowing. Tobisei unbuckled his big samurai sword and laid it on the table when he sat down, then took off his mask. Hashimoto served as interpreter. The gendarme asked Burke those innumerable irrelevant questions that only Japanese gendarmes can ask —how old, how many children, their ages, the ages of their wives, the population of Macon, and so on. Hashimoto translated, Burke answered, and Hashimoto retranslated. During the latter step, Tobisei cut in frequently with a serious and studied, "Ah-h-h, sodeska.",

Finally, Hashimoto said:

"Very sorry, but Lieutenant Tobisei must take your pass to local headquarters for the checking. Will bring back tomorrow, but without pass you must not walk on streets, please."

Burke protested mildly that the pass had been issued by the Shanghai Area Headquarters, to which Sungkiang was subordinate. There should be no need for a local check. But the Japanese army didn't operate that way, as Burke was to learn. Each commander liked to display his own authority. So the old missionary parted reluctantly with his hard-won pass.

As he feared, the two Japanese did not come back with the pass the next

day, or the following. Three days later they came and again promised to have the pass ready "tomorrow." It began to look as if it was going to be another "Shanghai." But there were things to keep Burke busy for a week or two, cooped up though he was in the compound. Some of his former native Christian workers had returned and together with them he laid plans for setting up a refuge and rice kitchen on the compound. He had the Red Cross money to make a beginning in the project. The Chinese co-workers could go out and bring in needy people for food or shelter. There was also planning to be done about the orphanage. Voong came over daily to discuss the problems. There were still only the two orphans left, but it was decided to start taking in some of the many deserving cases now in Sungkiang. Burke allocated a part of the Red Cross money for that too. As soon as he got his freedom of movement again, he would see about drawing out some of the institution's banked surplus in Shanghai. That involved getting the signatures of three of the trustees. He had adopted that deposit system years ago to safeguard against misuse of the funds. Voong said one of the three signatories had returned to Sungkiang. The other two were in Shanghai.

The first Sunday back in Sungkiang was Easter Sunday and Burke decided to have services at home. The church hadn't been cleaned out and, anyway, there probably would not be enough people for the large auditorium. It would be more *nau-nyih* (combination of warmth and good-fellowship) in the home. Chinese enjoyed close packing and it turned out that way, for there were thirty present—enough to fill up the living room.

Burke spent more time than usual on the porch swing that Easter afternoon. He watched Muh-huh play in the yard. And he thought. There was a lot to think about. It was almost fifty years to the day since he had first come to Sungkiang. He held services at home then as he had that morning. Strange how many other things also reminded him of those first years. There was no Diesel fuel to run the artesian well pump and he had to boil and filter canal water again. And at night he had to use a lamp. He had seen his work grow from nothing back to nothing. Instead of New Order and co-prosperity as promised, the Japanese seemed to have set the clock back a half-century and added a deal more human misery. There was no use being discouraged, however. There was too much work to be done. If he could only get his pass back. That was beginning to be a little bothersome now.

He exercised himself every afternoon by pacing around the compound walks. At first he checked the distance with his pedometer to see that he got in his three-mile average. Later he found that ten laps around a certain rectangle of walks made a mile and he began counting laps instead of watching the pedometer. It reminded him of a ship.

On the eleventh day after taking up the pass, Hashimoto and Tobisei

returned it to the missionary. It had been approved and he could go anywhere in Sungkiang.

Everything worked out very well until the middle of May, when the local garrison changed. The Japanese changed their garrisons—especially the officers—in occupied China at least once every six months in a vain effort to save their army's character. It was vain because the Chinese were too expert in the art of bribing to require six months or even a month to seduce any Japanese officer or man.

Having heard that the garrison had changed, but being only casually interested in the fact, Burke set out one afternoon to visit the orphanage trustee who had returned to town. He had already been to the man's home several times since getting his pass back, the first time to get the signature. The route lay west along the Big Street to the stone-arched Black Fish Bridge and about half a mile farther on. Though it was a warm sunny day, he went without his hat. For that matter, he had stopped wearing a hat altogether. It was one of his personal compromises with the Japanese. People wearing hats must take them off when passing a Japanese sentry, because he was the representative of the "divine" emperor. It was not something just the conquered Chinese must do. Japanese civilians did it too. And nothing infuriated the invaders more than to have the arrogant Europeans of Shanghai and other treaty ports ignore the custom. Burke did not want to infuriate any Japanese nor did he want to take off his hat to any Japanese, so he simply stopped wearing a hat. But no one could ever get him to admit that was the reason.

In the middle of the Black Fish Bridge, the Japanese had built a little wooden sentry house. A sentry was standing in front of it as Burke approached. The old missionary stepped jauntily up the steps of the bridge, gave the sentry a pleasant nod and started down the other side, when the soldier hailed him. He came back and the soldier said something in Japanese, which Burke supposed was whether he had a pass. So he showed his pass. The sentry inspected it, sucked in his breath, said, "Ah-h-h," and rang a bell in the sentry house three times. This brought several soldiers out of a large guardhouse off to one side of the bridge. They could speak only Japanese too, but they led the missionary back into the guardhouse where there was a young lieutenant who could speak some English.

The lieutenant invited Burke to sit down and looked at the pass. Then he asked the missionary what his profession was, how old he was, if he was married, and so forth. He was quite polite. After the questions he picked up a telephone and talked to headquarters in the walled city. Then he hung up and turned to the missionary.

"So sorry, but cannot cross bridge."

"But I've been crossing off and on for a month nearly," Burke protested.

The lieutenant paused a moment to grasp for some more English. "General Ishida new commander. He has new regulation. My sympathy to you."

