# CHINA, MY CHINA

by

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*Understanding China*

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TO

E. M. R.

GOOD COMPANION

OF

THOSE DAYS

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# ILLUSTRATIONS



*Except where otherwise indicated the illustrations are from photographs by F. Deaville Walker*

# PREFACE

GREAT CHINA and Great Britain ought naturally to be friends. Separated from one another by the width of the earth, they are in many ways strangely alike. Their national pride, their moral sense, their humour, their tolerance, and the sturdy independence of their common folk mark them out as made for friendship. Too few people in Britain have realised these things.

One of China's most characteristic figures, not altogether unknown to Britain, is that of middleman. In all the greatest concerns of life he is the means and method of negotiation and agreement.

For the best years of my life I have been unconsciously one of Britain's middlemen to China. In this book I have deliberately set out to be a middleman from China to my own countrymen. Half my life, all my best years, have been spent in China in the midst of her ordinary scenes and people. Great China and Great Britain have both been my cherished homes.

Few things are so important in this present hour as that these two historic peoples should come to common respect and friendliness. The essence of the matter is mutual knowledge. If there is any value in this book, it lies in the fact that it gives a picture of everyday China through the eyes of an ordinary Englishman.

Whilst the conception and plan of the book are, of course, my own, I am under great obligation to a number of friends for its execution. The manuscript has been read by Miss Barbara Simpson (Author of *China Post*), by Mr. F. Deaville Walker (traveller, writer and editor), and by my son, Mr. Arnold F. Rattenbury. The responsibility and the defects are mine. The improvements that they have suggested are many and great. Most of the beautiful photographs with which the book is enriched are the work of Mr. Deaville Walker. Two are the pictures of Mr. K. R. Snow, a fellow resident in China. To Miss A. M. Embleton, I am indebted most of all for her unstinted help at every stage of the work. Finally, no publisher could have been more understanding and encouraging than Mr. Frederick Muller.

That these pictures, photographed or verbal, should bring a sense of the humanity and vitality of the Chinese to the freedom-loving British is the aim of all that is included here. If my story

should prove useful to a wider audience, that would be an unanticipated reward.

Chinese readers can hardly be satisfied with so partial and limited an interpretation of their great land and people, but I hope that they may realise that here is an earnest attempt of one whom they have received as a guest to write sincerely, understandingly and helpfully about the household of his kindly, courteous, patient and enduring hosts.

The Chinese title on the wrapper has been devised and written by an old friend of Hankow days, Mr. S. K. Chow of the Chinese Embassy. He has done me this kindness without having seen the manuscript and is naturally free from all responsibility for any of my statements or opinions.

The book closes with the Postscript to the news given in the Home Service of the British Broadcasting Corporation on Sunday, January 31st, 1943.

WINCHMORE HILL.
*October 10th, 1943 (Double Tenth).*

## CHAPTER I

## A STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND

THE trouble with the average Englishman is that he doesn't really know that anyone else exists. He is well-meaning and kindly disposed, but the sun never sets on his flag. He doesn't mean to annoy the American, the German or the Frenchman. He is so sure of himself that he is unconscious of the effect he is having on others. He is at home everywhere. He doesn't need to learn another language. In all the ports and hotels he visits, "English is spoken here." It seldom occurs to him that other eyes may not see things as he sees them, or look at them quite from the English angle. These other folk must surely be wrong-headed if they don't see things his way. So he travels abroad, either lord of all creation or giving annoyance, by his unawareness of the state of mind and outlook of the other members of the human family. We have ruled so many nations so long and so well that it seems it must always be so. But nations, like well-trained children, grow up at length, and then if their elders can't yield them their place the way to freedom is through self-assertion and strife.

When I went to China in 1902 I found a strange contrast to all this.. All my life there I've had the healthy knowledge, for an Englishman, that I was a "foreign devil," that there was a race that considered itself superior to mine, that I was a weird person with outlandish ways from far away over the ocean, that I was hardly human, and of the stuff of which witches and wizards were made. On the streets they cursed me for "*mieh-hoh-tih*"—"a sheep person"—which was a parody on the Chinese word for "foreign"; a "*kao pih tze*"—"a high nose"—because they resented the intrusion of the English nosey-parker nose; a "*yang kou-tze*"—"a foreign dog"—meaning something much worse than appears, for the dog, in this aspect, is a beastly animal; or simply a "*yang kuei-tze*"—"a foreign devil"—which comprehended all the lot.

I remember standing in a field near Wuchang, many years ago. A little lad came up and said, "Foreign Devil, what is the time?" He didn't even mean to be rude; and was quite unaware of his rudeness. It was the name he had always heard for a strange-looking, strangely dressed person like me. It was no use being annoyed. I told him to say, "*Wai-kuoh ren*"—"outside-country-man"—next time, and gave him the time of day. It was not often

in towns that grown people called these names after one, but I well remember, on my first country journey in 1903, being cursed the live-long day by farmers working in their fields as we passed through a lovely valley that we christened then and ever after called the "Valley of Malediction." Generally it was the children who amused themselves in this way. When one remonstrated the usual reply from the bystanders was, "It's only the children." I often thought of Elisha and half wished for a bear.

When I was a lad I remember seeing a Chinese sailor or other gentleman walking the streets of Newcastle wearing his Chinese gown, pigtail and all, being pursued by little English urchins who ran after him begging, "Ching-Ching, Chinaman, give us a cash." I little realised then that, when I grew up, Chinese feet would patter after me, and Chinese children pursue me begging for cash or cursing me for a devil.

"Sweet are the uses of adversity," and I have learned long ago to rejoice that, as an Englishman abroad, I lived in a country where I wasn't the lord of all creation, but just a "foreign devil." This wasn't the way the grown-ups talked to your face, or the beaming shopkeepers who desired your custom; but the children's voices showed the way the elders thought. You were a stranger, an intruder, and they didn't like the looks of you; perhaps they were rather fearful of you. You were so strange, so unlike human beings as they knew them.

This is strangely similar to the picture the average Englishman has had of the ordinary Chinese. You read a certain type of novel and "John Chinaman" is a synonym for cunning and even cruel cunning; a mysterious person whose mind you can never fathom; somehow connected with opium-smoking and treachery. You go to the cinema and there is a "Dr. Chan" preternaturally clever and absolutely unbeatable in his craftiness. I have known even old residents in China who no more thought of risking a walk up the nearby Chinese street than of flying, before the days of aeroplanes.

It is rather strange that we should have been "foreign devils" to them and they embodiments of mystery and craftiness to us. It only shows how ignorance and fear may divide between two of the kindliest peoples on the face of the earth.

That, anyhow, was the China to which I went as a youngster just after the Boxer Rising, when so many foreigners and their Chinese friends had been killed by ignorant, suspicious, frenzied mobs, who probably thought of us as something in the nature of

demons to be resisted, rather than as human beings who had come to be their friends.

This strangeness has all worn off long ago. It seems to-day unbelievable that such things could ever have been. I have as many Chinese friends as friends of other races, and I hardly think of them as strangers and people apart. They are just friends, and that name is deeper than any division of race or class. For under superficial distinctions we are all much alike in heart.

In these early days there was much else strange beside the amusement and the cursing. What a pity one does not keep one's early letters home from a new country. Those first letters from China would have given pictures which are hard to remember now.

I landed in Wuchang, I remember, in a December storm that churned the Yangtse up into great waves. This made the voyage across from Hankow, in a Chinese junk, the most adventurous part of the entire journey from England. We were packed into rickshaws and rushed through the streets, paved with granite blocks, but inches deep in water and mud. We went through narrow streets where it was difficult for two rickshaws to pass and where foot-passengers were continually being jostled out of the way by the shouting, sweating rickshaw coolies.

We came to the shelter of the Mission House, where all were one big family, and where I was given a Chinese name.

That was a strange thing, and after all these years still remains a strange thing, that one's name, and the name of one's fathers, is absolutely useless in China. No Chinese characters are to be found for it; few Chinese lips could pronounce it. So the first thing one does in China is to obtain a Chinese name.

I am thankful for the Chinese name my missionary friends and their Chinese advisers gave me on my entry into China. They could not have guessed how suitable it was to be. The characters are 饒永康 and the pronunication is *Row Rin-Kang*. The first is the surname and was the nearest Chinese name they could think of that sounded anything like "Rat," the first syllable of my English name. It means "forgive" and is one of the more common of "the hundred names" that are supposed to be all the surnames that China's 460 million people need. It is just a surname. But the beautiful personal name—*Rin-Kang*—is related to it in meaning. Those two characters signify "Eternal-Peace." So I have gone through life as Mr. "Forgive Eternal-Peace," or, in the English order, Mr. Eternal-Peace Forgive. Many an English girl is called

"Irene"; some are called Peace, but no boy would ever be given such a name as mine. Are names realities? Has there perhaps come to me something of that nature? I have been well content to be called "Forgive Eternal-Peace," though I don't suppose anyone else ever bothered about its meaning.

Armed with that name, I became to the Chinese a little less strange. In spite of my appearance and my dumbness, at least I had a human name which people could pronounce and understand.

I went abroad not knowing whether they cursed or blessed. I walked around the city wall, several miles in circuit. Outside, in all directions stretched the little mounds and hillocks of Chinese graves, marked, each of them, with a small and simple stone. There in the spring, at the feast of "Clear Brightness," one watched little groups cutting the grass, cleaning the graves, burning cash-paper and incense sticks, and firing off Chinese crackers as they bowed in obeisance to the spirits of the departed. The cash-paper consisted of small squares of thin coarse yellowish paper made from bamboo. Each town in China still contains many cash-paper shops where that is the sole article of merchandise. You see it stacked from floor to ceiling, and all day long the apprentices are punching holes in it to represent the holes of the old-fashioned strings of cash. This done, it is sold to those who would worship at the temples or the ancestral halls or graves. The paper is burned and thus transmuted into coin to be used in the spirit world. There were other shops, now as then, where you could see them making bamboo frames, covered with light tissue paper, of houses and horses, chairs and boxes. There were paper figures of men and women, gold and silver, and any conceivable thing that the spirits of the dead might need in the spirit world beyond. It was a common sight to find these paper objects set up beside a temple or a grave. Then grown men and women set fire to them and bowed and let off crackers, trusting that their departed friends might enjoy these gifts in the world of shades. In China, when a man dies, we most commonly say that he "*tsou lu*," he has "gone on the road." I always felt there was a wealth of meaning in that expression.

All this is very like the notions of the Spiritualists in the West. The other world is thought by them to be a shadowy replica of this world of ours, of streets and shops and dwellings. If it seems strange to you, as it does to me, that a sane and practical people like the Chinese should almost universally practise such trivialities,

remember the hold of tradition over all of us, and especially in ghostly things. Remember also that the modern bespectacled student, as Confucius of old, lays no stock by demons and strange things. The old-fashioned students of a generation ago, whatever they thought in their hearts, still followed the ways of their fathers, as the so-called "stupid people," the ignorant masses, did.

Looking inwards, from the height of the City Wall, one's eyes took in the multitudinous roofs of Chinese houses set in narrow streets. There wasn't a chimney among them. The smoke got out as it could, and at the time of morning and evening rice caused a mist to rise over the city. Here and there some temple or guild-hall or official residence stood towering out, above the universal grey of the houses and their blackened tiles, with its red walls and gorgeous coloured tiling.

In the streets there was noise, noise, noise, as sweating, sturdy coolies, with their rice and vegetables balanced on their carrying-poles, trotted along, jostling with the rickshaws and the passers-by, shouting to clear the way and make room for the burden-bearer. How the Chinese loved to shout together. How queer they must have thought us quaint English folk chatting quietly with one another, as they said, "like birds." It was evident we were talking and saying something as we talked, "just like the birds" and quite as unintelligibly to human (Chinese) beings.

The windowless shops were all shuttered at night and all open by day. The goods in many of them flowed right down from counter to pavement, as in a fruit and vegetable market at home. There were big silk shops with scores of shopmen on a bigger and finer scale than ordinary shops, and always thronged with purchasers. There was chopstick street, where every shop in the street was making and selling bamboo chopsticks, varnished or lacquered red. There were cash-paper shops, and cracker shops where nothing was sold but little red Chinese crackers. The hand machine that rolled these out went rasping all day and all night. Did those apprentices ever rest, we wondered.

In those days there were not many women in the streets and they, except at festivals, mainly old blue-gowned grannies with their hobbled feet and gnarled and furrowed faces. The younger women were busy indoors with their cooking and their babies. They were literally the "inside-men," their husbands being their "outside men."

You knew when you approached a school by the noise of the scholars chanting and yelling their books. For all education was

classical, and the first step for all was memorising their books, which they did at the top of their voice. Schools were small, with thirty or forty boys at the most, with perhaps the teacher's own daughter added. The teaching was by individuals, and a successful teacher might teach the same scholars from the time they learned to recite the Chinese characters till they had earned their first Civil Service degree.

Into this educational programme a few Church schools were introducing new subjects and Western methods, and there were forward-looking officials beginning to lead their people in the ways that were to come.

In the houses, the water carried by bare-backed coolies in their wooden buckets, spilling all the way, was kept in big earthen-ware baths called *kangs*. There were no drains except the main one down the street. Into this the slops and garbage of houses and shops was discharged. There was no sanitation. Coolies carried buckets of foully-smelling human ordure through the streets into the country for manure; or down to special boats on the river, whence it was conveyed to the adjacent country. After you had met these things a time or two, you kept ahead of the coolies if possible.

The gentry and women who had to travel were carried through the city in various types of sedan-chairs. The women were screened from your sight with bamboo blinds. The shouts of the chair-bearers added to the noise and clamour around you. Small vendors of roasted chestnuts, rice-cakes, bean-curd, and most other things, with the help of the inevitable shoulder-pole, pushed their way through the crowds, each tinkling on his little gong or rattling bamboo castanets. There seemed to be a peculiar call and special musical announcement of the goods that each man was selling. Then almost everyone seemed dressed in blue, and, to the stranger's eye, every face was alike.

The grey-gowned Buddhist monk, the Taoist with his hair done on the top of his head, with a wooden peg to keep it in position as in old Chinese pictures, the blind musician feeling his way along carrying his two-stringed fiddle, the barking, fighting dogs, all added to this lively scene. For it was certainly living. Noise, noise, noise; men, men, men; blue, blue, blue; children, children, children; narrow streets, crowded humanity with their shaven brows, and pig-tails wrapped around their busy heads. This was the strange land into which I had entered, that cared nothing for me but to stare at me and curse me; that hadn't asked for my religion and was contemptuous of all my ways. But, at any rate,

I had obtained a new Chinese name, and had thus taken the first step to becoming a recognisable human being.

How thoroughly insignificant I was, and yet how interested in all I saw and all I met. "Alone in London," men say. That was nothing to being there amidst all this pressing throng, alone in China, a stranger in a strange land, among a strange but civilised people. They were not up-to-date. They were living, perhaps, as our fathers in the days of Napoleon, or in the days of the Great Fire of London, but they were alive and a breath of a new age was blowing through their streets.

## CHAPTER II

## LEARNING THE LANGUAGE

I ARRIVED in China just after the settlement of the Boxer upheaval which began in 1900. I was young; and such tragedies didn't bother me over much. Perhaps there was a lack of imagination, as certainly there was an absence of knowledge of what it all meant.

My anxiety was on quite a different score. Should I ever be able to learn this world's most difficult language? I had heard so many stories about people asking for an orange and being given a saw, or trying to buy a chicken and being presented with a wife; about the misunderstanding that might arise through pronouncing a word in its wrong inflection, that it looked as if only a linguistic genius had any chance of success and we English are notoriously bad at learning languages. I wonder why. I have thought since that those early travellers and missionaries who came home and talked to us were so slow in making converts and had so little really of which to speak, that they got away with making funny jokes about this strange language of a curious people. Perhaps that's rather hard on our predecessors, but it must be a generation since any speaker about China has had much to say of such things as these. There has been so much to tell about really important things.

At College I had set myself to master Hebrew, as being in a group of languages entirely different from Latin and Greek, French and English; and though I never studied Hebrew sufficiently long to make much of a fist at it, this not entirely unsuccessful effort did give me a modicum of assurance that perhaps I shouldn't be an utter failure at the acquisition of Chinese. I found later that in language structure Chinese and Hebrew had much in common. A Chinese student of mine found himself more easily at home in Hebrew than he did in the long, involved sentences of Greek.

Actually, the Chinese spoken language is not so difficult as people have thought. Our children picked up its monosyllables (and Chinese is entirely monosyllabic), from the "*amahs*"—"Chinese nurses"—and the servants much more quickly than they learned English from us. It came more easily to their little lips, and out of the mouths of their children grown-up people picked up a lot of good Chinese expressions.

I have a friend in China, a great linguist, who all his life long

Village Women at Home

Farmers go to Market

Fishing with a Lever Net

A Weaver in Bamboo

has dabbled in numerous languages, who regards spoken Chinese as actually among the easier forms of speech.

Written Chinese is a different matter. As everyone knows, there is no alphabet and no alphabetical way of building up Chinese words as we do in English. Yet it is not true that each Chinese character is an entirely separate and unrelated word.

The New Testament contains in Chinese about 3,000 different words and characters, and the entire Bible about 5,000, though the ordinary dictionary may run to 40,000 different signs. The Chinese peasant commonly uses not more than 800 words.

Instead of being built up of a number of letters, as our English words are made, most Chinese words or characters can be divided into two parts. The first part, most often on the left-hand side, is called the "radical." These "radicals" give a clue to the meaning. The right-hand part is called the phonetic and gives a clue to the sound. It is astonishing how readily the words fall into groups under their various radicals and phonetics, and how this eases the burden on the memory. 日 is the radical for the sun and 明 is the character for brightness. 土 is the radical for the soil and the word for the earth is 地. 口 is the radical for mouth and the word to eat is 吃. The connection is obvious and even easier to remember than in our English alphabetic language, which is otherwise so convenient.

On my outward journey to China, I learned the radicals and a little of the idiom of the language, but did not attempt any pronunciations, lest I should learn wrongly the sounds better heard from the first from Chinese lips.

My first year was spent in the country, some four or five miles from the Yangtse, in a three-roomed bungalow on the hillside above a tiny mud-brick village, where we had a little white-washed chapel. All around me a horrible country brogue was spoken. Friendly Christians, with half their teeth gone, used to come and shout at me in Chinese, hoping that if they "said it very loud and clear" it would help me to understand; but it didn't help me a little bit. Clearly, the villagers could not, at that stage, be of much use to my Chinese studies. A teacher, therefore, had been provided. He was a "*Hsiu Ts'ai*"—or "B.A."—of the First Civil Service degree, and for twelve months he was China to me. He came to me at 9.0 a.m. each morning, and we stayed in company till one o'clock. He had no word of English, and I was equally devoid of Chinese. We had such primers and dictionaries

as there were. Of the English part, he was as innocent as I was of Chinese.

We used to practise "tones" for half an hour each morning, saying the blessed word "*foo*" in five different ways, each with a different meaning, according to the way it was pronounced, and so with other characters. Then I learned the Chinese words for "What is this?" and used to take him round the dining-room and every article around me and upon me to learn its Chinese name.

Then we started elementary forms of conversation, aided by the primer. These four hours took a good deal of filling up at first; but after a month or two we had plenty to employ every minute of the morning; learning, reading, writing, talking. In the afternoon I put in two hours alone at the new characters we had learned that day. I regret to say that my teacher went off his head at the end of the year, but I should not like to think that his strenuous toil with me was the cause. At night I read English books, and talked and played chess with my senior colleague. Kipling's *Kim* had lately been published, and my colleague was my *lama*, and I his *chela*. The *lama* sometimes went off into the blue for a week or ten days tending his country churches, leaving the *chela* to manage as best he could, with no living soul round him who understood a word of English.

This was the stuff for any struggler with the language. You just had to talk, whether you sank or swam; and gradually I found I I could swim. At the end of nine months I was attempting a very carefully prepared address. I don't suppose any of my hearers understood a word, but in their courteous way they all pronounced it "*Hao Tung*"—"good to understand." One disbelieved them, but somehow there was comfort in their kindness. That is how any mother helps the first efforts of her little son. To others it may be double-Dutch; to her it is "*Hao Tung.*"

A friend of mine, a year longer than I in China, told me about this time that he'd been speaking to the outsiders in a street-preaching chapel. "Did they understand?" said I. "No, I don't suppose so; but I've no hesitation in practising on them. They'll get the advantage by and by." That's the spirit that will make a linguist in any country.

At the end of a year I could read or write 3,000 "characters" or words, however badly I pronounced them. Then I was put to a job, but kept on studying under other teachers. China was different then, and the Chinese books we studied were mainly the classics of Confucius and Mencius. We kept off Christian books,

except the Bible, as much as possible, because they weren't truly Chinese, being the translations of English words and foreign ideas.

One of my teachers was a hard case, heathenism incarnate, money-grubbing and not untypical of some of his Pharisaic class. He taught me one good phrase, "*To-tih ssu Shui*"—"much is water"—the Chinese equivalent of "Speech is silver, silence is golden." His idea was "Wine is rare, but water is plentiful." Perhaps his teaching has helped the quiet ways of his pupil, "Eternal-Peace."

Another teacher was a gem, a man of a higher degree than the others, of great intelligence and originality of mind. He taught me more about the classics in the few months I had the privilege of his instruction than all the others put together.

A fourth teacher had a lovely voice—clear as a bell. To hear him read the lesson in school was an education in itself.

So, under many teachers in different circumstances, Chinese was discovered to be immensely interesting. At every meeting one attended any striking phrase was noted down, and wrestled out with the teacher next day. Often you had got it wrong and neither teacher nor anyone else could make head or tail of it. Sometimes you scored a hit, and then it was surprising how, as you walked along the street, or talked in the home or school, or sat listening in a meeting, the phrase would leap out at you again and again until you had it so firmly fixed in your mind as never to be forgotten.

After the early toil of getting acquainted with the language so strangely different from English, the beauty of its cadences burst upon you. You began to feel its flexibility and adaptability. People said you never could use it for scientific purposes, or close and exact reasoning. Who would say so now?

As the nation itself, the language has melted and become living again. In fact, one sometimes wonders if anything has changed quite so much. The old rigidity and enslavement of the classical tradition has gone. It is not a language only for scholars now, but for everybody. In some ways this means a much easier approach for the foreign student. In the schools there are now graded readers from primary to middle school, beautifully and aptly illustrated, from the simple ABC of things, so to speak, to the harder and more meaningful reaches of composition: and the foreign student may follow it through from its simplicities to the profundities and its quotations from the classics.

There are modern methods of instruction too, language schools

in China and in England, where under skilled teachers many of the hurdles that had to be taken by the individual are now more easily and more skilfully surmounted with experienced aid.

No reasonably intelligent foreigner need have any more fears of learning Chinese than of learning French, Italian, German or any living spoken language. Chinese tones are considered by some to be a stumbling block: but, after all, 460 million Chinese are using them all the time quite naturally. So why should a foreigner fear or fail?

I, for one, do not regret those early toils and adventures in Chinese. Somehow as one worked through the *Analects of Confucius*, and the *Sayings of Mencius*, the *Great Learning* and *The Doctrine of the Mean*, arguing, disputing, examining with your teacher these treasures, that only one teacher of them all had real liberty of mind to discuss with me, something more was coming to me than the acquisition of a language. I was getting steeped in the atmosphere of the Chinese ages. Acquiring the language with modern methods and more skilled instructors with more ease the student to-day avoids to some extent the toil and sweat. There may be some things, however, that hardly come but by the sweat of the brow.

There have been a number of attempts to simplify the written language. It has been romanised. It has been transcribed into a sort of phonetic script that the illiterate might learn it more rapidly. In my early days, for a few months I was attached to a school for the blind, where, by means of a Braille system, the blind were able to proceed with their studies more quickly than the sighted.

The Chinese themselves have, however, on the whole rejected these short cuts, feeling, rightly or wrongly, that something of value was being let go. The Chinese have a proverbial disbelief in hasty methods. "*Mang tsung yu ts'o*"—"In hurry there is error," "more haste, less speed"—they say. It has to be remembered that they have been working out the wisdom of experience, not for hundreds, but for thousands of years.

Yet there has come a Chinese simplification for beginners and for the illiterate. You begin with the thousand commonest and simplest characters nowadays. A coolie who is already in possession of the spoken language before he starts to read can grasp and read those thousand characters in six weeks or so. It is not a far cry from that to the three thousand characters of the New Testament or of an ordinary book. What is good for the coolie makes easy going for the foreign students too.

It was consuls, missionaries, and Customs and Postal staff who chiefly gave themselves to the study of the language in my day, but in the later years British firms were encouraging their men to follow the example of German and other business men. For they rightly felt that the more intimate knowledge of the people that a grasp of their language would mean must sooner or later have its direct or indirect effects on good business.

Is anything so uniting or so divisive as language? We missionaries were rightly told that we must either learn the language and learn it well; or England, and not China, would be the place for us.

When you come to the deepest things, a man of any country falls back on the language he drank in with his mother's milk, and one of the essentials of understanding between England and China is that the bridge-builders on both sides should know, with some accuracy and appreciation, one another's speech.

As a spoken language, English is probably harder than Chinese. Think of the confusion in pronunciation of "bough," "cough," "through" and "though." Chinese has nothing as confusing as that. Yet many a Chinese is eloquent and accurate both in speaking and writing our tongue.

It is an extremely rare thing for anyone really to speak an alien language, as we say, "like a native." In all my time in China I have only known two individuals whom the Chinese described in such terms. But almost anyone who sets his mind to it can attain a knowledge of Chinese that is useful for all practical purposes. The treasures of the classics and modern books alike then become his, and Chinese of all sorts and conditions regard him, not as a chattering bird, "speaking with tongues," but as a human being who speaks with them in their own tongue and can understand the things they say.

The stranger who begins with a Chinese name shakes off much of his strangeness when he has learned to speak Chinese. Apart from the mere speaking, the very idiom of speech and way of saying things is in itself a revelation of the Chinese mind. You cannot, for instance, conduct conversations, as the Chinese mainly do, without the use of "I" and "you" without something of their courtesy and consideration entering into your very bones.

When, at length, you have some grasp of the language, you have only obtained the instrument of understanding. You are still a stranger with the key of knowledge in your hand. The lock is turned, the door is open, but you have still to enter in.

## CHAPTER III

## LEARNING THE PEOPLE

FOR a foreigner who would live in China to be given a Chinese name is essential. If he would even begin to understand, to learn the language is equally essential. But it is most necessary of all that he should learn the people.

In my early years I hadn't even dreamed of learning the people. I rejoiced in my name. I was revelling in the language, and above all, in the classics; but I had never seen the point of thinking as the people thought.

Furlough came in 1910, and I was asked to deliver three or four lectures on China to a theological college in England. Afterwards I was encouraged to offer them to a religious publisher. Happily for me, as I have always thought, the publishers had other work on their hands and my lectures were rejected. Had they been accepted, they would have damned me for life in the eyes of intelligent Chinese. For, after some nine years in the country, I, who had tried to teach my fellow countrymen about China, had never got inside the country of their mind. I was writing as an outsider. In China, as in other lands, you have to lose your life before you find it, and I, an exile there, was still fortified within my British prejudices. I had not learned the people and had hardly realised there was any people to be learned—apart from certain habits and customs that seemed then to me to be as strange and wrong-headed as my customs were to them. It seems pitiful to me now that I should have been so blind and dull. I have seen some sail almost on their first voyage right into the freedom of Chinese life. I have seen others who, all their life long, had never known there was any other problem than the learning of the language. Among these I now realise myself at that time to have been.

How the change came I have no very distinct impression, but I think it came in the atmosphere of the 1911 Revolution, when the Manchus were overthrown and the Republic, with its five-barred flag, was established.

About that time two startling words were said by Chinese whom I greatly honoured. Both seemed unintelligible and wrong-headed at the time. Both have had a profound effect upon all my after-life in China. The first was said to me by a Chinese colleague, a

"*Hsiu Ts'ai*"—"B.A.," as we translate it—a man who had taken the first Civil Service degree. He had grown up with us, was a brilliant scholar, and an excellent mathematician; one of the early examples of the new China that was already on its way. Conservative by nature and training, there was nothing of the revolutionary about him, then or since. He was waiting for me as I finished directing a letter to a fellow missionary in another town. I had written, "Mr. X., —— Mission, Wusueh." "Why do you write 'Mission'?" said he. "Because it is the Mission where he lives." "It isn't." "But of course it is. What else should I write?" "Write '—— Church' " was the rejoinder. Then, almost passionately: "I'm not a member of your 'Mission.' I'm a member of God's Church in China." For months I never understood. I wonder if even now I fully understand. "Not a member of your 'Mission' "—not an outreach of your English spiritual imperialism. "I'm not a part of a white thing extended into China with however much idealism and sacrifice, but a member of God's Church in my own Chinese right. After all, the streets of the city are gold, the colour of my China, even though the martyrs may be clad in white." He didn't mind belonging to my Church. He rather revels in that; for he finds the form of life in that Church practically useful. He would scrap it if he didn't. But he does want to be a Chinese Christian, yellow, with no sort of tinge of any sort of white.

The years that followed 1911, with its breakdown of the Manchu Government, were very dreadful. Armies were chasing one another from province to province. The war-lords were hydra-headed. As soon as one was eliminated, three or four took his place. Sun Yat-sen was known to have said, "Though the land runs with blood it is worth while if we attain our goal." He was said to be a dreamer and a fanatical revolutionary and, as far as folk who wanted a quiet life were concerned, he was quite out of court. What we knew was that terrified women and children were periodically rushing for refuge to our compounds as ill-paid, ragged soldiers swarmed into our neighbourhoods. There were fear, pillage, and destruction apparent everywhere. We longed for the flesh-pots of Egypt, for the comparative order of the Manchu régime, with all its iniquities. Then one of the most outstanding Chinese Christian ministers gave me a shock. He was a giant of a man intellectually and spiritually, known in four continents, but characteristically gentle and courteous in manner. When foreigners commiserated with him on his country's troubles one day,

he replied, "We'd rather have our mess than your order." So the revolutionary bug had bitten him? Was he demented? I wondered if he could really know the tears and the blood, the suffering and the destruction of his countrymen. How wrong-headed the best of Chinese could be, I thought. Now, I know that he was right. Order and peace can be bought at too great a price if they mean the loss of freedom or of national liberty.

Unless he is much more intelligent than I, the reader will not easily accept the essential rightness of the attitude of those two Chinese gentlemen, who, in a sense, owed all their development and standing in their Church, their country, and their world to British influences, and yet who, in the last resort, stood firm for the liberty, the independence, and the integrity of their Chinese personalities.

Since then I have watched ecclesiastics and politicians of foreign countries, filled with idealism, pity, and good-heartedness, making plans that they consider right and good for China, and I know that China will repudiate them. It's as true of the Communists as of the Christian Church. China will be China. You may win her if you respect her. She will be no means to your ends, however good your intentions. That is the first and last thing to learn about this people.

When I first went to China this independence was seen in savage ways. We called them "anti-foreign riots." We knew they were not so much spontaneous movements of the mob as deliberate actions engineered by student leaders, working on the natural fears and prejudices of the ignorant and illiterate and superstitious populace.

In quieter ways, we might have seen it had we had the sense. In the Christian Church, for instance, it was common talk in my first period of life there that you never could get any Chinese really to express his mind. You had some more or less baffling problem. You took counsel with your Chinese friend. You got no help. You came away from the conversation saying, "Oh, these awful people. Why won't they speak." "Why don't they tell us what is in their minds?" "Why do they always end with '*Sui muh-ssu tih i-ssu*'—'As the minister thinks right'?"

Now it is all plain. The Church of that day they didn't regard as their Church, or the school or the hospital as their school or hospital. It was yours, and the blunders and the mistakes were yours. They were your converts, your employees. You were the host and they the guests; and there are things the courteous guest will neither say nor do. You didn't understand or recognise their

status and their personality. It is all different now, and you can have all the advice you will take. Or, rather, China being China, they are in the place of the host and you are the guest, and now there are things that you as guest will not do or say, unless the bonds of friendship have got you beyond the outer guest-room of courtesy into the inner courts of understanding comradeship.

I somehow feel that in those earlier days in China we divided humanity into men, women, and Chinese; and they, in turn, thought in terms of men, women, and British. We were admitted into their guest-rooms, but not into their hearts. As for the British, our home was our castle. Round the wall was our moat. Over the moat was a draw-bridge that was rarely lowered for any Chinese to enter on terms of complete and utter equality. In the last resort, we were "foreign devils" and they mysterious Chinese, a little suspicious of each other's mysterious ways. Men we understood, and women we thought we understood if they and we were British; but Chinese somehow were different, topsy-turvy, and a little wrong-headed. Who could trust them, anyway?

In due season it came home to me that they couldn't trust us either. That teacher friend to whom reference has been made was talking to me one day. There'd been a little trouble at the other end of the town, and he, out of his wide experience, had shown a young English colleague how to solve it. To his distress, the method the young Englishman had used to solve it was by quoting and giving the name of his Chinese colleague, only to expose him in turn to trouble. "I'll never do anything to help him again. He's a potato. Fancy spreading my name around." The real trouble was that the young Englishman had treated his Chinese adviser as he would naturally have known not to treat an Englishman in similar circumstances. It was a case of men and women and Chinese. Unconsciously and without intention, that differentiation had crept in. It all comes from failing to recognise that a Chinese is a man precisely as you are a man, and that China is a country precisely as Britain is a country, and that whatever of recognition is due to your country's position and to your individuality that, no more and no less, is due to China and to each Chinese person you meet. It is not only possible to live in China for twenty years without having bothered to learn the language, but it is possible to live, a fluent speaker of the language, for a lifetime in that country and never learn the people.

It is not a question of time but of intelligent and understanding outlook. Here is a story of a young English minister somewhere in

China. The nearby hospital was temporarily in charge of a certain Dr. Li. Li had his difficulties in administration, as all doctors may have who are called to be medical superintendents either there or here. Let us call the Englishman Mr. Smith. One morning Li calls upon Smith, and they sit and talk over their Chinese cup of tea, and then Li, as a sort of afterthought, says, just before leaving, "By the way. I've heard that the Missionary Society is in difficulties and that the hospital grant will have to be reduced. I just wanted to say that, whatever economies you have to make, you mustn't get rid of my colleague, Mr. Chang. He's far too good a man to be spared."

Smith sits thinking in his study. "Why did he say that? There's nothing wrong with the Missionary Society. The grant is not reduced. There's no need to dismiss anyone."

Then, after due reflection, Smith takes the bull by the horns, calls on Chang, and informs him how difficult is the situation into which the Missionary Society may be coming; that there are said to be great financial difficulties. Under any other circumstances, we should hope to have retained the services of Mr. Chang for many years to come, but under this emergency there is nothing for it but to ask Mr. Chang to retire with this little present. Chang admits the propriety of this arrangement and Li, Chang, and Smith all part good friends.

When all is over, Li is heard to remark that Smith is "the only foreigner he has ever known who understood a Chinese when he spoke straight."

Smith is still active somewhere in England now, but when I think of my early stumblings and mistakes in learning China, how I reverence the bright intelligence of Smith and what a loss it is that, for health reasons, he is compelled to spend the residue of his days in the misty isle of England. One of the perpetual concerns of the Chinese mind is, in personal relationships, never to leave an avoidable sting; always to leave the other man with a little face, if possible.

"Oh, this face-saving people," we used to exclaim. "Everything has to be sacrificed to face. Why can't we have the plain, brutal truth?" The Chinese answer is: "Because it is so brutal." When a man is poor, hungry and ragged, if he has his "face" he is still a man; he still has something to cover himself with. Mencius said that you could throw food to a starving beggar in such a way that even a beggar would not touch it. A man who doesn't care for "face," who has no sense of shame, is beyond redemption in

Chinese eyes. We outside critical foreigners used to see no good in "face." From the inside, with all its dangers, it seems a very lovely, purifying thing. Yet how many times have most of us to confess that, at least in our earlier days, we deliberately and consciously took people's "face" away.

"*Mu yu lien*"—"he has no face"—is a Chinese description of a brazen-faced scoundrel.

The Englishman in China has often been "John Bull in the China Shop"; and the pity of it has been that he has been so often unconscious of the precious things he has been destroying.

I am often aware in my reactions to life of a divergence of view between John Chinaman and John Bull. "This is how I should react to this situation," I think; "And this is how I am certain the Chinese will react." In my early days I should have known that I was right, for my motives were so good. I have come since to know that quite likely it is the Chinese reaction in China that is right. They know their people and common humanity deeply, and their experience is very great.

I am sure now that both Chinese teacher and Chinese preacher were right in their mystifying and astounding statements—"Your Mission," "Your order" were manifestly more efficient than "my Church" and "our mess"; but then liberty is greater than order and personality and individuality is the greatest of all human possessions.

As Confucius, I "learn without attaining." It is no easy thing, not only to live in another nation, to speak its language, and to admire its civilisation, but really to be a Greek to the Greek and a Chinese to the Chinese. There is no hope of real friendship unless on both sides the attempt is made. A great British Minister to China recently remarked: "The only way to get on with the Chinese is to give them all you've got, to be utterly friendly with them." No one is likely to do that unless it is given him not only to learn the language, but to know there is a great people to be learned, and who is prepared, in all humility, to sit at their feet as a scholar or side by side, as an equal.

## CHAPTER IV

## MY VILLAGE HOME

CHINA is so vast a country that no sane person would ever generalise about it. What is true of one area may be quite untrue of another. Round Peiping (Peking) the climate is Canadian, dry and cold in winter, dry and hot in summer, with a rainfall that is apt to fail. On the other hand, I have met Chinese from Canton whose first sight of snow was when on a visit to Shanghai; for in Canton you are almost within the tropics. In the Yangtse Valley, where I lived, the seasons followed one another as in England and at about the same period. The spring was cold and wet, bringing the rice rains on which the life of the people depended. The summer from June to September had patches of gruelling heat bursting now and then with storms and torrential rains, which would cause the temperature to drop quite suddenly as much as 20°. The thermometer in summer rarely registered above 105° Fahrenheit and was usually lower than 100°, but the river valley was moist and the damp heat before the storms could be almost unbearable. You woke in the morning with your pillow one bath of perspiration. Sweat would stream down your body and exude from your arms as you did nothing more strenuous than write a letter. The autumn break, which came about mid-September, generally heralded by a typhoon ("big wind"), restored you to normal life and introduced months of dry, sunshiny, and perfect weather. Gradually the grass turned brown and continued so till the skies were grey with winter and cold winds and occasional sandstorms blew over from the Gobi Desert. There was always one fall of snow, sometimes quite heavy and deep. We hated the cold after the heat of the summer, but we knew it did us good, and tried to be content.