Burke told him he appreciated the sympathy. Officer and minister thereupon exchanged visiting cards. The lieutenant's card had Chinese characters on it, but, of course, they stood for his Japanese name and he proceeded to read it out for Burke—"Kyoshi Noma." Burke's card also was in Chinese characters, and he read it to the lieutenant in Chinese—"Boo Wei-li." Then he told Noma his name in English and the Japanese scribbled something on the card in *kana* which he pronounced "Bar-k." These amenities concluded, Noma invited Burke to come call on him again sometime. Burke reciprocated and the two parted with much bowing and remonstrating with each other when the lieutenant insisted on seeing the missionary all the way to the street.

Japs were funny folks, the old man thought as he walked back home. Pleasant and nice as they could be at times and ruthless and bestial at other times. One thing was certain, however. They swore by their rules and regulations and their own perversities with childlike intransigency. No budging them with any arguments. And here he saw one of the principal differences between them and the Chinese. All Chinese had some degree of *zing* (that mature fellow-feeling and goodwill which inspires elasticity or reasonableness), but the Japanese seemed to have none of that. It had been *zing* that made the soldiers looting Daung's house stop and listen to his admonitions, then leave the old man alone. Had they been Japanese soldiers they probably would have ignored him or else shot him for meddling.

Burke lost no time in calling on General Ishida and asking for a special extension of his pass to permit him to cross the Black Fish Bridge and any other bridge. Ishida was quite charming and approved the request at once. All Japanese wanted was a chance to show their authority. And Burke didn't mind giving them that chance when it resulted in no more than allowing him greater freedom to help the Chinese. It was simply a question of being pleasantly tolerant to a certain extent.

Besides his adaptability, Burke had another asset in his relations with the Japanese. This was his age. Deep respect for old age was one thing Japanese had in common with Chinese and other Orientals (which might explain why there was such an intense cultivation of beards among middle-aged Chinese in occupied China). Then, too, there was Burke's record and standing in Sungkiang. Even the traitor class of Sungkiangites were loyal to their American patriarch. The result was that by the end of the first year in occupied Sungkiang Burke had achieved a unique and enviable status. He had general free reign in Sungkiang's New Order without being forced

to become part of it. He only carried his pass when he went to Shanghai. In and around his old city, he was quite safe from Japanese molestation.

It was about this time that the Japanese selected a spot on the Big Horse Road hill, slightly above and to the west of Burke's memorial pavilion to erect a small torii and shrine to their war dead. One dark night, the following week, torii and shrine were quietly carted off, stone by stone, wood section by wood section. When day came, the mystified Japanese found no trace of their handiwork, and Burke's pavilion again had sole rights to the hill. When this latter point was mentioned in teahouse conversation, some Sungkiangite would nod wisely over his cup and say that the invaders sometimes carried things too far. The Japanese may or may not have guessed why the Chinese had objected to the torii and shrine. At any rate, they didn't build anything else on the hill, and they seemed to hold nothing against Burke.

In fact, the Japanese became almost chummy with the old missionary. Officers of the garrison who could speak English were for ever dropping in to call. They seemed to like chatting with Burke. And though it might disrupt his schedule, Burke would always invite them in for coffee. He had a new ruling about that beverage, though. Steadily depreciating Chinese currency began making imported Maxwell House too expensive to be wasted on people who he felt certain did not appreciate real coffee flavour. So he kept a box of cheap Chinese "coffee" cubes—an unholy mixture of sugar and some sort of soybean ersatz coffee over which one simply poured hot water. The missionary would sip a few sips along with his hissing guests just to be polite, but he brewed some real coffee as soon as they left to wash away the taste of the wretched native stuff.

The Japanese officers had an extraordinary fondness for Burke's flower bed and were for ever asking him if they could pick some blooms to take with them. It always seemed incongruous to see the officers bending down with their big murderous swords dangling by their sides and lovingly plucking dainty narcissus blossoms. And yet in their feeling for beauty there was an explanation of Japanese character. It lay in the near identity of simple emotional expressions—whether love or hate. The Japanese had these simple reactions and the same hand which caressed flower petals was capable of mercilessly gouging the vitals out of an enemy. Again it emphasized the childlike nature of these hybrid island people—delightful when confined to their rocky homeland but liable to become obstreperous if allowed to roam into others' yards.

Most of the officers who visited Burke were conscripts. In Japan they had been in various trades and professions. One day an officer came who introduced himself as "Lieutenant Sakai" and said he had been a Methodist

preacher for eleven years before being inducted into the army. Burke was so surprised, pleased, or both, to meet a brother in Japanese uniform that he served real coffee instead of the soybean cubes. Sakai spoke good English and took full advantage of the opportunity to restock his spiritual system. He had the old missionary bring out a Bible and hymnal and the two held a service on the front-porch swing, reading Scripture and singing. Burke would never have initiated such a performance, but he hated to hold back in the face of Sakai's wishes. The preacher-lieutenant had a strong tenor voice which, added to Burke's bass, brought Lau Pak-pak (now major-domo around the mission home) peeping around the corner of the porch with a nervous grin.

Sakai was stationed at Sungkiang two months and during that time was a regular attendant at Burke's church services. Once he sang a solo and the missionary called on him several times to pronounce benediction. He sang the solo in English and said the benediction in Japanese, much to the wonderment of the Chinese congregation, which had grown to nearly two hundred now.

Had all Japanese been like Sakai, the tolerant, practical Chinese would have given them all the co-operation in the world. Japan's propaganda—Asia for the Asiatics—had no seam in it so far as the Chinese were concerned. The past hundred years of Asia for the Westerners had odours aplenty. The only trouble was that the Japanese did not live up to their propaganda. A few days in an occupied city like Sungkiang would unveil for anyone the real Japanese slogan, Asia for the Japanese, with the masters in this case fostering tyranny as a definite policy rather than allowing it to occur as something incidental to imperialistic avarice.