China scenery is as varied as the weather. Conditions in China may vary as greatly as the weather and the scenery. You will meet many people who only remember the drab rice flats that border the Yangtse, but we who travelled inland over hill and dale know China for a land of surpassing beauty. Even so, there are great variations. I have been on the Shantung plains in wintertime when the cold winds were blowing, and the land seemed utterly desert, and then I've been shown photographs of the selfsame spots when the foliage was out, after the rains of summer, looking

like a veritable paradise. In other parts of China, I've travelled over superb and magnificent mountains.

The village where I lived was a quiet little place, nestling at the foot of a hill some four or five miles from the Yangtse. Our three-roomed bungalow was halfway up a pine-clad hill overlooking the village, with its huddle of brown mud-brick houses. Behind us was a broken temple, with the roof caved in and the idols exposed to the weather, a refuge for the beggar and the haunt of wild animals. A couple of leopard cubs were found there one day. We often used to climb the hill beyond the temple and see the long snake of the Yangtse waters meandering through the countryside. It hardly seemed possible the river was five miles away. What interested us most was to see the steamers going up to Hankow, or down to Shanghai, bearing the letters that are the most precious freight of all to men in exile.

The name of the place was the Liu Family Village. It was, as its name suggests, the homestead of one spreading family. The little cluster of mud-brick, grey-tiled houses, from which morning and evening rose the blue mist of the cooking of the two main meals, was really an extended family. All were called Liu: all were closely related. There was no marriage between those living within the hamlet. Brides were fetched in red festal chairs from other villages—the Chu, or Li, or Chao family village—and the Liu brides went to villages of other surnames.

There were a few graves marked by a group of cypress trees just outside the place, and from our home we listened to the barking of the dogs. We saw the ploughing of the water-buffalo, watched the unruly pig being driven from its nefarious rooting among the crops, heard the women with a "La-la-la-la" calling the chickens home to food, or with a different "La-la" calling in the pigs to their trough of piggish delights. By day we could hear the thud-thud of the stone hammer worked by some daughter-in-law hulling and crushing the rice, and occasionally a shrill voice of a woman calling across the fields to her children or her man.

It seemed a ragged place, and I was told that some of the patched garments had covered more than one generation of the Lius; for nothing was ever thrown away.

Children were numerous and soon set to work gathering dried grass and sticks for the family cooking. It was a common sight to see a little chap perched on the back of a huge water-buffalo, steering the patient beast by means of string attached to a piece of wood that pierced its nose. There were no idle hands in that village.

During the whole year we only had three or four visitors of our own people, and they on short and special visits. How we welcomed them—all, that is, except the "Angel." He was our factotum, a little gnome of a fellow, tanned by the sun, innocent of soap, which, in those far-away days of 1902 and 1903, was, anyway, little known in inland China. When a foreign visitor turned up, the "Angel" was heard to grunt out, "Ah, another foreigner. Suppose he'll want a bath. Always bathing. Dirty people." Why should you bath unless you are dirty? All the water had to be carried up a steep slope from the village well, and the angel of the house had to carry it. No wonder he complained at the foreigners' dirty bodies. No wonder he was thrifty of the precious fluid for himself.

From our sitting-room we gazed across rice-fields and hamlets to a lake lying amongst the misty hills. The fresh green of the growing rice was an unforgettable miracle of colour. Night after night there was painted for us the perfect sunset, and morning after morning we woke to the glowing heavens. Thrushes, blackbirds, blue-headed jays, and skylarks were our constant companions. The kite and the hawk circled overhead. In summer the golden oriole arrived with its rich mating song, colour and sound making one perfect harmony.

The wild pig often came down through the undergrowth of the pine-clad hills to feed on the crops and was chased by the farmers with their mattocks and old-fashioned fowling-pieces. Once there was talk of a tiger, and quite often there were leopards on the hills; for we were on a spur of great mountain ranges that stretch on and on for hundreds of miles till finally they mount to the ranges of Tibet.

What more perfect setting could be imagined—quiet and intensely beautiful—for one's early months of study.

There we saw the rice growing thickly in its seed beds and then, when the rains had come, planted out root by root in fields of standing water. Soon it was a carpet of living green, and then brown for the harvest. We watched the irrigation of the water-carriage by which a sort of wooden dredge propelled by young men and women, with their tireless feet, lifted the water from level to level of the terraced fields till all the plants had drunken. For most hillsides were terraced up and up so that every available foot of land might be tilled.

Then we saw the rice full-grown and ripened, reaped with the sickle, and thrashed into a great wooden rice-bin and, finally, we

saw the ox grinding out the corn in a stone furrow over which a heavy stone-wheel was run. The winnowing was done as in Scripture times, in its simplest form, by throwing the grain into the air on a day with just sufficient of a gentle breeze to blow the chaff aside as the falling grain gradually grew to a considerable heap. To a townsman, close to such things for the first time in his life, it was all intensely thrilling.

The roads in those parts were raised paths between the fields. There were no hedges. To have grown them would have been to waste the good earth. The main roads, leading to the riverside mart or county towns, were strengthened with small, irregular flag-stones near enough to one another for you to place your feet and keep from slipping on a rainy day. The village paths were just the simple earth, and to walk them during or after heavy rain was an exercise in callisthenics.

The motor-car and bus have begun to alter all that, but in the days of which I write lorries and buses were not so much as dreamed of. Sometimes I think it may be centuries before the communications of most of the villages in Central China will be materially different from what has been described. Yet the main routes are already becoming broad roads, and once a change of this sort shows its practical advantages Chinese farmers, as well as bus-owners, may be quick to make new roads.

The people themselves I used to meet at close quarters on Sunday in the chapel at the foot of the hill. The faithful few came nightly for prayers to the guest-room, where, sitting round the wall, each spelled out his verse, listened to the exposition of the preacher, burst into what was said to be song, and kneeled together in devotion. Sometimes one wondered what it could mean to each and all of them. One could but wonder; for it was months before one had enough Chinese to share it in any real way.

What struck me most of all, apart from the singing, was the absence of the women. Young Chinese women of the present generation can hardly imagine the utter lack of education of their sex forty years ago, or the early struggles of the missionaries and other pioneers to give them the privileges that were then the birthright of their sisters overseas. Young educated lads of the early decades of the twentieth century neither could nor would demand the schooling of their fiancées betrothed to them, by thoughtful parents, in their infancy. I used in my early years to press this question on my pupils and was met invariably either with indifference or a shrug of the shoulders. It simply was not

done, in inland China, to educate the women-folk, and that was all there was to be said about it.

The singing in that village was a weird experience. It wasn't that the Chinese couldn't sing, but their ideas of music were then entirely different from ours. Then, as now, their actors and songsters shrilled their falsetto to the accompaniment of drum and gong, to the great delight of Chinese listeners. It was not our music, and few foreigners understood or enjoyed it any more than those Chinese villagers could comprehend what our music was all about. Their ears were not attuned to it. The consequence was that they started off a hymn together, went careering through the verses each at his own pace, and finally ended up like a set of runners, some of them early breasting the tape, and the stragglers coming in as they might, but each and all determined to continue to the very end. It was all very strange and greatly misunderstood by foreigners, who hastily concluded that the Chinese were unmusical. Actually, I early began to see, and have never varied from my judgment, that the Chinese are as musical as any race on earth. Apart altogether from the stories of Confucius's enjoyment of ancient music, the more foreigners are acquainted with the Chinese race the more are they aware of the treasures of music, as of art, that are to be found in China. Modern Chinese play on Western instruments and sing our Western songs and oratorios, though they are proud too of their own traditional music.

My villagers were all farming folk, up and in the fields before the rising of the sun, and toiling in those fields till dusk. They raised their own crops and vegetables, wove their own cloth, built their own houses out of mud-dried bricks made from their own fields. Every few days their menfolk went through the darkness before the dawn to the market on the nearby street, there to be met by farmers from villages round about. This, in our parts, was called the "*Reh-chi*"—"the hot gathering." The marketless days were called the "*Len Chi*"—"the cold gathering." It was really hot and noisy on a market day. Crowds, crowds everywhere; the farmers bringing the things that they could spare, and returning with the things that they did not make, such as chopsticks, macaroni, fish and pork, paper and sticks of incense, and cash-paper for worship. How happy the farmers were in the noise and crowd and heat of the "*Reh-chi.*" It was all "*Reh-lao*"—"hot and noisy"—the word for everything in Chinese society that gladdens the heart of the people. There is something rather childlike in this

Grandads in the Sunshine

Young Hopefuls

Old Pagoda, Kunming

New Library, Wuchang

old people who love to be "hot and noisy." Isn't it a perfect picture of a children's party? Those who don't like "*Reh-lao*" shouldn't live in China, for "*reh-lao*" is the very gladness of the Chinese soul.

In market town or village there was no great amount of money in any farmer's hand except when the main crops were gathered. A man whose fields support his home, needs and uses very little money at ordinary times. Autumn ingathering was followed, not only by the winning of money, but by the joy of harvest. These country harvests were celebrated by theatricals performed by strolling players. The theatres attracted huge crowds, including, of course, all the riff-raff and ne'er-do-wells of the neighbourhood. The plays were long and mainly historical. The actors were dressed in gorgeous masks and robes. The people chatted and shouted, ate oranges and pea-nuts and anything the small portable kitchens and their cooks could provide. In spite of the "*Reh-lao*," the heat and noise, the people hugely enjoyed the day's outing, and seemed to appreciate all that was going on, clear proof that you can do more than one thing at a time.

Missionaries, as a rule, gave those country theatricals a wide berth; for in those early days of unrest and suspicion, with all the roughs of the countryside about, one was only asking for trouble by intruding into what, after all, was not one's business. A crowd is very easily moved this way and that. If you can imagine a Chinese gentleman of the day in his full national costume projecting himself into the midst of an English fair on a Saturday night, you are able to picture the sort of scene that might at any moment have been caused if one had been unduly careless about such matters.

One experience in that village during the hot summer weather was striking in itself and has parallels with certain sides of English life. Night after night we found people dashing over the hillsides with their oiled-paper lanterns, gongs, and Chinese fire-crackers. After losing one or two nights' sleep, we discovered that they were scaring evil spirits which were supposed to be located in or about our house. What had happened was this. A woman in the village, whose time was thought to have come, was unable to give birth to her child. After consultation between the Chinese doctor and midwives, it was decided that a devil must be concerned, for there seemed to be no other possible explanation. How like human beings, after all, the Chinese are. Enquiries were made as to the possible origin of this evil spirit, and it was stated that the wife of

a former cook of the previous missionary had died in the little house behind the bungalow. She had not had a proper burial, according to local village ideas. Her spirit was therefore wandering about, causing trouble to another woman.

The way this information was discovered is the interesting thing. This wasn't just a matter of village gossip. The idol had been consulted, and this was the answer of the idol through the "*Ma-Chioh*"—"medium." I had a talk later with this or another medium in that very village. He was a young, healthy-looking farmer in his twenties. He told me that he whirled and danced about until he had worked himself up into a state of exaltation, and his mind was an utter blank. Then questions were put to the idol and the answers of the idol came into his empty mind, and so the thoughts of the spirits were made known. One can see how all this can be utterly sincere, and yet the medium was doing nothing but giving the opinion of some one or more strongly convinced people in the group that stood around.

Many have experimented with table-rapping or the planchette in their youth in England, and got the most amazing, interesting, and intelligent results. When spiritualists here or there interpret such things as communication from the other world rather than as thought transference from living being to living being, then begins the journey down the road to Endor which, in the end, brings no good to anyone. In this case, the devil did not come out; the child was not delivered. They fired their crackers and beat their gongs in vain. We also lost our sleep in vain.

The woman did not die. Strangely, she lived on for another month and then became the proud mother of her son. It was not, after all, a devil, but a miscalculation in arithmetic. But I don't suppose it would make much difference the next time the doctor was in doubt and there were idols and media to consult. Believers may be as stubborn as the unbelieving.

Before the days of vitamins, we had proof of the value of foods. Our house dog, as everybody else's, was a Chinese wonk, a mongrel, half collie and half wolf in its appearance. He was fed from the bones of our chickens and the leavings of our pork, as well as on the rice that could be spared. He was accordingly strong and vigorous. The house dogs of the village fed on simpler fare. The houses and folks were poorer and their dogs never had the sustenance of ours.

How often have I seen him tearing down the hillside and putting some neighbouring dog to panic flight. The poor, under-fed

neighbour hadn't a ghost of a chance against his onslaught. It was a trial to us to have such a sturdy scoundrel guarding our door, and did not give the impression of "Eternal-Peace" that would have been more appropriate.

Yet we, as all other houses, had to have a dog. How else could we be guarded against prowling rogues and beggars? Having a dog, how could we do less than feed him? He being fed from a lordly dish, how could he do less than prevail over the village dogs? Was it his fault or the vitamins?

Those village days were filled with the learning of Chinese by day, and browsing in English books by night; for it was considered right to rest one's eyes from the square Chinese characters after the lamps were lit.

Never again was I to have such reading, and seldom such good companionship as with the old missionary who taught me the beginnings of all I came to know of China and her fascinating people and their ways.

## CHAPTER V

## THE SPELL OF CONFUCIUS

ALL my China days I have been under the spell of Confucius. It began in that village, under the pine-clad hill, and has continued ever since. This is strange in some ways. People said to me, as I began to read Confucius's books, "You'll find him stiff and stilted. You'll get very tired of the constant repetition of 'The Master said,' as though he was the only Master and his sayings closed discussion for all time. Wait till you come to Mencius with his genius for illustration, his story of the man who pulled the young rice-plants up to see how they were growing; and his warm-blooded relationship to life. The Master is so cold, so icily faultless." Others spoke of the wit and wisdom of Chuang Tzu, the brilliant thinker and writer of Taoism. "There's far more in him than in all the Chinese classics," they claimed.

I am bound to say that, though one of my Chinese teachers had a superb and open mind, the others for the most part repelled me. They were certainly stilted, proud, and disdainful of the "*Yu-min*" —the "stupid people," the ignorant populace, the common folk— to an annoying degree. They seemed to have closed minds, and viewed all new ideas and ways with positive resistance and alarm. They were custodians of the old and tried traditions. They were suspicious of everything new, whether religion, education, or science.

A doctor friend used to say that he would rather see in his surgery the most stupid and ignorant dolt from town or village than have to attend a Chinese teacher. Such a man never seemed to understand the ways of a doctor from the West. After all, it's the sick who need a physician, and however sick a Confucian scholar's body might be, how could there be anything wrong with his mind? He was the Master's pupil, and what more could he learn from anybody, let alone from a foreigner?

One of my teachers was an unashamed and hopeless money-grubber and seemed in violent contrast to his Master. Thinking back, I realise that the scholar, who failed to gain an official position, often led a penurious life. He had to keep up all the appearances of his social position, often on a mere pittance, and the wear and tear of life made havoc of his ideals. An old minister who had gone to China, as I had, straight from College, and then

been forced by family troubles to return to work in England, said to me on my first furlough, when I was commenting on these and other matters, "I think of the Chinese much more highly than I did, now that I know more of the English. Human nature, the world over, is very much alike." As my life has lengthened and experience of human beings, including myself, has grown, I have realised the deep wisdom of his judgment. Yet it was natural, in the beginning of things, that Confucian scholars and teachers, not truly representative of their great Master, should have had an unfortunate effect upon the mind of an Englishman too young really to know much of human nature in his own land, let alone elsewhere. As I see things now, the wit of Chuang Tzu and the power of homely illustration and story-telling of Mencius, are utterly characteristic of the Chinese race; but the structure, the skeleton, the backbone, without which all the other things would collapse and be futile and ridiculous, is the teaching of Confucius.

You can't expect to know a great deal of the personal history of anyone, however great, whose life was lived 500 years B.C. There are stories of portents at his birth and death. There are always portents if we could but see them. I remember, in the Revolution of 1911, passing the corpse of a Manchu who had been killed on the Hankow street as he tried to escape his pursuers. There was a crowd that morning on the street, but they weren't looking at his poor shell. They were gazing up past the telegraph wires into the clear blue sky, where a star was shining on that sunny morning. Doubtless, someone was connecting star with revolution. Did anyone say it was that poor victim's unlucky star? There have been sufficient comets and eclipses in my time in China to find a sign in the heavens for most political events. Remember, China is still the land of the star-gazer and the fortune-teller for most of her many millions.

Apart from myths, what we do know is that Confucius was an official, who, by virtue and wisdom, rose to the highest position of the state of Lu in what is now called Shantung. So well-ordered was the state in consequence that it is claimed that robbery ceased to be, and that even jewels and money dropped on the open road would never be appropriated by others, and would always find their way back to their rightful owner. That is a great claim for the time of 500 B.C. and would perhaps be a still greater wonder to-day. Confucius served a ruler much less perfect than himself, as was inevitable. Yet as long as the Duke of Lu was under the guidance and spell of his chief official, his dukedom

prospered and neighbouring states began to be jealous and afraid. Did the Duke himself grow a little tired of virtue?

*Anyhow, it is said that a ruler of a neighbouring kingdom sent him a present of horses and lovely women. His acceptance of the* gift turned his heart from Confucius's puritanical ways. After hoping and waiting for his repentance in vain, Confucius threw up his office and made a slow journey to the confines of the realm hoping to the last for the repentance of his master. It was not to be. Exile and retirement followed for the sage, not without its perils, as he journeyed in search of some other monarch who would rule as the famous Yao and Shun of old. Around him were disciples whose number is said to have grown to 3,000, of whom some seventy were outstanding. These scholars treasured up and in the end wrote down their conversations with the Master in a book called the *Lun Yu*, or, in English, *The Analects*. A great deal of higher critical work has been done on this book, as on all the classics, by competent Chinese and foreign scholars. For the ordinary reader it is sufficient to say that *The Analects* consist of disciples' questions and the Master's answers, and sometimes of a searching question to a beloved disciple and that disciple's inadequate reply with the Master's comment. Sometimes, on some great occasion, or at a meeting with some special individual, the Master is constrained to speak a word which his disciples have treasured like gold. There is no story running through *The Analects*. There are no miracles and few parables. *The Analects* are just treasured sayings of the Master. Treasures some of them are indeed.

Here and there is a hint of Confucius' character. You are told that he could not bear to sit at meat with the table all awry; that he was silent at meals, and liked a little ginger afterwards. After all, how human he was. When he lay down he had a sleeping-robe, longer by several feet than his own body. I remember arguing with my teacher about a man, approved by Confucius, who would not shoot at a sitting bird. "It's easier to shoot," I said, "How foolish not to shoot it." I hope that teacher put it down to my ignorance and want of understanding, and didn't accuse me and my kind of not being able to "play cricket." Confucius "played cricket" all right, and kept the rules of the game. How can a huntsman shoot a sitting bird?

In my day, the critics were accustomed to say that they thought the Master had been a little lacking in truthfulness, and that this had been a damage to his people. The evidence often quoted for this was that once when a caller whom he did not wish to see had

come, Confucius had sent word, "Not at home," and then, before the man was out of earshot, had strummed his guitar for all to hear. Such an illustration was rather proof of the want of intelligence of his critics than the want of truthfulness of the great Master. Where all praised him, foreigner and Chinese alike, was that greed and avarice had no place in his nature. In those last rotten days of the Manchu régime, before the final Revolution and abdication in 1912, the land was full of corruption. To be an official meant to amass ill-gotten gain. "Squeeze" seemed to rule the land, from the palace to the hovel. Justice was bought and sold, and many young revolutionaries were preparing to overthrow all that. Somehow, in the midst of things like this, it was lovely to gaze on the pure and flawless figure of Confucius, who preferred poverty to ill-gotten gain and exile rather than the service of an unworthy monarch. Whatever his country and his people might do, there stood their great Sage, a judgment on all living evil everywhere.

Two other books are closely associated with his name. They are both short and both books with a theme connecting the various chapters. There is the *Great Learning*. This is really the instruction for a prince as to how to govern his people wisely and well. Each of us is, after all, a prince in his own right. Our kingdom is ourselves, and what was meant for the instruction of an heir-apparent is, for the most part, applicable to us all. So his disciples have interpreted his teaching as Confucius must have meant they should. The second is the *Doctrine of the Mean*. Chinese wisdom consists in walking in the middle of the road, not being swayed overmuch to the right hand or to the left. Every Chinese coolie lives by balancing loads exactly on his carrying-pole. In the *Doctrine of the Mean* will be found the philosophy of the balance and the avoidance of extremes. Does it point to the fact that even 2,500 years ago China was old and her wisdom ripe and rich?

These books, or much of them, are to be found in English translations, though there is always something in the original that a translation can never give. It is not the purpose of this chapter to give translations, however imperfect, but to set forth something of the spirit that captured a young Englishman and holds him still, and that down the centuries has been the ruling thought of China.

With all their reverence for the scholar, the Chinese people as a whole have, as other nations, been illiterate. How many years does universal education go back in any country? In Confucius's day

the country must have been still more illiterate. Is that why he groups the relationships and the virtues around the five fingers of each hand? One can almost see him sitting among his disciples with the five relationships in his right hand and the five virtues in his left. If princes were true princes, and ministers true ministers, if fathers were true fathers and sons true sons, if husbands and wives, elder brothers and younger brothers, and friends with friends, lived together as they should, all bound together by a sort of filial piety, then would the golden age have come again. For he looked back to the golden age. He made no claim to be original. He was always talking of the days of Yao and Shun. Did his disciples think his way hard? Then let them look to his other hand, and count the five virtues of love, right, courtesy, wisdom, and loyalty. These are all social virtues, all involved in the five relationships, all comprehended in the fundamental virtue of filial piety. For is not the Empire one great family, and are not "all within the four seas brothers"? Is not the Emperor, offering on the Altar of Heaven sacrifices and loyalty to the Upper Emperor, from whom he derives his authority, the father-mother of all his people? So that all virtue is wrapped up in this one thing: to be a perfect family with perfect filial piety.

In the *Chung Yung*, the *Doctrine of the Mean*, is to be found the Confucian vision of the perfect prince with virtue so secure that his very presence will make others virtuous too. All his kingdom will be leavened. Strangers from afar will come to him. Neighbouring kings will lose their subjects, who will flock to him. Confucius taught that all good government comes ultimately from personal virtue and that perfect virtue is rooted in perfect knowledge and wisdom.

That Prince of whom Confucius dreamed has come, and when He came men seized Him and crucified the Lord of glory. Confucius, perhaps, had too high a view of human nature. Yet he should have known, for he lived in the midst of evil and imperfection. He was no theologian. Such mysteries were too deep for him. Like Socrates, he seems to have looked askance at religion as he knew it, and yet enjoined those who followed religious practices to be reverent and sincere in all their ways. Confucius was perhaps the greatest humanist who has ever lived, and, just because he drew the line at human conduct, he left behind a void that others filled. For there is so much more in man than thoughts of good and evil.

The human heart cries out for answers to death and pain, and

sin and the life invisible. Mencius had some answer to the problem of pain, but the other questions were left to Taoist and Buddhist monks, and by and by for Muhammad and Christ to answer. China is religious as any other country, and must have an answer or it will follow, as other so-called civilised people, the inanities of mascots, luck and spiritualism of various sorts. There is no avoiding the religious question. Man is that sort of an animal, and it is not necessarily the sign of intelligence but quite likely of escapism to "eat drink and be merry; for to-morrow we die."

What an enrichment it has been to have absorbed some of the wealth of Confucius's wisdom.

"Know what you know and confess your ignorance of what you don't." How often I rebuke myself with that.

"Don't be grieved if you are unknown. Grieve rather that you are not fit to be known."

"If someone blames you, look within three times before you answer back."

Above all, there is this picture of the Princely Man we are to imitate and the Little Man we are to avoid. The "Princely Man" the Chinese have claimed to be Confucius himself. How little he would claim such things. With all his commanding personality, he was, like Moses, "the meekest of men." He "learns as though he cannot attain." "In his eagerness for knowledge he forgets his food." He never took himself to be the Princely Man. He only dreamed of him and tried to follow his dreams.

This great distinction between Princely and Little Man is proverbial in Chinese life, and to call anyone a "princely man" is high praise indeed to-day.

The "Little Men" are the great majority, and there seems to be no bridge in all the teaching of Confucius by which one may pass from Little Man to Princely Man. That is where Confucius stops.

Yet that he has been a great gift from Heaven, that he has kept alive the Chinese conscience, and that he has been the true author of her civilisation and expansion, that he has been the forerunner of the true Princely Man, I have no shadow of a doubt.

As the Psalms and the Prophets of the Jews, so have the life and the teachings of Confucius of China been to me the bread from Heaven and inspiration for life. I went to China full of gifts that we, who had received, were to hand on to others wherever they might be. I have received from China the inspiration and the help of their great prophet. How privileged has been my lot.

On some Altar of Heaven in Confucius's day, and as long as an

Emperor ruled upon the throne, there was acknowledgment of the Righteous Ruler of the Universe about whom Confucius made no speculations. Behind Confucius, and behind Yao and Shun, of whom he spoke and thought, and in the Chinese conscience of to-day, as yesterday, is the certainty that the world is not meaningless, that "Virtue has a good reward and evil a bad consequence."

The Chinese, following Confucius, have not pressed the ultimate question to its depths. Its leaders have remained a little coldly agnostic.

That early criticism of the Master by the foreigners is not without its reasons. He is just a trifle superior, just a little aloof. Or is it that the reverence of his followers has deliberately set him a little apart from his fellow men? It is strange that in a country where a famous and ancient hero is now worshipped as the god of war, where dead ancestors and dead men have so often had temples built to them and their images have become objects of worship, in the temples of Confucius there has only been a tablet. Whatever obeisance is made to ancestors his worshippers have rendered to him and that alone. After 2,500 years he has remained a man and not a god.

Some readers may judge that this is too sweeping an assertion, and mention occasional instances that point in the direction of deification. Yet no one will deny that, on the whole, this generalisation is as correct as it is remarkable.

The explanation may well be that Confucius's own attitude to the spirit world has been far too strong an influence for his most enthusiastic disciples to resist, even had they wished to do so.

In the Revolution of 1911, and especially in that of 1926, China ceased to cultivate the past. Her eyes were in the front of her head. China was rushing down the road of modern development, trying to do in a generation what others had taken centuries to accomplish. In the process, whatever the gains, China suffered some hurt and now, a little chastened, she presses on, but quite mindful of her past and of her ancient sage.

In this all her friends within and without the land rejoice. For China to gain the modern world and lose Confucius would be indeed to win the husk of things and lose the grain. Happily there is no fear of that, for the spell of Confucius that binds me has first and last and altogether bound his people too.

## CHAPTER VI

## THE FAMILY

THE Chinese family has undergone great changes in my time. Yet it would be untrue to make such statement without qualification.

There are so many families, in country and city, by the rivers and on the mountains, in the maelstrom of the revolution in Shanghai, Hankow, or Tientsin, or in some remote village. Almost every judgment is true somewhere, less true somewhere else, and quite contradicted by the facts of another place. Yet there are trends, and the changes in the family, almost completed in places and hardly noticeable in others, are deep and widespread. Even so, however, it is not all change.

The stream goes on whatever may happen to the eddies and currents. There is a family sense and sensibility as striking and characteristic in the newest home as in the pre-revolutionary period. That is China, and one would not want it ever to change. When the Chinese classics say and the common proverb repeats, "*Tien hsia i chia*"—"All under heaven are one family"—they do not mean that all humanity is one. A recent writer has translated the phrase "All under heaven" as "the Great Society." That, too, is a very general term. What is really meant is that China is one family. In classical, as in later times, the Chinese were aware of other half-civilised folks beyond the confines of their Empire. Their travellers and soldiers had brought back word of these, but those folks of other parts no more mattered to China than America did to Britain before the voyages of Christopher Columbus. To all intents and purposes, the "Great Society" was China and that was one family. The Chinese down the ages have been very concrete in their thinking and in their speech. They are practical and like to see things in their actual setting, and this idea of the race being one large family, true in some sense of all the races, is somehow vividly true in China.

Around the year 1930 an Englishman, a doctor friend of mine in a country hospital, was talking to a wounded Chinese soldier of the Revolution. He asked his age. "Twenty-six," he said. "Then I'm more of a Chinese than you," said the doctor. "I've been here thirty-six years." To his amazement, the Chinese belched and

flamed at him: "You dare to say that. You bastard, insulting my ancestors. My people have been here for thousands of years, and their blood flows in my veins. How dare you, an outsider, talk to me like that?"

That doctor was one of the best-loved men in China. There was little he did not know about the lives and the ways of this great people, and yet suddenly he had come up against a family sense of which he had hardly, after a lifetime, been aware in this intensity. It has to be remembered that it was a time of great tension. Yet can anyone imagine that situation reversed on English soil? It is unimaginable to me.

The Chinese word for "family"—"*Chia*"—is identical with the word for "house and home." We use three words where they use one, because we have differentiated between the ideas. To China, house and home and family, have been, if not one, at least so closely connected that they have not felt the need for different words. You can get the turn of idea from the spoken or written context, but the root is all the same.

The character for family or home seems to be a simple picture of a pig under a roof. It takes you back to the Irish cabin, where the pig, who pays the rent, has a special importance. Where there is a pig there are many mouths to feed, or why would you need her? So you get the picture of a country home with parents, grandparents, children, and grandchildren tending the chickens and the family pig, the original unit, very close to Nature, of the Chinese Society.

That unit expands into a great homestead containing, to our British eyes, not one family, but many. Under the spreading roof, extra roofs and rooms having been added as the family grew in numbers, it was quite common to find four generations, all the stages of human life from Shakespeare's puling infant to old age. What was more, under that same roof there might be sheltered the wives and children of three or four sons at various stages of their growth. Yet it was all one house, one family, one home. One of the great sins against loyalty was for a son deliberately to "*fen chia*"—"divide the home." The iniquity of the Prodigal Son was in that respect much more blameworthy than it would seem in England. To our English eyes, the younger son, scoundrel as he was, had some sort of right to the things that he claimed. In China that question was not raised. That he should split his father's home for his own selfish pleasures was a terrible crime.

A home cannot go on expanding itself indefinitely, and so that

single roof with its single pig grew and spread till at last it became a village. Then the land became insufficient to support all the "mouths" with which Heaven had blessed the homestead, and so fresh land was acquired and part of the village moved to the new land and a new village was formed; but the sense of kinship was never lost. All families within the village, as within the home, shared the common surname, and naturally the old family name was taken over to the new village or villages as they might arise; but the sense of kinship and the common family was so strong that there was no intermarriage between folks of the same surname, for how can you marry your own brothers and sisters? There was little distinction in their village minds between brothers and cousins. In fact you never quite knew whether blood brother was meant, or only a cousin of the same generation when a man spoke to you about his brother.

So you could trace in any countryside the growth of the village from the home; and the clan from the village; and ultimately China, the Great Society, from the smaller and larger clans. Thus all under heaven was literally and almost physically "one family," and the single family was the unit of the nation. The individual, of course, was there but, until the revolution, he had not arrived.

John Li was a pupil in your school. It did not really matter whether he was the son of some official waiting in Wuchang for a new post or a brilliant farmer's son from the country, where all the family had clubbed together to find the necessary fees for this new type of schooling. The only difference was that the official home might be still more proud of its family life, and still more rigid in its unity, than the less splendid toiling family of the village. It would be more conscious of the meaning of the family tradition, and have more cause for self-congratulation through all its official connections and intermarriages.

One day you asked him, "John, are you engaged?" A little self-consciously, he would tell you he had been engaged since infancy and he hoped his parents had made good arrangements. "You are speaking English, John, and entering into the life of a world even wider than your glorious China. Is your fiancée being educated too?" Almost every lad would answer that he did not know, or he supposed not. Anyway, that was a matter for his parents or her parents to decide. It was not his business. His only concern was, as a loyal son, to fall in with his parents' wishes when they judged the time for marriage had come. A good deal of the decision on such an important matter depended on the judgment

of the old granny, the ruling figure in that large home of his as far as matters directly under the family roof were concerned. It was hers to rule and unify the household and the lives and happiness of her various daughters-in-law and their children. Otherwise, whatever happened to it outwardly, the home would, in fact, have been divided.

That old lady used to be called the "Mother-in-Law." She was mother-in-law, of course, to all the sons' wives, but mother to her sons, and in theory, as often in practice, they all remained with her in the home. To use the term "mother-in-law" in the English sense, without explanation, is misleading. She was possibly grandmother-in-law. All depended on her bodily and mental vigour and her ability to rule her household.

Marriage, to us, is a very personal thing. So it was in China. The difference is that in Britain the individual is the person, whilst in China before the Revolution, the family was the person. Marriage was for the family, not for the individual's pleasure and help, however that might turn out; and it was as much the duty of a parent to secure in infancy a life mate for the newly-born son as it was to provide a cradle. That life that had been given them had to be continued. It was not their life, or his life; but the family life that mattered. Each individual was but a link in a great family.

Infant bethrothal and family-provided marriages used to seem to foreign eyes very strange and unattractive, but they are quite logical if the family, and not the individual, is the unit. I have lived through the days when not the elders only, but the young people themselves were rather shocked by the idea of the sex-attraction and the love-making of Westerners. Such things were indulged in in China by those who had no sense of the proprieties, and were felt to be not far from immorality. The filial son and daughter left such matters to the parents whose duty it was. There must have been tragedies. There are tragedies in any system. One advantage, from the personal point of view, was that bachelors and old maids were few and far between. After all, man is not made to be alone. In a sense, it was the safer way—the way dictated by prudence and experience. China to-day, young China, is leaving the path of "safety first," and on the new adventure is winning both a richer and a more dangerous way of living.

In the classics, in the home and in society the great virtue was the family virtue of "*Hsiao*"—or "filial piety." This character seems to be made up of the symbol for old age resting on the

symbol for youth. Whether that be its history I do not know. But so it appears and so, of course, it is. The "*Five Relationships*" between prince and minister, father and son, husband and wife, older and younger brother, and friend with friend are all a sort of explication of filial piety. The prince is the father-mother of his people; the older brother is a sort of interim parent to the younger brother; and similarly friends are really brothers first, for "All within the four seas are brothers," as once more the classics teach and the common proverb of the street repeats. Out of all these things there has developed in China a tremendous family sense. A very lovely family courtesy remains typical of China. Along the country path between the rice-fields, Grandfather Wang goes with his wisp of grey beard and his thin bamboo pipe or carven staff. Behind him follow in single file his sons and then the grandsons. The pace, of course, is the pace of Grandad—not so slow, either, in China; but the sight is rather a lovely one. To watch the courtesies of the little laddies to their grandsires is still a very charming sight in these days when we are all so busily rude.

"The Chinese talk so much about filial piety," said an old friend of China, "because they practise it so little. Their children are wild and unruly. They seem to think talk makes up for a multitude of sins." Yet, in other moods, that same critic could say very lovely things of China.

The Chinese love of children may or may not be connected with this family sense. I think it is connected. China has its goddess of mercy with an infant in her arms. So had Rome and Greece, and modern Rome with its Blessed Virgin Mary. That is natural and inevitable. But in China it is characteristic to see the fathers with their children, openly, unashamedly, and happily carrying their babies in their arms. Those children, if they were boys, seemed to have more of their own way than was right. There seemed but little discipline normally. Many an *amah* used to irritate her English mistress, when remonstrated with for letting a child have this or that, by saying "*T'a Yao*"—"He wanted it"—as though a child's wants were a compelling answer to everything. This sort of thing ought perhaps to have led to wild independence. Actually the strong family sense penetrated everything and a man was often old before he was ever called upon to take an independent decision. It was the family that determined.

The place of girls and women in the Chinese family had its limitations. The girl was, as a child, a potential member of some-

one else's family. She did not really belong to her own. In another family, under another surname, she would eventually be wife and mother or even head of the house. If she were a poor man's daughter, betrothed as all others in her infancy, her own family might not feel able to bring her up. She was then sent to the home that was to be hers. There she would earn her food and keep by service in the home, until in due season maturity arrived and she became a bride. She was called a small daughter-in-law. This wasn't an arrangement that anybody rejoiced in, but you do strange things when poverty compels. Even infanticide. This ancient practice was the result of poverty and, for reasons of the family, was never applied to boys. That it happened at all in spite of China's quite universal and passionate love for children shows to what terrible straits awful poverty may drive you.

It is a far cry from all this to the sight of China's leading lady standing on February 19th, 1943, before America's Senators and Congressmen, pleading with them for the needs of her great country and persuading them of the service of her unconquered people to the cause of freedom. She was the symbol of the new age, and, incidentally, of the new home. For she, a citizen of Shanghai, as many of her Shanghai sisters, stepped a little earlier into the freedom of China's new homes than did her countrywomen of inland China.

The Revolution of 1911 hastened up the process already begun of loosening the shackles of the home as of so much that had grown rigid in Manchu China. Much remained, but the dead hand of tradition began to be challenged in all directions. The rights of the individual began to be regarded as well as those of the community, the home. Youths and maidens began to wonder at the efficacy of some of the traditions of their fathers. All things began to change. Ideas from the outside world began to pour in like a deluge. The process went on, seen and unseen, from 1911 to the Nationalist Revolution of 1926 and onwards. The Nationalists put plainly in their propaganda the "equal status of male and female"—"*Nan Nu p'ing teng*"—and when that slogan became widespread, following the growing number of schools for girls as well as for boys, something was bound to happen in the home.

For a period, infant betrothals, so dutifully and rightly arranged by parents, began to be repudiated by those most concerned. Divorce courts got very busy dissolving unhappy marriages about which the parties most concerned had never, in the nature of the case, been consulted. Finally, in many a home this whole

business of infant betrothal just ceased to be. I have watched these things among the youth of both sexes for the last twenty years, and it is the rule now in Central China rather than the exception for such girls and boys as go to grammar schools and high schools (using the English equivalents of our Chinese terms) to be left free to make their own choice as they deem best. Relatives and other intermediaries are consulted a good deal more than is customary with us. After all, as many a rebuffed suitor might admit, there's some advantage in discovering through another if "Barkis is willin'" before you take the risk which may mean unhappiness and disappointment.

The modern Chinese home is much like ours, except that it more usually holds a grand-parent than ours is apt to do. The old people less frequently continue in the nest from which all their fledglings have flown. Neither parents nor children wish to have it so; that strong sense of family solidarity and responsibility rules there as in the past.

The break is not complete. The old survives in the new. It is right and healthy that it should. That is what happens in each spring blossoming of your apple-tree. The new growth is astonishing, but the sap rises through the old trunk, and when summer is done they are still apples that you gather from the branches and not some different fruit.

I rejoice that new homes have come, are coming, and will come in China. I do not know—perhaps nobody knows—how far the process has yet gone, and who would dare to prophecy how far yet it will go. These things are hidden from us.