The vaunted discipline and chivalry of the Japanese army had been proved a myth in the rape of Nanking. But Tokyo tried to cover it up by explaining it as the normal consequence of any victorious army's marching into a city after weeks of hard fighting. Tokyo could have left out everything except "normal consequence" and added "Japanese army" and thereby approached much nearer the truth. There were little Nankings—unseen by the world—going on continually in garrison cities like Sungkiang. They went on one year, two years, three years, and four years after that "heat of battle" upon which Tokyo would blame its army's atrocities and terror.

It was no odd sight to see Japanese soldiers on patrol take out little notebooks and jot down the locations of houses where pretty girls had been seen. And the next off-day period would find the soldiers making their calls, battering down doors if necessary and threatening entire families with death unless the spotted daughters submitted. Sometimes families did die, but more often the girls sacrificed themselves. Pretty girls soon learned to wear

tattered clothes and daub mud on their faces before going on the streets, or else never go on the streets.

Occasionally army authorities took a hand in satisfying their soldiers' appetites. It was done in a systematic, Japanese manner. "Comfort squads," recruited from the homeland's Yoshiwara, were brought in and billeted for a day or more in a building near the barracks. And the troops lined up in an orderly fashion, waiting their turns. It was affairs like these, together with what he knew of the Japanese custom of selling their own daughters into temporary prostitution, that convinced Burke of the complete amoral character of the little islanders.

Probably the only persons in occupied China more detested than Japanese soldiers were the Japanese carpetbaggers who followed in the wake of the army. They were a daring, gun-carrying lot, drawn from the roughest elements of their home society. They knew they were risking death in newly conquered but unsubdued territory, yet they were willing to risk it for a chance at the quick money they could make at the expense of both their own military and the Chinese people. So they were cordially hated by both.

In Sungkiang, toward the third year of occupation, there were a hundred and eight such carpetbaggers banded together into a Japanese Residents Association. The president was named Ashizawa, a remarkably hairy person with a mouthful of disordered gold teeth. Ashizawa was an old hand at his game, having just spent five years in an army frontier city in Manchuria. He reached Sungkiang about the same time Burke got his permanent residence permit; being the first Japanese civilian to arrive there, he seized the best available home—which happened to be the former magistrate's house. He made his chief business selling motor oil and kerosene—both in great demand in the Sungkiang area. He bought it cheaply from American and British dealers in Shanghai, paid the Japanese army a commission for getting it into the interior, then sold it for all the Chinese could pay. When Chinese smugglers began competing with him, he took the job, and the profits, of curbing them out of the hands of the army.

A typical case occurred one afternoon when Ashizawa was out patrolling a canal a half-mile or so north of the city—he or any other Japanese dared not venture much farther into the country alone. His suspicions were aroused by a large freight boat, apparently loaded with building stones, which was tied up against a bank. Drawing his gun, he approached the vessel and shouted at the crew of five, who were lying about the deck. The boatmen immediately leaped off and started running. Whereupon Ashizawa opened fire and killed one of them.

The Japanese then boarded the boat and pulled out a few of the building stones. As he had suspected, he found drums of oil. The boat had run the

blockade out of Shanghai and was waiting on the edge of Sungkiang until dark, when it would have tried to slip to its rendezvous in the latter city. Ashizawa had been familiar with such tactics, though, and now he went back to Sungkiang, got his own men, and returned to bring the boat in. He had it moored in a canal back of his house and the oil carried in and stowed. A week later, the Chinese owner of the oil in Shanghai sent his agent to see Ashizawa—Chinese always managed to find out where their goods ended up. The agent paid more than the original cost of the oil to free it. And thus the carpetbagger had made a neat sum for himself and cheated the army out of what it would have made in a similar bribe or complete confiscation if it had captured the oil boat.

Ashizawa later developed another scheme. He became a high-priced mediator between the army and harassed Chinese property owners. There was the instance when a Sungkiangite one day found some drunken Japanese soldiers tearing down his house to sell its wood—then at a premium. The Chinese ran to the carpetbagger, who, upon receipt of a thousand dollars, went to military headquarters and had the soldiers stopped and punished claiming the house was his own property. Little wonder that Japanese soldiers—who made only some eight yen (a bit over two American dollars) a month and had to send half of that back home—hated the carpetbaggers.

And little wonder the Chinese—except a few of the traitors—hated them both.

The first Japanese casualty to Chinese civilian wrath in Sungkiang was a sake-filled young private who had playfully jabbed his bayoneted rifle into a burly farmer's buttock. This had happened on the Big Street some weeks before Burke took up residence in the city, but Lau Pak-pak told it colourfully.

"The big countryman turned with a loud cry and clubbed the little Toong Yang Nyung (Japanese; literally, Eastern Foreign Man) to death with his own gun," the old servant cackled.

The consequences weren't so good, however. The Japanese found out the hamlet the farmer came from and sent a company of troops there to exact payment—which included the inevitable shooting down of most of the able-bodied men, raping the women, and burning all the buildings.

It was significant that the Japanese never went out on one of these countryside forays without at least a company of armed men. And once in a while even this was insufficient. As the world press frequently and embarrassingly reminded the Japanese, only the larger towns and cities and the communications between them were in any sense occupied. The country round about—and there was no small bit of it—was filled with guerrilla bands into whose hands it was strictly unhealthy for any small groups of Japanese to fall. In the

Shanghai-Nanking-Hangchow triangle alone (of which Sungkiang could be regarded as a centre) there were an estimated three hundred thousand organized guerrillas. This was true nearly four years after that area had been under so-called occupation and the Japanese were claiming territory a thousand miles farther up the Yangtze.

Most of the guerrillas were former Chinese regulars, who, when cut off in pockets by the advancing Japanese, had shed their uniforms and filtered out in the country as innocent peasants. Other guerrillas came from the original bandit stock which had always infested the land. They were veterans at the game and more than willing to concentrate on the invaders. Officers and demolition experts slipped through from the regular Chinese forces to organize and train them.

Their main activity was train wrecking, but always on a selective basis. The guerrillas—whose associate bodies and agents honeycombed cities like Shanghai, even to the conference rooms of Japanese headquarters—always managed to find out when a certain train carried high army officers or had some other mark of distinction. There was the case of the "Flying Dragon," for example. The Japanese launched this new super-express train on the Shanghai-Nanking run in the summer of 1941 to the accompaniment of much fanfare about "symbols of New Order in the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere"—only to have the inaugural trip abruptly ended by a bomb on the tracks just outside Soochow. It was things like this that hurt Japanese pride bitterly and caused them to scream out furiously against Chinese "misunderstanding." People never "understood" the Japanese unless they submitted supinely to their direction.

On the Shanghai-Hangchow Railroad, most of the wrecking was done a few miles west of Sungkiang. Bombs were rarely used here. Powder was too scarce. Particularly when one could creep up to the tracks, pry up a spike, saw the head half off, then stick the spike back. Japanese track inspectors walking past a few minutes later could never notice the flaw and the next train would go tumbling over the embankment. The Japanese countered this by what they thought was magnificent strategy—sprinkling fine sand along the entire hundred and fifty-odd miles of track between Shanghai and Hangchow. This, they reasoned, with faultless Japanese logic, would enable the inspectors to see where tracks had been tampered with. But the guerrillas simply began carrying their own little bags of fine sand and covering up their prints.

After standing the guerrillas as long as they could, the maddened and frustrated Japanese would begin another mop-up campaign. They began them every few months in the Lower Yangtze Valley. The attacks were short but vicious, with many an innocent farmer dying because the Japanese

claimed—as was more or less true—that guerrillas could not be distinguished from farmers. But the Japanese criterion for identifying guerrillas was even more inclusive. A missionary's cook in Soochow, who unwisely selected a mop-up time to visit his family in the country, was shot because he was wearing leather shoes. Few actual guerrillas were ever killed in these campaigns. They usually found out about them at least two days before the Japanese were ready to mop and retired into safer zones. But they were back as soon as the Japanese had returned to their garrison centres.

So the invaders naturally were constantly on edge. Especially around Sungkiang, which they acknowledged was on the fringe of one of the larger guerrilla-controlled areas extending west and south-west to Kashing and Hangchow Bay. Shots would crack out at night and sentries pitch over. The garrison would then spring to life and turn loose their machine guns wildly at any suspicious object—which was rarely a guerrilla. Then there were days when the rumour got around that hundreds of armed guerrillas had slipped into the city and were preparing an assault on the garrison. The jittery Japanese would immediately declare martial law and accost everybody on the streets for his identification pass (with which the invaders supplied properly investigated Chinese civilians, but which guerrillas skilfully duplicated for themselves wholesale). If some unlucky devil had forgotten his pass, he was shot.

One night as Burke was preparing to go to bed a shell went whining over the mission compound. Another and another followed, each accompanied by the crash of a gun or guns firing not more than a mile away. Then the shelling stopped and the missionary went to sleep mildly wondering what it could have been all about. In the morning Lau Pak-pak came back from an early call at his teahouse with all three teeth showing and hardly able to wait to cackle out the story to the missionary.

"Some farmers *zau-pok* (to the north) were having a ghost parade last night and when the Toong-Yang Nyung saw the lanterns they began shooting at them from the railroad station, because they thought they were guerrillas."

"No, nobody was hurt," he added in answer to Burke's question on that score, "but it was a good way to make the Toong-Yang Nyung waste ammunition."

A few weeks later shells sang over the compound again, but an investigating patrol of Japanese discovered to their chagrin the next day that they'd been firing at lanterns fastened to a row of bamboo sticks.

42

Six Hoo Months

THE YEAR 1941 had all the earmarks of cataclysmic evil. The Chinese almanac showed that the corresponding lunar year was a year of six *hoo* (fire) months. That is, the first and last day of each of those months had the fire element (the Chinese almanac designated each day of the year by one of the five elements), thereby bounding the months in that element.

Peasants and other old-fashioned Chinese, who took the lunar almanac as seriously as their rice, muttered about the certainty of dire events. Even one hoo month was a bad sign. The opening year of the bloody Taiping Rebellion had been a year of five hoo months. And the year the Japanese struck, 1937, when Sungkiang had been bombed—that year had had three hoo months. But now a year with six hoo months was to be faced. Prospects were dreadful indeed.

Burke had begun his third year in occupied Sungkiang still absorbed largely in his orphanage and general relief work. The plight of the common people had steadily grown worse. Prices changed daily—always upward. Rice was over a hundred dollars a *picul* (about 133 pounds). It had never been above twelve or fifteen dollars before. Eggs were as high as eighty cents each. Before the war they had been three and four cents. All this made no sense to the common people. To explain inflation and tell them their dollars were shrinking in value in their pockets only brought looks of bewilderment. A dollar still was a dollar to them—especially since dollars were even harder to make than before.