Yet there are stirrings everywhere. Her very calamities are helping. China never was quite such a family as she is to-day, striving, struggling, and sympathising in all her members. Apart from all this, her town life is so intertwined with life in the countryside that nothing happens anywhere without having its repercussions everywhere.

The Chinese have extended this family idea over so great a part of the human race that it is not inconceivable that China may yet give this noble conception of all human relationships to the rest of us.

China has no hereditary aristocracy any more than America. She has few class distinctions except as politicians, either in ignorance or for their own ends, manufacture them. It is only yesterday that all her business life was organised in guilds, a sort of extended family system. Is it this strong family sense that has

made it a chief concern of the Nationalist Government so to organise her growing industrial life as to avoid the terrible contrasts of wealth and poverty that constitute one of the main problems of the world to-day?

China was and is a family. She takes naturally to the family of nations idea, and may have some quite proper thoughts as to what is due to her as a member of the family. Those thoughts may be found as efficacious for others as for herself.

In old China, the Emperor, the "father-mother" of his people, was called the Son of Heaven. Filial piety, as all Chinese morality, has its roots in religion.

## CHAPTER VII

## MY WUCHANG HOME

I LIVED in Wuchang for sixteen years, longer than I have been in any other place on earth. Like Hankow, across the Yangtse, it is mentioned in the *Spring and Autumn Annals* of Confucius. So its recorded history goes back from 2,000 to 3,000 years, and it is difficult to imagine any period in which this area had no people.

Wuchang is built around a low hill, the Serpent Hill, and is a place of natural defence. The old Chinese city, like an old English walled city, York or Chester, say, was really a large castle and bulwark against attack. It was built on a sufficient scale for neighbouring farmers and villages to take refuge within its walls. Some Chinese cities are of a very great size, and within the wall are many square miles of arable land. Wuchang was not built on so large a scale, though there were plenty of open spaces. There were lakes where the lotus was grown for food and where its white or pink lilies floated on the water. There were fields where rice, as well as vegetables, were grown, though the greater portion of the city consisted of close-packed houses bordering narrow streets. Its population was some 300,000.

In ancient times Wuchang was the capital city of the Kingdom of O. In Manchu times it was the residence of the Viceroy of the two provinces of Hupeh and Hunan. Since then its fortunes have changed with changing politics. For a few months in 1927 it was actually the capital of Nationalist China. It can never cease to be a place of strategic significance. There the waters of four provinces meet. There the great railway from Canton connects with the railway from Peiping. In a very real sense the Wu-Han cities, the three cities of Hankow, Hanyang, and Wuchang, with their population of one million, are the hub of the wheel of China.

My first home was in an old Mission House on the Long Street, the main thoroughfare, which, in those days, led to the Viceroy's *yamen*, or official residence. Even in Japanese-occupied Wuchang, in 1940, the old house and Mission buildings were still there, though for many years they had been used for public library and other city needs.

The Long street was paved with great slabs of granite, six or more feet long by a foot high and wide, covering the main sewer of

the town. There was no pavement and little room on either side when officials, in carriages or great sedan chairs with eight bearers, were hurried along arrayed in their old Mandarin hats and buttons of office and peacock feathers to greet the famous Viceroy, Chang Chih-Tung. He was a tiny figure with a little pointed beard. He was a man of great learning and greater influence, and held in high honour at the Manchu Court. He was an enlightened man for his day, opened iron-mines at Tayeh, within his province, and set up smelting works, needle factory, arsenal, and powder factory at Hanyang on the opposite bank of the Yangtse.

He wrote a famous treatise, *China's Only Hope*. The theme of this book was that China must wake up from her petrified Confucianism and drink in knowledge from the modern West. The country was to be saved by Western education. Salvation doesn't come by education; but how are proud scholars, East or West, to have the realism and the humanity to understand that?

I remember one Sunday, during service, hearing the howling of the crowd upon the street, like the voice of many waters, and wondering what it was. A schoolboy told me afterwards: "It's a criminal being taken to execution." "What of his wife and children," I asked, with that howling still in my ears and soul. "Oh, he won't have a wife and children," he replied. "Men with wives and children don't become criminals." I wondered, and I wonder. Yet there was a whole world of Chinese philosophy, experience and belief in that ready answer of a Chinese youth of forty years ago. It is worth pondering still.

My second home was in a Chinese "*Kung-Kwan*" not very far from the Long Street. There wasn't room in the mission house for the growing family of missionaries, and I found myself in a quiet street in a "*Kung-Kwan*," or "official house," rented commonly to official people waiting to be posted to a job. As other truly Chinese houses, it had been erected meccano-like, though on a frame of wood and pillars. Roof and tiles were added first, and then the walls were built, not supporting the house, but to fill in the spaces and keep the weather out. I have often thought the modern, reinforced concrete building erected around its shell frame is really old-fashioned Chinese architecture in its modern guise. The only brick walls were the outer ones. There were no windows to be seen from the street. All lighting was from the inner courtyard called the "Heavenly well." When you look down and see the water, that is a "water well." Why shouldn't you,

when you look up and see the heaven above you in a narrow space, call it the "Heavenly well"? I have always been charmed with that lovely Chinese name for the courtyard that brought us light and air and health.

The back wall was only some eight feet high, and as we lay down at night we could hear, in the stillness, the gamblers rattling their mahjong, the harsh voices of people quarrelling sometimes and the inevitable blows that followed, and the crying of the night-vendors as they went along the streets ringing their gongs and calling out their toothsome dishes. The place was infested with rats and we always, even in wintertime, slept with our mosquito net tightly tucked in. We used to hear them scampering along the iron framework of our bedstead, and one morning woke up to find an adventurous creature lying drowned in our wash-basin. Perhaps attracted by the rats, over our dining-room lived a couple of weasels. They lumbered overhead, pulling tiles about even more noisily than rats are accustomed to do. Once we saw them going up the veranda pillars into their lair with their brown, bushy tails.

On our doorstep one day we found a small puppy whom nobody wanted, all reeking with filth and sorrow. We took him in, washed him and fed him and judged that Jerry was a good name for him, after the Prophet. He followed us all about, indoors and out, not like a stay-at-home Chinese house-dog so much as Mary's little lamb. The nearest our servants could get to his name was Jelly, and that wasn't a bad description either. For "r's" and "l's" seemed indistinguishable in our town. He disappeared in the Revolution of 1911. A year or two after I thought I saw him in a shop, but he showed no sign of recognition. He was evidently well cared for. So we let him be.

By and by the Viceroy bought us out of our Long Street property and gave us a piece of land a mile outside the Great East Gate. There we built our school and houses among the beans and rape, the "*hung-ts'ai-t'ai*" (a special red cabbage for which Wuchang was famous), and the ever-changing rice-fields. We had had a few jays in the city, but here was everything that sang praises. Even the frogs in the rice-fields seemed to take up their summer-long anthems with more vigorous voice than beside the city ponds and lakes. The kingfisher, the humming bird, the thrush, the blackie, and the lark filled the air with gladness. The golden oriole came and went as rich in its mating note as in its yellow plumage. On the hillsides was a sort of ground-lilac. It wasn't lilac really, I

think, but had the colour and appearance of lilac. There were violets and red lilies, anemones and wisteria, honeysuckle, and wild roses. Just think how they spoke to us of England.

A quarter of a mile away was the Temple of Hell, about which another chapter must tell, and beyond that, on the "*Hung San*"—the "Great Hill"—a Buddhist monastery with some 160 monks. A lovely pagoda rose above the hill. That view to the east of us on a summer's morning, with vegetable fields and Great Hill, temple and pagoda, mud-brick hamlets and green rice below, and the blue heavens with their driven clouds above, made us rejoice to be alive.

Sometimes we went for picnics, across the country to the east. In a famous temple was the "Viceroy's Well." The legend is that here a great soldier had struck the rock with his sword, and from the rock pure water had gushed out. That soldier is now "*Kwan Ti*"—the god of war. What we knew was that, whatever be its origin, here in the temple was a deep well of cool pure water that some said you might drink without boiling, so pure was it. The Viceroy had a water-cart which carried the water from this well several miles to his *yamen* every day.

Beyond the temple of the god of war, again, was the East Lake—blue waters under blue heavens on a summer's day. On its shores a modern University was built by the Provincial Government round about 1930. The leading professors were a group of Chinese scholars who had studied in Cambridge University. The structure was a glorious combination of Chinese curved and brilliant tiles, together with utilitarian Western structure. To see the buildings cresting the hillsides, silhouetted against lake and sky was to realise the beauty of the modern Chinese mind that had dreamed it all.

Around and about was primeval Chinese village life, with its disease and poverty and endless toil. Somehow that University rose as naturally out of all that as a lotus flower from the mud.

Still a little further east was a mud wall, an outer rampart protecting the city of Wuchang. It had been constructed during the Tai-Ping Rebellion of 1860. Several of the walled cities of Central China were at that time ringed round with an outer rampart of mud, a protection to the suburban villages and fields. Just within the mud wall was a Muhammadan village with a tiny mosque. I have often gone inside and listened to the Chinese boys being taught to recite the Koran, and have talked with the local teacher and elder. To hear him say the name "*Ahung*," the title

of what I understood was a travelling mullah, was a lesson in reverent speech. There were not many Muhammadans in Wuchang, about 400 families, and only two or three mosques. You could always tell the Muhammadan shopkeeper by the sign of a tea-pot painted on his signboard. There was some strictness among them as to the eating of the pig and all its products, but Muhammadanism in Wuchang was not of a militant nature.

My fourth home was on a new road just inside the Great East Gate. The road was called "*Ch'ien Chia Chieh*"—"Thousand House Street"—but, at the beginning, ours was the only house. This is not untypical of China. Their names are dreams of good things to come. Of course, there are other houses now. I love the hopefulness of many Chinese names. Only the very young expect the hopes and the facts to be immediately the same.

It was in the camp adjacent to the "*Ch'ien Chia Chieh*" that the Revolution of 1911 began. I was living outside the city then, but my friends at "*Ch'ien Chia Chieh*" spent a hectic evening, with shooting taking place back and forth across their houses. The next day they were lowered down in baskets over the city wall, like the Apostle from Damascus, and they have in their memories, as he, the feeling of the ridiculousness of their situation. But then they were glad enough to be out of the city of blood and on their way to freedom.

In 1940 this city of my four homes had become one huge Japanese camp. Our "*Ch'ien Chia Chieh*" houses were overlooked by a Japanese watch-tower and listening post. That Long Street was filled with Japanese shops and shopkeepers selling goods to Japanese soldiers. That school outside the Great East Gate had become a refugee camp. Between that camp and the city wall hardly a house remained standing. The houses had been hauled down with ropes that the wood might be kindled for Japanese fires. The city of military glory had become the city of many sorrows.

Whole sections of the city bombed and burnt-out were filled with military lorries. The glory had departed for a little time. It will come back again. Wuchang means "military glory." It has always been the watch-tower of the Middle Yangtse. It was the place where new China struck her first blow in 1911 and won her freedom.

How often have I stood upon the Serpent Hill that divides the city from West to East and watched Chinese gentlemen, with their caged thrushes vying with one another in song in the evening

time. How often have I gazed across the Yangtse at old-fashioned Hanyang, with its iron-works chimneys and cranes and its powder-factory tower; at modern Hankow, with its Custom House, its banks and shipping buildings, its consulates with their flags, and the steamers of many nations lying at their hulks. Chinese junks of all sizes sailed up and down stream or crossed the river under full sail. The ever-improving ferry launches, packed to capacity, conveyed their never-ceasing human freight. The noon gun roared from the hill telling us the time of day. The rickshaw men, the policeman, the soldier, the farmer, the countryman, the tailor, the coolie with his baskets of coal-dust or of rice, the baker stretching out his strings of macaroni over the undrained gutter, the squealing pigs carried for their last ride on the shoulders of a couple of lusty farmers, the dogs, the chickens, the children with their shrill voices—all of them go on their busy ways. What life, what movement, what humanity. What nook and cranny of the city have I not visited.

Its new wide streets and old-fashioned alleys; its *Kung-Kwans* and its hovels; its Church and Government schools; its drill ground, in revolutionary days the scene of huge mass meetings; its provincial parliament hall, and, spaced over the city, a leaven working vigorously, the friendly churches of many names, but one common loyalty. It is a long time since, in 1835, on that drill-ground two foreign Catholic priests were decapitated by the public executioner for daring to preach the then forbidden faith. That was during the dark days of closed China under the Manchu Emperor. Under China's new flag, the "white sun on a blue field" of the Nationalists, as under the five-barred flag of the Republic, all religion is free. When the revolutionary guns went off in 1911, experienced folks talked of ten years of unrest. How little they or we dreamed of the depth of the sorrows or the immensity of the changes that were to come. Yet those sorrows and troubles have been the prelude to a better day.

There are memories too of friends. Apart from one or two German military instructors and an odd Government adviser or teacher now and then, the only foreigners in Wuchang were British, American, Swedish, and Catholic missionaries, ministers, teachers, professors, nurses, doctors, men and women. They came from diverse traditions and different lands, but there was a camaraderie and a mutual interest about them that was enlarging to each and all. Particularly we had a Friday Club, where away from easy access to Western book-shops and libraries, some dozen

of us used to visit one another's houses once a month. One read a paper on a book or theme and we all joined in discussions, followed by a cup of coffee, tea, or cocoa, and then dispersed for the night. Thus we kept our souls alive, triumphing over the mental inertia that easily falls upon foreigners exiled from their kith and kin, and away from the normal facilities of their native lands. This club laid, beside that, the foundations of friendship and mutual understanding which made common service in the common cause an almost inevitable and natural thing. Some of these missionaries were of considerable scholarship and natural ability. When they crossed the river and mingled on the Concessions with their own nationals, they were apt to look a little dowdy in their dress, but there was nothing unkempt about their minds.

They had gains as well as losses. They were soaked more and more in another civilisation. They felt its throbbing life after the Revolution. Among their scholars and their colleagues, they had found enriching friends.

There are not many who have spent their years in the service of humanity in this great city who, in spite of all the troubles of war and revolution, will forget its glories or will cease to be glad that for a little time it was their home.

When peace has come again, Wuchang, already before 1937 beginning its transformation, will be built again, renewed, enlarged, and regain its great and natural place as the capital of Central China.

## CHAPTER VIII

# LIFE IN A CHINESE SCHOOL

As a youth, I had known the life of a boarding school in Yorkshire, as boy, prefect, and master, and had said, "Goodbye to all that," when I sailed for China. Another vocation had gripped me. To my disappointment, those in whose hands my destinies were placed, posted me in my second year in China to a boarding school, and I felt, at first, as though I might as well have stayed in England. You hardly ever see the bearings of things at the time.

By their act, I now know that they had given me a place of privilege and distinction that, in China, is unique. Apart from being an official, the most honoured position a man could hold in China was that of teacher. He might be poor and unknown, he might not be much of a success at his job; but, as he went through life, he would be continually meeting the men whom once he taught and they would pay him respect and affectionate deference, to a degree unusual in Britain, because of the sheer fact that he had been their teacher. Such reward here, in this country, is given to outstanding people. In China it seems to be the lot of every teacher, to be connected with his office and status as such. A Chinese gentleman will courteously introduce you, a mere nobody, to his highly placed friends as "My old teacher." As you travel to some strange town, you will find yourself invited to a noble feast in some Chinese tavern by some of your old pupils. There'll be no speechifying, as a rule—just a happy friendly family gathering of the scholars with their teacher. It is all very moving and very gratifying. You only realise it as the years pass by. It is almost a family relationship, and one of the most beautiful and characteristic things in China. As I wandered through eleven provinces of war-torn China in 1939 and 1940, a wounded soldier in a Canton hospital, a geologist in a Kueiyang government office, a Bible Society agent travelling from Chungking to Kunming, a group of business men in Changsha, the Head of a normal and agricultural school refugeeing in North Hunan, and Chinese colleagues in the ministry claimed their scholar-teacher relationship and showered upon me their loving-kindness. They would have done the same for anyone else. It was the relationship and

not the person that mattered. It is the free and willing expression of the tradition of this people whose kindliness is proverbial and for whom "*ren-ch'ing*"—"kindliness"—is the open sesame to all hearts.

I was naturally ignorant of all this when I took up my duties in that school on the Long Street, Wuchang. Its seventy boarders crowded the low one-storeyed building, arranged round the three sides of a quadrangle whose fourth side was contained by a wall, with open-work of tiles and bricks, through which you could see the lotus lake beyond. This school had passed through its initial difficulties. Twenty years before, a brilliant Cambridge mathematician, subsequently to be Headmaster of The Leys School, Cambridge, had come out to open a school which it was hoped would make contact with the then hostile *literati*. The bait was to be mathematics and Western learning, for which there was beginning to be a desire.

As in the case of other schools opened by British missionaries, there was never any intention to teach English except as a subject on the curriculum; but it was English and not mathematics that crowded its class-rooms. That was what the Chinese student wanted, partly for its commercial value as the way to clerkships in the Customs, Postal or Telegraph Service, or the offices of foreign firms and steamship companies. Partly, in the case of ambitious students, it was due to the fact that the English language was thought to be the entrance to a wider education.

Notions of foreigners as to what was good for Chinese and the determination of the Chinese as to what they themselves desired, caused clashes frequently recurring in the last generation or two. Those clashes could only end one way. It was China; and the Chinese had to win.

Old China strangely was becoming young again. Old heads may shake, but young China, as young England, will have its way, with all the risks and dangers involved. After all, where there is no risk there is no life.

So I found myself in a classroom teaching the elements of English in much the same peripatetic way as I myself was acquiring Chinese. We used no books, talked English before we read it, and generally tried to pick it up as children learn. That was the theory of it, and it was great fun. What they themselves did outside the classroom was another matter. Years later I was enquiring of a Chinese student about the type of lecture delivered in an antiquated theological school somewhere in China. "Oh," he said,

"we sit and listen; but, of course, we don't take any notice of it and it does us no harm. We think and say what we like amongst ourselves." Very Chinese, very human, and very consoling to old Noah. He delivered his stuff from the Ark, was happy in doing it; and, anyhow, did no harm.

Those were the days when scholars were dignified, still grew long fingernails, in proof that they had no contact with manual work, and strolled along with a distinguished air. But our school of the new order was playing tennis, and drilling, and about the time that I arrived in China added to its English, mathematics, geography, and science the noble game of soccer. You daren't play rugby; for people might have been collared by their queues, with fatal results to their necks. So we taught them Association on our little quadrangle of grass, and once they all turned out in a body and beat the British Navy to a standstill. An eleven from a gunboat was making rings round our slight lads, who weren't at that stage equal to such a hefty crowd. So we turned the whole school on to them and the Navy was in too small a space to manœuvre. So, with yells and shouts of delight and with the goodwill of the British lads, our crowd overwhelmed them by their numbers and we all retired to tea.

With my halting Chinese I early managed to make conversation with some of the boys. One told me he was the twenty-sixth son of his father, a distinguished official of the old school. With the old Chinese form of marriage, the children of concubines were reckoned as true children of the family. No. 26 eventually rose high in official life, becoming the Commissioner of Education for the Province of Kwangtung. He was a very brilliant lad, and by no means the only one. Some of his comrades made their way, with Government scholarships, to England and America. Some of them won high positions in the Customs and Postal services. One is the outstanding evangelist of his country to-day. Others have names known in Church or State in more than one country. Chinese students since those days have been great travellers, and are a chief means of bringing modern knowledge from West to East.

It was commonly said that Chinese students were good at classical and literary studies, where their well-practised memories stood them in good stead, but were not so successful at science and mathematics. I found them very teachable, diligent, and eager to learn. Nor did there appear to be any lack of mathematical ability then nor scientific bent of mind in the years that have followed. I have watched the career of more than one student as he re-

searched in science and ended up with his doctorate. Once they were free from the trammels of the old Chinese classical education, there seemed to be nothing that they could not do. In those early days I believed, and still believe, that field sports had a great deal to do with China's development in new and modern education. They have become expert tennis players and footballers, and you could almost see the effect of physical exercise on the minds of brilliant but placid and anæmic scholars whose background hitherto had been mainly one of classical memorising and writing.

It was not long before our classrooms and dormitories were far too small for the school they were housing, and, thanks to the action of the Viceroy Chang Chih-Tung, we found ourselves in new and expanding buildings under the "Great Hill" outside the East Gate of the City. Here the school grew till in a generation we were housing 300 boarders, all eager for the new education.

Life was much on the lines of an English boarding school. We had our Debating Society, our Sports and Sports' Committee, and our daily tasks and our organised games. One somehow rarely thought of English and Chinese. Some of us were masters. Some of them were colleagues, and the rest boys and prefects, and the relations between us were as normal almost as though we had been of one nation. At least so we felt it, however our English habits may have jarred on those scions of an age-long civilisation.

One thing I came to prove, and that was their real love for music. We put baby organs about the place, and these organs were never still except under magisterial fiat. We had choir and choral society; sang anthems and simple oratorios, although our teaching ability and knowledge had extreme limitations. I think the old classical men on the staff never knew what the noise was all about, but the lads who started early in many cases developed good singing voices. There are well-known gramophone records to-day of a lovely Chinese baritone voice from Nanking singing modern music. I emphasise this because in a great many respects —and music is one of them—our former estimate of things Chinese has been long belied by the actual facts. It is curious how blind some of us were to real China even thirty years ago. Somehow the Revolution of 1911 and then the terrific upheaval of 1925, when the Nationalist movement seized the country, have not only changed the face of China: they have changed the understanding of the stranger within her gates.

China was petrified under the later Manchu régime. The

Revolution has set her free, and free China is very near to free Britain. Her ideals and her new ways are very different from those of the days of old.

The new life of China was signalised by a determination to control her own education. Our school, as other schools, was placed in 1927 by law under a Chinese headmaster. Missionaries, however well qualified, could only be assistants. The Board of Directors had, by law, to be under a Chinese Chairman, and a majority of its members had to be Chinese. The jolt was sudden and severe. We were subject to all sorts of investigations and inspections, but we judged it right that China should be mistress in her own house. There was an embargo on religious instruction in the curriculum which we found distressing. Anything of this nature had to be of a voluntary nature, and must be not only outside the normal curriculum, but outside the regular classrooms.

With whatever misgivings, we carried on, sure that our influence was not in places and rules, but in life. China had many religions, and she could not favour one, she said. That looked all right; but probably agnostic influences from the West, through Chinese returned students, had much to do with the decision.

When the new Government recognised that, come what may, we were there, not for power, but for the good of the country, a lot of those regulations were mitigated in our favour. Anyhow, we found means of living in this new world. Finally, in 1938 the Chinese Government, through the mouth of Madame Chiang Kai-shek, announced its determination to give our schools back their liberty of religious action out of gratitude for the service of the Church to the life of the nation tortured by war.

When war came in 1937 that school carried on in spite of bombing till the Japanese threat drew near Wuchang. Then on foot and horse, by bus and junk, by little steamer and wheelbarrow, teachers and students streamed northwards up the Han to the town of Chungsiang till the advancing Japanese invaded that area too. They struggled into mountain fastnesses and tried to carry on their school tradition. It was very brave and very characteristic of the modern school and scholar. How could old China with its old-fashioned teachers have done this? Then, at last, in the spring of 1939, for the first time in seventy years or so the school was closed.

In the autumn of 1939 I was at Hsichow, one day's journey away from the Burma border, visiting the Central China College of Wuchang, which was refugeeing in temples and hostels in that

lovely country town. Eleven young men sought me out. They were pupils of my old school, 1,500 miles and more away from their Wuchang home. They entertained me with milk and honey, the delicacies of their temporary exile, and after the usual felicitations expressed their concern that the dear old school was closed. I talked to them of all the difficulties, praised them for the glory of the school's noble stand when other places had fled, said that the present debacle was the direct result of the school's former courage. This didn't satisfy. Somehow, somewhere the signboard must be hung up again if the school was to have any future when victory had come. Months afterwards in the burned-out shell of Changsha, Hunan, another group of old boys gave me a meal, and their petition was identical: "Get the old school open somewhere, anywhere. We can't bear to have it closed." Do you wonder that in 1942 that school, long reopened, was carrying on in a temple at Wanhsien in Szechuan? There were 700 students then. The Chinese Headmaster was back and some of his staff were rallied round him. A young Englishman, a science master, had left wife and bairns in England, sailed round the Cape of Good Hope, travelled across India, flown from Calcutta across the mountains to Chungking and thence down the Yangtse gorges to Wanhsien. There he was met with a tremendous welcome. There is no East or West in such a comradeship. Foreigners and Chinese are just friends together for the good of China in the intimate life of teacher and taught. It is a far cry from Wuchang's Long Street in 1903 to Wanhsien's temple-school in 1943. The school spirit has not died, and her sons would not have her die.

The inner life of that school to-day is much like that of a school in Britain. The subjects taught are much the same. The freedom of the boys is true in both lands. Their thoughts and studies, their aims and purposes are parallel. In China they are more politically minded and closer to the realities and necessities of life than British boys of the same age. Nationalism, Communism, Humanism, Christianity are striving for them body, soul and spirit. The older religions and ancient traditions have little more grip on them than they have on our boys and girls here.

One of their perennial joys is the performance of amateur theatricals. They love to dress up and go on an improvised stage and act again stories from history or from Scripture. Nowadays there are amateur playwriters who create their own plays. It's a test of your Chinese to follow all their quips and jokes, and I was never able fully to follow all that happened. One scene I never

failed to grasp. Somewhere in almost every play he would come in—the old teacher, with his pig-tail and greasy gown, his horn spectacles and supercilious ignorance of all things up-to-date. He was always greeted with laughter and mirth. So does young China laugh at old China; and yet, even in its laughter, it continues the tradition.

It was this old teacher and all he stood for that ruled the China that I went to live in. It was old Confucian students who hid the books and reproduced the sayings of Confucius when "Ching Shih Huang Ti," the tyrant Emperor Ching Shih, the builder of the Great Wall, would have stamped out with fire and persecution the last vestige of the Confucian cult. It is the student Sun Yat-sen who was the author of the new China of the Revolution. Sixteen students became his first revolutionary band. Once more students are the leaders of the Nationalist Party. Schools and students the Japanese have known to be the heart of all resistance and have directed special efforts to their destruction.

Students and schools have fled before the invader that they might preserve their minds and culture intact. Students have continued, largely penniless and homeless, their studies in far-away places that they may be ready to take their leading part in the construction of the China that is to be.

I do not regret now that some sixteen years of my life were spent in close association with the life of this one school. It meant concentration of one's energies instead of a wider audience. It meant, perhaps, a less perfect knowledge of the language than otherwise I might have had; for too much of one's time, after all, was taken up with English. Yet if I lost a little in the language there were compensations in the closer knowledge of these students; and now that I, a mere foreigner, should be acclaimed by many as their teacher, that is all joy and satisfaction.

China's schools are central to China's life, as English schools have hardly been. The thoughts of schools and colleges are mighty in moulding the traditions of any nation, but in China the influence is immediate and direct.

The story of this school is typical of many a school in China. Many, especially American-founded schools, were richer and better equipped with teachers and with apparatus. All of them are a vital contribution from the West to China. In buildings, and all that money will buy, they cannot as a whole hope to compete with the resources of the Chinese Government; but China herself

is aware of the contribution such schools for girls, as well as boys, have made to the renewal of her people.

Madame Chiang Kai-shek and her distinguished sisters owe, at least, the earlier years of their development to such a Christian school and college in Shanghai. Many of China's most distinguished leaders, men and women, look back with gratitude to some such school as that whose history I have written here.

"*Ch'eng-Tzu Wei Kuei*"—"Truth is nobility"—was the motto on our school shield. It was a quotation from Confucius, but a word like that knows neither geography nor time. The name over our school gates was "*Poh Wen Hsu-Yuen*"—"The Academy of Broad Culture." There is no real translation for such lovely words.

In June, 1943, a cable came from those temples and ancestral halls where the 700 students had their temporary home. "The school is splendid," it said. The message came from a friend whom business had taken from Kunming to Chungking. How could he resist the invitation to slip down the Yangtse gorges to Wanhsien? He had known the school in its days of peace and progress. No one better than he knew the hardships of the period. He was himself a schoolmaster by training and he was satisfied.

## CHAPTER IX

## GO-AHEAD LIU

THERE was a myth in China in my time, widely believed in business and shipping circles, that the Chinese, in his own tradition and religion, is a pretty straight man, but when he gets mixed up with Christianity somehow his morals go and you don't know where you are with him. "Avoid the Christian Chinese," says the myth, and many there are that believe it.

In Shanghai, where that myth had considerable currency, there have been outstanding Chinese Christians of world reputation; there have been heads of schools and colleges; there was at least one Chinese business man who, besides founding a special mission to prisoners in the Shanghai gaol, actually set up the first Christian broadcasting station in the world. How much of this sort of thing the myth-mongers and myth-followers knew is doubtful; for such matters were not prominent in the local Press. Yet there were facts shouting at them if they had eyes to see and ears to hear.

All my life long I have been looking for that mythical figure who, by his Christian faith, spoiled his Chinese morality. I have not found him yet, nor do I think I ever shall. The simple reason is that he never existed except in the minds of the mythologists or those who unthinkingly came into that tradition.

Yet even myths have origins. There must be some reason for them, and I suggest that this is how such an all-pervading story may have begun.

Some Chinese, perhaps, looking for a job and thinking it might be easier to get one by that means, told his prospective foreign employer that he was a Christian. When he turned out a bad lot and things went wrong, the evil came back upon the Church. Was the *bona fides* of the employee ever established by enquiries as to how and where and when, or was the evidence of his religious faith the mere say-so of someone who wanted to be clerk or cook or boy? The question hardly needs an answer.

How often I have heard this myth in the after-dinner gossip of a Yangtse steamer-saloon, I have kept no record. Yet constant repetition of a myth, though it may make it believable, does not make it true.

China's Christians are much like the Christians of all times and

all lands. The main difference is that for a century they have been more tried by fire.

Now that some of China's Christians are outstanding in world leadership, this myth may dissolve like other mists before the morning sun.

Whether that be so or not, here is the story of a man that I know and greatly honour.

In some ways he is a very ordinary man. No one beyond his more intimate circle is likely to take any note of him. He is never likely to read this chapter, and if he did, would hardly have the English to understand it. His name is Liu Chin-hsien. The first word is the common surname, Liu, one of the commonest in China. Chin-hsien is his personal name. It seems to mean "Enter the first rank," or something to that effect. Probably his father said, "I am but an ordinary Liu, but I would like my first-born to be better than his father." His father, not having been able to realise his own dreams of success, thought, "My hopes perhaps will be realised in my son." So he said in his heart, "I have only reached the rank of cook, but this son of mine shall '*chin-hsien*,' " he shall 'go ahead.' " So, in hope, he called his first born son Chin-hsien.

Names are very meaningful in China. You have a "milk-name" when you are born, and a scholar's name when you go to school, and still a third professional name when you enter life, if you desire. When the Revolution changed China's political system, there was an almost general change of names for all our provincial and county cities. This was very disconcerting to foreigners in or out of China; but it is precisely the habit of the ancient Jews as well.

You may be sure Chin-hsien's name was not lightly chosen, and it has been as surely fulfilled. Most likely, the village teacher was consulted about it. Anyhow, the son has surely gone ahead, and left his father far behind. But, in China, the father is always glorified in the son.

The father was my cook in my "*Kung-Kwan*"—"Chinese house" —days in Wuchang. He bought the coal and stacked the sticks, fried or boiled or poached or scrambled our breakfast egg, and as likely as not took a considerable commission on his purchases. Soon after that we parted company, and I met him occasionally when I went visiting. For he had risen in life, becoming the servant of a senior colleague in another province.

I hardly knew of Chin-hsien's existence then. Out of sight out of mind for a time.

After some years I saw his name appearing in our scholarship lists. He failed to get sufficient marks to obtain a place in the Anglo-Chinese school where I was teaching, or else the value of his scholarship was insufficient for his father to make up; so he entered the Chinese normal school next door.

There he came under the influence of one of the most expert educationalists who have ever served in China. This teacher was an Australian, and Chin-hsien became one of his favourite pupils. The teacher himself was a go-ahead person. He put much time and thought and interest into his scholars and had a rich reward. When Liu's training days were done he was placed in a village school where one teacher had somehow to teach four grades in one schoolroom. Succeeding unusually well, he took charge of a country boarding school and did so well there that, when an inspector of schools was called for, Liu was the natural choice. He received further training, and then became Inspector and Education Secretary of the outlying schools of our province. He and his Australian friend worked in the closest co-operation, with gratifying results. As secretary of a committee he was one of the most efficient persons I have known. He was the superior of a good many of his English colleagues; for, like many Chinese, he had a genius for organisation.

About this time Liu married a girl of his own choice. His parents had been near enough to the new day not to betroth him in his infancy. Mrs. Liu was a teacher too, and would have been a perfect model for a Chinese Madonna. She had a lovely oval face and an air of purity and peacefulness, and seemed quite unconscious of her charm. One could almost hear her saying, "Behold the servant of the Lord; be it unto me according to Thy word." She was the granddaughter of a very remarkable old man. Tall and with a wisp of a Chinese beard, he, an old man, walked quite naturally and inevitably right into the membership of the Church. Life had prepared him. As a youth he had lived near Nanking, at the time of the Tai-Ping Rebellion which General Gordon, with his "ever-invincible" Chinese army, had helped to overthrow. Gordon's name has passed into Chinese history and Gordon put on record his view that the Chinese, with proper training and weapons, had the capacity to be as good soldiers as any race on earth, and demonstrated his faith by his deeds. Because of their prowess, his troops were known as "the ever-victorious army."

The Tai-Ping king was a southerner, a man of Christian origin. His followers, the "long-haired rebels," smashed the temples and

broke the idols wherever they went and proclaimed that God was one. They cut off their queues, the sign of Manchu domination, and adopted the Western style of hair-cut. Doubtless, the result left something to be desired, as it earned them the name of "long haired rebels." Somehow the error of idolatry entered into the convictions of this Nanking youth, and for a lifetime neither he nor his family ever worshipped idols. Yet he was a grandfather before, at that time in Wuchang, he realised that the "foreign teaching," as Christianity was commonly called, proclaimed what he believed. He wasn't quite a "natural" Christian, but very nearly so.

He lived in a house beside the Yangtse, outside the west wall of the city, and in the fires and shooting of the 1911 Revolution he never moved. Street after street around him went up in flames, but somehow his house was miraculously preserved. He used to preach this to his neighbours as a proof of the reality of his faith, and when we told him that good men could suffer as well as bad, believers as well as unbelievers, he was quite unmoved. He was sure that his house had been specially preserved, and he bore his witness to his deliverance. After all, he was an old man, and we let him be till he was gathered to his fathers.

His son, Mrs. Liu's father, a man of like simplicity and character, came to visit me years later. There had been more shooting, more fires, and more destruction. He stood in the doorway of my study, his face full of sorrow. "I have sinned. I have sinned," he said, and before I could stop him had flung himself prostrate on the floor. He raised himself to his knees to *k'o-t'ou*—that is, bow with the head to the floor. There he remained until his shocked, humiliated, and astonished host had time to raise him up. His house this time had fallen a victim to the flames, and so it was manifest that God had punished him for his sins. There was something deep in the Chinese tradition in old father and younger son. The Chinese are sometimes said to be irreligious, but facts like these are both deep and typical.

Mrs. Liu, Chin-hsien's Madonna-like wife, was the child of such an ancestry, and had freely chosen Liu to be her affianced husband. I think of his mother on her little bound feet, with her illiteracy and her circumscribed mind; and then I see his wife with her lovely little brood, and I know that Liu has truly gone ahead. In a refugee city in Hunan, in 1939, he brought them all to call upon me. There they were, bobbing their polite little heads, and there was their mother, a little older now, but still with that

girlish Madonna face. I know that in their home they have a harmony of East and West and the little ones are growing up after the pattern of the universal home that has the blessing of good and Godly parentage.

He had welcomed me to that city after a gruelling journey. Hunan was then in the front line of the fight between China and Japan, and because there hadn't been time to get my passport properly visaed I had found myself held up by military police on the borders of the province for five days. There I sent off telegrams from the local telegraph office. The telegraph machines, however, were in a country village to preserve them from fire and bombing. So when the office had a dozen or so telegrams in hand, a man took them fifteen miles over a country road on his bicycle to the transmitting place, and there he waited till he had a sufficient number to bring back again on that day or the next. So telegraphing wasn't easy, and there was much delay. When finally I did get started again, the public bus had a breakdown on the road, and I got to Yuanling, the city where Liu and his family and school were refugeeing, late at night when they'd almost given up hope of ever seeing me.

Yuanling was living its life between six and ten in the morning and six and ten in the evening. The rest of the day, when the syrens blew and the bombers were apt to come, the city sat loose to life. Most Chinese cities had few air-raid shelters, and perhaps they were better without them. For the most part, they had trenches and graves. Chinese cities are not large, and around them there are always little hillocks of grave mounds. To crouch or lie between two of those in the hour of trouble was almost as safe as being in a trench. Nothing could get you except a direct hit.

All the business quarter of the city had been destroyed by fire and bombs. In the daytime the city was a deserted ruin, but at evening time, when fear of the daily raid had passed, the streets were as full of life, business, and traffic as any other market anywhere.

In that city were refugee schools from other and more exposed places, and among them Liu's. He took me about to see the sights, lavished his time and care upon me, and would not be gainsaid. We talked together of past and present, and especially the future. He was a Hupeh man, exiled in Hunan, and, like other exiles, was longing for his home again. We had much feasting and much talk with old friends and new, and then he said, "I want you to come and meet the Methodists." "Methodists?" I said. "Why do you

talk of them? Why don't you join in with the Church here? This is no place for denominations. Aren't you all one?" "Oh, that's all right," he said. "Of course we join with the local people and are only too glad for their generous welcome. We can never be grateful enough. But this is different. You will come, won't you?" And, of course, I consented.

I found myself facing a hundred boys and girls at various stages of their education. There were just a few elders—mainly teachers —present. Their fathers and mothers were old friends of mine, but they had stayed at home and had not fled, to take whatever might befall them from the Japanese occupation of their province. Their children were another matter. They belonged to new China. They must go on with their schooling free from foreign interference. There was little communication possible between exiled children and their parents in occupied Hupeh. It was at least six years since I had seen these children last, and some were grown beyond all recognition, though on the faces of others I could see the parents' features written.

"What does it all mean?" I said.

"We're not stopping here for ever. The Japanese will be beaten some day. We want these scholars to be loyal to the places from which they come, and to go back and help in the Church of their fathers. We shall need preachers and teachers, doctors and nurses. So once a fortnight we gather together, maintain our solidarity, and remember home. On the Sunday we join with the others and are glad to do so. On the Saturday, each fortnight, we gather here."