For the first two years Burke had been able, with what Red Cross and church funds he could get, to keep a rice kitchen going in the compound. The rice was cooked in a big iron pot and more than five hundred half-starved people came with their bowls for two servings a day. Many of these people were living as well as eating at the mission, sleeping in the Bible-school building and dormitory. Rehabilitation was slow getting under way. Word of Burke's early relief work had reached as far as Chungking and in October, 1939, the Chinese Executive Yuan cited him. The citation was signed by Dr. H. H. Kung, then chairman of the body. It was transmitted through American diplomatic channels to Sungkiang, where Burke promptly stuffed it away behind a lot of books to keep his Japanese visitors from seeing it.

One afternoon shortly after this the old missionary was surprised to see two black-robed Chinese Catholic priests walk into the compound. It was the first time Burke could remember ever seeing such a phenomenon—

Catholic priests entering a Methodist mission. As the two men came up to the porch of the mission home, Burke rose from the swing and went to the steps. A feeling of gladness welled up in him, displacing the momentary shock. It was good to see Christian brothers in these times of hate. The priests seemed to share his feeling, for they smiled warmly. They spoke in Chinese, presenting themselves as "Father Tzu and Father Ling." They were in charge of the local Catholic mission, they said.

"Father Chevestrier at Zocè [a hill north of Sungkiang, where there was a large Jesuit religious establishment and observatory]," Father Tzu continued, "has suggested that the Protestants and Catholics in Sungkiang join forces in relief work. Father Ling and I agreed to the idea at once and have come to ask you about it. Though Protestants and Catholics have some differences in doctrine, essentially we are both dedicated to the same service —helping our fellow man. So if we can help him here in Sungkiang better by working together, I hope we may be able to do it."

The old Methodist grasped Father Tzu's hand.

"It is something I would have liked to see started fifty years ago," he said. "Come in and we can begin making plans."

Some weeks later a small Episcopalian mission station was put in operation in Sungkiang and the Chinese catechist in charge joined in with the Methodist and Catholic missions. The three denominations organized a local relief committee, with Father Tzu as chairman, Burke as treasurer, and the catechist as secretary. Monthly meetings were held, at which time the Reverend Cameron MacRae, the veteran American Episcopalian missionary in Shanghai who supervised his church's Sungkiang activity, came to sit in at the meetings.

Co-operation proved helpful from the start. One of the local rice merchants was a Catholic and he cut his profits to supply Catholic and Protestant missions with rice at cost. The missions then sold it at a still lower price to people who were not altogether destitute. At the same time Burke and MacRae worked on the Red Cross end in Shanghai, putting in requests for allotments of American cracked wheat, then beginning to arrive in China. This wheat the Sungkiang committee distributed to people unable to buy even cheap rice. Wheat could not have been sold anyway in that rice-growing section of China, because people with any money at all would have bought almost anything else. And lectures about wheat's being more nourishing than rice did not help either. Sungkiangites simply did not like wheat, but driven by complete poverty and hunger, they would eat it. Which was a good point about wheat—one could be certain that those who asked for it were really needy and not just trying to get something free, as had been the case occasionally with persons asking for servings at Burke's first rice kitchen.

The wheat, done up in bags clearly labelled "American Red Cross Committee in China," was not brought to Sungkiang without Japanese objections. Colonel Idichi, the new Sungkiang liaison officer, at first told Burke there would be no possibility of getting a Japanese military permit for the wheat to come through.

"Japanese cannot have Chinese feeling gratefulness to United States," he said quite frankly. "Japanese must have all credit for helping Chinese. Otherwise Chinese more friendly to Americans than to Japanese."

But Burke found a sore spot.

"Colonel, people are starving here. It's no time to consider political issues. Do you remember the 1923 earthquake, when your own people were suffering and homeless? It was the same American Red Cross that brought you aid then, and out of no political reason. It's the same here. The case is one of simple humanity."

Idichi apparently had something more of that trait than most Japanese militarists, for he looked away, hissed and said:

"I will speak with headquarters."

The permit was approved a week later.

Meanwhile, the Methodist mission station was beginning to branch out into some of its pre-war activities besides pure relief. Burke found some teachers and started a primary school in the old Bible-school building, which was empty of refugees now. Many Sungkiang families, high and low, sent their children there rather than to the puppet government's New Order schools. The Japanese did not seem to mind. Then the mission conference met and appointed some more workers to the Sungkiang station, including a Chinese preacher and two American women, Misses Stallings and McCain. Later Miss Stallings was replaced by another American woman, Miss Armstrong. There was little difficulty now in foreign missionaries' getting passes to go into the Shanghai hinterland. When the women came to Sungkiang, they opened a girls' middle school in a building across from the burned school.

Next Burke obtained Japanese permission to go out and reopen one of his old circuit stations, the one at Loktiauwan. He made the trip there to preach two Sundays each month, riding as far as Shihhutang on the train and walking the remaining five miles—returning the same way. Those twenty miles a month more than kept up his daily walking average. Colonel Idichi had urged him not to go into this definitely guerrilla country, but that was one of the least of the old missionary's worries. What worried him most was to walk through the farming districts, watching men and women on many farms turning irrigation pump wheels, pulling ploughs, and doing other manual chores ordinarily reserved for oxen and water buffaloes. It was

estimated that Japanese bombs and Chinese earth scorching had killed more than a million of these animals in the provinces of Kiangsu and Chekiang alone.

All this while, the Sungkiang orphanage, now grown back to a hundred and twenty boys, was full on Burke's shoulders. There was no board of trustees to share responsibility. The surplus money banked in Shanghai had been used up the first two years and the puppet government would contribute nothing. Support of the institution was a day-to-day proposition. Burke personally solicited the funds. Much of it came from former Sungkiang friends who had fled to Shanghai and were making handsome profits there in war trade of one sort or another. The missionary made it a point to get in touch with these friends and drop a hint about the orphanage whenever he visited the port.