It was Go-ahead Liu and another teacher or two, as well as an exiled minister, who had thought out this lovely bit of work; but I think the chief shepherd was Liu.

No one had told them to do it. No Church Council had thought of it. It had just come out of their wise and kindly Chinese hearts. A letter written in Liu's handwriting lies before me. It was meant to reach me on Christmas Day, 1942. "We are all here still," it says. "Some of us have gone to other schools for higher education. Some of us have finished our schooling and have begun to earn our living. But we are all here one body, and send thanks to our friends in Britain." He doesn't sign it himself: it is signed by "Everybody."

To me Chin-hsien has gone very far ahead. His father's dreams and ambitions have been more than fulfilled, though probably not in the monetary way of which that impoverished father

dreamed. When I think of his schoolmastering, of his home-keeping, and of his shepherd heart, I know how richly that Australian teacher and minister will know himself rewarded for every moment of time and every ounce of energy he poured into Liu Chiu-hsien and others like him.

"His manners were sometimes hard to bear," says Liu. "He was so energetic and occasionally so overbearing that we found him hard to endure. But we recognised his ability and his simple-minded care for us, and those of us who were willing to submit ourselves to his somewhat masterful ways have reason to be very grateful to him now."

Liu is just an ordinary man. There is still something of the villager about him both in dress and in speech. He is obviously not a college man. He would look rather out of place in the fashionable humanity of Shanghai, Tientsin, or Hong-Kong. He is more suited to an inland town like Hankow, or, above all, to the countryside. He is a bit of the dull yellow gold of China, malleable and without alloy. He doesn't fit at all into the Far-Eastern myth with which this chapter began. He is just Go-ahead Liu. He has gone ahead with everything that has happened to him and still he goes ahead.

He is only one person, and we mustn't make a myth of him; but I judge that his real deep progress and expansion is not just the fruit of modern education. As is the case with his wife, something has been grafted into a Chinese stock that in its very essence was good and true.

What religion does for China is not to destroy the good that is there, as the mythologists declare; but to fulfil and bring to perfection China's original root.

Is not the story of my friend Liu in essence the story of the great Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek himself? I would that all mythologists would learn the language and get among the people. There is nothing like true knowledge of the facts for dispelling myths.

## CHAPTER X

## THE BEGINNING OF NEW CHINA

OCTOBER 10th, 1911, marks the great watershed between China new and old. Some showers had fallen on this side of the Great Divide before. But on that first "Double Tenth," as October 10th has since been called, China manifestly took a new direction. Henceforth everything was "after the Revolution," as all of the past is described as "before the Revolution." It is 1911 that counts as the first year of the new era, the first year of the Republic, the "*Chung Hua Min Kuoh*"—the "Chinese People's Country."

Before 1911 China had three ways of reckoning its calendar. The old way was that of the cycle. The twelve characters denoting the signs of the Zodiac were combined with ten numeral characters, in sets of two, in a regular series. After each sixty years the sequence began again. According to this system, the infamous Boxer Year, 1900, when missionaries and their Chinese friends were slaughtered by infuriated mobs, and even the foreign diplomats were attacked in their legation quarters in Peking, was called, in Chinese, "*Keng-Tze Nien*"—"*Nien*" being year and "*Keng-Tze*" the characters that marked that particular year.

If there had been no revolution and no change, "*Keng-Tze Nien*" would have occurred again in 1960 and in 2020, as it had come formerly in 1780 and 1840. And so with each of the other names of the sixty years. This system had the advantage of being exact and unmistakable as far as each year of the sixty was concerned, and the disadvantage of not having a clearly defined place, like the foreign style, 1900, in the procession of the centuries. When you asked a Chinese teacher for a date, he would work it out on the fingers of one hand unbending and bending them as he enumerated the names of the succeeding years. But it took a teacher to do the calculation. Such things were hidden from the ignorant foreigners, from the "stupid people," the common folk, and from babes.

How the common people reckoned was the year of the reigning monarch. For them the Boxer Year was the twenty-fifth year of the reign of Kwang Hsu. This was clear as far as it went, but once again it had little connection with the general trend of history or the place of their Emperor among the rulers of the world. Why

should it have? Was there, after all, any other emperor than theirs worthy to be considered as an emperor at all?

Besides these methods, a few modernists were beginning to use the Western style. They called that Boxer Year either the Lord's Year (i.e. A.D.) 1900 or the Western Year 1900. At the Revolution all this changed. After 1911 the calendar was reckoned from the founding of the Republic instead of according to the year of the reigning monarch, but the Western calendar also became very common; for China wished to take her place in the world of nations and used accordingly the reckoning that most other people used. The old sixty-year cycle method has entirely disappeared, together with the old scholars who throve on it. So when you give the year of your birth to-day you give the straight year of the Western calendar instead of fishing about for your cycle year, which, after all, no one but a scholar or a fortune-teller could grasp readily.

There was another change a little more confusing to the ordinary man. Right up to the Revolution, China went by the lunar year, which sometimes had thirteen months and sometimes twelve. So that every other year was a sort of leap year, and China's year varied considerably from the regularity of our Western solar year. Sometimes China's New Year's Day would fall at the end of January, and sometimes in February, but, for an agricultural country, there are obvious advantages in going by the moon. The Chinese word for "moon," 月—"*Yueh*"—is also the word for "month."

Officially, since 1911, New Year's Day has been January 1st, as with us, and eventually the official year is perhaps likely to prevail. But there are so many practical advantages to the farming community in keeping the lunar year, and the life of the people has been so long adjusted to it, that, law or no law, the old China New Year's Day is still celebrated whenever it is due. Somehow that, and the spring, summer, and autumn feasts, fit in with the harvestings and the practical realities of country life. If, after all, some folks get two New Year's Days instead of one, China is a hard-working country and an extra day's holiday does no one any harm.

These things are the outward signs of the tremendous changes that began to be revealed when, by a premature bomb explosion in the Russian district of Hankow, a nest of revolutionaries was discovered and two or three of them were arrested, handed over to the Chinese authorities, and immediately executed. I was

inside Wuchang that afternoon taking tea with my colleagues at the house on the Thousand House Street when the news was brought in of what had happened. In those last years of the Manchu Dynasty there had been many signs of unrest, riot, and disturbance. The Chinese cauldron was evidently bubbling up. But, on the whole, the officials seemed to have things pretty well in hand, and the trouble-makers generally ceased from troubling as they met their end on some open piece of ground at the hands of the headsman. In those days a public execution was a sight for the curious crowd to witness as it had been in England a hundred years before. From the official point of view, a public execution was supposed to be a deterrent to evil-doers. To be decapitated was much more serious than merely to be strangled. In the latter case your spirit entered into the other world whole. It was not so clear what happened to a spirit whose head had, in this life, been severed from its body.

I returned to the school outside the great East Gate. There were no telephones then, and there appeared to be no signs of excitement. We chatted over the incident and pitied the poor fellows who had thrown their lives away in an unequal and hopeless struggle.

Things, however, were much more serious than we had imagined. As soon as dusk fell, rifles began to crack, and, looking from our windows as dusk deepened into night, we not only heard the sound of shooting, but saw the flames of huge fires leaping heavenwards, both in Wuchang and in Hankow across the river. What we were in for we could only imagine. The Boxer Year was not far away and its memory was still vivid and kept green by occasional rioting of superstitious mobs, egged on by some anti-foreign leader, against helpless and isolated missionaries in some inland town.

As a youth I remember how, when walking in the Lake District, I was suddenly startled by a turbaned Indian stepping out of a house on to the road. I was supposed to be an educated Englishman, but I still recollect a sort of terror of the unknown that this sudden apparition made upon me. This experience has given me some sympathy with the feelings of Chinese, in country towns and villages of those days, at the presence of missionaries among them whose colour, appearance, dress, and habits were so different from those of ordinary civilised human beings as they knew them. It has to be remembered that foreigners were seldom seen outside the Treaty ports, and those who were seen were

nearly always missionaries hawking strange books and speaking Chinese in a way only half intelligible to the ears of the country peasants. So we feared that anything might happen to us and to others, and spent that night of October 10th prepared to leave at very short notice indeed.

Next morning the farmers taking their produce to market found all the city gates shut and barred. Evidently no business of any sort was possible that day. Students began to ask for leave, but we kept them at their books till their parents might arrive. We had our football game as usual that afternoon, with the booming of occasional guns and the cracking of rifles ringing in our ears and the smoke of many fires rising to the heavens. Meanwhile, parents and relatives began to arrive for their sons, and it became evident that the school could not carry on. Our friends from *Ch'ien Chia Chieh* arrived by way of the city wall, and we began the long trek, servants, baggage, children, parents, outside the city, through the rice-fields to the banks of the Yangtse and thence across the river to a go-down and flat on the river side, which someone had secured as a refuge for their friends in trouble. The go-down was just a big cement floor where merchandise could be stacked. Above it were bedrooms and sitting-rooms, where for the next five months we shared a communal life.

So innocent were most of us of the meaning of modern warfare that a refugee Canadian from another province, unable to sleep for the racket of the guns and the whining and ping of the bullets, who realised her window was open, got up and shut it and was evidently comforted. Lying down again in peace and freedom from fear, she slept like a top till morning light.

It soon became clear that foreigners were not to be molested. It was a Chinese affair, and both sides sought the friendship of all foreign interests.

It was on the second day that I re-crossed the river with the senior *Ch'ien Chia Chieh* missionary. His wife had come over the city wall in a basket without many of the necessities of life, including her best hats, and he was sent to retrieve them. We took our way across country, giving the rebellious city as wide a berth as possible, and eventually reached the Great East Gate. We hammered away and soon an eye was observing us from the postern hole. The gate was opened just wide enough for us to squeeze through and to admit no one else. There we were confronted with a soldier dressed in regulation black uniform, with a white band round his sleeve, sitting on his horse. We told him our business,

and "*Yu Pao-hu. Yu pao-hu*"—"There is protection." "There is protection"—he said. We wended our way to the compound, passing an unburied corpse or two, possibly some escaping Manchu, packed up the precious hats and other things, learned that 3,000 troops of the city garrison had revolted, and that the General and the Viceroy had fled. We proceeded across the city, as everyone seemed friendly, and made our way to the wrecked *yamen* of the Viceroy and even picked up a broken tile or two. Their brilliant colouring decorated the steps of my colleague's house for many a day that followed. Whether it was that day or not I have no distinct recollection, but somehow the Revolution is symbolised for me by a Chinese soldier standing on some temple steps and screeching out at the top of his voice to a few gaping by-standers, "*Sha Man-ren*"—"Kill the Manchus." That's what they were doing. That is why the city gates were closed. They hunted through the city for any Manchu, man, woman or child, that all might be destroyed utterly. This was the rising of China against her Manchu oppressors. The dragon flag, the emblem of their tyranny, was torn down and in its place was set up the five-barred, five-coloured Republican flag in which each racial section of the new republic was represented by a coloured strip of equal width. There was to be no overlord, no serf. All were equal members of the People's Country.

Not many people thought the revolutionary soldiers could possibly succeed. It seemed so incredible that Wuchang's slender garrison could oppose the well-trained armies that rapidly poured into Hankow from the north. They did not come so rapidly as they might have done had official telegrams been despatched as quickly as they should have been. The Revolution not only had its sympathisers making bombs and leading Army revolts. There were telegraph clerks who somehow failed to despatch Government messages, perhaps because they had so many revolutionary telegrams to send.

The Yangtse steamers left Hankow for their river-ports packed full of refugees. There was not a foot of space on any deck that was not covered with fleeing humanity crowded together like flies on a fly-paper. Almost in equal numbers, revolutionary sympathisers poured in, students many of them, and were quickly enrolled in the new armies.

We foreigners had strange freedom, and were allowed to move where we would. Some of us were rolling bandages. Some of us were hastily enrolled into Red Cross units. All of us sought the

roofs of high buildings from which we might watch the progress of events. At least one well-known missionary, on one of these observation posts, got a bullet through his jaw which left its mark on him for life. We were all revolutionaries in sympathy. Backhouse and Bland's famous book, *China under the Empress Dowager*, had just been issued, and destroyed any last vestige of sympathy anyone might have had for the Manchu régime. Some of us acted as interpreters for British Tommies and sailors guarding the approaches from the Chinese city of Hankow into the British Concession, and taking from those who crowded down what looked like loot from the abandoned shops. Stray bullets and shells often dropped around. Then one day Hankow—all Hankow it seemed—was on fire. I joined a rescue party on a launch that tried to get up the River Han to clear our hospital and Blind School from the threat of this new danger. Bullets whizzed above us and one smashed through the cabin. A British Military Attaché not unnaturally said, "Damn," as we flung ourselves on the floor and then, as he saw my collar, said, "Oh, I beg pardon, sir." What would he have said to God, I wonder? When shells began to be added to the bullets, we just had to turn back. Of course, we sailed under the Red Cross flag; but what is the use of that in the midst of a burning city and with troops fighting for their lives? We organised a second expedition, by land this time, and got our friends away to safety.

Our school in Wuchang had become a Red Cross hospital, and our dormitories and classrooms were full of wounded revolutionaries. It was long ago, when the only thing to be done with a bone splintered by gun-shot was to remove the wounded limb, and I still can see the severed limbs lying about on our football ground, too many of them to be destroyed immediately. I also remember an American lady's joy in coming face to face with a British monocle, "Oh, do jerk it off, Captain Jones. I do so love to see how you do it," and Captain Jones, with solemn face, whatever may have been his outraged feelings, dutifully gratified the lady's wishes. She was "tickled to death" with the sight. In my bedroom I found a lady's wig, the private possession of a visiting nurse from Shanghai. So there were other things than monocles to astonish the local populace.

We saw sadder sights than these; junk-loads of soldiers shot to pieces and sunk before our eyes. It looked as though the Revolution hadn't an earthly chance, and then suddenly there was negotiation and peace. What had been happening in Hankow

had been going on, with varying fortunes, in other great centres too. It was clear that the day for China's liberation had arrived. Those refugees pouring out of Wuchang over the city walls, that endless stream of fugitives, waylaid by robbers as they filed their way over the countryside to their village homes, those maimed and broken soldiers in the Red Cross hospitals, those boat-loads of heroes so vilely shot away, and, above all, the executed instigators whose poor bodies were photographed and their pictures hung above the shrines in the old "Emperor's Temple," now the "Hero's Temple"; they had paid the price. Others too were to pay the price; but China was free. The Manchu Court had abdicated. Henry Pu Y, later to be Japanese Puppet Emperor of Manchukuo, was a little infant then, and his Regent turned over power and authority to the Northern General Yuan Shih-Kai. China—Manchu China of the Ta-Ts'ing Dynasty—had been like some gorgeous temple whose painted beams had been honey-combed and eaten away by the ravages of white ants. Outwardly, in those early years of mine, it seemed so fair and stable, almost eternal. Barely five months of the storms and winds of revolution had brought it down with a crash, broken and destroyed, so that there could be no recovery. From an empire of the Roman type, with its governors and satraps, in five months China had become a modern republic, and the people could not even read. Had Sun Yat-sen and his fellow visionaries waited for the slow process of evolution, how little would have happened in the next thirty years. As it is, in spite of all the chaos, is there any other country under Heaven that has advanced at such speed? Our foreign hearts sighed. Our foreign eyes pitied. But China, as always in China and about Chinese things, was right.

So after five months of temporary exile I was able to move my family back, not to the school outside the Great East Gate this time, but on to the Thousand House Street within the city, where I had first heard of the explosion of bombs and the execution of revolutionaries and across whose compound on the first Double Tenth had sped the bullets and the shells which were to blow away the old cobwebs of Manchudom, and let in the light of a new China day.

It seemed strange that we had lived through a revolution with, on the whole, so little dislocation to our own lives and so little suffering to China's teeming millions. A few days of Japanese invasion in 1937, with its modern weapons, was far more devastating than the five months of revolutionary strife that

ended the old day and brought in the new in 1911.

That revolution had been put through in the absence from the country of Sun Yat-sen, though he had been the inspiring spirit behind it. He arrived back in time to be elected first President, a place which he willingly relinquished in favour of the Northern General Yuan. No one then foresaw the place that Dr. Sun was ultimately to occupy in the estimation of his people.

## CHAPTER XI

## BETWEEN TWO REVOLUTIONS

WHEN the fires are raging, there is destruction and terror, but there are also revelations. I have been told by those who lived through the Boxer years, at the turn of the twentieth century, that there were startling surprises. Some of their Chinese friends went to pieces, and others, who in times of peace had seemed very ordinary mortals, came through the furnace like gold refined.

By all outward appearances the years 1911–25 were, almost everywhere in China, years of division, destruction, and chaos. How the country held together at all no one could understand. The Manchu Dynasty in Peking had through 300 years organised the country into eighteen provinces. The provinces had been divided into prefectures, and prefectures into counties.

Over all the chief official in the larger provinces had been a viceroy. In compassable areas, the viceroy was appointed over two provinces and their governors. The whole system was carefully co-ordinated from county magistrate, through prefectural magistrate, provincial governor, and, finally, viceroy up to the Emperor, reigning in the Forbidden City in Peking. The Chinese principle of responsibility was as carefully apportioned as the various offices. The county magistrate was responsible to the prefect; the prefect to the governor; the governor to the viceroy; and the viceroy to the Throne. The viceroy had been a very big and powerful ruler over some 30 to 50 million people or more. All authority was his, except, in normal times, the taking of life. The one thing demanded of him by the Throne was order and good government in his jurisdiction, and a prompt despatch to Peking of the taxes at which his area of dominion had been assessed. He, in turn, demanded order and good government and the taxes assigned from prefects and magistrates. These things being promptly attended to, other matters were under the responsibility of the official concerned, who had a good deal of liberty of action.

There were two safeguards. No official of any grade was allowed to serve in his own province. A system of censors at all stages of official life was in vogue. The country and provincial gentry and scholars could impeach an erring magistrate or viceroy, and in Peking itself there were censors appointed to watch over the

proper government of the country. These arrangements, on the one hand, were a check on too great independence on the part of an ambitious official, who, in his own province and among his own clansmen, might be a serious menace to the central government. On the other hand, in the system of censorship, there was an obvious watch on the actions of men where public opinion was unable to be vocal. Village elders managed the affairs of the villagers when disputes arose, but they hardly came into the picture of Government machinery. This was all government from above, through the well co-ordinated machine, and without a parliament or popular assembly of any sort.

Each viceroy had his provincial army under the provincial general, but the military official was always subservient to the civil authority. In the main provincial centres there were also Manchu bannermen. The theory obviously had been that these Manchu garrisons should hold the country in concert with the Emperor, whilst the civil government should be conducted by Chinese viceroys and their subordinates.

When I got to China this articulated system seemed strong and effective. There was little trouble, except in the mountain country that often divided provinces or counties. In these mountain areas outlaws and bandits found their sanctuary. When pursued in one county or province, it was easy for them to flee into the next, where the responsibilities of government belonged to a different official. There was no centralised authority capable of holding jurisdiction over these border areas.

On October 10th, 1911, practically the whole of this effective machinery of government was destroyed. Within five months the Emperor had gone and with him the Imperial system. Republican generals were given provinces to govern, but, without a strong central authority, they were like the spokes of a broken wheel from which the hub has been removed, and, like the free spokes of a broken wheel, they were unstable within themselves. Even those who looked strong might become weak at any moment. The country might have gained liberty: it had certainly lost cohesion.

What then happened in China would have happened in any land which had so great an area and so vast a population, with all its human problems.

Good men, with some sense of responsibility, did their best to maintain order within their own provinces. They were compelled to have provincial armies for the purpose. Circumstances forced them away from the Manchu regulations in one respect. These

*tuchun*, as they were called, were apt to govern in their own provinces and be surrounded by bodyguards and troops of their own kinsmen, clans, and fellow provincials, thus heading inevitably for the very independence of central authority against which the Manchus had set up the most careful safeguards.

The bad men only differed from the good men in that they were self-seeking and avaricious and thinking of themselves rather than their country. In this world there are always bad as well as good. Good and bad were alike the origin of the "war-lordism," which was the description usually given to this period of Chinese history. It is difficult to see what else could have happened. Of course, a parliament came into being as soon as ever the Republic was set up. Immediately there were Republican, Democratic, and Socialist parties, but there was no machinery of democratic election, no considerable body of literate electors. No British or American system could have been worked at first. You had to begin with names before you could have the things. Politics had always been the business of the scholars and the soldiers. With more than 90 per cent. of the 460 millions illiterate, it is not surprising that the new Republic failed to function perfectly. It is surprising that it was able to function at all. The alternative was to go through a few hundred years of slow transition from absolute to limited monarchy as the English had done. To think of such a slow process in this modern machine-controlled world is to realise that the Chinese took the only reasonable alternative, at that time, to the absolute monarchy from which they had broken free, whatever the ensuing mess might be.

In certain respects, and those very vital to China, that parliament with all its limitations did function in spite of war-lords and civil strife. You can see that, now that the smoke has lifted. What we saw and felt then were the fires.

For fourteen years China was torn by almost continuous strife. You can hardly call it civil war. It was more like the period of the Judges in the Scriptures, when everyone in authority did what was right in his own eyes. War-lords were infinitely preferable to anarchy, though the war-lord system seemed to be a sort of higher anarchy. Anyhow, it was better that there should be some twenty leaders of strife and many of them with good motives than thousands of such leaders.

Men like Wu Pei-fu the scholar, Feng Yu-hsiang the Christian General, and Yen Hsi-shan the Model Governor were the more outstanding of the better type. Probably the only conception they

could see of a new China was a military dictatorship working in conjunction with a parliament. If this was their view, it was largely the view of foreign sympathisers too. I am bound to say that, at that period, I shared the general hope that one or another of these better men might prove the Napoleonic saviour of his country, wash her gaping wounds and dry her tears. At one time I was afraid lest the Christian Feng Yu-hsiang should seize national power and by force of arms and through his military power be a second Constantine to bring an empire to the feet of Christ. I had seen enough of the effects of the Roman Constantine to be apprehensive of a Chinese successor.

I needn't have worried. The Chinese mind was quite made up, and it seemed the only point on which all Chinese high and low were agreed. They had broken free from one imperialism. They were not going again to be enslaved to that yoke of bondage. No sooner was a man hailed as Napoleon, dictator, master, than he was sure to fall. Time after time the cup was dashed from over-eager lips. "We would rather have our mess than your order" was what China repeated by her actions again and again in those blood-red, tear-stained years of the Republic.

Living, then, mainly in Wuchang, but later in Hankow, I shared the immunity from all this chaos which was happily the lot of foreigners. We were like people watching a huge conflagration. We were genuinely sorry for the victims. We did all we could to help, though we realised it was their mess and not ours. Their institutions in the internecine strife were frequently put out of action. Our hospitals and schools strangely flourished in those days. Our church compounds were frequently a refuge for those in fear and suffering.

There were few provinces that escaped the sufferings inflicted by predatory troops going up to battle against someone or other. When defeated, the soldiers took to looting. What else could they do? When disbanded, they became bandits. What other course was open to them? The period witnessed more than one bandit leader, with thousands of followers spreading ruin through the land, preying on the people. The most notorious in our province of Hupeh was a man who called himself "White Wolf," and he left behind him a trail of terror everywhere. He was eventually betrayed by a follower and executed. A similar fate followed most men of this type; but meanwhile the people had suffered horribly and whole counties had been wasted and devastated. Chinese and foreign merchants saw their once-flourishing businesses come

almost to a standstill. Chinese cities were pillaged and their citizens taxed by each succeeding general. Chinese villagers were seized by press-gangs and hailed off to battle. Homesteads became charred ruins. Soldiers maintained their old reputation in China of being made out of anything but good iron. The people sighed for a peace that never came.

The fires of destruction blazed and spread, died down and blazed up again. Many longed for the good old days. "Manchu despotism was better than this," they said.

The fires of destruction are also the fires of revealing. That is destroyed which is ready for destruction. In China, as elsewhere, there were things that fourteen years of turmoil did not and could not destroy. They stood out all the more clearly for the ruins that were all about them.

For part of that time I was busy in school in term time and travelling the countryside in vacation.

I remember setting off just after a local war through some of the southern counties of Hupeh. It meant a few hours up the railway, from which all normal amenities had disappeared, a night in a Chinese inn, and then a trip across the mountains, past villages and hamlets and lonely farms. There were plenty of charred ruins, very few people on the roads, here and there an old man or woman. There were no children and no cattle. All along the thirty miles I never saw a chicken and hardly a living soul. I wondered what sort of a reception I should get at the county city for which I was making. I knew there'd be a welcome, but didn't expect many delicacies.

The Chinese minister took me in and gave me a lovely Chinese meal. When I exclaimed at the abundance of eggs, and told him of what I'd seen upon the road, he smiled and "*Ngo-men yu fah-tze*" —"We have methods"—he said.

Yes, I thought, you have methods. You've lived for long amidst war and rumour of war. You go on living with your methods. Nothing seems finally to get you down. War or no war, somehow there are hens and eggs. There is devastation this week and springing crops the next. The soldier doesn't seem to win against Nature.

In the 1914–18 European War men marvelled at French peasants going on with their ploughing within sight of the guns. From 1911–25 China was all the time doing that.

Many a time we said to one another, "If this had been industrial England, could it have survived? But here, war or no war, the

fields are ploughed and sowed and reaped; the mud-brick, thatched huts are burned and destroyed, only to be replaced by new ones; the people scatter or hide, but they're soon on their land again." That plodding Chinese farmer beats creation. Somehow that journey and those eggs and that "We have methods" remain to me symbolic of the period. However much was burned by fire, the good earth, the tillers of that earth, and the organisation of their village life remained. You felt as if only the light decorations of the Chinese house had been destroyed; the solid substance lived on indestructible.

Then there was education. There must have been more than mere survival for education to flourish. That parliament, after all, could not be so helpless as its lack of control over the war-lords might suggest.

It was as though what the farmer was doing in the physical sphere, the teacher was doing in the mental sphere; just quietly pressing on as soon as the immediate trouble had passed.

It was in this period that the almost universal one teacher Confucian classical school was being transformed into the typical school of all lands. Black-boards, globes, test-tubes, maps became the equipment of schools, with many classes under modern teachers. The old men, with their chanting of the classics, remained, but they were giving place to modern, alert, bespectacled, athletic colleagues, brought up on team games and drill, used to the open air; and dreaming of a China as up-to-date as any country in the world.

Marauding soldiers made sad havoc of their buildings. Often the whole machinery of their life was stopped. The Church school, under the ægis of the foreign Power from which its founders came, was protected by all parties. It was a little haven in a stormy sea of trouble, and flourished all the time and whatever happened. But, in general, the survival and development of new schools as such was a visible proof of the undying and reviving life of China.

We were all expecting that peace would come at any time—peace for the farmer, peace for the scholar, peace for the merchant, peace, above all, for the homes of this harried people. In spite of all the bloodshed, we were in a living country and it was good to be alive.

Then there was this "New Thought Movement," this "*Hsin Ssu Ch'ao*," this "new tide of thought."

"Had I heard of Hu Shih and his friends in Peking?" they asked me in 1920 on my return from furlough. The incredible had hap-

pened. Chinese scholars of high repute were transforming the written language. No longer was education to be the prerogative of the educated. Chinese scholars, of their own initiative, were doing perfectly what missionaries, with ideas and teaching new to China, had already tried to do in their stumbling way. They were giving the key of knowledge to the common people, making the way of learning easy, putting out their great thoughts in the common rather than the literary and classical speech.

That, in spite of all, China's farmers should go on ploughing and China's teachers go on teaching, awakened to necessary modern subjects and methods, was perhaps in the nature of things. Both the plough and the pen are mightier than the sword. The wonder was that in a time when war-lords were striving, homes were burning, parliament was fooling, and merchants were sighing, a few scholars in Peking had actually been busy on a literary revolution. There is only one thing to be said about it: "China is different." How many other nations would have had the leisure of mind for this?

All these things happened in the time of political and social chaos that inevitably followed the breakdown of the Manchu imperial system. The blood, the fire, the strife, the war-lords—these, it seems to me now, were inevitable, though I did not like them then.

What struck me then, what impresses me the more I think of it, was that continuance through all these dreadful experiences of the strong agricultural life of the people, and the leisure of mind and energy of spirit that could transform China's education at a time when often it was impossible for her schools to function, and that in the midst of it all scholars and philosophers should transform the language. Fires that, when they have done destroying, reveal such Chinese gold as this, have burned, not only to destroy, but to refine.

It is by these things that a man or a nation is judged.

People unthinkingly say that what has been will be, that China will survive whatever happens, that she is a great human entity that absorbs all bodies that invade her. It just is so, and must ever be so, they say.

Chinese civilisation, which has spread, might conceivably contract. There is nothing inevitable about the continuance just for the sake of continuance of any part of the human race. Nations large and small do in fact rise and fall. I am not competent to give reasons for the past or prophecies for the future.

What I did witness in this period was the survival of the farmer and his social unit, the survival of the scholar and his awakening to a wider world, the survival of the thinker and his creative thought, and all in a time when the nation seemed ready to perish.

Incidentally, all this period was one of phenomenal growth for the Christian Church, and the beginning of the appreciation that it might be a Chinese and not a foreign thing. Its immunity from interference from any of the contending parties, and its social and philanthropic help to general society, gave it popularity.

With the hoisting of the five-barred flag there came liberty to the human spirit and liberty of choice, in religion as in other things. The dead hand of the past was losing its grip.

## CHAPTER XII

## COUNTRY JOURNEYS

ALL my life in China I have been taking country journeys. China is country, and those who only know her ports and cities have missed the heart of China. The cities themselves have their roots in the country, and there are few of their citizens, be they rickshaw coolies or millionaires, who have not some place in the country which they call their "*Lao Chia*"—their "old home."

I remember sitting in a crowded bus next to an old man with his basket of salt fish, vegetables, and pork tied up with a wisp of straw. He had been pushed in on the top of us in a bus that had already seemed crowded beyond capacity. Somehow he had come to rest alongside of me, so cramped that he couldn't move hand or foot. Someone else's knee was jammed into his thigh, and I heard him chattering with pain. "*Hsing-ku*?" I said. "It's hard to bear?" "*Hsing-ku teh hen*"—"My luck is very bitter," he replied. "Who would travel if they could stay at home?"

The old man spoke for China. Till yesterday there was so much "bitter travel" that they wondered at anyone taking a country journey who needn't. Watch that coolie, swinging along thirty and more miles a day with a good hundredweight of burden suspended from front and back of his carrying-pole. See the sweat streaming down his naked back, and the dust coagulating on his muscular legs, so often disfigured with swollen and varicose veins. Watch that wheelbarrow man, behind an almost superhuman load of cotton bales or human beings, pushing along a foot-wide uneven path among the fields. Listen to the song and repartee of those chair-coolies as, more rapidly than the baggage-bearers, they carry man or woman in a light country chair, with its blue cloth cover, from inn to inn and street to street. They are all toiling terribly, and toiling because they must, earning their rice by the sweat of their brow and the strain of their bodies; but who among such people is likely to stir one furlong for the sheer pleasure of taking their walks abroad?

All, with one voice, would echo the groaning sigh of the old man, "*Hsing-ku. Hsing ku teh hen*"—"Bitter luck. Very bitter luck" —this business of country travel.

Most of us were different. We weren't carriers, but carried; not burden-bearers, but those who hired the coolies. It would have been possible to be carried in state through the countryside like

mandarins or to have ridden from place to place on horse-back. Some of our men, in their own areas, did use horse or, where feasible, bicycle to ease their toil over oft-repeated journeys, but in our province the ordinary journey was taken on foot, and that for settled reasons. It was necessary that our women-folk and children should be carried along in country chairs, but we had deliberately gone to China to get among the people, and the surest way of doing that was to pass like them upon the field-paths, to sit sipping tea with them at wayside tea-shops, to eat amongst the fast-gathering crowd, if not with them at least before them, in the country inns. We wanted to be with them, not above them, and there was no surer way of doing that than being a traveller through their well-kept countryside or over their hills so often stripped bare for fire-wood, and through their country markets. Many an ordinary-looking parson, travelling demurely now in England by bus or car or train, has been seen day after day in China slogging his thirty miles by riverside, through paddy-fields, up hill, down dale, past temple, street, village, and hamlet, sometimes in amazingly beautiful scenery, in all sorts of weather and mingling with all sorts of people. Till quite recently travel was mostly in single file (Indian file), and for the very reason that the Indians travel that way. There was no room to walk abreast. Now much is altered. There is an increasing network of roads of various quality. There is a multitude of lorries and buses of still more varying quality. But the country journey of which I mainly think is the old single-file journey across the good earth that brought you into living contact with the people.

Country journeys in China differ enormously with different conditions. In the north there are bullock carts with heavy wooden wheels. As they pass over the deep-rutted roads the passenger is jolted and tossed till he may be severely bruised. In Yunnan there are short stages over the mountains where, after twenty or thirty miles at the most, your day ends in a caravanserai. It is a road arranged according to the needs of mule-trains and coolies bearing loads of salt over extremely difficult country. In Hunan the main routes have long been well trodden and the inns are of a type that witness to the affluence of the province and the needs of long-distance travellers. Most of my journeys were through the Province of Hupeh. Our roads and inns were by no means so good as those of the neighbouring Hunan. We must never generalise overmuch about so vast a country and so numerous a people.

This was Chinese journeying as we knew it.

Our daily journey generally began in the dark. In a Chinese hamlet the foreigner must not trust the cock-crow. Those lusty birds seem to watch for any gleam of light in the darkness and anything of that nature sets them heralding the day. A friend of mine, whose watch had stopped and who had been roused by chanticleer, got his grumbling coolies on the road and well off on the next day's journey, only to find that he had been misled by the crowing of the cock. He had made the error of starting out at 11 p.m. instead of 5 a.m. That the coolies grumbled was no guide to him. They often, and naturally, grumbled when they were roused to the day's work. In the country there are few clocks, and fewer still that are more reliable than the lordly fowl. How the people know which of his crowings is significant is inexplicable to me, but you can be sure of being roused at the proper time. There is always someone waking and moving before you, and when you stumble along in the morning darkness there is always some shadowy figure meeting you or passing you, swinging along at a steady trot with his baskets full of produce for the market. Always too there are shadowy figures already at work in the fields.

The inn-keeper had hot water ready for you the moment you arose. Where there was hot water there was tea—just a few greenish leaves in your own cup with boiling water poured upon them. There was no milk and no sugar. They did not suit real China tea. This consisted of nothing but the faint coloured infusion of greenish leaves, and the brew was hot enough to scald the skin off your lips. The seasoned traveller, perhaps, had tea and tinned milk of his own and a biscuit or two. This was not a meal. That would come when you had been ten miles on the road; for the secret of a thirty miles' journey was to get a third of it done before breakfast.

Soon the darkness greyed to dawn, the sun was up and day was here. My China days have taught me that to watch the dawn is a much exaggerated pleasure. I have seen so many dawns, and though some were beautiful, most were as prosaic and plain as people. There are beautiful dawns as beautiful women, and perhaps in the same proportion.

In my experience, you stepped out into the often misty dark. Gradually dark changed to grey, and then to light. In the fields you picked out clearly now a peasant with a hoe, a pheasant sitting quietly and undisturbed, a buffalo being driven out to work. Above you the dark sky was becoming pale. Streaks of palest blue

showed behind the clouds. Then all was light. The sun, sometimes a red ball, more often a pale gold, arose. The birds chattered and sang, and lo! it was day. As you trudged on, that sun gathered in strength, and smote you in the neck and face. He had risen without pageantry, but, like a good labourer, was getting to work.

The road was but a single path through the hedgeless fields. It made its ways amidst the rice or wheat, pea-nuts or cotton, and the multifold crops of the countryside. Here and there was a "*T'u-ti-Miao*"—a "local shrine"—containing the doll-sized idol images of a man and woman, watching over the growing of the crops. Sometimes for a little while the path left the fields and passed over barren ground between diminutive hedgerows.

Other travellers like you were on the road making the most of the morning hours. Those who passed or met you hailed, "*Na-li k'e?*"—"Where are you going?" Or you varied it with, "*Ch'i-liao fan ba?*"—"Have you eaten rice?"—as if it was any business of yours where they were going or if they had broken their fast. But anything was better than marching along in silence. If a man does not speak, how is one to know what he is up to, pondering his deep designs? The coolies carrying your baggage would call with loud voices to those moving in the opposite direction, and there always seemed to be some intimate acquaintance, old companions of the road, the inn or the tea-shop, rather than neighbours of their street or village.

After three miles there would nearly always be a little tea-shop. It was just a crude country hut of unbaked brick and wattle, with a large part of its cramped floor space taken up with the rough, mud-brick stove. Opposite was a partly planed plank serving as a bench. Between the eaves of the hut and the bench there was generally a frame on which straw or straw-matting was spread, thus bridging the road and making a sort of cool tunnel which sheltered you from the heat of the blazing sun as you sipped your cup of tea and nibbled your pea-nuts. That first tea-shop had rarely got its stove going so early in the morning, but by the time you had gone the next three miles the day was further advanced, there was tea to be had as well, and a strong temptation to stay and break your fast. Prudence urged you on till, after ten miles, you had reached a "street" with anything from thirty houses and upwards. Here was sure to be an inn or inns with meat from the newly slain pig ready to welcome you. The innkeeper swept an ancient table for you, and whilst your cook was ordering the food convenient, you washed and drank tea and answered the eager

curiosity of those to whom you were literally a sight for sore eyes. There were many sore eyes, and they far from regular medical service.

They assumed a foreigner would know how to cure all ailments of the human body. If you were a doctor or nurse, you did what you immediately could to help any in their need. If you were within a day's march of a hospital, you told them of the wonderful help to be had there. They loved to hear you talking their language. That proved to them that, in spite of your strange looks, you really were a human being. You would pick up bits of news. You would hear of old acquaintances. If it were a new road, you would learn the particulars of the way. Almost invariably the people were friendly. They wanted to know your country, your parents, the number of your brothers and sisters, your age, the price of your coat and hat, and anything that interested them. Your buttons were attractive—so different from theirs, made by their own hands of cloth to fit their garments. They admired your strong leather boots, and you admired their hardened feet and the straw sandals that took them at so little cost over stone and sand and through the puddles.

Above all, they loved to watch you eat. Sometimes we brought out our knives and forks and ate the provisions our women-folk had made for us for our comfort. Sometimes we ate with relish the bowls of lumps of lean pork, bean-curd, fried eggs, and vegetables that were placed all steaming on the table. When they saw you use the chopsticks and evidently enjoy the innkeeper's rice and varied dishes, just like human beings, it only added to their certainty that after all even "*Wai-kuoh ren*"—"outer-countrymen" —and foreign devils both spoke and acted much like people. When you spoke to one another in your own tongue, they said "*Puh tung*"—"We don't understand"—but when you smiled or laughed at some ridiculous incident, then they understood. For our laughter and our fun make us true comrades of the Chinese people.

You paid your bill, or probably the servant did that for you. You bowed and said, "*Sao p'ei*"—"We have been little company" —and the innkeeper said, "*Man tsou*"—"Slowly go." The pattering feet of the children followed you out of the village and once more you were off; the sun well up now, and everyone everywhere at work. The lark was trilling in the sky, the dogs were barking before each house door, the farmers and other travellers were passing to and fro upon the road. As the day wore on you grew

foot-sore and tired and welcomed the chance of a minute or two's rest beneath the straw awning in front of the tea-shops on the way. What a blessing in China you found that green tea to be. Sometimes it was fresh brewed in your own cup. At other times it was already brewed in a brown earthenware teapot fitting into a basket and kept warm with a cloth that lined the basket. Sometimes the tea was salted. Once I found pepper-corns floating in the liquid to correct some fault in the local water. Sometimes there were chrysanthemum buds floating on the top. But generally it was plain tea, hot or cold or lukewarm, but by preference hot. The glory of it was that it was always safe to drink. It had always been prepared with boiling water in a land where it was dreadfully easy for water to be contaminated. You never needed to fear drinking it, and if the tea-shop cups didn't appeal to your ideas of hygiene, no one objected to your washing the cup with its first contents, pouring them on the ground, and asking for another cupful. As to the chopsticks in the inn, it was quite the correct thing to wipe them well with paper before you used them. In fact, the better inns provided paper for the purpose. For the Chinese had a sense of the demands of health, even though their medicine and ours were of a different tradition.

On you went, through the burning sun, often enthralled by the beauty of the scenery. To the traveller on the Yangtse, at certain seasons of the year, China seems very brown and drab and monotonous, but a few miles' penetration into China's countryside brings a complete change of experience and opinion. How many times among wooded hills crowned with pagoda or temple, or passing by lake or river, have I longed to stay and sit and stare. But always there was a place to be reached; always there was shortness of time, and night was coming on. I am not writing of exceptional beauty spots like the mountains of Yunnan or the sublimities of the Yangtse gorges.

Every journey everywhere brought tiredness, blisters, and sudden and difficult experiences. Intense heat might suddenly change to storm and a deluge of rain. You might sleep in strange and uncomfortable places at night, but by day you had seen some picture of Nature at her most beautiful. For the face of China is not really drab, and a journey through her lovely countryside is abundantly rewarding.

The inn at night was something like the place of your morning meal. There was a large outer room with mud floor and stove. It is in this outer room for the most part that coolies sleep when the

place is all shut up for the night. Then there are inner rooms for the innkeeper and his family, and an inner guest-room too. It was here, as a rule, that our women-folk had to sleep. There was a wooden bed on which too many visitors had slept for there to be any hope of immunity from vermin except at the coldest season of the year. They did their best to protect themselves by the oil-cloths in which their bedding bundles were wrapped, and the mosquito net that was always a necessary travelling companion; but most spent sorry nights. The innocent would find that, added to their other troubles, was the family pig that had settled under their couch for the evening. The innkeeper or his wife had seen it safely under cover for the night, for who knew what harm might come to it otherwise? Old travellers took stock of these and sundry other matters before lying down. The cesspool was generally at the back of the building, and it was more salubrious to give it as wide a berth as possible. I learned by experience to avoid any inn bed or inn door (the frequent substitute for a bed), for its hasp was apt to get you in the small of the back, however great precautions you took. I used to ask for a clean hank of straw, which I spread on the mud floor of the outer room among the coolies. It was possible on that to make a soft, clean, and comfortable bed, though draughts were not to be avoided. The drawbacks were that so often the coolies seemed to gamble or chatter all night. It was amazing how they had strength for the next day's thirty miles. The other drawback was that all your getting up in the morning, including your shaving, was apt to be under public and very interested observation. After all, the Chinese village had every right to some compensation for the intrusion of my uncouth face and figure, and the Chinese villager's curiosity is insatiable.

Sometimes, morning, noon or night, as you sat in a Chinese inn asking and answering questions, opportunity would be given you to speak. It suited you, who had a message to deliver. It suited equally well the innkeeper, for whom it might well mean an increase of customers. You were almost as much a help to him as a Chinese story-teller, who whiles away the time of his hearers in the tea-shop as they stay and eat and drink.

On these journeys you were very near to Nature, and very near to the people. It took time and wore down your physical strength and yet the beauty of hill and river, sky and landscape, and the glorious fresh air, were great renewers after the cooped-up life of the city.

I always faced my journeys with reluctance and some apprehension. I revelled in them as we travelled; and returned a refreshed and better man to my city task. As Virgil knew, there is something life-giving in the country, and not least in Chinese country.

All this is still there to-day, but changing with great rapidity. Rough roads are replacing the foot-tracks that led from city to city. You are still close to humanity in the crowded bus, too close for comfort and too speedy for sociability. Politeness and the courtesies of life take time. You don't need to use the country inns now as you did, and happily on the new roads new modern and better inns are being erected. A few more years of peace and there will be great transformations in China's country journeys.

Old China did not travel unless it was compelled by the hard business of earning a living to do so, and there was little provision made for travellers who were not mainly poor. New China is travelling hard and fast, and though the need of accommodation on the roads is in some way reduced, now chauffeurs, lorry drivers, students, officials, and merchants are needing such accommodation as there is far more than formerly. They are able and willing to pay, and a good inn should be a good paying concern.

I have seen the effect of these new modes of travel and new travellers upon the inns of Yunnan, Kueichow, and Hunan, and already there are improvements beyond all belief not many years ago. The Chinese soldier and the refugee now know the countryside like the farmer and the missionary. As communications get easier and travelling more common, the country journey in China will become common as in other lands. Students now are in their refugee schools and colleges in the very heart of China's most beautiful countryside. Will they ever lose their memories of mountain and lake, flower and bird, glorious heavens and far-spreading earth? Will they lose their sense of obligation to the good earth that sheltered and fed them in the hour of their extremity? For the distance from the poor man in the village to the enlightened and wealthy in the town is a gulf that needs to be spanned in every land.

China's wealth is in her countryside, and there for generations, perhaps for ever, the bulk of her people will remain.

Country kitchen and
living-room

Travelling through
a Yunnan Pass

A Wayside Inn

Mine Host and his Customers

## CHAPTER XIII

## WANG SSU-FU

It is the common man that matters most in any land, and my boy Wang was an ordinary poor peasant from the country. His name was one of the commonest in China, like Smith or Brown with us. The meaning of the name "Wang" is "king." How did "king" become so common a name, I wonder?

Wang lived with us for most of our days, first as coolie and then as house-boy. Through the long years he meant so much to us that we should be blind and heartless indeed if we could ever forget him.

Actually, more than any other man of our acquaintance in China, high or low, rich or poor, good or bad, Wang stands out distinct; and when I think of China, somehow he is always in the foreground of the picture.

On a winter's morning, you could see him shuffling slipshod around the house in padded gown, his ears protected by little pointed ear-caps, which intensified his natural, gnome-like appearance. In summertime, if you came down early, you would find he had propped open the mosquito doors so that he might go in and out the more easily, entirely oblivious of the fact that the doors were there to keep the mosquitoes out. For who, thought Wang, bothered about an odd mosquito or two? When the air became thick with them, that was another matter. This mosquito-proofing of doors, as well as windows, would make life very hard for a man, if he were to keep all the rules of the house.

He had his own thoughts and ways, had Wang; and it wasn't his fault if your ideas were silly. It was your house, and when you were there and were looking, he did things as you might wish. In your absence, he did what was convenient and wise. For Wang certainly had a mind of his own.

Most of us lived in homes far from the amenities of modern life. There was no hot or cold water flowing from our taps. All water had to be carried from the well or river. There was no electric light or fire. Lamps for the light of Asia had to be filled with oil. There were, for foreigners, no easy facilities for shopping. Most of our purchasing had to be done for us. Until our later years we were greatly dependent upon human labour, and Wang was one of our

essential trio of servants in such a home. This was not extravagance, but sheer necessity, and very cheap.

There was, first of all, the "*Ta Ssu-fu*"—the cook, "the big servant"—who bought the food and cooked it, both for the household and for the servants. These were his sole duties. He would do nothing else. Then there was the coolie who did the rough, heavy, outside work, including the garden and the carrying of water.

Between the coolie and the cook there reigned the "boy." He cleaned the rooms, laid the table, received the visitors, and was in close contact with the family from early morning until the day's work was done. Cook, boy, and coolie, each had his well-defined sphere, and if any of them over-stepped the bounds of mutual propriety there arose a situation of heated argument, and sometimes of blows, that none could settle but the mistress, or, in the last resort, the master himself.

When there were children an *amah* was added, and it was better for the smooth running of the household if she were the cook's wife. The *amah* was a deserving and hard-working body, but seemed to be everywhere at once, like the atmosphere. Happily, she rarely penetrated into my study. Doubtless, in her heart she said, "The same to you, sir."

None of these servants was content to be classed as servant. A Chinese official might have his underlings; a Chinese merchant might have his apprentices and hands; but your servants were "*pang-mang-tih-ren*"—"helping men." That was their status as they understood it.

They were short of money and needing a job. You were a foreigner, ignorant of their country and its ways. They joined you on a sort of mutual contract, not as inferiors, but as helpers. You were the employer, and they the employed. That was the way that life had worked out; but they were free creatures on an equal human basis. So "*Wang Ssu-fu*"—"Wang servant"—as all the others, thought.

When Wang first came to our household, the cook of those days introduced him. He started as water-coolie, messenger, and gardener, and somehow he never lost the air of the garden. He was not in the front seat when faces were given out; had the mask-like, gnarled face, not of the man who is concealing things, but of the man who has nothing to conceal. He really looked most at home in the mud of the garden among the turnips. But Wang had ambitions.

In the summer heat, when my wife and children went to the

hills, taking the cook and *amah* with them, he aspired to leave the garden and enter the kitchen. He was my temporary cook. After enduring his manners for two summers, and being continually in consequence subject to physicians, I decided that, whatever his sterling worth, he must never again be allowed to make a hash of my stomach; and so, in due season, he was promoted to the rank of "boy."

There he was—loyal and hard-working and, though nobody else could stand him, he lived with us for twenty-five years, and how we wish we had him with us now.

He was honest by his own lights. He would have been ashamed to take your money. Only thieves do that. Careless folk put strong temptations before the servants if they leave their money about in China as anywhere else. We tried to avoid such folly, and so we had never to accuse him of stealing. Oil and sugar and oddments of household stores was another matter. He didn't think of these in quite the same light and, as long as we were dependent on paraffin lamps, we never quite knew why so much oil got used.

One day my wife thought she had caught him red-handed whilst he was trimming the lamp, and told him a little of what was in her mind. "Fancy talking to me like that, and on a Sunday too," says Wang, greatly shocked at the accusation, his face as doleful and rebuking as his words.

At another time I was involved in a very complicated purchase of property. There were constant meetings with middlemen and endless talk and bargainings. Wang was always in attendance serving tea. When the transaction was finally completed and the deeds duly signed, Wang received a handsome and well-deserved tip from the visitors. "You've done pretty well, haven't you, Wang?" said I. Promptly came the reply, "What about you?" Oh, Wang, how could you? After so long together, haven't you really known me, or was it merely a little grim humour of your own?

We taught him to read, and after a while he was able to stumble through the Chinese characters of his verse at daily prayers, though it never seemed to us that he was turning out much of a scholar. He went to church with the rest of us, and often there found peace in sleep.

But he must have taken in more than we thought. We never felt it right to press our servants overmuch, but one day I suggested to him that it would be nice for him to join the Church as a member. "No," he said. "If I did, I should have to give up things

I am doing now. I wouldn't be one of those people who go to church and don't live accordingly."

Quite an outburst of eloquence for him. Quite a picture also of an observant and reflective mind. That he didn't join the Church did not prevent him from hurling appropriate texts at us when he thought we needed a word of advice, rebuke, or consolation, and I suppose his kinsmen roughly classed him as a Christian. He was always pushing Chinese proverbs at us, the quintessence of China's traditional wisdom and experience and the final argument of any discussion.

Wang was married; but his friends hadn't done very well for him in that respect. His wife lived outside on the street, and some of our oil and things may have gone into her store. They had no children, and that may have made him the fonder of ours. They loved him and he them; and a screaming infant in his high chair was speedily restored to good behaviour by the faces Wang pulled at him across the table. He was no more cleanly than he was by nature godly, and was always lengthening that sad and loyal face under the inevitable and necessary feminine rebuke.

One day he must have been more than usually annoying, for he went from my study to my wife and said, "Mistress, I've got to go. There's no other way. The Master's face has put forth red. I must go. I can't stay."

"Why, Wang Ssu-fu, what's the matter? We can't have you go."

"The Master's been angry. His face has put forth red. It wouldn't have mattered if yours had turned red. It does that every week. But the Master's face has turned red."

So he gave us each our word in season, and somehow it was all patched up; for, after twenty-five years, you can't let an old servant go because "his master's face has turned red."

It says something for Wang, as well as for us, that we stood each other so long. Perhaps it was furlough that did it. Other folk were persuaded to take him over for the time of our absence from the country, but it was never a great success. With one he had a row over his children. This is what we heard on our return:

"Children? Don't I know what children are? Haven't I been with the Master when all the children were born? Didn't I risk my life crossing the great Yangtse to fetch the doctor the night his first daughter came? Haven't I played with them and watched them in sickness and in health? Don't I understand children? But yours. '*Huan ssu ih ko yang-shih*'—'They are a different brand.' "

There weren't many who would have talked to my friend like that, but old Wang got away with it.

Describing another friend to us on our return from furlough, he drew her picture in one word. He hadn't quite liked her ways any more than she'd liked his. They weren't as our ways, to which he'd got accustomed and formed a sort of loyalty. She tried to teach him new ways till he could stand it all no longer, and had parted company, to sell pea-nuts and oranges at a little stall on the street, awaiting our return.

When we asked him how he'd fared in our absence, with mounting indignation and with tones of utter disgust, he stretched forth his arm and "*T'a*," he said. "She." That was all; but there was nothing more to be said. The verdict was quite final. Was ever so much said with so little?

He was a lump of China's "good earth," grimy like the soil from which he sprang; stupid sometimes, dull, hard-working and, above all, loyal. He was with us in joy and sorrow, in war and peace, in good report and ill report, a helper and a man.

For long years the children's eyes lit up when we spoke of him, and children are great judges of human nature. No one else could stick him, nor ever did for long. When we left China, one and another bore him as long as they could, and then he went back to his little stall upon the street selling oranges and pea-nuts, and occasionally acting as an extra messenger when needed.

He was no bit of jade. There was nothing ornamental or out of the ordinary about him. There was no beauty that you should desire him. He was just typical of the more humdrum side of China's multitudinous life; and yet, as I look back, it is of Wang that I think first and last of all. He is like tens of millions of his people—sturdy, free, and independent, loyal, diligent, with a keen sense of justice.

Do you wonder that I love the land where such men grow, and am gripped by the race of which he was a true but unknown member? Oh, Wang Ssu-fu, what wouldn't I give to see you poke your homely face around my door again, and to hear that gruff, familiar voice once more call out: "*Fan hao-liao. Ch'in Sien-sen lai ch'i-fan*"—"The rice is ready. Please, Master, come and eat"?

## CHAPTER XIV

## MY HANKOW HOME

THE Chinese mart of Hankow is the shape of a stick bent at an obtuse angle. The longer end of the angle faces the River Han, as, after 1,500 miles of its twisting, navigable way, it pours its waters into the Yangtse. Hankow means "Han-mouth," the town at the mouth of the Han. A hundred or so yards across the Han, the area of Hanyang begins, though the city of that name is a mile further on. One side of Hanyang, with its wood-yards, where timbers from Hunan are stored and sold, faces across the mile-wide Yangtse to Wuchang.

The shorter leg of Hankow's obtuse angle, below the Han mouth, stands opposite Wuchang, separated by more than a mile of water, though 600 miles inland from Shanghai. Below Hankow were the "*Tsu-chieh*," as the Chinese called them, "the leased streets," or "concessions," set aside for the benefit of foreign merchants who were supposed to live and do their business in a restricted area stretching seven miles along the bank of the Yangtse and some half-mile in depth from the river-front. The "*Tsu-chieh*" had been barren mud flats, useless, undrained, and uninhabitable for the greater part of the year. One can see the humorous twinkle in the eye of Chinese mandarins of the period, who, when compelled by force of arms to set aside some place of residence for the foreign merchants, gave them these delectable swamps by the side of mercantile Hankow and Shanghai. Could these mandarins have returned fifty years later, they would have been amazed at the wharves, where Butterfields', Jardines' and China Merchants' boats were berthed, to mention only the three largest and most prosperous shipping companies. They would have been still more amazed to see the huge Hongkong and Shanghai Bank and the American Bank, and the many-storeyed offices of the foreign merchants. They would have found three good roads parallel to the Yangtse. That bordering the river, including grass lawns and pavements, was some 200 feet wide. That river road was called the Bund, and was, in addition to the Racecourse, the main lung of Hankow, with its breathless summer heat.

When once those "*Tsu-chieh*" settlements had got established, Chinese speculators, quick to see a chance of making money,

put up street after street of Chinese buildings, filling in the space from the concessions to the railway behind. For the Hankow terminus of the Peking Railway, the Ta Chih Men Station, was directly behind the French Concession.

Concessions, back-area slums and shops, railway and station were, I suppose, all part of geographical Hankow. But to most of us they seemed different, so foreignised and unnatural that we never counted them as Hankow proper. The people always differentiated between the "*Tsu-chieh*" and Hankow, which began where the British Concession ended, extended upstream to the Han mouth for a mile or so, and then turned to the right for three miles more. It was some two miles up that alluring street that our houses were situated. For Chinese Hankow was one main shopping street, with one or two lesser and subsidiary streets behind. If you thought they were parallel, you made a sad mistake. It was the easiest thing in the world to get lost in Hankow's maze of alleys, and go round and round unable to find your way till some kind soul took pity on you and brought you to the only place where he was sure that foreigners lived.

Wuchang, Hanyang, and Hankow are called the Wu-Han cities. In a sense, they are one big centre of organised humanity; yet each was definitely different from the other. Wuchang was the capital city of the province, full of officials and their underlings, and of soldiers, schools, and camps. Business was only an incidental part of its life. It was definitely concerned with the Government.

Hanyang was an old-world, prefectural city, dominating the rural area of the Han, with its lakes, rivers, and fishermen. Somehow it always seemed outside of things—a sort of poor relation to Wuchang and Hankow. The Hanyang ironworks had nothing to do with the city of that name. They were on a tongue of land between the Tortoise Hill and the River Han, were close to Hankow, and clearly visible from Wuchang, but couldn't even be seen from Hanyang. The Tortoise Hill on our side of the Yangtse continued the line of the Serpent Hill of Wuchang.

Hanyang's population was perhaps 50,000, if the suburbs were included; Wuchang's some 300,000 all told; and Hankow, with its boating population, made up the residue of some million "mouths," as China calls her ever-hungry people.

The site where my home was located in Hankow had been purchased about the time of the Tai-Ping Rebellion, during which time the town was thrice destroyed by fire and thrice had risen again. Officially, Hankow was classed as a mere market town,

which indeed it was. It was the place at the junction of two mighty rivers where people inevitably always had lived and always would live. In 1911 I saw it one vast sea of flames. A few years later all trace of destruction had gone. There were so many people, and their needs were so pressing, that you had to leave the dead to bury their dead, whilst you got on with the business of living.

Whether it was due to the time and conditions of purchase I do not know, but the 1931 flood, that turned most of Wuchang and Hankow into one vast lake, left us above water. So we must have been from ten to twenty feet above the level of the lower part of the town. When I first went to live there, in 1920, we were shut off from the river Han by a congested slum. Over a number of years and with infinite trouble we finally succeeded in purchasing this rabbit warren of a place from forty different owners. We had to go slowly and cautiously, lest by undue haste we forced the market price up and were put to fabulous expenditure. Such things leave their mark on anyone, and one of the Chinese proverbs, in England as in China, that seems to me the most valuable guide in practical life is "*Mang Tsung Yu T'so*"—"Hurry makes for error." The Chinese can be decisive enough when they are sure, as many of the actions that Chiang Kai-shek has taken make quite plain, but they are not much enamoured of fussiness and bustle. They don't see such things often turning out the best.

I watched these wretched hovels being demolished. Centipedes, beetles, cockroaches, and bugs of every size and shape, and insects that one never knew existed came creeping out of their dark places. It is marvellous how many parasites live on or near civilised man. Then we dug foundations seven feet deep and could see some glimpses of the Hankow of past ages. As far as we went down there were still signs of human habitation, with occasional vestiges of flood. After that we erected three and a half-houses, foreign style, with kitchens and servants' quarters underneath to save space. This made the houses look unusually large and imposing, and my envious friends christened them "Buckingham Palace." There was just room for a tennis court between the houses and the river, and enough land left to grow a few cucumbers and tomatoes, and allow a little lawn for the children to play on and the family washing to dry. But instead of being hemmed in on all sides by houses, at last we had broken through to the river and had all the space and air that that implied.

It had been a joy to the slum-dwellers to climb to their upper

storey and gaze with their friends over our surrounding wall and stare at the foreigners with their strange ways and habits. Now that was largely over, and we rejoiced in comparative quiet and privacy, even if we did live at "Buckingham Palace."

You can imagine our feelings when two ladies, one visiting us from India and one from the far away Hankow Concession, expressed themselves with vigour. The Indian visitor turned up on a wettish day and found the back street a little puddly. "Why don't you have the street drains attended to?" she said. "It's iniquitous to live in conditions like this. You ought to be ashamed of yourselves." Well, we were guests in a foreign country and glad to have the privilege of living there. We weren't a well-ordered British Dominion and there didn't happen to be a drain in that quiet back street, and we weren't the Municipal Council, anyway. So we did, as the Chinese did, arranged a few bricks for stepping-stones when the water was uncomfortably deep. After all, it doesn't always rain and by and by that, with other things, will be put right.

The other lady, an American, wife of a business man who, for most of her life, had enjoyed the amenities of foreign concessions, landed in our home after some three-quarter's of an hour's journey by rickshaw through the Chinese street. She hated the smells and couldn't understand a word that was said around her, and when we showed her "Buckingham Palace," with Chinese neighbours right and left, and Chinese sightseers watching us play tennis, somehow she was not amused. "Fancy living in a place like this," she said. "Surely it isn't right."

We and our friends went on living in "Buckingham Palace," enjoying every day of it. Only we were rather glad when a more understanding visitor called it "Wesley Terrace." That seemed a little more in accordance with our station in life. Through our back windows we looked straight at the Women's Hospital. Then came the main street and beyond that the General Hospital. Altogether 200 in-patients were often under our care. Behind the Hospital was a school for some forty blind boys. It was the second blind school to be opened in China and was named after the Rev. David Hill of York, its founder, and one of the greatest friends that England has ever sent to China. A man of some considerable means, he went out at his own charges, and spent his entire fortune on his work. In some ways he was unique in his zeal and his philanthropy. In other ways, he was typical of a goodly number who have had both the means and the will to make their life and

work a free-will offering to China and the Church. I have known several in my time.

Then, alongside the Blind School was a great Central Church which held a thousand people, and there were boys' and girls' day schools for several hundred children. So, what with doctors, nurses, teachers, and preachers, there was quite a little group of British men and women, apart altogether from Chinese friends and colleagues. We were not stranded and alone, as would be the case on a country station. Life in that hospital will be described in another chapter.

Before the 1911 Revolution, Hankow had been bounded on the one side by the River Han and the Yangtse. On the landward side there had been a city wall, with its gates, enclosing the congested population. The wall was unimposing for so great a place. It was really a wall around a market town, rather than a city wall like those of Hanyang or Wuchang. After the troubles the Wall had been demolished, and its base had been turned into a "*Ma-lu*"—a "horse road." It was wide and useful. Ramshackle carriages and hard-driven ponies used to ply for hire along its length. Traffic speeded up considerably. This was the beginning of city wall demolitions, a process greatly extended, as we shall see, after the Nationalist Revolution of 1926–30.

The main life of Hankow still moved down the "*Cheng Chieh*"—the "true street," as it was called—and it is really on that street that one saw Hankow best. It was a narrow street about four miles in length of almost continuous shops. Every conceivable thing that Chinese hearts desire, or Chinese money could buy, was to be purchased in its shops. Spanning the road, but more often hanging beside each shop, were large wooden boards with gilded characters giving the name of the shop and the wares that were sold. They were generally written in lovely Chinese characters and painted in gold on a base of red or black or green. The shops were completely shuttered when shut, and completely open when not shut, and the goods were right under your nose for all to see. Not only under your nose, but almost down to your feet. The bigger shops were "*I-Yen T'ang*"—"One-word halls"—which meant "one-price shops" where the usual barter and discussions as to price were not supposed to be used. The largest and most imposing of all were silk shops and medicine shops. The former were served by a hundred people or so, probably all members of the family or near relatives. The medicine shops were good to distinguish because of their innumerable drawers all round the

walls, in which the precious drugs were stored. There were tea-shops, crowded with guests listening to a professional story-teller whilst the busy landlord plied his customers with food and tea. There were butchers' shops where whole carcasses of pigs killed that morning were hanging, still dripping blood. There were shops with dried shark-fins and varnished ducks and sweet hams. There were furniture shops, grocers' shops, stationers' shops, cash-paper shops. Shops, too, where Chinese crackers and other fire-works, some of them elaborate, were being made and sold. Shops where there were paper houses, paper men, and paper goods for the enjoyment of the spirits in the world beyond. Fruit shops with oranges, melons, bananas, and dried fruits and everything in its season.

Then there were little stalls and pedlars with their carrying-poles and burdens. On the roadside were fish alive in tubs filled with water, vegetables of every sort carried in from the market gardens that morning, soap, candles, brushes, cloth. There were money-changers behind their little brass grills, and barbers, "Chinese and foreign style," chopsticks and basins, and every sort of Chinese porcelain and crockery. Oh, what a street for the eyes of all women.

But more thrilling than the crowded, tiny shops was the ceaseless crowd of people. It seemed as though all China were going through that street. Here was a country bumpkin staring open-mouthed at the wonders all around, till some scurrying coolie bumped him in the back and swept him aside to make an open road. There were three friends in the accustomed single file talking to one another at the top of their voices of money, or the price of rice, as they sauntered along. Here was a tanned boatman off the Han, turban round his head, come to avail himself of Hankow's shopping facilities. There were rickshaws, strings of them moving in opposite directions and often the cause of traffic jams, curses, and blows. The Chinese policeman's life was not a happy one as, many times a day, in that congested street, with his truncheon, he cleared the way for the traffic. There were coolies swinging heavy-laden baskets on their shoulder-poles, bearing rice, vegetables, pots and pans, bricks, lime, and every conceivable thing of weight. There were other coolies with great tree-trunks on their shoulders, and occasionally a freshly painted coffin came swinging along on the backs of men. The coolies sang their "*Hey-hoh-ti, hey-hoh-ti,*" which, like a sailor's chanty, helped them at their work. There was continuous movement up and down

the street which was never by day or night completely still. At three or four in the morning you would hear the noise of work in some cookshop, and find some traveller on the street making for an early boat. All night long the noises went on, as you realised if by any chance you lay awake, and heard the hawkers with their toothsome rice-cakes calling out their wares, or the city watchmen clanging their halberds and beating on their gongs. These gave the creatures of darkness time to steal away; so much better an arrangement this than fights, arrests, and trouble. To have watchmen gonging down the street gave the wakeful burgher a sense of security and pilferers a fair warning that stealing was "not done." At 4 a.m. there were other voices. Some local slaughter-man killed his pigs outside our garden. You could hear the dying creature's half-human cries and protests. Then followed silence, and then the sound of beating of the carcass. One waited for each separate act of the process—seizing, killing, beating, skinning. It was rather close quarters, but, after all, one ought to know something of the price at which one eats one's meals. After the pigs came the tootings of the early-morning steamers, overcrowded with human freight, starting before break of dawn for a long day up the river.

Most of all this was usually hidden from us; for late night and early morning we were asleep, in spite of the falsetto singing and gong-beating in some nearby tea-shop, or the clicking and shovelling of the mah-jong counters in some neighbour's all-night gambling party.

We have lived in Hankow in all weathers and occasions. We have watched a conflagration among the Hunan coal-boats anchored at the other side of the river. We have seen the Han come down in summer spate, speeding the junks at a terrifying rate. We have wondered if it were possible for them to make safe anchorage before they were dashed to pieces in the whirlpool where Han and Yangtse met. We have seen the Tortoise Hill and the river banks transformed by snow, and the low winter river one solid mass of ice cracking and crushing the close-packed junks like matchwood. We have seen revolutionary troops drilling on our tennis court, and beaten soldiers hurrying through our streets, the frightened people shuttering their shops and hoping there was going to be no looting of the people this time.

In some ways Hankow's most memorable sight is the fortune-teller, sitting at his table in the open street. He was some sort of a scholar, generally elderly, always adorned with great horn-rimmed spectacles. How should a man be wise without those horn-

rimmed glasses? Sometimes he had a canary or little parakeet picking out lucky papers for the seeker of a fortune. Sometimes behind him would hang an outline picture of a human head with all its lumps and sections clearly marked and defined. No fortune-teller ever looked successful. It was evidently a poor, if necessary, trade. The physician could never heal himself, or why should he be sitting there?

But so many needed his help. When was the lucky day for a wedding or a funeral? Why had a man's business gone all wrong? Would it be right on such and such a day to start upon a journey? Some doubtless came out of fun and curiosity. Others were in dire need. Few serious decisions seemed to be made in Hankow without consulting the "*san-min-tih*"—the "reckoner of fate," the fortune-teller. Yet some would tell us the Chinese are not religious, not perplexed with life's dread mysteries. Theological they may not be, except some of those whose lives are spent in the monasteries, but religious they certainly are. "Three feet above you are the spirits." Strange home this for an Englishman, do you think?

Dear home to me, with all its homely wrinkles, with all its Chinese and foreign friends. Great changes have come over Hankow and great changes will come, but what good fortune it has been to spend some fourteen years right in the very heart of such a busy, many-coloured market street.

## CHAPTER XV

## LIFE IN HANKOW

In the days of the walled cities, and wherever they still remain, it is outside the city gates that the most vigorous life is to be found. In times of trouble the city wall was a protection. In times of peace it denied the Chinese that freedom without which they cannot live. The city gate closed at sundown or soon after, and opened at dawn or a little before. Between dark and dawn, all your movements were hemmed in by the city wall. Within that wall was officialdom, with its lesser breed who had not too savoury a reputation. So the Chinese, of a certain class—shall we call them the common people?—seem to have a certain claustrophobia when they get near to city walls. Outside the gates you would generally find a thronged and busy street to which farmers may bring their produce at their own convenience, and from which free folk may go across the fields and village paths with their oiled-paper lanterns, when their work or talk or play is done, under no restrictions from the official hand which controls the city gates and regulates the lives of all within them.

This is the fundamental notion to get about Hankow. Hanyang and Wuchang have for long centuries been official cities with their protection and their restrictions. Hankow is a street outside the city wall, where the common people love to be.

Moreover, its position along the banks of two rivers gives it access, not only to the countryside, but to the waterways at almost any time of day or night. "Heaven for atmosphere; hell for company," we second-class passengers by P. & O. boats often used to quote. Atmosphere or not, we had a good and happy company. So has Hankow, and so much more of it. Hankow's population is about twice as great as that of Wuchang and Hanyang combined. How the children loved to watch the life on the River Han. Little panting steamers, with their screaming whistles, packed on every deck with humanity and its baskets and luggage, used to chug-chug upstream to riverside towns, and late in the afternoon others came whistling in, returning from those towns after a day or two's journey.

Junks of all shapes and sizes made the same journey quietly, except for the letting off of Chinese crackers and the burning of incense with which, in worship of Kwan-yin, the sailors' goddess,

or for the appeasement of spirits or petition for sailors' luck, each considerable voyage was heralded.

From our windows we could always see scores and hundreds of boat-masts out of the thousands that, on an average, were anchored and tied to the bank of the lower Han, unloading goods and passengers, or taking on fresh merchandise that might be carried anywhere up to a thousand miles of China's meandering inland rivers and lakes.

There were the rice-boats marked by a basket hanging on the mast, and fuel-boats whose sign was a log at the mast-head. There were other boats with other symbols, according to their freight, a very convenient arrangement when there is a forest of masts among which you are looking for a particular boat. Some of them were tiny little sampans where, beside the boatman, erect in the stern and pushing with his oars, there was just room for half a dozen passengers to be ferried across stream. Others were considerable ships with captain's poop above, and his family and a good big cabin underneath. Amidships there were two or three compartments for baggage or for passengers, and forward room for several sailors to be busy about poling, rowing, attending to the huge sails, cleaning, cooking, washing, and all the internal or external life of a sailing junk. Underneath the polished floor-boards every inch of space was packed with freight. Between the tiny ferry-boat and the great junk there were other craft of endless variety and size and shape. The experienced, by looking at them, could tell you from what province they had come; for every considerable area of China had its own traditions of shipbuilding, varying doubtless with local experience and local needs. Most ships of all kinds were broad and flat-bottomed, the outcome of China's experience as to what was most suited to her inland waters.

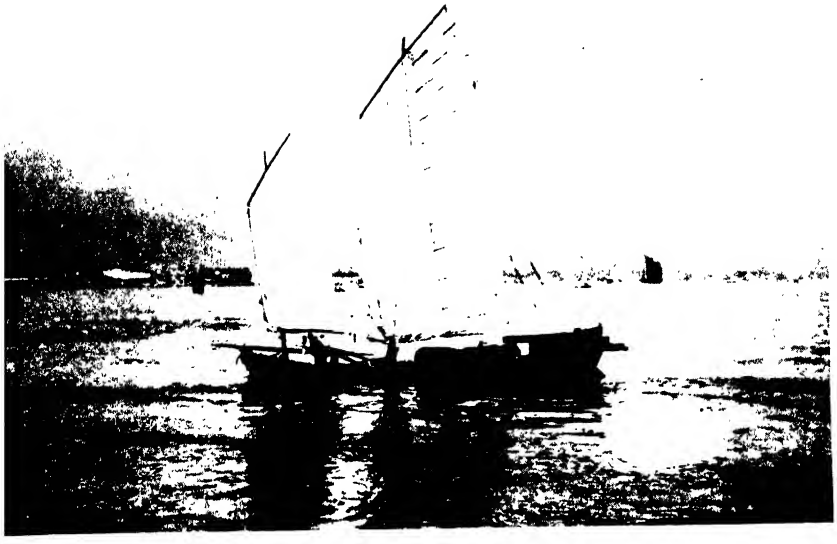
Just across the river from us were huge grimy, narrow, unvarnished coal boats. They came from South Hunan with their freight of coal and coal-dust. Those that lived through the Hunan rapids and survived the long and perilous voyage found an anchorage in the Han. When emptied of their coal, they were broken up and the wood sold to contractors for floor boards and the other less ornate parts of the structure of a house. So timber and coal came together from the area of their production and were alike useful to the life of our busy centre. When we wandered on the river bank we found, among the freight and the passenger boats, that there were other craft tied up among them to serve

the needs of the boatmen themselves. These shop-boats were unexpected, but obviously practical and sensible, besides being another proof of the Chinese eye to business. I remember especially two junks of medium size stacked full of crockery, basins, jars, tea-cups, spoons, precisely the things that a boatman or his passengers might need. Other boats plied up and down among the anchored junks with vegetables, fruit, fish, eggs, firewood, charcoal, and other essential commodities.

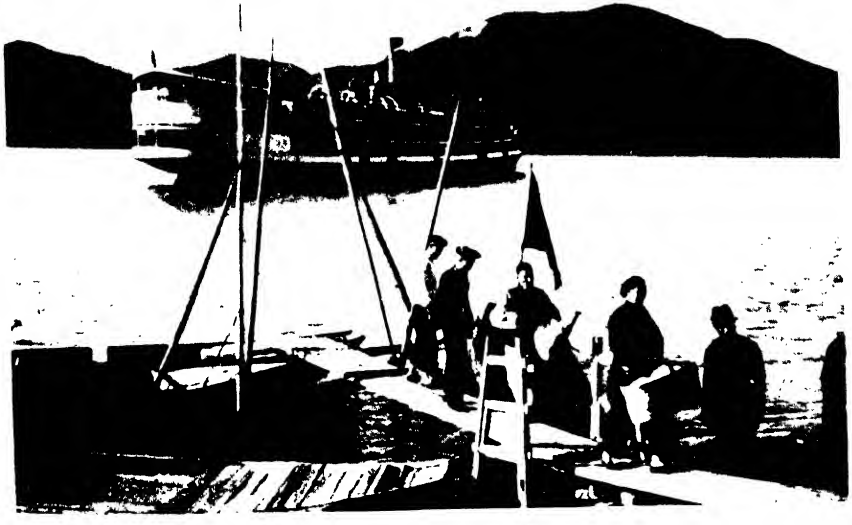
Here and there was a gunboat, made for swift sailing, with its lofty poop astern, its breech-loading cannon in the prow, and its crew half-sailor, half-soldier, whose business it was to protect the riverside population from robbers and pirates and river bandits. It was no difficult thing for the plodding farmer by day to add to his income by night by attacking a well-laden boat and its passengers benighted in some lonely spot on the river. It is not for us, whose ancestors in the eighteenth century added to their incomes by the then respectable business of smuggling, to do other than merely chronicle the facts.

But, anyhow, before us on the river was a constant stream of life that, like the waters of the Han itself, never really stopped. As you drifted downstream, you came to the smelting works, the needle factory, and the arsenal of the Hanyang Ironworks, and on the opposite bank the Electric Power Station. As you moved upstream you came to the powder factory on your left hand, and flour-mills and water works on your right. For whatever of old and constant life there was on the river and on the street itself, the environs of Hankow were largely taken up with a new industrial and factory life.

Across the river from us were the Tortoise Hill, the Black Hill, the Coal Hill, and tiny hamlets and villages with countless grave-mounds. From this raised ground one could get almost a complete view of Hankow's long, stretching, flat-pancake of houses, with park and racecourse, Union Hospital and Railway in the open area at the back of the town, and the foreign concessions below them. In 1934 word was brought us that the Chinese had found a dragon whilst quarrying some sandstone on the Black Hill. There was no doubt about it. There on the pale red stone were the scales and skeleton of the primeval monster, ichthyosaurus, dinosaurus, or what the scientists have doubtless determined. For it was characteristic that this phenomenon was the object of investigation by Chinese scientists, whereas fifty years before it would have been a godsend to the Taoists and the geomancers.