It was Georgia, though, that really came to the rescue of the orphanage and kept it going. The Macon business friends, Sunday-school classes at Mulberry, the Americus church members, friends and relatives in Atlanta—all were caught up in the spirit of the old missionary's struggle to keep an orphanage running in war-torn China and they kept a constant stream of money donations and clothing going to Sungkiang. In one fairly typical six weeks' period, Burke's diary carried the following items:

"Brother Happ sent $10 and pants [Happ ran a pants factory in Macon]. . . . Received $25 from Miss Agnes. . . . Mrs. Coleman's business girls' class sent $20. . . . Brother Waterman's class sent $30. . . . Got $10 from Sara."

And those ninety-five dollars would nearly take care of the orphans for a month, because they were American dollars, fabulous coins in China by 1940, when one of them was exchanging for around twenty Chinese dollars.

Burke had taken only two brief vacations before 1941. He did not like leaving Sungkiang long for fear his work might disintegrate again. His first trip away was in the autumn of 1939, after a year and a half's uninterrupted vigil—except for one-day trips to Shanghai—over his stricken city. The second leave came the following autumn. Both were visits to see Gordon, then consul at Tientsin. It took the place of Macon in a way—to sit around the home and hear Gordon's little Barbara call him "Grandpa Burke."

These trips were his first to North China too and he took full advantage of them to see the celebrated sites of that section. In Peking he stood on Coal Hill looking across the glistening gold-enamelled roofs of the Imperial City. He went out to the Ming Tombs. And he rode the train to view the Great Wall at Nankou Pass. It was amazing to think of having spent half a century in the country without suspecting the absolute grandeur that had been Imperial China's. There was certainly nothing in Central China—except, perhaps, Hangchow—to compare with it.

After these few weeks in the northern capitals, the old missionary was back in Sungkiang again, watching the New Order unfold in the undiluted light of that drab and broken city.

The Japanese had decided to remake Sungkiang according to plan—no doubt a master plan drawn up in Tokyo to fit all Chinese cities that size. There would be straight, wide streets and they would all be named in honour of Japanese soldiers. (The canals and bridges also were named for Japanese heroes. The Black Fish Bridge had become Sazaki Bridge.) The idea of straight, wide streets for Sungkiang was fine and should have been done years before. But the Chinese had lacked the Japanese genius for getting at the core of a problem with one simple decree. It mattered little inside the walled city, where there was only rubble to be cleared away the desired width of the new streets. In the still-standing western suburbs, however, the decreed streets ripped across courtyards and through bedrooms and kitchens. Of course, there were no compensations to the owners of these bisected homes. The Japanese mind could not be cluttered with such minor considerations. The Methodist mission got off luckily. Burke just had to move the front compound wall and gate back twenty-five feet.

The next Japanese project was to dig a canal connecting the railroad station with the main canal system around Sungkiang. The invaders had an effective system of digging canals also. Every morning squads of troops scoured about through the city grabbing up able-bodied men until the day's canal-digging quota was filled. All the luckless victims got out of their twelve hours' hard labour was a bowl of rice each for lunch. But the canal was finished in two months.

The principal function the Japanese had in mind for this new canal became plainly evident when long strings of barges, piled high with rice, began floating up to the railroad station to be loaded on trains. Thus the crops from Sungkiang's bountiful farms were more efficiently shuttled to Shanghai and ships loading for Japan. All the Lower Yangtze Valley farmlands were being similarly drained, so that now the most fertile rice-growing section of China was no longer able to feed itself. Much rice had to be imported from Indo-China, a fact which undoubtedly accounted for some of the tenfold rise in the price of the grain. And the standing witticism of the day was:

"Wang Ching-wei? Oh, he eats Saigon rice."

With that the Chinese retained his sense of humour and expressed his opinion of the independence claimed by the Japanese for their arch Nanking puppet.

The Japanese hotly denied any suggestion that they were looting the country of its food. They pointed out that they were paying good prices for the rice. But as with so many other things they were paying good prices for,

they paid in military yen, a thoroughly disreputable paper currency disgorged by their military printing presses. It was first pegged at about the value of a Chinese dollar, then quoted at ever ascending rates—regardless of the general fluctuation of the money market—until it stood at more than two Chinese dollars.

The Japanese showed a double purpose in circulating their military yen. First, as noted above, it served as a cover—obvious though it might be—for looting the country. Second, they wanted to get foreign exchange, particularly U.S. dollars. The military yen itself was, of course, worthless on the world market, but that was got around by forcing Chinese to exchange their dollars for it. And Chinese dollars could buy American gold. Much of this conversion of military yen into Chinese dollars was done through the railroads, which, in Central China, were now owned and operated by the South Manchuria Railroad, that immense imperialistic arm of the Japanese government. Fares on these trains must be paid in military yen, which the Japanese sold, as remarked, for as high as two Chinese dollars and above.

And trains were choked in the third and fourth years of the New Order. Tens of thousands daily risked the guerrillas to go to and from Shanghai, the black market centre of the East. Farmers might bring a pound or two of rice sewed in the linings of their coats and they took back perhaps a carton or two of cigarettes to sell to their town merchants. If they were discovered by station inspectors, the worst they might expect was a hard cuff on the ear and confiscation of their goods. But it was worth it. If a man was caught once out of ten trips, he could still be ahead of the game. And when he was caught, sometimes he could save his goods by slipping the Japanese a dollar or two. New Life had tried to curb and rechannel the natural Chinese energy for smuggling and graft. But New Order only stimulated it. And when that ingenious Chinese aptitude was stimulated, woe be unto the stimulator—in this case the Japanese. He was generally outwitted. And this explains one of the reasons the little islanders indulged in armed aggression in the first place. They could get nowhere with the Chinese by any other means. In peaceful trading the Japanese always came off on the short end of the bargain.