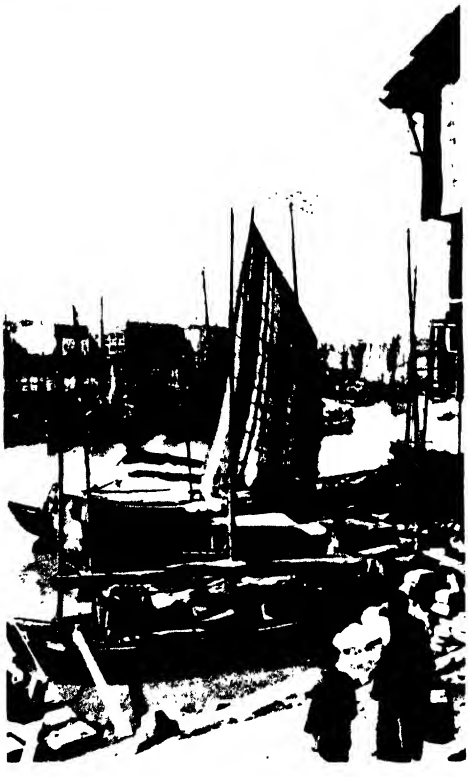


On the Yangtse opposite Hanyang



Disembarking from a Yangtse Steamer

The river Han at Hankow. (Facing the Tortoise Hill at Hanyang, with the chimneys of the iron-works in the background)



Types of river-craft at Hankow

After all, you see, there is something in the old Chinese notion that there are dragons in the hills that you must not disturb. Ruskin wrote that ancient men saw the dragons in the clouds. In China there is just as likely to have been a tradition of formidable prehistoric monsters, reinforced by such remains as I myself have seen revealed in the hillsides opposite Hankow.

On the Black Hill and the Coal Hill in 1931 there were quartered some 80,000 refugees from the terrible and devastating floods of that year. Chinese officials, not out of partiality to the Church, but because they could trust its Chinese leaders, handed over to an Anglican clergyman and a Methodist minister, both Chinese friends of mine, hundreds of thousands of dollars for the organisation of relief amongst these sufferers. As far as is known, not one dollar went astray. What better tribute could one pay to China and to the Church?

Facts such as these are the reasons why, after much misunderstanding and opposition, the Christian Church is winning its sure place in the respect of China. Chinese, generally speaking, are not greatly interested in theology. They are impressed by character and conduct. In these things they follow their great sage, Confucius.

The main stream of Hankow is not the waters of the Han, however entrancing with all that sails upon them, but the parallel stream of human beings that, like the Han, flows free and never stops by night or day. Behind our house was the Women's Hospital, whose front gate opened off the "*Cheng Chieh*"—the "True Street"—itself. On the opposite side of the street was the General Hospital and between them flowed the stream of Hankow's life. The only difference between the Han and the "*Cheng Chieh*" was that the former took everything down to the Yangtse, whilst the stream on the "True Street" was always flowing equally in both directions.

"True Street" means "Main Street," in contrast to "the Back Street" behind, and the "Horse Road" where carriages, motors, buses, rickshaws, and pedestrians spend so much time getting out of one another's way in the fast-speeding traffic.

Between True Street and the river were houses, hostelries, and storehouses as you would expect. Between True Street and the Horse Road were temples, guild-halls, inns, houses, and narrow and twisted alleyways where Hankow's people live.

The True Street itself was four miles of a thronged shopping centre, the typical street, magnified a hundred times, outside a

Chinese city gate. Here was life—abundant life, ceaseless, noisy, surging life.

You could not walk fast there. Only foreigners and chair coolies tried. The latter jostled others out of the way, swore, cursed, shouted, and usually got away with it. After all, it was not ordinary folk that they were carrying, and they had a certain prestige and "face" as being, for the time at least, the bearers of officials or the well-to-do. The foreigners were strange, outlandish people, anyhow, and you could not expect them to be dignified and polite like other human beings. Most people went the pace of all the rest, with someone a little more urgent pushing here and there.

There was only one day in the whole year when the street was empty and you could travel at your own pace. It was China New Year's Day. The whole length of the street was littered then with exploded Chinese crackers with which the dawning of the New Year had been welcomed. All the shops were shuttered, with perhaps one board loosened for getting in and out. No one did business on New Year's Day unless he was driven by poverty. Over the shops and beside each door were clean red strips of paper, some six feet in length, on which were inscribed in clear, bold characters, about six inches square, antithetical couplets combining wishes and hopes for prosperity in the coming year. The few pedestrians besides yourself were hurrying from house to house of relatives and friends, paying New Year's respects, drinking tea, and eating sugared delicacies.

One New Year's Day I was taken by a friend into some of Hankow's guildhalls, with their exquisite carving of wooden beams and stone-work. These are the halls where the business of a particular trade or particular province is transacted. For till recently there was little social division between capital and labour, employee and employed. As in Elizabethan England, masters and apprentices, rich and poor, were related to the one guild. These guilds were the builders of the gorgeous guildhalls of Hankow and of other Chinese towns and cities. Provinces were often associated with special trades, as Shantung for silk and Hunan for rice and furniture. So that the provincial guilds were partly also trade guilds and partly took care of fellow provincials exiled away from home. The guildhalls were often the richest of Chinese buildings.

That New Year's Day I witnessed an act of reverence more striking and memorable than I have seen in any Chinese temple.

We were admiring the architecture and the stone-work carving of a guildhall when there entered, under the stage of a theatre

which seems to be a part of all such buildings, a tall, well-dressed Chinese gentleman in blue-silk gown and black skull-cap with its red button on the top. He crossed the open courtyard and approached the central shrine, for each guildhall has its tutelary deity. There he knelt and prostrated himself, with perfect ceremonial. A Chinese gentleman every inch of him. Whether he even saw us, I do not know. He gave no sign of seeing anyone. His worship done, he retired as unostentatiously as he had come. I, who was familiar with the tawdriness of temple worship and the lack of dignity and reverence that is characteristic of many Chinese temples as I know them, had seen a reverent, dignified worshipper in a guildhall. When I hear people lightly say that the Chinese are not religious, it is not their many temples and their pilgrims of whom I think, so much as of one solitary figure in a Hankow guildhall upon a China New Year's Day.

Hankow's street was so crowded with men of various provinces, counties and districts that it was an obvious preaching centre for anyone with a message, such as we were concerned to deliver.

It was impossible to preach in such a crowded street as you may do on the threshing-floor of a village or in some roadside inn. So we opened what we called "street-preaching chapels." You had a gate-keeper in a room right on the street front. Within, on the other side of the tiniest of courtyards, the double door of the chapel was thrown wide open. Inside were benches leading up to a little Communion rail and preaching desk. Behind the chapel was a Chinese guest-room for all who desired to stay and talk or come again another day. Connected with the guest-room was the Chinese resident preacher's house. From the street, seats and desk could be seen. It was not necessary to give any invitation. All you had to do, especially if you were a foreigner, was to stand at the desk and talk to one or two Chinese friends in the front row. Curiosity did the rest, and it was a poor night when that little chapel at Kung Tien, in the heart of the silk-shop area, was not almost immediately filled to capacity. All that we asked of the audience was that they adjusted their clothing, refrained from smoking and talking, and paid attention to the speaker. The gate-keeper had his little stall of books for sale, at a few cash, at the door, and you preached away till not another idea would come into your head and your throat was dry. It was a shifting audience. They came and went as they thought fit. A passing show upon the street would empty the place in a trice. You talked on to the empty forms and they were soon filled up again.

You had your disappointments. Who has not? It took some nerve to face such an audience at first. Later on, one's only regret was that one could not be at it more constantly. You used to watch for people showing signs of interest that you might continue the contact afterwards. One such man whose eyes had been riveted on me for the full half-hour I had been talking, and to whom I went to speak, brought me down to the ground again by asking, "Foreign gentleman, how much do your buttons cost?" So, after all, that was his object of interest, and not my eloquence. I knew an old man who daily attended street-preaching as a youth, and then daily continued in the guest-room afterwards till the Chinese preacher had taken him right through the four Gospels. He must have spent many months. "Then," he said, "I believed and became a Christian." He was a grand one too.

This sort of thing in Hankow and in other populous centres seemed often futile, but its influence was very wide-spread. We used to hear of visitors from many provinces of China whose first inkling of what Christianity was all about had been gained in the street-preaching chapel. There is no way, as the politicians and especially the Labour Party know, if you would spread your beliefs, like becoming "more vile," to use John Wesley's well-known phrase, and standing anywhere where you can get an audience. When, in 1927, the Nationalists swept through China with their gospel of a new age, they paid us the compliment of imitating our preaching methods and places in every conceivable way. For all this sort of thing, Hankow was obviously unique.

Somehow, one associates with all Hankow's weath and throbbing life the picture of persistent and hideous beggars. There are two sorts of beggars in China. There is the seasonal poverty when casual labourers from the fields come into the townships, sleep in temples and theatres, and are the objects of compassion to Buddhists as well as to Christians and all kind-hearted people. There is also organised beggary under a beggar king, where blindness and all human deformities are exploited and even invented. I have known beggars refuse healing in a hospital on the ground that it would take their means of livelihood away.

Most days you could see some revolting object of pity moving up and down the street to excite your compassion, or you'd see a string of beggars refusing to leave the front of a prosperous merchant's shop till he had doled out little Chinese coins, after receipt of which they would move on to plague his neighbour. This is one of the blots on China's fair name that has received a great deal of

attention lately from Nationalist China. This is one of the many great tasks which the Nationalists are facing manfully.

Of Hankow's life what is there not to say? The whole street, as the riverside, was alive with human beings and human problems. Hankow is indestructible. It is a natural haunt of people. It is life and the surge of life for which it stands. That is why the evidences of new life were more visible there than anywhere in Central China.

## CHAPTER XVI

# IN A CHINESE HOSPITAL

In common with most Englishmen, I have a great respect for the medical profession, a respect greatly increased by my close association with doctors and nurses in China.

I believe the day will come when there will be a full recognition of the fact, by Chinese and foreigners alike, that the pioneers in modern medicine and surgery and in public health were mainly the doctors and nurses who had given up all hope of wealth and preferment in their own countries with the simple desire to be of help in China as elsewhere where there was need. After all, modern science is a universal boon. It cannot be restricted to any country.

The missionary doctor is a creature quite apart. He is not a general practitioner hanging up his door-plate like the many thousands who render service in these blessed isles of Britain. Neither is he a specialist, in the Harley Street sense, giving his whole time and practice to the handling of one group of ailments. He has to accept far more responsibility than ever a general practitioner need or should bear. He cannot have the specialised knowledge that belongs to the expert concentrating on one range of things. He must be prepared to face every disease and accident that is brought to him. He neither should nor would turn away any in need. He sees a range of physical ills, in a tropical country, that would make the fortune of any medical school, and has to deal with human troubles of which his colleagues in Britain are often only aware by reading. He must keep up his medical reading, or he is doomed to failure and his patients to disaster. Out of all this emerges a practitioner with whom the nation who sends him out has reason to be satisfied. If we at home are proud of our medical fraternity, the more we know of what they have done in introducing modern healing in their hospitals in China, the more we should rejoice.

Their work, at first—say, seventy years ago—had to be started in the teeth of great difficulties.

No foreigner in China then was popular, and the doctor was more under suspicion than any other man. This situation was easily understandable. At that period the average Briton thought of the Chinese as sly and cruel and hostile. They in their turn

called us "Foreign Devils" and more than half-meant what they said. We seemed hardly human and were, they thought, certainly sinister. We broke into their settled life and disturbed the even tenor of their ways. Preachers were bad enough, with their red hair; for our dark hair was still red in comparison with their jet black hair. Then there were our blue eyes, ungainly raiment and strange, bird-like speech. As for these doctors, what were they doing sending folk to sleep, and removing part of their bodies, when everybody knew it was the duty of a human being to return his body intact to the ancestors who had begotten him.

When the medicine the doctor gave proved potent for healing, it was natural to assume that it was his nefarious work in the operating-room that had produced the powerful medicine made, it was hinted, from the viscera of his victims.

He performed miracles that Chinese doctors of the period could not compass. It was easy to believe that he was in possession of diabolical powers. After all, there is proof in our own Scriptures for a parallel accusation.

Hence arose stories of the digging out of children's eyes for the making of medicine, for the foreign doctors were very good at eye-work, and eyes were a constant source of trouble in China. A riot took place in the port of Wusueh in 1891 which ended in loss of life and a heavy fine on the town. A farmer came in from the country, bringing his two children in his rice-baskets, which hung at either end of his shoulder-pole. When asked where he was taking them, he jestingly replied, "To the foreigners, to be made into medicine." It happened to be a time of great tension, and that crude jest set the street aflame with passion. Two Englishmen lost their lives and a church compound was burned to the ground.

Happily, that is old history now, but it is perfectly understandable if you can imagine the facts of the time. After I got to China, a preacher, who had given plenty of trouble all his life, closed that career by giving his skeleton in his will to the local hospital. Needless to say, we lost the will; for no one at that time had any desire to be found with a Chinese skeleton in his cupboard. On the whole, I lived in happier times and well into the modern period, when such things had been largely forgotten, and I lived quite close to our Hankow Hospital, which had been founded in the 1860's, almost as soon as missionaries were to be found in Central China, and almost on the very spot where they first took up residence in Hankow.

Preachers arrived in Hankow first, but they were so appalled

by the diseases that surrounded them that they said, "How can we dare to preach to these people of the great Teacher and Physician if we don't stretch out a hand to help them? We are ignorant ourselves. We must have medical colleagues." It was not that there was no medical practice in China. There were good and useful medicines; there were plasters and ointments; there were blood-lettings and acupunctures and, finally, if the doctors failed, there was always the explanation of devil possession to fall back on. An Irish doctor told me in my early days that he'd never met a devil to date that castor oil could not shift. The whole thing was mediæval, as Britain used to be before the era of modern science. There are many old Chinese remedies that no one despises now, and modern science takes note of some of them. It is, however, the use of anæsthetics that has made possible the development and the advance of modern surgery; and China had no common anæsthetic till the missionaries came.

Each night, in my Hankow home, as I went upstairs to bed I could see the lights in the Women's Hospital opposite to me, and almost always, on the stairs or passages, the shadowed figure of an Irish lady doctor moving about caring for some woman in her pain. When or how that doctor slept I never could discover. She seemed to be on call at all hours of the day and night, and to hear her stories of the patients she had served made me feel that, if the sad and tragic side of Hankow's life were ever to be known, there was the one person who could relate it. But why should she? Sufficient for her that one more day she had been able to help humanity in its sufferings. She knew and loved the people; grew early grey in their service; "stood like a rock in the day of trouble," as a Chinese colleague said of her. She was a Gold Medallist of Glasgow, an able surgeon, and yet in her Irish way believed in ghosts and things. If you disputed or scorned, that was your ignorance, said this brilliant, sincere, straight, and childlike woman.

Across the street was the Out-Patients' Department of the Hospital, and it may be well to look in there. Remember, we are paying the visit in 1934, not seventy years earlier. There is no longer difficulty in getting patients now. The problem is to handle with care, skill, and efficiency all who come for help, and to find the most modern and useful equipment. Let us go in and see for ourselves to what point this seventy years old hospital has grown.

Over the entrance on a slab of granite are carved four Chinese words—"*P'u Ngai I-Yuen.*" The usual translation is "The Hospital

of Universal Love." What it really means is: "In this Hospital there is no distinction between high and low, rich and poor. All receive equal care." Do you say, "Of course?" Are you quite sure that that is the mark of every hospital everywhere?

Under the inscription is an archway, leading to a garden and the hospital wards. Over the archway runs a second storey. On the left as you enter is the gate-keeper's lodge and a sort of little hole in the wall like a ticket office in a railway station. Here patients are registering and receiving a bamboo tally with a number painted on it. Then they turn right and enter the out-patients' hall and waiting-room. There are patients and their friends sitting about on benches and at one side a sort of chapel place, with forms, facing a preaching desk. As you mount the desk and look at the people on the forms, you wonder if anyone can be listening at all. There's one man sick and yellow with jaundice; another bandaged after some accident. A mother sits there with her little child, whose head is all covered with festering boils. Here are folks with eyes red and bloodshot, running with pus. "Oh, in what divers pains they met." The preacher is telling them of a good Physician who also practised undiscriminating love, who healed the sick, cleansed the leper, and opened the eyes of the blind. Or he is talking of the hospital and why it is there, or he is trying to sell a few simple books. They sit there waiting, too taken up with their physical ills to bother much with anything he says. Some friend of theirs has got relief and persuaded them to come along, even though the doctor may be a foreigner with his strange appearance and peculiar ways. Every now and then there is a shout from further down the hall, "*Erh-shih-ch'i-hao*," "*Erh-shih-pah-hao*," which means "No. 27 and No. 28," and No. 27 gets up with a grunt and follows the nurse to the consulting-rooms.

In the first room there sits a great giant of an Englishman who was an air pilot in the last war. Following that, in days of unemployment, he drove a taxi on the streets of London. Then he qualified as a doctor in St. Bartholomew's and was sub-editor of the famous *Lancet* for a little time. He gave up much to come to China. He was offered a good and lucrative job in a Shanghai firm of doctors. He preferred to be a surgeon and an eye specialist in the "*P'u Ngai I-Yuen*." Actually, he became the eye specialist for two provinces. Chinese and foreigners alike came long distances to seek his advice. Yet he gives the same attention to a Chinese beggar as he would to the highest official in the land. No. 27, with his bleary eyes, is a little frightened as he enters that room.

Although the doctor is dressed in a long Chinese gown he looks, to Chinese eyes, very odd, and his speech isn't quite the same as the Chinese spoken in the country town from which No. 27 comes. It takes No. 27 a little time to gather up his courage, but, in spite of all appearances, the foreigner seems very kind and he seems to know what he is doing.

In the next room sits a diminutive Chinese doctor with iron-grey hair. It is so much easier to speak to a Chinese doctor with knowledge of Western medicine than to any foreign doctor whatever. The patient who comes to him has confidence just because it is a case of Chinese talking to Chinese.

In the third room sits an elderly missionary. He came to China at the age of nineteen to be a preacher, but was so moved with compassion at the physical sufferings he saw that, after acquiring the language as only a youth of nineteen can, he returned in his early twenties to his home in Lincolnshire. He then spent long years in Edinburgh qualifying to come back to heal as well as to preach. Except for the look of him, you might almost think he was a Chinese, so perfectly did he speak the language. He was so old and so kind it was hard to be afraid of him. And you should hear him preach in the wards on a Sunday afternoon. What a marvel of a man!

Then in a room across the passage sits "the Lady of the Lamp," who never seems to sleep. She is examining women and children. Her hair is white. So they know she must be over seventy, though actually she isn't fifty. I could tell them why her hair is grey like that.

In the fifth room there's a Chinese lady doctor, and no one is afraid of her.

No. 28 follows No. 27, and No. 35 follows No. 34, till the preaching place is empty, and the patients have each seen the appropriate doctor, had their prescriptions, bought their medicine at the dispensary, and all gone home, except the few who are to be "taken in."

They pass through the arched tunnel into a garden place where flowers are growing, and then up two or three steps, where bright, cleanly dressed Chinese nurses are waiting to receive them in a three-storeyed hospital block.

On the ground floor there are two surgical wards, one for men and one for women, so as to be near the operating-room. Up the stairs there are two more large wards for medical cases, again one for men and one for women. Up one more flight of stairs there

are cheaper wards for those whose purses are slender. Even this less perfect accommodation is infinitely better than anything they have ever known before. They are nursed by the same nurses, attended by the same doctors, as the richest people in the hospital. Some of them are subsidised by the Hospital's Samaritan Fund to make it possible for them to be there at all. Truly this is a hospital of undiscriminating love. The nurses are young women, as in Britain. It was not so seventy, or even fifty, years ago. Then Chinese women were too ignorant and too conservative to be nurses in a general hospital. Forty years ago, after much hesitation, an English nurse was allowed to act as Matron and give some semblance of order and training to the men orderlies. But many shook their heads at such an innovation. Things changed and moved; and when, in 1927, Chinese ladies were found in Red Cross hospitals caring for the needs of revolutionary soldiers, we knew the hour had come to turn over the nursing profession to the care of Chinese women. How often in recent years have I heard my doctor colleagues come in from their day's work and thank God for the Chinese women nurses! Somehow, nursing is a task for which women are particularly fitted by their very nature. China, by her revolutions and her radical alterations in the status of women, stepped right into the front of Asia's nursing profession.

The China Nurses' Association was recognised by the International Nurses' Association before those of either India or Japan. The cause of this pre-eminence, it is only right to say, was that the missionary nurses of many lands had laid the foundations and led the way.

If you had time you might visit the beautifully clean kitchen, screened from flies and mosquitoes, so essential a part of any hospital, or the Nurses' Hostel where nurses are housed and trained for service in all parts of China. The hostel was the gift of one Chinese Christian gentleman. A Chinese contractor built the fine in-patients' block without making any profit on his building work.

It is a far cry from the time when the Western hospital and its doctors were objects of suspicion to the day that Chinese boards of directors and philanthropists support them with their influence and gifts. In 1927 that Chinese doctor with his iron-grey hair became Medical Superintendent, and the missionaries were his colleagues and assistants, working under a Board of Management whose Chairman was a Hankow Chinese business man, and the majority of whose members were Chinese.

It's a long way from 1864 to 1934. Changes have been very

many. The Hospital has been built and re-built three times over to bring it into line with modern requirements.

One thing has never changed, and that is the universal, undiscriminating love, the general humanity and atmosphere of the place. I myself was carried there and put into a ward more dead than alive many years ago. I have since learned much about hospitals in England, and I put on record that, if I were ever ill again, I would rather be treated in Hankow's "*P'u Ngai I-Yuen*" than in any hospital of which I have any knowledge anywhere. I should go there knowing that, in the nature of the case, there were more expert doctors for special diseases in Harley Street than in any hospital in China. But I would risk all consequences because of the general friendliness, of the competence and care of nurses and doctors alike, and because, as far as is possible in any hospital, it would be "home away from home."

There are two or three hundred of such hospitals in China, and they are few enough, a real worthwhile gift mainly from friends in Britain and America.

Now, however, there is something better than the best of Church hospitals. In medical schools, in China and abroad, many Chinese doctors have been trained. The Nationalist Government has established a National Health Service under some of China's most outstanding doctors. They are setting up an organised medical service right through the country for preventive as well as remedial treatment. There is no expectation of rivalry between the Church hospital and the National Health Service.

China is China, and Chinese must be masters in their own house, in modern medicine and in modern education as in all else. The Church hospital, the Hospital of Universal Love, is already in little ways beginning to fit into the national scheme. It will fit in more fully with the passing of the years.

It is my dream, and not mine alone, that the spirit of kindliness and efficiency that has animated a race of foreign and Chinese doctors in the "*P'u Ngai I-Yuen*" might be the spirit that animates the entire medical profession of this great country.

Then will be repeated the glory of the medical profession that we see in the West, where the lofty ethics and great traditions of the medical fraternity have come out of the roots of great Christian institutions of the past.

A friend of mine in China used often to say, "No one can really be a nurse unless she is a Christian." Is that true or is it just enthusiasm? After all, we know who is the Great Physician.

## CHAPTER XVII

## "DELICATE STRENGTH"

"I WILL resist with all my delicate strength. I will never give in," he said. In those words, he gave a better picture of himself than anyone could have drawn. All his days he has had the curious faculty of using the English language in the most appropriate way, and yet in a way distinctive to his polished Chinese mind. His grammar was perfect, his pronunciation accurate, and his words apt and fitting but somehow not quite an Englishman's English. Who but a poet would have joined together in one phrase "delicate" and "strength"? Yet the self-portraiture is not to be improved on. This use of our tongue is characteristic of the modern Chinese scholar, who perhaps intertwines unconsciously something of his age-long heritage of speech with the language he has acquired for entry into Western life.

The poet's name, translated into English, means Rivers, and so we will call him here. When you think of the origin of names, you will not be surprised to know that Rivers, like Plum, Willow, and King, is one of the commonest of Chinese surnames. His ancestral home was in the *Huang Pi* (i.e. Leather) county, though I fancy he was born in Hankow, to which place his family, for economic reasons, must have removed. His links with his "*lao chia*," or "old home," remained strong through life, as is the case with the greater part of Hankow's people. For, after all, what is Hankow but a great "street" where you go for business? Home, where his ancestors were born and buried, is the only home a Chinese finally recognises.

What brought him fifty years ago to the little school at "*Wu Shen Miao*"—"the Temple of the Five Spirits"—he himself does not remember. "*Wu Shen Miao*" was the name of the district where my home was situated, next door to the "*P'u Ngai I-Yuen.*" In England localities are often marked by public-houses like "The Angel," "The Red Lion." In China they are marked by temples. Yet people foolishly assert that the Chinese are not a religious race. You might as well say that English public-houses are only there for ornament.

His parents must have been rather daring to let him attend a Church school in those days, when riots against the foreigners were working up to the terrible anti-foreign outbreak of the Boxer

year of 1900. Perhaps it was ambition, or the calculation that somehow, down the road of foreign schooling, there were new openings in life. Perhaps, and more likely, it was poverty that led to the decision. Whatever people said of the "Foreign Devils," at least for once they had done a "*hao-shih*"—a good deed. They had opened an "*I Hsioh*"—a "Righteous school"—as a school that was free and took no fees, was called. There were about thirty boys under a Chinese teacher, a fanatical Christian who subsequently fell a victim to religious mania. He had determined that every pupil of his should become a Christian. What success he achieved may be doubtful, but Dr. Rivers remembers still the impression of great earnestness that his first teacher made upon him. For the rest, there was little to differentiate this school from the numerous schools in Hankow and elsewhere, where, in an ill-lighted room, innocent of pictures, maps, blackboard or chalk, the teacher sat at a high table some four feet by two, chiefly distinguished from the common ruck of men by his huge horn spectacles with brass rim. After all, in England the academic gown means something, and the old horn spectacles which the Chinese teacher wore served the purpose of dignity and distinction of the teacher's gown of the West.

On his table there was a little pile of classical books and a teapot from whose spout he was continually sipping tea. For his was a thirsty job on a hot day, and the teapot was his personal property and not for common use. Besides the books and teapot was a white-metal water-pipe which he would occasionally light with a brown paper spill. Then he puffed for a moment or two at an infinitesimal pinch of Chinese tobacco before ejecting it on to the floor. A piece of split bamboo, with which he occasionally rapped the table or thrashed the boys, completed his pedagogic apparatus.

Through the livelong day, the boys were summoned, Rivers among them, to the master's desk. "Characters" were taught to each individually, a few at a time, and then the lad went back to his table, the same size and shape as the teachers', but accommodating two small boys and their belongings, and, sitting on his backless bench, he chanted and yelled in a loud voice the lessons he had learned until the teacher called him up for recitation. Then he "*Pei-shu*"—"Backed the book." That is, he turned his back to the teacher so that he could not see the book, and, facing his fellow-scholars, swung from leg to leg and recited the Chinese characters whose meaning he had not been taught, but whose rhythm became a permanent possession of the greatest value.

In this way he memorised, not only the Confucian classics, but St. Mark's Gospel and other Christian Scriptures. Explanations followed when he had "*K'ai chih-ssu*"—"opened his intelligence"—and to his appreciation of the music of the classics he added their noble meaning and any interpretation the teacher cared to add or was capable of adding. The scholars were taught also the merest rudiments of arithmetic and the very first lessons of antiquated geography. It is a long way back in the Chinese educational world to have been a scholar in the 1890's in Hankow.

Rivers was bright and attracted the attention of the doctor in the old "*P'u Ngai I-Yuen.*" As he followed round the wards, he was asked how he would view the prospect of taking up foreign medicine if the way should open. He wasn't long in jumping at the offer. He crossed the river to Wuchang and became a pupil in the Wuchang "*Poh Wen Hsu-Yuen*"—"The Academy of Broad Learning"—on the Long Street. There he began to mix with boys of his own calibre, some seventy of them, under Chinese and foreign teachers. He heard of science as well as of mathematics, and understood that there were whole worlds of learning outside the Chinese classics. He saw teachers using blackboards, and pupils being taught in classes and groups.

Then he was sent 600 miles by river to the St. John's University in Shanghai. This Institution, founded by American missionaries, played a leading part in the creation of new China. Many of China's most distinguished political leaders were, for a generation or two trained in its class-rooms and played on its campus. The Chinese Envoy and Ambassador, Dr. Wellington Koo, was for a time one of Rivers' schoolmates.

In 1906 or so came the question of England. For, though in China now there are good and improving facilities for training in modern medicine, things were very different thirty or forty years ago. Now there are the Peking Union Medical College, the Shantung Medical School, as well as many Government-founded institutions. Then, to be a doctor of this sort, meant years of exile among strangers in America or Britain.

He returned for a little time to Wuchang after taking his B.A. degree, and it was my happy lot to coach him for a while with my little Latin and less French.

After that, arose the question of marriage. His *fiancée*, betrothed to him in infancy, had become the head and much trusted nurse in the Hankow Women's Hospital. Rivers was to be absent from the country for several years. Marriages were usually early in those

days. Should he be married and then leave his bride for an indefinite number of years, or should he go and qualify in England and postpone marriage until he returned to China again? It was a difficult question, on which the relatives on both sides were bound to be involved. Ultimately the matter was settled by a letter from Rivers to the Hankow doctor, "I'll go and qualify first, and hang the blooming girl." An Englishman would not have put it quite in those terms, but the decision was wise and savoured also of "delicate strength." The "blooming girl" turned out to be a magnificent wife and mother and did not spoil with keeping.

He came to Britain, enjoyed his life here, but was much shocked by the ragging, by ribald medical students, of the Professor of Anatomy. No teacher in China of those days was ever treated with such disrespect. In his letters I could read how shocked he was, and how bothered for the wounded feelings of his teacher. It was a typically Chinese reaction and to Rivers, as to most of his countrymen then as now, discourtesy seemed to be the greatest of all sins. It is this discourtesy to China's womanhood that has proved, in Chinese eyes, the greatest condemnation of all the enormities of the Japanese invasion. Did Japan's leaders realise, the last thing they would have done would have been to have shocked this Chinese sense of the fitness of things.

An elderly gentleman in the Potteries and his wife, who had visited China, being unhappily without children themselves, lavished their love and kindness on this young Chinese exile. Their home was at his disposal. This gentleman, brother of a local M.P., was one of the most courteous Englishmen it has been my lot to know. Dapper and even fastidious to a fault, he was at least a contrast to the rough student habits of the school of medicine, and Rivers, as many before and since, understood that there were Englishmen and Englishmen. How much such kindness can do for the cementing of Anglo-Chinese good relationships can easily be imagined. China had seemed very remote from England. America has been much nearer to China and her modern students. Yet I have known a number of Chinese students, men and women, domiciled in England for their studies and courteously received and kindly treated. One outstanding example is a Hunan lady for whom a certain Miss Barnes gave up her missionary career and returned to London to become her companion and friend whilst Miss Tseng was taking her London B.Sc. degree. She was to become one of China's outstanding women. How can she ever forget the lady, or that lady's country, who did so much for her?

Rivers returned to China in due course, married the "blooming girl," and was posted to a country hospital. The fact that he was a Chinese in race as well as modern and Western in knowledge gave him access to the people and influence in the neighbourhood that it is hard for any but the most exceptional foreigner to obtain.

Changes came as the years passed, and by and by he was back in Hankow with his increasing family just when he was most needed. He was assistant physician now at the very hospital where he had first had the ambition to be a doctor.

Soon after this there burst upon us that typhoon of radica nationalism that marked the Revolution of 1925 and the following years. There was trouble and upheaval everywhere. Schools broke up—even our Hankow School for the Blind revolted—and orphanages discovered that they too were under foreign oppression. Hospital discipline broke down. Nurses failed to function. Patients were left helpless, with two or three doctors and a couple of missionary nurses trying to cope with the needs of scores of them. It was revolution. There never was a gentle revolution yet, and never can be. No revolutionary leader set out to create this needless suffering. It was evident that missionary doctors would be responsible no more, and Rivers, in the midst of a storm like that, was put in charge of the "*P'u Ngai I-Yuen.*" He needed all his "delicate strength." There were critics of his faulty discipline. His critics would have smashed the hospital to pieces if they had the handling of things.

He stuck to the boat, trimmed his sails where he must to the raging of the winds, kept his eyes on the port, and ultimately brought the ship to harbour. No other doctor that I know could have done it. Many a hospital failed to weather that storm.

He stayed by my side for three hours one night as we wrestled with the representatives of an unbending servants' union. They threatened to put a green cap on his head and march him through the street as a traitor if he did not yield to their terms. He sat there patient, courteous, delicate, but strong. He is so tiny for our parts, little over five feet in height, and can never have weighed more than eight stone. He would have been perfect for a cox in a boat-race or a jockey if he had gone in for horses. He looked as if a puff of wind could blow him away. There he sat, as they dashed in and out with their little red flags, reasoning, saying little and always saying it patiently, and somehow we came through with colours flying at least half-mast high.

In the following years he became Chairman of the Board of his

old school, which had been knocked right out for a few months. Soldiers had wrecked its classrooms and its science plant. Everything had to be started again from the very bottom. Faced with all his hospital problems, he found time to face school problems too.

I saw him last in 1940, after the Japanese invasion, just the same bit of "delicate strength." He was older, greyer, and more fragile than ever. "If ever man needed a holiday and a reward," said his colleagues, "it is he. He seems to stand like a rock, and, in spite of all his worries, he carries on." Only once in two years had he left his hospital compound. It needed his presence, he said, as, of course, it did.

He had a happy home life. Boys and girls were born to him, and his great dream was that his eldest son might be a doctor and come to Britain too. Unfortunately, he contracted tuberculosis and died an untimely death, but Rivers and his family carried on.

One of our annual pleasures was a visit to his home at Christmas time, when his wife, as good a cook as she was a nurse and mother, served us with a feast prepared in her own kitchen with her own hands, a considerable feast, as you would have known had you shared the bounty of her table. Then we sat round and finished with tea and oranges and the smokers with their cigarettes. We talked of old days and old friends, of Hankow before and after the Revolution, of life in England and life in the Chinese countryside. He was interested in his Church, was himself a lay preacher, and bore his share of Church responsibilities. Yet he didn't talk about religion much. To me he is a lovely combination of his innate Chinese courtesy and the strength and truth whose roots are in the Unseen. He was the least aggressive of men. Where personal needs came in, it was his wife who had to take the initiative.

In this post-revolutionary period, problems, wellnigh insoluble to foreigners, have been innumerable. When we got bothered and excited, he remained calm. When the Japanese advanced on Hankow in 1938 and the great body of Chinese of standing fled for safety, he judged it his duty to remain. The sick were still there, and even in increased numbers. The missionaries were there taking risks that led to their internment. He was neither going to desert the Chinese sick nor his English friends. There he is to-day with the floods and billows of adversity submerging his "delicate strength." I don't know what fears and hardships, what humiliations and dangers, he has been called to go through. Somehow the hospital still carries on.

There he sits in his consulting-room, an ageing man with fast-whitening hair. Every patient trusts him, and knows he understands. On his shoulders is the burden of a hospital of 200 beds with all its servants, nurses, doctors and problems in a whirling and fast-changing world. As he passes down the street, you would hardly notice him. As he speaks in a Committee, it is with the gentlest and most courteous voice. He is so different from an efficient, active, boisterous, and decisive Englishman; yet somehow, with his "delicate strength," like an Atlas, he supports his world. In writing of Rivers, I have written of many like him, who are the salt of the new China, who know her present faults and failures, and are fully aware of the long and tremendous tasks that lie ahead, but are unafraid.

Who could have foreseen in the 1890's that that little Rivers, backing his Chinese books, was, forty years on, to be one of the great towers of strength in the social world as in the medical world of this ancient mart of Hankow? If these lines should ever reach your eyes, Dr. Rivers, know that they come from one who rejoices greatly that he has had any acquaintance with you, any right to call you colleague and friend, any tiniest part or lot in the shaping of your "delicate strength."

## CHAPTER XVIII

# CHINESE TEMPLES AND THEIR WORSHIP

EVERY high hill in China has its temple, and most low hills too. In each temple there is at least one Buddhist monk with his shaven pate, his nine marks of initiation burned upon his scalp, his grey gown, and his rosary. More often there is a group. Larger temples are the home base of hundreds of monks, and there are sometimes as many as one or two hundred in residence.

Those remote hill-temples stand out for all to see, with their white-washed walls gleaming in the sunlight. They are generally very simple and poorly equipped. In each there are an idol or two with their shrines, and a few temple fields where the monk is raising vegetables. The idols and temples are often in disrepair, waiting for some generous donor or occasional festival, when subscriptions may be ample and all be restored again. Other temples, generally near great centres of population, are rich and ornate in the extreme. Such places I have visited by the lake at Kunming, and in and around Hangchow by the West Lake amidst the old magnificent and giant trees. At Hangchow, as on certain holy mountains, you find remarkable carvings on great boulders and rocks on the hillsides.

It would be unwise to generalise about Chinese temples. Their variety must be wellnigh past imagination. All that I set down here are a few true but personal impressions. Obviously they are limited, as any individual's impressions are bound to be.

The simplest form of temple, and almost universal in my experience, is the little shrine that stands among the fields and is called by the Chinese "*T'u-ti-Miao*"—"local earth temple." Such shrines are perhaps ten feet high, roofed with tiles, and have only one little chamber in which stand two idol figures, about the size of a child's toy doll. The figures are of a man and woman. The man generally has a beard. It is evident they are the patrons of the field, the local deities, blessing the fertility of your fields and warding off pests from your crops. In front of them is a little trough filled with the ashes of burned incense sticks, and the whole is on a raised pedestal. These shrines are so small that one would hardly call them temples, except that to the Chinese large and small places for the worship of idols and spirits are alike "*miao*"—"temples."

One such shrine stood on part of the many sites we had to purchase on the Hankow riverside for the erection of our houses, and I had to promise to re-erect it outside our boundary wall or I never should have been allowed to use the site on which it stood. So I, a Christian minister, have built a heathen temple. Life has its humours and necessities.

Another "*T'u-ti-Miao*" stood just outside my "*Ch'ien Chia Chieh*" house in Wuchang and still another just on the edge of the garden wall at the school where I taught outside Wuchang's Great East Gate. I could always check my calendar by the regularity with which the worship was conducted. It was all very simple. On the first and fifteenth of each month I heard a few Chinese crackers exploding, saw a little cash-paper being transmuted by fire into coin in the spirit world, and saw a figure prostrating himself nine times before the idol in the little shrine in front of which sticks of incense were left burning in the trough. The crackers were there to summon the spirits and to greet them. The incense was doubtless for a sweet savour and a symbol of petition. The cash-paper was a gift in kind to be transmuted into spiritual coin. No words were used and no prayers offered. The ceremony was just repeated every fortnight. What they thought about it I never enquired. It was the tradition of the countryside. It was some recognition of the limits of human toil and sweat, some glimpse of dependence on the unseen world, and it was all but universal wherever there were fields. No priest was thought of or was used. Both men and women performed the worship. It always had been so: it always would be so. The farmer and the sailor are up against the mysteries and the disappointments of Nature. Is that why they so readily take to religion, whilst the city man, with his artificialities, sees less difficulty in crowding out both heaven and earth from his real thought and life?

Apart from this general background, the temples that I knew best and visited most frequently were the two or three quite famous ones outside the East Gate of Wuchang. They were visible from School and house. I do not claim that they are typical, only that they were there outside one of China's most important cities; that they were constantly visited by worshippers; and once a year, at their anniversaries, they were thronged with great crowds of people.

The nearest to us, and the less ornate, we called the "Temple of Hell." Literally its name means the "Temple of the Eastern Hell." Whether that corresponds with the Western Heaven, the

Buddhist Paradise, I do not know; but its name seems to suggest the contrast.

I took a visitor to see it one day. Climbing the steps, we found the doors locked and barred, a somewhat unusual occurrence for Chinese temples. There is generally a priest or accolyte about and the doors are ever open. By and by, as we knocked in vain, a woman told us that the caretaker lived down the street and we could get the key there.

"Doesn't anyone live in the temple?" I said.

"No," was the reply. "No one dare live there. There are too many demons about."

It was an unexpected but not surprising answer; for the temple was as lurid as its name. At the entrance were four terrific figures, great idols of plaster, stucco, and paint with thunderbolts and swords and hammers, depicted as crushing beneath their feet sinful human beings. Such monsters must have been impressive to boys and girls paying their first visits and not brought up to disbelieve in all gods of wood and stone. Then you entered the main temple and were faced with a perfect galaxy of idols, large and small, grouped around the "Pearly Monarch Ruler on High." This was no Buddhist idol, but an image of a truly Chinese nature. Taoist we roughly class him now, though his origins stretch far back into history, like the gleaming marble of the glorious Altar of Heaven in Peking.

The important feature of this temple was neither the frightening guardians of the door, nor yet the central shrine with its clustered gods and goddesses, but the ten hells delineated in ten adjacent chambers. Here were set out such groups of images as would crowd Madame Tussaud's Chamber of Horrors from morning till night. "I never go there," said an older friend of mine. "It only suggests to people the diabolical things that they can do." He was perhaps right, but Chinese went there, and it is wise within limits to go where your neighbours go, if only that you may understand their thoughts.

The "hells" were arranged on two sides of a large room behind a wooden barrier. Five "hells" faced other five "hells." and each "hell" was distinct from the others. Before them all, outside the barrier stretching the whole width of the five hells, was set the usual trough filled with incense dust of innumerable worshippers. I don't suppose those troughs are ever cleared or cleaned.

All the "hells" had common and special features. At the back of each enclosure sat an idol judge, some three or four feet in

height. By his side were halberdiers and torturers with demon heads and spears. In front of him was the tribunal table, and kneeling before that and facing the judge were the criminal sinners with hands bound, backs bent and bare, receiving the judgment of their earthly sins. In the foreground the sentences are being carried out by demon executioners on their hapless human victims.

In one "hell" liars are having their tongues torn out. In another, women are being drowned in a bath of blood for the crime of giving birth to human beings to be born in this sad world of human desire. Another "hell" depicts criminals being hurled over the city ramparts to be impaled on spears planted in the ground. Here are men and women being sawn asunder with a two-handled saw, worked carpenter fashion by two fearsome demons, and there others being disembowelled or blinded with red-hot irons. There is no mercy to any who comes before those judgment seats. Every punishment is fitted to its crime. Yet this is only purgatory. More is to follow. Coming past those "hells," so vividly if crudely portrayed in the plaster and the paint of idols, you reach a white wall on which is drawn the wheel of life. Stepping on to it are the souls released from purgatory, men or women. As the wheel goes round they are being transformed into tigers or pigs or other forms of life, to be born again, stepping off the wheel, according to their deeds done in their former life.

There in that one temple were the ten "hells" of purgatory, and the transmigration of souls on the endless wheel of life, set forth vividly and even colourfully before your very eyes.

No wonder there are so many devils in that temple that no one cared to live there after the day's light was gone. Was this the sort of thing against which Confucius' spirit was in revolt when he refused to talk of spirits and strange and miraculous things? Educated Chinese, all down the ages, have followed in his steps, caring for the conduct they could see rather than the imaginings that could not be proved. Yet Confucius was different from Socrates in this. The latter mocked, questioned and disbelieved, and was accounted an atheist. Confucius, the realist, refused to discuss these things, but added in regard to this matter of the rites of worship: "Worship the spirits as though they be present." As much as to say, "If you believe those things to which I cannot subscribe, at least perform your worship in reverence and awe." I think he felt there might be something there which he could not deny, which even might be meaningful for others. He would not deprive them of their false gods till he had true gods to put in the

place of the false. Even false or faulty conceptions might be better for his people than no gods at all. Following him, China's scholars have been agnostic, but seldom atheistic. On the whole, from time immemorial till to-day, China has been on the side of the gods.

Along that same great East Road, leading from Wuchang, you proceeded for a mile or so beyond the Temple of Hell, and by and by found yourself outside a great and imposing temple entrance. Great figures of lions and tigers had been painted on the walls that flank the entrance gates as you climb the steps to the "*Hung San*" Monastery—the monastery of the "Great Hill." As you enter, you get a vista of two or three temples and their courts rising up the hillside and crowned by a beautiful pagoda.

There is no mixture here of Taoist and Buddhist deities; nor is there that general mixing up of religious symbols and ideas which is rather characteristic of the Chinese man of religion, making the best of all possible worlds.

This is a monastery of Northern Buddhism. Some 160 monks and novices are gathered within the temple precincts. Their heads are shaven and their brows burned with the candles of their ordination ceremony. Some have three marks, some nine, burned into their brows and marking them for life. One or two attend you as you climb past a pool, filled with young tortoises, to the first temple with its huge threefold Buddhas and its "*lohan*," or saints (lit., "Happy Chinese"), idols themselves now, seated around the wall. The temple is altogether lofty and imposing. At the door there hangs a great ceremonial drum and a deep-toned bell that reverberates throughout the temple when struck with a heavy beam. Such heavy Chinese bells usually have no tongue, but are struck on the outside. On the floor facing the shrine are kneeling-mats in rows for the praying of the monks at set times and seasons. Behind the shrine are other idols, one said to be the gilded skeleton of a holy monk, who, instead of dying, just gradually faded away. Such images are to be found in various temples and some of them are said to be real skeletons of men. I am no judge. I cannot say. I have seen. I relate what I have seen and what is said about it.

Passing behind that first temple, you come to an open quadrangle and then to a second temple, more lofty, more imposing, more ornate. Here are even bigger Buddhas, shining in their gilt, and the lesser saints or "*lohans*" stationed round the walls. In some temples they amount to 500 Buddhist heroes, adventurers, and

pioneers. They are the early saints who brought their religion with its scriptures into China.

Higher still on the hillside there is a third temple on a less imposing scale, more fitted to be the private sanctuary of the abbot, who lives in rooms near by.

Between first and second temples on your right is the refectory, before which hangs a large wooden fish. Once I had the good fortune to be there at mealtime. A lay brother took a mallet and struck the fish resounding blows, which echoed like a gong through all the buildings. Monks rapidly appeared from all directions and took their places beside the long, unvarnished trestle tables. For the abbot and the leading monks there was a sort of high table surmounted by a little white metal gong. When all were seated silently, and the Abbot had come in, he struck the little gong above his head. Immediately 160 voices began chanting "*O-Mi-T'o-fu, O-Mi-T'o-fu,*" saying it over more times than I could count. They were calling on the name of Amita Buddha. When enough had been said, the gong was struck again and the great throng fell to upon the steaming vegetables and bowls of rice that were served to them by lay brothers from the kitchen. Much of it seemed familiar enough to me who had known life in a great boarding-school. That constant repetition of the name of Buddha reminded me of something I had read from a child in an old and sacred book.

Food finished, the gong was struck again, and the dining-hall emptied as quickly as it had filled as each monk or novice hurried back to his appointed place and task.

I went through the refectory to the kitchen, and then through the kitchen to the land outside where, to my amazement, I found a pigsty built against the monastery wall. Inside was one of the biggest porkers it had ever been my lot to see. It was couched in straw and muck and squeaked almost like a child. "What is a pig doing against a monastery?" I asked. For answer, my guide picked up a pebble or two and threw them at the beast. With angry grunts and squeaks, he rose up from the muck, exposing a malformation of his hoof which could be interpreted as the beginnings of five toes. There are many such freaks in Nature. In Hanyang I visited a temple where there were sheep and ducks and hens as well as pigs, on whose feet the superstitious could detect the rudiments of a human foot. In hungry China such animals and birds had not been slaughtered; for they were evidently human beings returned to this world from the wheel of life. They were

human spirits in animal form. To eat them would have been cannibalism. So they were taken to the temples and kept as living proof of the doctrine of transmigration.

Do you wonder that Confucius refused to discuss "strange things," and that his followers have followed in his agnostic steps?

The pagoda that surmounted these temples was a building of peculiar beauty. It is said to be several centuries old. You could climb to the top on circular steps, as in the Monument in London. From its top-most openings there were glorious views in all directions. Hankow, Hanyang, and Wuchang all lay a wondrous panorama at your feet. You could see the Yangtse River and the Wuchang lakes amongst a variegated and colourful carpet of fields and farms and hamlets stretching for many miles in all directions.

Chinese city walls, Chinese bridges, Chinese guildhalls are famous for their architecture. Chinese pagodas ought to take their place beside them.

There have always been artistic minds in China, and their flair for scenic effect is nowhere more apparent than in their building and planting of pagodas quite naturally by hill or lake or river, as though the Creator of all lovely things had planted them there from eternity.

The architectural structure of the pagoda is borrowed from the honorific umbrella, with its tiers of cloth, that is carried over the head of some great official. Pagodas are so built to give honour to the Lord Buddha, and are always supposed to be erected over a rag, a hair, a tooth, a fragment of cloth, or anything that can be claimed as directly connected with the Buddha. As he lived and died about 500 B.C., he must have had a lot of hair, millions of teeth, thousands of garments, and hundreds of staffs to supply the material for all his pagodas in Ceylon, Burma, Japan, China, and all the countries where his name is venerated in this way. I fancy Chinese artists and builders have readily subscribed to the superstitions of the faithful for the sheer joy of planting these lovely buildings all over the countryside.

A third temple that used to interest me was quite a small place, mostly built of wood, just outside the Great East Gate. It was a Taoist temple, and there you saw men dressed in ancient Chinese raiment, with their long hair worked up on the top of their heads and wound round a wooden peg. Often they wore, in addition, an ancient ceremonial cap. The type of dress can be seen in any

old picture of Confucius. For ecclesiastistics, be they Taoists, Buddhists or Christians, seem to have a habit of clinging to old clothes, as we who live in England can easily see for ourselves. The special interest of this temple was the one or two monks who were doing the "*Ta Tso*"—"The sit." They were said to be practising to sit motionless, cross-legged, for longer and longer periods, until they would have no need for food or any sustenance, but would be changed into immortals and never die. The Taoists have, all down the ages, been seeking the secret and the elixir of immortality, and this is one of the manifestations of that search. It is stated that some of these men can sit for days and weeks immobile. I have no proof one way or the other. So they say: so it is believed.

This temple was always well stocked with coffined corpses waiting for a propitious day of burial. The Taoist monks are called on for funeral rites of various sorts. Their energies are much engaged in the occult.

These are only three out of hundreds of thousands of Chinese temples. Yet they are not untypical. In the following chapter we shall have something to say of Taoist and Buddhist ideas.

## CHAPTER XIX

## BUDDHISM AND TAOISM

THE average Westerner, if he thinks of the subject of religion in China at all, imagines that her 460 millions can be classified as Confucianists, Buddhists, and Taoists, with some twelve million Muhammadans, and two or three million Roman and Protestant Christians of various traditions. With regard to Christians and Muhammadans, he would be correct. But with regard to China's other "three religions," he would be labouring under a complete misunderstanding.

I suppose those Taoist monks I used to pass as I went in and out of the Great East Gate of Wuchang were really Taoists, and the 160 monks in the Hung San Monastery were really Buddhists; but, speaking generally, China knows no clearly defined distinction in her religions. The Chinese talk of "*Yu Ssu Tao, San Chiao*" —"Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism, the three religions"—as though the three were one and not three, a sort of trinity of the one idea, religion. Ordinarily, you do not ask a man-in-the-street whether he is a Taoist or Buddhist or Confucianist. He would not understand you if you did. Venerating his ancestors, he might be called a Confucianist; believing in transmigration, he can be called a Buddhist; seeking a lucky day for marriage or burial, he becomes a Taoist. He does not, however, divide himself up in this way. He just believes and practises all three cults if he is a religious man, and shows no partiality among them. He follows the "*San chiao*"—the "three religions" or—shall we say?—the "three-fold religion."

When you came to the-man-in-the-school, you had someone who followed tradition, was agnostic to matters of religion, but might be driven by sorrow, pain, remorse, or death to that in which he only dimly believed. On the whole, he busied himself, as "the Master" did, with conduct. The man-in-the-school—old style, anyhow—was a Confucian agnostic with occasional lapses from his agnosticism.

The man-in-the-monastery and the man-in-the-temple were definitely religious, and followed a definite cult, Buddhist or Taoist. Yet in China you have the curious anomaly, as in the Temple of the Eastern Hell, of Buddhist and Taoist idols and practices all intermingled. If there were such confusion in many

temples, what wonder if the people talk of the three religions as one? This is a vast subject, and something will need to be said about the change in attitude of mind that has begun to show itself since the change in all Chinese life that dates from the founding of the Republic on October 10th, 1911. What I am attempting, in this as in every chapter, is just to give that picture of things that for the best part of a lifetime has passed before my eyes.

In the Shanghai Y.M.C.A. in 1940 there was pointed out to me a permanent resident, a former English M.P., dressed in Chinese cap and gown. His name was Trebitsch Lincoln. Some of my readers will remember him. He was now the Buddhist abbot, Chao Kung, and was the centre of a group of admirers and visitors. His account of Buddhism would undoubtedly be different from mine.

A little later I met a Norwegian clergyman, called Reichelt, in a retreat of Buddhist monks he had set up in most gorgeous scenery at Kowloon, opposite Hong Kong. As he showed me the sea running into a deeply-wooded bay, "Perfect Norwegian Fiord, isn't it?" said he. Reichelt has entertained Buddhist monks by the hundred, and himself been the honoured guest in Buddhist monasteries and temples all over China. He is the outstanding foreign scholar and student of Buddhism in China to-day. I only paddle about at the edge of that sea of which he is plumbing the depths. I write, therefore, certainly not as a convert, and just as certainly not as a student, but as one who has lived his life alongside the Buddhist and Taoist way of life in China. It was one's particular business to know something of these matters, and, short of being deaf or blind, one could hardly live amidst it all and be untouched.

Buddhism is, of course, like Christianity and Muhammadanism, a foreign religion in China. It is said to have come from India to China about A.D. 66. Some 400 years passed before Buddhism and China had permanently settled down together; yet no one but the student to-day realises that it is anything but a thoroughly Chinese religion. The mere fact that it is one of the trinity of China's religions is itself proof of that. Buddhism, which arose in India, travelled East by two different routes. "Southern" Buddhism invaded Ceylon, Burma, and Siam. "Northern" Buddhism came to Tibet, China, and Japan.

On one voyage to China I arrived at Ceylon on the same boat as a Cingalese Buddhist missionary to England who was returning home. We never saw him till he landed on the wharf at Colombo.

As his tall, saffron-robed figure descended the gangway the whole dock area was thronged with cheering, excited, welcoming, yellow-robed Buddhist monks. Somehow the whole scene was more vivid, vigorous, almost militant, than anything that my Chinese experience of Buddhism had ever led me to expect. At a later date I spent several weeks in Burma, and watched the saffron-robed *poongyis* (Buddhist monks) with their large, black, begging-bowls balanced on their hands, going their rounds of the faithful in the early morning. I realised what a dominating influence they have in politics and social life. I was told that every boy in Burma goes to some Buddhist monastery at the age of puberty and is, in a sense, a monk for a few days. Some of the lads never return to civil life again. I saw the multitudinous pagodas (999 on one occasion in one enclosure) outside every hamlet and on every hill, both large and small. Somehow this Southern Buddhism of Ceylon and Burma was a more victorious, conquering thing than the Northern Buddhism of China, and I wondered which was more profoundly Buddhist.

In Peking one sees, in one temple at least, the red-robed, fierce-looking lamas of Tibet. They, too, were strangely different from my friends of the Hung San Monastery at Wuchang, or the monks one meets daily about the streets seeking rice and alms at the doors of Chinese womenfolk.

One day in the Hung San Monastery a monk said to me, "You and we are much alike. You worship the Ruler on High and we worship Heaven. We are really the same." I couldn't imagine those Southern Buddhists talking quite so accommodatingly, or quite so ignorantly, as that.

Our Buddhism was "Northern," of a different tradition. Our monks were clad, not in yellow, saffron, or red (all princely colours), but in grey, the colour of asceticism. Our temples and images were different in appearance from those of Southern Buddhism.

One could not but note the signs of contact between Buddhism and Christianity at some earlier period. There was first of all the Buddhist Trinity, three manifestations of Buddha, three idols found frequently side by side in the chief temples. Then there was Kwan-Yin, the goddess of mercy, unknown to Southern Buddhism. She is as popular in China as the Virgin Mary in Roman Catholic countries. She is the helper of mothers. To her they pray for children. She is also the sailors' protector. She is often presented as a woman nursing a child—a sort of Buddhist Madonna. I have been

lost with Chinese coolies on the mountains in the mist and heard them in distress calling "*Ngo-tih-liang-a*"—"My mother." Such people in their spiritual distresses will quite naturally call upon the mother god. It is not so much Kwan-Yin in herself as Kwan-Yin the goddess of mercy, but Kwan-Yin associated with other things that makes one somehow see in her a contact with early Christianity.

There is also the apparel of the monks. In my early years I used to teach in a London B.A. gown, with its wide sleeves, and one day a Chinese friend said to me, "We call you the Buddhist monk. Your gown is just like a monk's. The only difference is the colour." When they told me that, I realised that the gowns were strikingly alike, and I began to wonder when it was that Christian monk and Buddhist monk had met, and whether Buddhist had borrowed from Christian or Christian from Buddhist, or each from the other.

Then every monk had his rosary, which he fingered as he repeated his endless "*O-Mi-T'o-fu*," "*Amita Buddha.*" It is noteworthy too that the Chinese mandarin, old style, was adorned with a necklace that, to all appearances, was a rosary. It is not these instances singly that prove, or even give a hint, of anything. But, when to such facts is added the following experience, the accumulation of evidence is to me too impressive to be overlooked:

Just before leaving for furlough in 1910, I happened to be in the Hung San Monastery when a mass was being said for the dead. The Abbot was there in mitre and rich robes and hood, surrounded by a dozen or twenty monks, all similarly and gorgeously apparelled. The Buddhist *sutras* were intoned to the tinkling of a triangle, the rhythm of the drum, and the burning of incense. Then the chanting ceased, the monks filed out, some of them with no great show of reverence once their task was done.

It was a very few months later that I happened to be in the Roman Catholic Cathedral at Westminster when Mass was being said at the High Altar. There was the same grouping of priests, the same splendour of clothing, the same burning of incense, the same rising and kneeling. The likeness was too great ever to be forgotten. Here was great reverence too. As I stood, somehow the Chinese worship in the Buddhist monastery and the English worship in the great Cathedral had, in outward show, far more points in agreement than difference. "Which was the borrower and which the lender?" one asked. That question is not easy to answer; but of the early contact there is small shadow of doubt in my mind.

Whatever may have been the history of our "Northern" Buddhism, it has accommodated itself rather fully to China. It has stooped to conquer. To the ordinary man this other-worldly, non-idolatrous religion has become full of idolatry. Not only are the three Buddhas and Kwan-Yin to be found within its temples. There are other lesser deities; for all its halls are thronged with the apostolic *lohan* and their images, the men famous for bringing Buddhism to China and establishing it there.

All this idolatrous side of Buddhism must seem strange to English eyes as it did to mine whose knowledge of Buddhism was largely gathered from Edwin Arnold's most moving *Light of Asia.* You see little of Arnold's picture in everyday life in China.

Some monks are monks because they have been taken to the temples in sickness as little children by distracted mothers, as the only possible means of saving their lives. They were thought to be otherwise incurably ill, and taken and given to the temple. On recovery they never returned to their homes again. Others I have met who had retired from official, military, or business life in disgust and weariness, leaving all the cares and desires of this world for a life of meditation and contemplation. Once I had the great joy of visiting the sacred isles of Pootoo, off the coast of Ningpo. Here the goddess of mercy has left her footprint on the rock for all to see. Here, as one gazed at the azure sea under a lovely sky, surrounded by other islands so that one appears to be in a glorious lake, all Nature was heavenly enough for goddess of mercy or any other lovely thing to come. The Buddhists have had a great gift of choosing beautiful places for their temples.

I found Pootoo to be a place of pilgrimage for all China. I found the paths that led to the great temples lined, not with ordinary beggars, but with begging monks, thus affording the pilgrims the means of accumulating merit and obtaining mercy with every gift that they gave to every monk.

In the temple courts I saw something in a Buddhist monk it had never been my lot to see before or since. It was the tall, dignified, ascetic, obviously intellectual "*Fa-Ssu*"—"Teacher of the Law." Altogether, Buddhism in Pootoo was a more living, throbbing thing than anywhere else in China, as far as I had known.

Besides all these temples, idols, masses, pilgrimages, and piling up of merit, there has been since 1911 a growing and powerful lay Buddhist movement. This school is non-idolatrous and lives its life apart from temples. It issues magazines, holds meetings, and delivers lectures. It stands for an intellectual grasp and preaching

of the doctrines at the heart of Buddhism. Its propaganda is much like Christian propaganda. The evils of the day are analysed, and then the world is told that there is no salvation except in Buddha and the way of Buddha. There are apostles of modern Buddhism. Tai Hsu, a distinguished leader, lived in Wuchang in my time. He is a Buddhist scholar, no stranger to Paris and Berlin, England and America. His reply to an American Bishop who sought his aid in a joint Christian-Buddhist movement against the opium traffic was characteristically Buddhist. Didn't the Bishop know that the world was evil and its desires evil? It was not a place to be reformed, but to be escaped from. The wise man fled its snares and did not seek to make it better.

Whatever be said for and against Chinese Buddhism, Tai Hsu, in that reply, was certainly following in the footsteps of Gautama Buddha.

Latterly the Taoist faith has begun to have a great attraction for the West. This is not quite a new thing. The early missionaries were strangely attracted to the not always very perspicacious *Tao Teh Ching*—"Classic of the Way of Virtue"—which, it is claimed, is the work of Lao Tzu, an older, hermit contemporary of Confucius.

It was the mysticism and poetry of the book that attracted, and there were early scholars who thought that this classic was a Chinese Old Testament and that they had actually found the name of God, Je-Ho-Vah, hidden among its mystic characters.

It is not surprising if modern students have been attracted by this little book and its doctrine of the all-pervading "*Tao*," which is inherent in everything and without which nothing does or could exist. It seems as theistic and spiritual as some of our modern philosophers who favour some little other-worldly life-force rather than a sheerly materialistic basis of the universe.

Philosophers and sages of Taoism there have been. These searchers after truth and the "Way" of life have not only been the fathers of magic, but the pioneers of Chinese invention and discovery. Alchemists in China throve parallel to alchemists in Europe, and both in a sense were the forerunners of modern science.

Yet Taoism, as I have known it, was not a matter of the *Tao Teh Ching*, however exalted or unintelligible, but of dispelling devils, choosing lucky days and places for burial, and avoiding all the ills of life. Taoism is indigenous to China and no foreign introduction. Lao Tzu and Confucius were contemporaries, both of them

## CHAPTER XX

## WHO KNOWS?

ONE day I went into the Temple of the Eastern Hell and found a lad of some twelve years of age worshipping before one of those dreadful tableaux that have been described in Chapter XVIII. It had never struck me before that anyone would deliberately worship in such a place. He told me that his mother was grievously ill and so he had come to the temple.

"Is it any use?" I said. "Can they really hear?"

"Who knows?" was the reply.

Then he continued his lighting of incense sticks, his burning of cash-paper, and his bowings of reverence before these hideous godlings.

China is not irreligious. She is uncertain, and yet in her uncertainty takes no chances. There may be something in religion, she thinks, for all its superstitions and puerilities. "Worship the spirits as if they were present," said Confucius. There must be something in it, say the multitude; otherwise, why should everyone do it? Taoism, in some shape or form, has existed for thousands of years, whatever its connection with Lao Tzu may or may not be. Those monks, in their old-time dress, have been knit together by some sort of an organisation which has held them in a brotherhood under the supreme authority of a Taoist pope who lives hermit-fashion in the heart of China's mountains. A body of tradition has been handed down. A technique of priestly functions and activities has been taught in their temples. Speaking generally, however, there is no Taoist Church, no great company of the faithful meeting for divine service at regular intervals. There are "*Tao Ren*" monks, living in temples and monasteries. There are "*Tao Ssu*,"—a sort of lay order, earning their living in ordinary ways, but skilled in Taoist rites, which they may be called in to perform at appropriate times; but there is no general membership of a society. Anyone, at any time, may call in "*Tao Ssu*" or "*Tao Ren*" to help in funeral rites or the exorcising of demons. It is purely a personal matter. As you call the doctor in sickness, so you call the "*Tao Ssu*" when your need is great. In each case you will pay the appropriate fee. Things have gone beyond your power of coping with them. It may be some use. "Who knows?" You are not a Taoist. You are a man in trouble, and when you

call the Taoist monk to your relief you are not subscribing to his creed. That is his affair. If he can really help, you may call on him again, but you do not call yourself a Taoist. You are a Chinese calling in a religious expert for practical purposes, and you are not concerned whether he wears a black robe, grows moustache and beard, lets his hair grow long and mounts it on the top of his Taoist head, or whether he goes about clean-shaven, in grey Buddhist garb, counting his beads and saying his "*O-Mi-T'o-fu.*"

There is a lay association in modern Buddhism, but it can hardly be called more than an elect society. In general no one thinks of a Buddhist Church any more than of a Taoist Church. Neither Buddhism nor Taoism thinks of an association of laity disciplined and ministered to by Buddhist or Taoist monks.

If you take Buddhism seriously, you retire from the world, enter a monastery, learn the scriptures, and submit to the discipline. After due testing, you take the nine vows and are branded on your brow with the nine ordination marks. These you receive at a solemn service conducted in the midnight hours. You and your fellow ordinands kneel before the high altar and its gods. The nine candles fastened to your brow are lit and burn until they have scorched your skin, and finally flicker out, leaving nine holes on which no hair will ever grow again. You are marked with the sign of your vows.

When you enter the monastery you cease to have a family name. You were called Liu, or Li, or Wang. Now you are just Tseng or, more commonly, "*Ho-Shang,*" i.e. "Buddhist monk."

You have forsaken the world with all its allurements. You have "*Ch'uh chia*"—"Come outof the home," the dearest thing in China. You have ceased to be son or brother. You have eschewed marriage or business. It is not evil things alone that you avoid. What other folks call good and evil have no real meaning for you. The whole world is evil and the mother of all evil: you have forsaken the world and its desires.

You are a vegetarian; for you must not take the life of any living thing. All sentient life comes somewhere on the wheel of transmigration. To eat fish or flesh or fowl is, therefore, to be a sort of murderous cannibal. For you will have destroyed the life, for your enjoyment, of some other living soul, toiling upward—oh, so slowly—to Buddha-hood and Nirvana, where all desires cease.

What Nirvana precisely signifies has always been beyond my wit to understand. The word literally means "the blowing out of a lamp." Is that lamp life itself or is it man's desires, the accom-

paniment of life? Could life go on, with all desires gone? Is such desire-less life the perfect peace of Buddha-hood? Or is Nirvana the bliss of extinction? I wonder if the Chinese were not, as I am, baffled by such questions. At any rate, the ordinary man in China thinks rather of the paradise of the Western Heaven, and Buddhism lets him think.

There are great and learned men within the monasteries, but the ordinary monk, as I have seen him, seemed very dull and concerned with negative rules. He learned his scriptures by rote and often could not even read. At the end of his life he was cremated in a little bricked-up furnace that was there amidst the monastery graves, and so departed to the Western Heaven or even back on to life's endless wheel to be reincarnated for the punishment of his sins, monk though he were.

There are nuns also gathered in the nunneries, close-shaven, grey-gowned, natural-footed; so that at times it is difficult to distinguish their sex.

When all criticism is done, in Buddhism as we saw it there was a life of asceticism based on religious motives, involving hundreds and thousands of monks and nuns and touching every walk of life. Such an organised life is an undying witness to the religious sense of the Chinese race.

The monk goes from house to house begging alms in his rice-bowl. On his back is a grey bag or hood where, as the monk of mediæval Europe, he may store his gains. All this he does for the temple and not for himself; for he is trying to give up all human desire. As he goes from door to door, he has his opportunities of spreading the faith. Thus, in the main, undoubtedly does Buddhism retain its hold on the country. The women have it from the monks and the children from the women. In this way they will learn of festivals and temple ceremonies, and gain that touch of brightness that Chinese religion knows so well how to mingle with its solemnities.

Many of the great temples have their anniversary festivals. Outside the Temple of Hell in Wuchang was a theatrical stage where before the huge anniversary crowds and for the enjoyment of the idols, plays were performed amidst the loud voices and the heat, the orange-peel and pea-nuts, of the festival crowd. Meanwhile the worshippers inside the temple were busy with their fire-crackers, their cash-paper, their incense, and their bowings. Such temple theatricals are general in Central China.

Yet, as has been said, no more in Buddhism than in Taoism is

there an organised Church as we know it. You are either in the "*Chiao*"—"the religion"—or in the world. You are either a monk under vows or a layman without them. Is this what observers have meant when they say the Chinese are not religious? If so, it is a very superficial judgment. Let us turn from the monk and the expert to the ordinary man and woman.

In every shop there is a little altar to the god of wealth. In the kitchen it is usual to find a paper picture of the kitchen god presiding over the cooking of the household, or at least a few words indicating his presence. Kitchen gods and door gods, paper figures pasted on the front door, are renewed at every New Year's festival. One of the commonest proverbs in the land is that "Three feet above you are the spirits." Every city has its city god, and every locality its local deity. The very fields have their "*T'u Ti Miao*"—"local earth temples"—where the farmers pay their half-monthly respects. No funeral takes place without the monks. No grave is chosen without the geomancer, lest there be bad luck. There is the god of war for the soldier, and the god of literature for the student. The autumn theatricals in the country villages are all connected with idol worship. Every city guildhall has its patron deity. If the Apostle Paul had wandered the streets and paths of China, he would not have called her irreligious. Too religious, would surely have been his verdict.

Without organisation other than that of monasteries and temples, religion, in one form or another, seems to be wellnigh universal in China.

Yet there are, as there always have been, many agnostics and sceptics. The scholar and official class have, on the whole, not expressed themselves as greatly interested in these things. Yet, even in such circles, there is a certain wistfulness; for, after all, who knows?

Buddhism is old, Taoism much older and truly Chinese, but oldest of all is something else.

In Peking to-day an altar stands as it has stood down the ages, and no one knows China who is unaware of that greatest of all her altars. You go out of the South Gate of the mighty Tartar city, leaving behind you the red walls and yellow-tiled and gleaming roofs of the old Imperial palaces in the Forbidden City. After a mile or so amidst the dust, the crowds, the hucksters, the tea-shops, the inns, and the camels you come to a road in the Chinese city going east at right-angles to the main road by which you have travelled. Following that for a minute or two, you come to a

great enclosure filled with trees. Within the gates there are guest-rooms and reception halls. On the left rises the triple roof, with its azure blue tiles and golden cap of the peerless "Temple of the Happy Year," the most magnificent of all China's religious buildings. On the right there is the smaller, black-tiled "Temple of the Ancestral Spirits." These temples are situated on a broad granite roadway. Turning your back on them and walking south along that granite causeway in a few minutes you find yourself approaching an altar of amazing beauty. It is the "*T'ien T'an*"—the famous "Altar of Heaven." It is a dream of pure white marble. You ascend nine steps to a circular terrace, all of white marble. Round the terrace runs a marble balustrade with carved figures of dragons. Then you mount nine more steps and reach a second terrace with its marble balustrade; and finally nine more steps with a third carven barrier. You have now reached the top—a great circular pavement of white marble slabs. There is no temple, no roof and no building at all other than these steps, these terraces, these balustrades.

From the central slab, "the hub of the universe," your voice echoes all round. Whatever secret was known to the builder of the Whispering Gallery in the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral seems to have been known to the Chinese architects of this most famous altar.

The purity and majesty of the gleaming white marble under Peking's brilliant blue summer sky is something to stir you to your depths if you have any music in your soul. In the summer of 1939 I stood amidst the ruins of Athens' most glorious Parthenon. In the spring of 1940 in Peking I ascended the steps of the "*T'ien T'an.*" Looking back, it is hard to say which moved me more—the Greek temple with its amazing sculptures and columns and all its changing history, or the simplicity and sublimity of China's Altar of Heaven.

For the rest there is nothing but a furnace for the burnt offering, a few sacrificial urns and a few chaste animals wrought in bronze and green with age and weather. There is a spaciousness about the whole conception that fits in well with thoughts of heaven and earth.

This altar in its present form is only two centuries old, but it is the continuance of something that has existed all down the Chinese ages. It ceased to function after the Revolution of 1911, but stands to-day intact in all its wondrous beauty, a silent witness to the underlying faith of the great Chinese race.

From time immemorial, once a year beside that Altar or its predecessors, a bullock was slain and offered with rolls of silk as a burnt offering to Shangti, the "Upper Emperor." Miss Juliet Bredon does not hesitate to translate Shangti as the "Most High God." Twice a year the Chinese Emperor, clad in robes of heaven-like blue, himself, after a night's vigil, performed the sacrifice at break of dawn. No one else than the Son of Heaven dare venture to offer obeisance to Heaven and the God of Heaven. In this sacrificing he used an ancient liturgy acknowledging that his throne was held by him from Righteous Heaven. If he and his ruled in righteousness, his dynasty would be maintained. If he and his turned away to evil-doing, then his people's hearts would be turned against him, and the dynasty would be swept into oblivion. All down Chinese history the people have been the judges of their monarch, and they have judged him on the principle that governed the universe.

I do not wonder that an old American friend of mine, in his first visit there, took the shoes from off his feet, realising how holy was that marble altar.

No one knows the origin of this ceremony. It goes back, like Melchisedek, into the mists of antiquity, but the cult lies very deep in the traditions and thoughts of the Chinese people. When you passed along the fields and talked to any farmer of "*T'ien Lao-Yeh*"—"Old Father Heaven"—he knew that you referred to the great mysterious Ruler of the universe who was the ultimate cause of the reward of good and the punishment of evil. This worship was far older than Confucius. It was part of the ways of his fathers into which he entered and to which he wistfully called his contemporaries.

The common people knew that only the Emperor worshipped Shangti. He did so as the high-priest and parent of the great family which is China. The common people had their local cults and deities. How should they dare to lift up their eyes to one so great and lofty? The commonest proverb among a people that lives by proverbial wisdom is:

*San yu san pao*
*O yu O pao*
*Puh is puh pao*
*Erh tse wei tao.*

"Good has a good reward; evil has an evil reward; if there is no reward it is because the day has not come." In other words, what

you sow you reap, and there is no sowing without a reaping. The consequence of your good and evil are inescapable. Everybody believes that proverb. Not everyone realises how closely it may be connected with that gleaming altar in Peking.

As I roamed round China during the invasion by the Japanese, with all the atrocities that were perpetrated on soldiers and on populace, again and again I met this deep-seated conviction in the heart of the people.

In a garden in Kunming I found myself sitting chatting with a professor from Peking. He was a refugee, dwelling among refugees, and minding a church for their needs. We talked of old friends and old times, and then I turned to this intelligent poet and philosopher and said:

"Who's going to win this war?"

"We are," he replied.

"All the evidence is against it. Your armies cannot resist them. Your cities are bombed. Your women are ravaged and murdered. Your wealth is destroyed or captured. How can unarmed China stand against the modern armed might of Japan?"

It is only to a friend that, in a time of war and tension, one would venture to speak so frankly.

He hesitated and paused, and then he said: "I cannot argue about it. It's not a matter of reason, but of faith. I believe in a God of Heaven, and I don't believe that these atrocities, cruelties and devilries can ultimately prevail in a universe that I believe to be righteous."

"When?" I said.

"I cannot answer that, but Japan will not ultimately win."

Somehow that commonest proverb came back to me, and that Altar of Heaven gleamed white again in the sunshine under Peking's azure skies, and I realised the fundamental faith of this people whose origins are hidden so far in the past. This same conviction I met again and again on that journey and in all sorts of places. You never seem to be able to shake the Chinese from this firm faith in the righteousness of the universe.

Chinese morality and conduct take their rise from the teachings of Confucius. Chinese religion is rooted in the old belief called Taosim and the foreign teaching of the Buddha. Sometimes it seems as though religion and conduct were flowing in different streams; and yet there is something that binds religion to life in the oldest of all Chinese traditions, this deep, understanding of the consequences of good and evil.

That Altar of Heaven signified a sort of national ancestral worship by the Emperor who was called "*T'ien Tzu*"—the "Son of Heaven." There was another worship, of fealty to the living Emperor, by officials under the Manchu régime; and then, in every family, the all but universal worship was that of the ancestors by the oldest living male member of the family.

Filial piety has been the cement of China, binding together the different generations, the different clans, the living and the dead; and ultimately, through the Emperor, connecting earth with heaven. Heaven was and is the seat of morality.

In the Nationalist Revolution which began in 1926, the leaders of the people, perhaps over-impressed by modern thought and foreign influences, turned against all religion. Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, Muhammadanism, Christianity were all described as dope and all judged to be a hindrance in the way of progress.