In riding their invaders' trains, the Chinese patiently endured all manner of indignities and what they considered Japanese absurdities. In the first place, the trains were run on Tokyo time—as was everything else the Japanese touched, no matter how far from their capital. Then, after changing dollars for worthless military yen at high rates, the Chinese had to stand in line to buy tickets. Chinese were congenitally opposed to the idea of standing in line for anything; their individualistic instincts had heretofore demanded mass onslaught on things like ticket windows. But they soon learned to respect Japanese canes across their heads.

The real absurdities began when they went through the barrier to the train platform. As they went through one by one to have their tickets punched, their passes checked, and their goods inspected, a man stood by with a spray gun sending clouds of some sort of disinfectant over them. In cholera season, there were disinfectant mats for the people to step on and bowls of disinfectant for them to dip their hands in. And standing about busily supervising all this were Japanese soldiers and health officers encased in their black sanitary nose masks.

"They've got less sense to be as smart as they are!" Burke would erupt after experiencing Japanese railroad station hygienics.

On the trains themselves, the conductors, engineers, and brakesmen were all Japanese. The only Chinese employees were the food vendors and some young lads who walked behind the conductor to translate the latter's station calls into Chinese for the benefit of ninety-five per cent of the passengers. Yet these Chinese passengers could look out the windows and see the huge billboards picturing glossy-haired Wang Ching-wei and saying in glaring characters:

"Support your president and the New Order for a free and prosperous China!"

There was also a billboard near the tracks between Sungkiang and Shanghai which showed a smiling Japanese soldier with his arm around the shoulder of an equally smiling Chinese farmer.

The Japanese were great hands at sticking up signs and placards. To say that the Chinese were indifferent to them would be an understatement. But that indifference was rarely so eloquently demonstrated as in the case of one particular sign in Sungkiang.

For generations a certain alley intersection of the Big Street (now Sato Street) had been a popular urinal. There was constant evidence of the fact on the wall of the house standing there. So the hygiene-conscious Japanese painted a sign on the wall, slightly above the vulnerable part. The sign depicted a turtle, with feet and head extended. By it were characters admonishing:

"Whoever urinates against this wall is a turtle."

Now, a Chinese normally hated being called a turtle worse than any other subhuman form of being; worse even than a pig. Something about a turtle thoroughly revolted the Chinese mind. Yet the unmistakable evidence of the wall's time-honoured function continued undiminished until the wall, sign and all, went down to make way for the new straight, wide street.

Endless stories could be told about the futility of the Japanese health programme in China. Not that many of their measures were not highly laudable and needed—as, for example, general cholera and smallpox inocu-

lations. The trouble was the martinet attitude of the Japanese in forcing these measures on the people. To reiterate an earlier observation, Chinese did not like being forced unquestioningly into anything, especially by the despised Japanese. So they forged inoculation certificates and urinated on walls. And once when the New Order tried to take a page out of the New Life and hold a fly-catching contest, children brought in flies filled with water—since this time the flies were to be weighed instead of counted.

Against these aspects of the New Order, the year of the six hoo months also was witnessing ever-straining tension between Japan and third powers in China. Nineteen forty-one had opened on the very heels of President Roosevelt's advice to all non-essential Americans in the Far East to get out. Homebound ships were booked up months ahead and Shanghai's tourist trade, already limping badly, virtually ceased. But the Russian girls and the dance halls did a booming trade, for the women were going home and the husbands staying on alone.

In the spring of 1941, the Methodist mission board suggested that its missionaries in occupied China take up work in the Philippines or in Free China. It was not an order, but the missionaries began taking advantage of it. Miss Armstrong left for Szechwan and Miss McCain went to Shanghai to await transfer. Burke was alone in Sungkiang again. And he had no intention of leaving. He seldom made trips now even to Shanghai for fear church or government authorities would not allow him to return.

Even the Japanese seemed to sense and sympathize with the old missionary's almost pathetic determination to stay by his church and orphans this time. Colonel Idichi brought up the matter one day when Burke stopped in his office to repay a call.

"Mr. Burke, have you plans for future if international situation grow worse?" the colonel asked.

Burke lowered his cup of tea.

"I don't think there is going to be any war between America and Japan," he said, "but if there is, I'm going to stay on here in Sungkiang and you can put me in jail if you want to."

The Japanese officer smiled. "No one, I think, will consider you a spy."

Idichi, as a liaison officer rather than attached to the local garrison, had been in Sungkiang two years. Since their first meeting over the wheat question, he had been repeatedly impressed by the missionary's devotion to Sungkiang and, in turn, the near reverence in which Sungkiang held him. It had been a revelation to the colonel—this relation between Chinese and a foreigner. Moreover, the sheaf of gendarme reports on Burke contained nothing on which the slightest suspicion could be laid.

The dark days began in earnest in July. The Japanese marched into French

Indo-China and the United States and Britain froze Japanese credits. The United States—and Britain later—also froze Chinese credits—this at the request of the Chungking government in order to keep the invaders from misusing Chinese currency in occupied territory to get American dollars. On the same day of the freezing order (July 25th), an economic warfare expert in London envisaged a completely crippled Japan after six months of total-American blockade. American papers carried that together with other long articles by domestic experts carefully detailing Japan's critical dependence on Anglo-American trade. Only in rare moments did some whisper of the truth leak through. In the New York *Times* of July 28th, buried at the bottom of an inside page and obscured by the glare of less-ominous analyses, was this short dispatch from the paper's Shanghai correspondent:

> SHANGHAI, July 27—Expert observers in Shanghai advanced the theory today that Japan was embarking on a colossal conquering policy which included actions directed against the Netherlands Indies, British Malaya and the Soviet Maritime Siberian provinces, together with intensified attacks on Chungking.
>
> During the past few months Japanese divisions and naval craft have been concentrating in Formosa, Hainan and South China, and now Japan has "acquired" bases both naval and aerial in French Indo-China which, it is said, presuppose further drives to the South.
>
> North China and Manchukuo, these observers say, remain at present misted in a fog of censorship, yet it is known authoritatively that large Japanese troop movements have been carried on from Shansi to Manchukuo, ostensibly toward the Soviet borders.
>
> Meanwhiles Japanese forces, both army and navy, stationed in China continue their attack against any and all Chinese troop concentrations and Chinese positions.

The freezing of Chinese credits was a blow to Burke. A week earlier a home mail had brought him cheques totalling fifty-five U.S. dollars from friends in Georgia and he was on the very point of cashing them. Now he would have to wait perhaps a month or more before the mission could obtain the necessary government licence for selling American currency in China. The orphans would finish their small stock of food before that. There was hardly enough for two weeks.

Much as he hated the idea of leaving Sungkiang at a critical time like this, Burke saw nothing to do but go to Shanghai and try to get some extra donations from his friends there. He would put the trip off another week, though. Something might happen in that time. It always had. Once, the

year before, when he did not know how he could run the orphanage a single day longer, a woman whom he had never seen stopped him on the street and handed him five hundred dollars for the institution. And on his last birthday, during another such crisis, friends had given him money gifts amounting to more than fifteen hundred dollars, knowing that he would rather have funds to spend on the orphanage than any other kind of present. So Burke waited, trusting in a faith that had never failed him.

Three days later he was sitting on his porch swing reading a book, trying to find what comfort there was in the sultry summer air. His cat (the dog Muh-huh had died and another "Mats" had been adopted) was stretched full length on the cement floor at his feet. At the end of a chapter, the old man would take time out to reach down and stroke the animal and remark affectionately:

"Mats, you're a lazy comfortable thing if I ever saw one. If you'd just learn to catch those rats inside as well as you sleep, you'd do some good around here."

He had returned to his reading after one of these interludes when a stranger walked into the yard. Burke looked up expecting to see one of his frequent Japanese callers, but it was a Chinese civilian this time. The visitor bowed when the missionary rose to meet him. Then he reached inside his gown, down under the cloth sash which held up his trousers, and handed Burke a small pouch.

"Madame Kung instructed that this be delivered to you," the man said and politely made his exit before Burke could ask him in for tea or coffee.

Inside the pouch the missionary found ten crisp hundred dollar notes in Chinese currency. Eling, from her home high on a rocky promontory of Hong Kong Island, had remembered the relief work carried on by her father's friend. Twice before she had got money through to him by her special courier service. This time the donation was enough to carry the orphanage along until the American cheques could be cashed.

Burke sat back in the swing, holding the money happily but absently. His thoughts swept him into the past. He could see the little pigtailed girl who had refused to dance with the ship's officer. He never thought of Eling in any other way—certainly not as Madame H. H. Kung, eldest and head of China's now all-powerful Soong family and wife of the premier. No, she was simply Eling. And as the old missionary thought of her, his mind naturally went to Charlie. He could see the diminutive preacher-revolutionist waving from the deck of the tender *Victoria*. Then Charlie was at Quinsan, inviting him in his "humble dwelling." And finally the little Chinese was in the room at Wesley Hall. The old man smiled as he saw Charlie leap back from the charged water-basin.

More and more since returning to Japanese-occupied Sungkiang, Burke had found himself thus reliving the past. It was not hard to do, what with his deeply sentimental nature and the pictures and books and trinkets which had survived the bombing and looting. He still had his Atkinson's translation of Ganot's *Elementary Treatise on Physics*, the book he'd used to make the batteries for shocking opium victims. And on the old roll-top desk was one of William's baby shoes, preserved in bronze. There were pictures by the score on desk, mantels, and walls. There was one of Tong's Ningpo-roof mission house and another showing Lok standing in his rock garden (Lok's home, incidentally, had been converted into a military hospital by the Japanese—much to the scholar's relief, for it guaranteed against its being torn down by vandals).

Those years that were gone had been rich in friendships, in accomplishments, and in promise. The old missionary experienced a mixture of warmth and sadness when he recalled them. They would never come again; not in his lifetime anyway. Everything of meaning and value was crumbling. And the forces responsible were but gaining in the fury of their madness. They must be crushed. As in the Boxer days, Burke again saw no excuse for blind pacifism. "Sometimes a fellow has just got to fight," he would say. In no other way could decency be brought back to this world. He was positive of that fact; particularly when he watched the deadly custodians of the New Order roar across the sky. During August for two weeks they appeared in the north-east every morning at eight minutes after nine and disappeared into the south-west—fifteen two-motored bombers sweeping over in a massive V. They were off to attack advance Chinese positions near Hangchow.

What light there had been in the Lower Yangtze Valley flicked out on December 8, 1941 (December 7th in the Western Hemisphere). Japan had cast her last and most desperate die. It was now all or nothing for the ambitious little islanders.

* * * * *

Letters from foreigners interned in Shanghai occasionally reached Free China and air-mail routes to the outer world. One such letter, written by a Methodist missionary woman, contained brief notes about the various mission members including:

"Old Boo Sien-sang is still in his home at Sungkiang. He is getting the best of treatment. He looks thin and old."