When Chiang Kai-shek adopted the Christian faith in 1930, he was part of a wider movement. Other leading men at the same time reverted to Confucianism or Buddhism. They had tried a period of atheism and found it wanting. Somehow China, now as in earlier ages, could not live without religion.

She believes in Something, or Someone, at the back of the universe. She is puzzled by the multiplicity of idols and the clash of creeds; but, like the little lad in the temple, she will try them for what they are worth and hold to that which is good. For "Who knows?"

The religion that works will win.

## CHAPTER XXI

## CHINESE PILGRIMS

In the spring of 1907 I was spending the China New Year's holiday with a friend in the country town of Kwangtsi in the province of Hupeh. At what was then a universal holiday, the larger shops were shut for a fortnight and the lesser ones for three days. Work was set aside and all our world went home. No ordinary business was possible. The Chinese kept the feast with all the expectation and the joy we keep our Christmastide. China's New Year is still observed, but it shares the honour with the Western New Year now, and the holiday is not as complete as it was before the Nationalist Revolution of 1926 and especially in the days of the old order before the overthrow of the Manchus in 1911.

Then New Year was a great home festival and everyone loved to be at home. Up to New Year's Eve, the previous year's accounts were being settled. Creditors pursued their debtors; and debtors, if they had naught that they were able and willing to pay, made themselves as invisible as possible. I have often thought that, as the recording angel looked down on China at the closing days of the old China year, he must have split his sides with laughing at this creditor-debtor chase and evasion. For the ordinary Chinese, Micawber-like, loved to borrow money and always lived in hope that something would turn up to help them pay their debts.

Once New Year's Eve was reached, all that was over. Most debts were paid, and the debtor, with his obligations unmet, slipped home again free from all chasing and annoyance for a little time. The house was swept and garnished. In most country homes that was not a heavy labour. There were no carpets, pictures, or curtains to be dealt with. The outer room was simple, with mud floor over which the chickens ran in and out, the dog wandered round at will, and even the family pig poked in his snout. The inner rooms were little more elegant. They were floored with unvarnished boat-boards from a Hunan coal-boat. There was little or nothing hanging on the wooden partition walls, and little furniture except the bed, cradle, and a simple bamboo chair. In one corner of the living-room, or behind, was the kitchen stove. The smoke of ages was gathered round the walls

and roof-beams; for there was no chimney and, except for the part hidden by the loft, you could look right upwards to the tiles.

If it was a farmhouse, there'd be farming implements about.

Still, even in a house like this, it is surprising what a little extra sweeping can achieve. Especially new paper scrolls, which some local scholar had written expressing good wishes and hopes for the coming year, were pasted on both sides of the doors and above the lintel. New paper door gods replaced those that had kept guard during the year that had gone. A new kitchen god, of paper also, was installed beside the stove. The family altar to the ancestors received special attention, and there was an air of cleanliness and expectation in the house. Moreover, there was pork about, and real hope of feasting and of friendship.

China had many feasts, large and small, but this was the great family gathering of all the year. Everyone went home to "*Ko-nien*" —"Cross the year"—and it was a sad heart that was compelled by force of circumstances to stay away. New Year's Eve was spent feasting, talking, and keeping awake, and then at early dawn next morning the year came roaring in. Once and again in these pages I have spoken of Chinese crackers, the identical little red rolls of powder and explosion our children use on Guy Fawkes' Day. But you have to go to China to see the way that they are really used. Hundreds of them swinging from long bamboo poles are used at weddings, welcomes, and other glad festivals. They are lit at the bottom and as they explode go on lighting one another until the whole thing goes up in smoke with the rat-tat-tat of a machine gun. Imagine every household in every street in China issuing from its front door on New Year's morning and joining with its neighbours in the letting off of crackers. Some more, some less, but all without exception join in the New Year's rite. Add to that racket the boom of occasional squibs and you have some realisation of the roar of New Year's morning and the litter of red cracker shells and paper that lies all day upon the street. It is really "*reh-lao*"—"hot and noisy." There is "*reh-lao*" in their ears and in their hearts. If you cannot enjoy a "*reh-lao*" there is no place for you in China. There'll never be another "*reh-lao*" like that till China New Year's Day comes round again. So whoever has missed the joy and fun and "*reh-lao*" of it has missed it for twelve months.

It was on New Year's Eve that my Kwangtsi host took me into the garden. There, in the darkness, we gazed across the fields to a saddle-backed mountain silhouetted against the sky. Travelling

up and down the mountain were long lines of light. They were the lanterns of the pilgrims going up and down the mountain visiting the shrines all day and all night. When others' homes were full of joy and expectation, here were hundreds and thousands of people at New Year's time away from home, trudging up and down the steep mountain paths in the darkness that they might worship at the shrines.

How many people in England attend a Watchnight Service on New Year's Eve? Here in a land where New Year meant infinitely more were hundreds of people keeping watch-night on an open mountain. What a witness such a scene must be to the deep need and widespread religious feeling of the country. Since then I have seen and heard a great deal about China's religious places and their pilgrimages. There are great pilgrim centres in all the holy mountains. O Mei Shan in Szechuan, Tai Shan in Shantung, and Nanyoh Shan in Hunan are noteworthy amongst others.

Shan means "mountain" and O Mei, Nanyo, and Tai are considerable mountains up which the pilgrims go to worship in the temples on the summit. Friends in Hunan have told me of pilgrims, with the character "*Tsui*"—"sin"—like a great shield stitched on their chest and back, proclaiming to all the world their confession and their penitence as they wend their pilgrim way past villages and fields and streets on their journey to the holy mountain. They have told me of others who, every second step, knelt down and worshipped for mile after mile of their journey. They call this process "*I pu i pai*"—"one step, one worship." I have often seen parties of pilgrims, wearing masonic-looking aprons and flags and banners and accompanied with the letting off of crackers, setting off on a long pilgrimage from Hankow to some sacred place.

In the sacred Isle of Pootoo I found pilgrims from every province in China, all of them come to worship in the island sacred to "*Kwan-Yin*," the goddess of mercy.

"*Chao Shan*"—"tread the hills"—is a common word in China applied to the devotions of a man or woman who ascends the hills as a pilgrim for worship. Right through the year at various times and places there are pilgrims on their journeys. In this respect China is like England in the days of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, of which I was reminded as on the next day my friend and I, accompanied by a Chinese preacher as guide and friend, took our way across the fields to join the pilgrims on the *Huen-Kang Shan*—the "Saddle-Back Hill." It is long ago now, but my memory

of it remains clear. These are some of the things we saw and heard.

The pilgrim mountain, 2,000 or 3,000 feet in height, was some five miles from the city. We passed through the silent, empty, shuttered street, with its litter of exploded crackers, through the city gate, out into the glorious spring morning, with haze over the countryside and mist upon the hills. All was still and quiet except for the occasional crowing of a cock or barking of a dog. The very beasts of the field were keeping holiday, their masters asleep or paying visits and eating Chinese sweets from curious lacquered trays. These trays were divided into as many sections as there were varieties of toothsome goodies, sugared pea-nuts, caraway cakes, sweet rice-cakes, and salted melon seed. There was always tea to drink.

We threaded our way through rice-fields, dry now and filled with stubble, resting before the spring ploughing. The wheat was springing: the early vegetables were well up. Always something seems to be growing in the fields of Central China. There were no barren periods, as in Shantung and Hopei in the north. Our farmers never rested except at the New Year and the other feasts.

We passed hamlet and village, with a few trees sheltering the "*T'u-ti-miao*" and village graves; and gradually approached the foot of the hill. More and more we had become aware of other groups, in threes and fives and tens, and even in greater numbers, wending their ways across the fields to the same mountain path. So that when we reached the base of the mountain there was quite a concourse of us, some returning from the all-night vigil, their baskets empty and their bodies tired, going home again. Most of us were worshippers beginning the ascent. We were a very various crowd. Some quite evidently, by their dress and talk, were city folk. The great bulk were obviously sturdy peasants, used to doing their thirty to forty miles a day, carrying their goods to market and bearing heavy burdens from town to town. The bulk of the pilgrims were men, and the few women we met, making the journey then, in 1907, on bound and hobbled feet, were conspicuous figures amongst the crowd of men. They were elderly and probably members and devotees of some strict Buddhist vegetarian sect. Young women, I noticed, did not go on pilgrimages, which was right and wise.

These people, except for the occasional monk or nun among them, were not marked, as far as I could see, with any special form of clothing. They were just an ordinary gathering of citizens

and farming people such as one might see at any country theatre, but less gaily clad. For they were pilgrims and not sightseers.

At first I was rather shocked at the air of casualness and gaiety among them, until I thought of Chaucer's pilgrims and their tales and talk with which they wiled away the tedium of their journey. The sterner side of things that I had anticipated I know to be found amongst some of those who seek the much more frequented and holier mountains of Hunan, Szechuan, or Shantung. Here we saw no prostrations of the "one step, one worship" order. Nor did we see any pilgrim branded with the character of sinner. That there was a more tragic and even more terrible side we had proof before the day was done, but what we were chiefly aware of was companies of "good companions" sharing a common pilgrimage, laughing, talking, tale-telling, climbing, and getting out of breath, resting by the wayside and gradually getting quieter and more purposeful as the fields and trees and villages and work-a-day life were being left behind and they were drawing nearer to the object and purpose of their visit, ever climbing heavenward.

Two things they mostly had in common—a basket and a lantern. In the basket was a little food—simple, flat, square cakes of flour or rice with a tiny orange or two; just as a foreigner might have a sandwich. But mainly in the basket were sticks of incense, packets of holed cash-paper (the most universal thing in Chinese worship), and ingots of silver and gold-paper of the same nature and for the same purpose as the every day brown cash-paper, but more meaningful and costly. Then there were tallow candles, six or eight inches long, all coloured red and attached to strips of bamboo the easier to fit them into the Chinese lantern that was carried with the basket. If night found them on the hill or on the road, these candles would be lit and fitted into the lantern, and these men and their lanterns would become part of the great snakes of light that I had witnessed from a missionary's garden the night before. The Chinese lantern as I saw it on the mountain, and see it mostly in country China, was not the pretty highly ornamented variety you can purchase in Peking or see in Chinese exhibitions. It was less elegant, but very serviceable. It consisted of a sort of parallelogram of strong oiled paper fixed upon a frame of wire. Its upper and lower ends were open, with a rounded mouth; so that the opening was as small as was possible, to be at the same time safe and useful. The candle, when lighted, was fixed into a socket in the middle. The lamp had no ornament as a rule except the name of the owner and that name was large, filling

a full side of perhaps eighteen inches from top to bottom of the parallelogram that was the lantern. When all lanterns are alike, they are liable to get lost, but for this sign of ownership. Incidentally also, so large a character lit up by the candle inside the lantern revealed the identity of the traveller approaching in the dark, quite a useful help in the black-out of the Chinese countryside.

These Chinese pilgrim's lanterns had also another feature. On the opposite panel to the name was painted their prayer and heart's desire. On one was written "*Shou*"—"Long life"—and on another "*Fu*"—"wealth" or "blessedness." What is the difference, anyway, to hard-pressed Chinese farmers or craftsmen? On another was the character "*Tzu*"—"Sons." All you had to do was to look at their lantern to see why they had taken this journey at China New Year's time.

Some friend had been in trouble and had made a pilgrimage to this very mountain, and lo! on his return his troubles had all gone. Surely the spirits of the mountain had power and the pilgrimage had had efficacy. This man now had his troubles, and he had tried all the homely solutions and had failed. He was only half sure of the idols, and the worship about which his womenfolk were so diligent. That sort of thing seemed more appropriate to the women than to the men. Anyway, they were always listening to strange yarns from the mendicant monks. Yet troubles pressed upon him, and never seemed to lift. Others bore witness to the benefits of a pilgrimage and so "Who knows?"—it might be of some benefit. At least he would give it a trial. Soon he finds himself travelling the field and village paths with others in like case. Few are devotees of any religious cult. No rule of their religion sets them on this pilgrim path. It is not for most of them any sort of penance, except that it may be through some hidden fault that troubles have come upon their lives. They are merely seeking earth's good things, and if the price of that be a pilgrimage, well, at any rate, it is worth trying. One man's father is lying ill at home with a mysterious disease that no local physician can cure. The filial sense in China is very deep and strong. That is why on the lantern of Mr. Wang the word "*Shou*"—"Long life"—is printed opposite the owner's name. He has come to pray for his father's life, that that may be prolonged. This Mr. Liu, who asks for "Wealth" with "*Fu*" upon his lantern, is asking for no great riches. But business has been bad. Somehow things do not prosper with him as with his neighbour. "Who knows" but what a pilgrimage may be the cure?

Winnowing

A Tu-Ti Miao—"Local Earth Temple"
Bamboo Paper drying in the foreground

Buddhist Monks at Prayers. Wooden Gong in foreground of the Temple

"*Tzu*"—"Sons"—is on the lantern of a youngish man. In a land where all love children, and the very name will perish if there be no sons, by some mysterious fate, his wife is barren. How often has she burned incense and cried in her heart before the local image of "*Kwan-Yin*," the goddess of mercy. The heavens are brass. There is no answer. What Chinese woman, what Chinese husband, would not tramp endless miles and tread mountain after mountain in pilgrimage if by any chance the gods will give him "sons."

These and other prayers are in their hearts and written on their lanterns for all to see. As they go along so merry and sociable, let no one be deceived. Only some stern necessity would bring them upon a pilgrimage on New Year's Day. Don't judge them by appearances. Don't despise the futilities of their idolatries. Judge them by their lanterns and by their needs. As we ascend, we pass at intervals through three arched temples, built of brick, and containing seats where you can rest from the heat of the now blazing sun. These temples were nothing but gateways twelve feet by twenty feet in depth. In each gateway were an idol or two of no one in particular. I asked their names and no one could tell me. They were idols on the holy hill, and they just worshipped them, not enquiring or caring who they were.

These temple arches were called respectively Heaven's First Gate, Heaven's Second Gate, and Heaven's Third Gate.

By and by we reached the summit, and found four rough temples of unbaked brick. These halls were filled with worshippers and scorching hot with burning cash-paper. Here were just other idols and all the people worshipped, not bothering, it may be, about spirit and truth. They had come to worship. They had fulfilled their task. Now they could return, their pilgrimage accomplished, and look for their reward.

As I left the reeking temples, I saw on the hillside a rock on which the pilgrims were rubbing coins to take them home as amulets to ward off disease and other evils.

From that rock the mountain dropped sheer for hundreds of feet. What made it specially holy was the spirit of sacrifice. From its summit a young man had hurled himself to destruction in fulfilment of a vow. In his father's illness the son had vowed life for life. The father had recovered and the son had climbed the mountain and from that precipice had fulfilled his vow. After that I cannot think lightly either of Chinese filial piety or the Chinese religious sense. There was no Buddhism in Confucius's day, but I

think there must have been pilgrimages even then, as there were certainly filial sons. For himself, Confucius said, "You do not know life. How can you know death?" People spoke of prayers to him. He seemed to evade them by saying, "My prayer has been for a long time." He would not talk of spirits, miracles, and strange things; and yet, in view of what he knew, Confucius seems to me to have been very near the little boy in the temple who said to me, "Who knows?"

## CHAPTER XXII

## UP AND DOWN THE YANGTSE

THE Yangtse River is commonly called "the Son of the Ocean," because "*Yang*" is the word for ocean and "*tse*" the word for son. In Chinese, however, the diminutive *tse* follows a whole host of words. There is "*choh-tse*"—"table"; "*i-tse*"—"chair"; "*kou-tse*"—"dog"; "*hai-tse*"—"child"; "*mao-tse*"—"cat." Hence the second word *tse* indicates a class or kind. If the word "*tse*" means anything at all, Yangtse should be translated, not as "Son of the Ocean," but as "Ocean River," a river of the ocean class, and probably that is its meaning. It is so vast at its mouth that you can hardly distinguish between ocean and river. It seems big enough to be itself the source of the ocean, and when you think of its great length, and its great volume of navigable waters, it is a veritable ocean of a river. Nowadays Yangtse is, of course, only a name, but such thoughts must, I think, have been in the minds of those who first called it the Yangtse River.

In Chinese a still more common name is the "*Ch'ang Chiang*"—the "Long River." I have seen its upper reaches, and some of its tributaries amidst the mountains of Yunnan, Kueichow, and Szechuan. I have sailed its waters in some sort of a steamboat from Suifu in the far west to its mouth at Woosung, near Shanghai. This is a distance of some 1,200 miles of navigable water, broken only by the gorges that lie between Chungking and Ichang. It is still navigable there, though not to any but small and most powerful steamships or to old Chinese junks towed by scores of sweating trackers. The lower course, from Hankow to Shanghai, was as much frequented by me as by most old residents. My trips there and back in 1940 in a Japanese transport gave me the opportunity of seeing twice within a few weeks every inch of the river's course between Hankow and Shanghai. This was a unique and quite unusual experience. The traffic of the Yangtse steamers, as of ocean-going craft, was regulated by the condition of trade and the amount of goods that had to be loaded and unloaded at the various ports. The time of starting from Hankow was generally fixed. That at Shanghai varied with the tides. Though, as a rule, the inward journey to Hankow took four days against the current and the outward journey three, the steamers travelled by night as

well as by day except for the inevitable delays at the river ports. As a consequence, you never could calculate which portions of the river would be passed in daylight, when you could see them, and which at night. The Japanese transport, under the command of naval officers, in a time of war, took no risks. Always at evening-time we anchored beside a gunboat and did not start till the sun had risen again next morning. This was to avoid all unnecessary "accidents," and gave me the opportunity of checking up and piecing together my fragmentary memories of how the Ocean River had appeared to me in more disjointed voyages.

If the "*Huang Ho*"—the "Yellow River"—with its frequent devastating floods and changes of river-bed, is "China's Sorrow," the Yangtse is as truly "China's Life." It is along its immense and fertile course that Chinese life has thrived and multiplied, and that the work and wealth have accumulated on which China's civilisation has been based. From Shanghai to Hankow the river distance is some 600 miles, about as far as from Land's End to John o' Groats. Whilst there are occasional narrow stretches, at Hankow the river is still one mile across, whilst at Woosung, where the Yangtse empties its mouth into the ocean, it is almost any width you care to reckon. Its waters are highest in July and August, when the melted snows of the Tibetan mountains and the torrential rains of inland China raise its winter level by fifty to sixty feet. In summertime Blue Funnel liners, P. & O. freighters, Blue Star boats, together with the ocean-going ships of many nations, tied up at the wharves in Hankow, and loaded produce direct to other countries. Big British, American, and Japanese cruisers in summer joined the smaller destroyers and river-craft that all the year round were patrolling the brown Yangtse. On this lower stretch there were sumptuous passenger boats belonging to Messrs. Jardine and Matheson, Butterfield and Swires, the China merchants (a wholly Chinese company), and various Japanese lines. We missionaries were accustomed to travel rough over the Chinese countryside, taking anything in the way of Chinese inns and their discomforts that Providence provided, when we were away from our stations and country chapels. Some of us were secretly rather grateful to that same mysterious Providence under which it had been ordained that, on a Yangtse steamer, we travelled first, or foreign, class. There were spacious cabins, big saloons, wide decks, and glorious food. There was such a luxury of space as was not possible on any ocean-going boat of our acquaintance. There you lay on your long bamboo chair

lazily watching the banks slide by with their crops, farmsteads, fishermen and cattle. Or you read or gossiped, sailing on an ocean where there were no waves, amidst scenes sometimes of surpassing beauty and always of living interest. I have known many a person who regarded the round ten-day trip from Hankow to Shanghai and back, or *vice versa*, as the most perfect holiday imaginable in the sweltering heat of summer for the spirit jaded and worn down. There were no worries, no hurry, no work, no pressure; it was all about as near Nirvana as anything on earth could be, though the Buddha could hardly have approved our ample meals.

Those steamers weren't really built as a luxury for foreigners and Chinese who were able and willing to pay the foreign price. Their great holds were crammed with merchandise going and coming, and greatly reducing the prices of commodities which might otherwise have taken weeks to be brought up in small quantities in slow-sailing Chinese junks—always the victims of capricious risks.

Between hold and upper deck were crowded four classes of Chinese passengers, of which the first-class was spacious enough. The other three were rather more congested, but otherwise not unlike the arrangements made for cheap emigrant passengers from Britain to Australia. The passages were cheap, but there was a system of tea-boy stewards who battened upon the necessities of travellers in a heartless way with which the agents and managers of all the steamship companies found it almost impossible to cope. The love of money is the root of every sort of evil, and there were plenty of instances of the love of money and its evils as Chinese tea-boys preyed upon Chinese passengers who did not know the ropes. This is an instance of the temporarily uncontrollable evils that may arise when Western machine-made life is suddenly imposed upon a people unprepared. There are Chinese teeth gnashing at those evils, and Chinese minds working at the problem. A solution will come that the Chinese alone are capable of either finding or applying. Meanwhile the people suffer. The ordinary steamer plying between Shanghai and Hankow was about 3,000 tons. Shallower and lighter boats, of from 1,500 to 2,000 tons, dealt with the traffic from Hankow to Ichang, two days further west, at the eastern end of the Yangtse gorges and rapids. In summertime such steamers could also get to Changsha in Hunan, and all the year round steam-tugs and launches made that journey.

From Ichang westwards, through the gorges, there was no way of navigation but by Chinese junk when I first went to China. Now there are several steamers of less than 1,000 tons with high-powered engines and experienced pilots who take you up the rapids from Ichang to Chungking in four days of heavy going. The journey down the rapids takes less than three days' time.

Most of the traffic is still by junk and trackers, and it is difficult to imagine ordinary human toil more dangerous and more difficult than that of the trackers in the Yangtse Gorges.

As you sail along in your modern steamship, through and past the swirling waters of the rapids, where your captain is always on the bridge and always at a strain, the cliffs tower black above you on either side. Here and there are temples, as if growing from the rocks and forests in the apparently inaccessible perches beloved of solitary hermits and monks. It does not look as though there could be a foothold on those cliffs; but here and there you see teams of men—ten, twenty, forty—straining on great ropes tied to the tall masts of junks—heaving, straining, tugging the junk inch by inch and foot by foot over some particularly boiling patch of water. Sometimes they appear hardly to move; at other times they are pulled back until a smoother channel can be found. But the will and the strength of China's manpower conquers. The journey that takes you four days may take them six weeks, if indeed they arrive. That towing rope may snap and the junk fall helplessly on the rock waiting like a dragon to crush it with its iron teeth. A coolie may lose his foothold on that perilous path and it would be good fortune indeed if he alone were hurled to destruction. But, on the whole, China's manpower has conquered the gorges as it has conquered so many other things. Yet no wonder the name for these day labourers, be they on boats or in ordinary hard-bitten life, is "*coolie*"—"bitter strength." Bitter are the tasks that China's labourers face, and great the strength that suffers and overcomes the tasks. Never was name more fittingly given than "*coolie*"—"bitter strength."

Westwards from Chungking the river is still a broad stream flowing between rice-fields and with mountains in the distance. From Chungking to Suifu was a three days' journey in a little steam-launch with two or three simple two-bunked cabins and room to sit on the deck in a chair surrounded by Chinese travellers eager to know all about you and gain all the news you have to give. Another 150 miles beyond Suifu, up the tributary Min Ho,

is Chengtu, the capital of the province. Somewhere up in Yunnan and Tibet are the sources of the water that will go on running their 1,200 miles from Suifu to the sea.

What a river! Navigable to some sort of steamer traffic for twice the length of England and Scotland and miles beyond that for boats and junks. Throughout its whole course it is the bringer of life rather than destruction; though from time to time its waters break their banks and bring destruction too. The Yangtse is to the Thames what the Chinese people are to the British people, so vast, so long, so old as to make your imagination reel before it. Yet the Yangtse and the Thames alike consist of life-giving and life-bearing waters; and the people of the Chinese race, as of the British race, are people with strangely kindred qualities, and he who has read his own heart has seen theirs too.

On the upper or the lower reaches of the river are often to be seen huge rafts of timber. So big are they that cottages are built upon them, where the woodmen and their families live as they guide the great rafts ever seawards to be sold to wood merchants in Hankow or Kiukiang, Nanking, Wuhu, Anking, or Shanghai. Often, as you sail, you see the water almost black with wild duck that take to their wings as the steamer approaches. Almost as common are the droves of tame duck. Their owners paddle along in boats urging their teams of ducks with long bamboos to cross the river, waddle up the bank and take their course across paddy field or lake until, finally, at this town and that, their company has been broken up and sold for food as the needs of the populace may demand.

On the river bank are great fishing nets worked up and down by a sort of bamboo lever which plunges the huge spoon of a net beneath the water, and then at the fisher's will raises it again with fish jumping and flashing silver in the sunlight. Or you pass a sampan with a dozen cormorants sitting watching the river, ringed round the neck so that it is impossible for them to swallow the fish that they so dutifully and diligently hook out of the river with their beaks. The fisherman removes the fish from their beaks and gives them some little dainty as reward; so all parties concerned in the operation are made happy, except the unfortunate fish. The only thing that would make him happy would be for a good Buddhist to come along, buy him from the market and throw him into the river again, thus "saving life." Sometimes on the river you see men doing that, releasing eels, bought in the market, or fish. "Saving life" is "*Hao-shih*"—a "good deed." For we are

all sinners, they say, and require a great many "good deeds" of every kind to balance our bad deeds.

Upon a summer's night you will sometimes see the waters all aglow with tiny little paper lotus-shaped lamps with flickering candles inside. It is the feast of all the souls drowned in the Ocean River, and the people are sending little lights to light them in the darkness of the shadow world. The way in which so often Chinese match their artistry with their devotion is one of the beauties and attractions of this ancient people.

On the banks are not only temples on every high hill, but marts and cities of considerable size and great importance. Happily, your steamer calls at many of these river ports. Opposite others the boat slows down and the engines stop, and as the ship glides on with slackened pace large flat-bottomed barges jammed full of people, rowed by half a dozen energetic sailors in the prow, make across the river and, amid yells and excitement, and not without danger, are tied to the side of the ship. This sort of thing looks thrilling enough as you lean over the side of the ship and watch the struggling passengers. By all the laws of Nature, it would seem that many of them ought to be pitched into the river; but, strangely, few accidents occur, and it is seldom that a barge overturns with dreadful loss of life. Then it is due to the raging of a storm with mountainous waves that adds to the complications of the embarkation.

To be a passenger yourself in the midst of this melee is not so frightening as to observe it. It is "*reh-lao*"—all right, "hot and noisy"—but you are too busy with your belongings and your movements to have time to think, and once the steamer has started again and you have cast off, you find yourself in smoothish water making for the shore and some little steamer office, which may be in a temple. The whole length of the river is one long pageant of junks of all sorts and shapes, sailing east or west, or across the mighty river. Sometimes, with a following wind, they go scudding along, almost keeping pace with the steamer itself. An early recollection of mine was seeing a Chinese boatman at the helm of his boat, in the rain, under a huge Chinese oil-paper umbrella. It struck me as quaint and unusual then. It strikes me as very sensible now. For why should one get drenched to the skin if it isn't necessary, merely for the look of things?

Near the main ports little steam and motor launches were always fussing about, and there were generally a gunboat or two of a foreign nation anchored off the consulate from which that

nation's flag was flying. With the abolition of the unequal treaties, the foreign gunboat will go; but there have been times of trouble when those keepers of the peace were as welcome to the Chinese as to any foreigner. One chapter closes and another opens, as it should. This is China, and it is right that the Chinese, and no other nation, should be mistress in the new Chinese house.

The first port of call out of Shanghai was Tungchow, where the chicken-boats went for their cargoes of large brown fowl and sizable eggs. For it is not true that all Chinese eggs are diminutive in size. Tungchow, at any rate, was famous for its chickens and its eggs.

Then came Chinkiang lying in a wide stretch of the river that was something of a shallow, sandbank-filled lake. Beyond was Silver Island, covered with Chinese temples and forts. The setting of the temples among the trees and surrounding waters was as beautiful as anything I have known in China, and that is saying much.

By the second morning the boat was lying tied up at the wharf in Nanking, the capital of new China. I have sailed past Nanking when a bombardment was on, and it seemed as though the guns were just beside your ears. I have crossed the broad river there in a terrific storm in their modern ferry boat. I have seen the great rail-ferry, the work of Messrs. Dorman, Long & Co., which took the train from Shanghai and carried it bodily to the opposite bank at Pukow, whence it resumed its journey to Tientsin, Peking, and the north. I have walked on its wide new boulevard, that was blazed across the city when Nanking became the capital. I have admired the great new Government buildings, a combination of modern utility and ancient Chinese beauty, with gleaming tiles and ornamented roofs.

I have visited the Ming tombs, passing along a road bordered by stone officials, stone lions, stone camels, to the simple but impressive and most massive mound where some ancient emperor lies. I have climbed the steps to the modern mausoleum of Sun Yat-sen, where, in a chamber of gorgeous Italian marble, he lies embalmed in a glass-lined casket, as Lenin in the Moscow Kremlin. In ancient days they had colossal ideas and conceptions; and I have wondered if, after all, the old Ming tomb may not outlast the modern mausoleum, as the Pyramids of Egypt outlast our modern history.

Beyond Nanking are Anking, with its pagoda and its Cathedral set upon a hill; Wuhu, with its granaries and its great hospital on

the bluff beyond; Kiukiang, with the black mass of the Kuling Mountains, a perpetual and ever-changing background. Then come Chichow and Wusueh, with a glorious stretch of fiord-like scenery between; after that the lovely county of Tayeh and Shih Hui Yao, with its piles of iron-ore lying on the banks from the iron mines waiting to be transported east or west, and with its steel-smelting plant and model settlements. By and by Hankow and the other Wu-Han cities come in sight, and then, finally, Ichang below the gorges and Chungking above. Unique, in some ways, Chungking must always have been. It is a city set on the steep sides of a hill. What toil for the water-coolies is there, carrying their precious load up those steep steps for the blessing of the people. Chungking has been bombed and battered, destroyed and resurrected, since I climbed its steep and difficult streets. By and by it may be known as Chungking the Indestructible, wartime capital of China.

## CHAPTER XXIII

# KULING

In my years in China it was one of my duties to care for certain graves in Hankow in the old cemetery that had long been closed. Relatives who had returned to England were concerned that their family graves should not be neglected. There was a monument to Argent (a missionary) and Green (a Customs man) who had lost their lives together as they tried to go to the help of women and children in the Wusueh riot of 1891. There was the grave of the beloved and honoured David Hill. But what struck me most was the death, year by year, of mothers and little children whose names and dates were chronicled in that almost forgotten place.

In the nineteenth century, Hankow was the second place for fatal illness in the world in all the areas where our missionaries worked. The other place was Sierra Leone in West Africa, which was commonly called, at that time, the "White Man's Grave."

Old Hankow residents have told me how they used to approach the damp and breathless heat of Hankow's summer with concern each year. There were malaria, dysentery, and cholera to be faced amongst a multitude of other evils in a day when not too much was known about the cause and cure of these diseases, and at a time of the year when physical resistance was very low. "We used to wonder among ourselves who would go this summer," an old friend said to me. Others in other parts were suffering similarly and wondering if there was nothing to be done. Then, some ten years before I got to China, some adventurous spirit, driven by necessity, secured a large plot upon the Kuling Mountains behind the town of Kiukiang. He was a missionary at that time, and had often got away from the summer heat into the foothills of the great range which cut off the breezes from the riverside port and caused its sweltering heat. This Kiukiang missionary, joined together with one or two adventurers from Hankow, finally followed the pilgrim and coolie paths to the heart of the mountain. For Kuling for long centuries had been a place of pilgrimage and retreat. Lovely pagodas stand upon many of the mountain spurs, and temples, with glorious views, nestle in the upper valleys. One of the great Buddhist sects had its origin in a temple in Kuling.

The range was famous also in Confucian annals; for Chu Fu-Tse,

the most famous of all Confucian commentators, had gathered his pupils and written his commentaries in the lower folds of one of Kuling's innumerable vales.

These early pioneers made their journeys at considerable personal risks, and a friend of mine, out camping there in the early days, considered that he escaped death with but a few hours to spare. For the hillmen were not anxious that strange foreigners should come and live among their sacred mountains. More than a deed of purchase was required to complete the settlement. Long negotiations and steady patience were required before, at length, it was established that foreigners might flee the terrors of the summer of the Yangtse plains and spend their summer in the coolness and the beauty of the mountain air.

When right of ownership was finally established, various missions and business concerns took up sections of the well-watered valley some 3,500 feet above the sea. The Customs had a section for their staff. The shipping companies and the banks followed suit. For, though the men had perforce to stay at their posts in the heat and carry on, it was a tremendous relief to their menfolk that wives and children could spend the dangerous months from mid-June to mid-September out of the disease-ridden plains in the life-giving air of the mountains.

An ex-missionary, a surveyor by training, was persuaded to return to China and lay out the whole of the central valley in sizeable plots. He proved to be an able and efficient manager of the estate for half a lifetime. This continuity of service in Central China was very important. For the people of the hills got to know him and respect him. It is very true of China that "a stranger will they not follow; for they know not the voice of strangers." When I reached China the beginnings of Kuling's development had only begun. There was no prophecy of the great expansion that was to follow. We herded together in the common bungalow, glad to be there, glad to meet friends, glad to walk and picnic, but not really getting out of the mountain the healing that was to come.

My first visit to Kuling was after that gruelling summer in a Chinese village when devil drivers, night after night, had denied us all possibility of sleep. There was no wharf or hulk at our riverside port. So we lay in the landing-barge, waiting for the steamer from Hankow, afraid to stay ashore lest it should pass us by. There we stayed, sweltering and mosquito-bitten, till with a shout the look-out on the bank yelled that he had seen the lights of the down-river steamer. Passengers and luggage piled in on top of us; oars

were unshipped, and with cries and grunts the oarsmen propelled us into the middle of the river just in time for the mad scramble on board. Then in five minutes we were in the cool and comfort of a foreign cabin, refreshed with such a bath as we hadn't had for months. Up betimes next morning, we could see the black mass of the mountain with its huge head swathed in dark clouds. Arrived at Kiukiang, as soon as we had tied up, head coolies met us wearing straw hats, round the bands of which was the legend "Kuling Estate." After the usual yelling and arguing as to the number of coolies required for our baggage, and the right number of men to carry our chairs, off we hurried over the sun-dried plains, pausing every three miles or so for rest and tea for the coolies. Beggars gathered round our chairs craving for money. Others clustered round asking for medicine; for the countryfolk in China, all with one consent, assume your ability to heal all manner of diseases. After two hours' journey over that hot, sun-baked road at top speed, we found ourselves in the Rest House at "*Lien Hua Tung*"—"Lotus Flower Cave"—surely the loveliest of all Chinese names, a refreshment in itself to parched and tired men. In all my visits to Kuling I never saw the cave. For me it means, not a cave, but a journey through the arch of trees, with flowers linked about.

This first part of the road is done by motor now, and at Lien Hua Tung you take your choice of a bamboo chair with four to six coolies to lift you off the torrid plain into the mountains or, better still, you walk. If you are a woman or a mother, you have little choice; for the winding path is steep, very steep in places. Whether walking or riding, as you climb, soon you are looking down on the harvest-covered plains and the Yangtse, in its sinuous course or flooded lake-lands below you. You feel the sudden puffs of ice-chill winds on your perspiring face. You pass into a little cloudlet of mist and then out again. You see and hear the birds. Even the cicada sounds like music. Up and up you wind, 1,000, 2,000, 3,000 feet. Across the valley you see "the Gap," the Chinese street at the entrance of Kuling's valley, where Chinese storekeepers, milkmen, laundrymen, bootmakers, photographers, stationers, post office, and telegraph office are waiting to attend to all your needs. Kuling has meant prosperity to many an honest trader of which he never dreamed before. There's a church and school, and hospital there too; for foreigners seeking health could not neglect the needs of those who, for their sakes, had gathered there.

As the years passed by, I preferred to walk up from Lien Hua Tung to the Gap. You were your own master and, however exhausted, could make your own pace and gaze at will at the far-spreading panorama below you. Then you could just pause at the most refreshing and breezy corners, drinking in the air like wine. One stretch of the road we called "The Thousand Steps." It was literally that, with tiny booths where you could rest your heart, beating as if it would burst, and slake your thirst with Chinese tea ere you resumed your steps.

The Gap was reached and passed at last, and you swung into a wooded avenue alongside a cool and rippling clear stream. And so to mission bungalow or private house—if you were so fortunate as to be the proud possessor of your own house and land.

In those early years land was cheap, and building of rubble or cut stone almost as cheap as the land. Even the margin of a missionary's allowances was sufficient to build something. A friend and I, each on the eve of marriage, pooled our resources and built a tiny bungalow which both families occupied till we could get his built next door, and both were paid for long before our second furlough. It's remarkable what the money you don't spend on needless things will do. We scraped and scrimped ourselves, but we got our tiny house that we had planned and designed ourselves so as to get the maximum value out of every inch of building at the lowest price. We had a one-eyed contractor, who lost on every bungalow he built, and yet went on building all the years that I was there. I presume he had a sum fixed in his mind of what he considered legitimate profit, and everything he made less than that was loss. Kuling seemed to be fairly full of one-eyed men. I came to the conclusion that these hillmen were independent and combative people, and that the casualties to their eyes were due to village conflicts.

In those days everyone was trying to get a plot. Every plot had the best view. Every house was the best designed and every contractor was a little better than someone else's. There was an air of happiness and health about that tended to this mood.

There was a story of one man who got his plan by revelation. When the house was completed it was found there was no staircase. There wouldn't, of course, need to be for angels. However, he thought again, and finally a staircase was added. When I saw it it was there all right, though it was outside the house instead of inside.

To this abode of bliss women and children rightly came early

and stayed late. Men varied in their stay. Americans, as is their wont in their own native land, tended to stay longer than Englishmen. It is curious how much we follow the ways of our fathers and the customs of our countries. English missionaries, unless they were ill, made much the sort of stay they would have done in England. There were temptations in this, as in every other paradise, and the foreign business-man was apt to be critical of the missionary on holiday. On the other hand, he neither knew the conditions of the missionary's residence or of his work, and probably never differentiated between race and race or one man and another.

When I see Kuling it is always upon the background of that Hankow cemetery. The life of exiles must have been enormously extended and increased by the determination and the courage of those early pioneers to Kuling.

As the years passed on, Kuling overflowed into three other valleys, on the tops of the mountains, all well-watered and all, of course, better than anyone else's. The whole estate was governed and taxed by a Land-renter's Meeting. The meeting of this august assembly was an annual event of some moment. It elected a small council, passed a budget, determined questions of policy and, consisting of many nations as it did, was a proof of the effectiveness of democracy. There was a great central church, packed full in the season with 700 worshippers from Church and State and business communities all over the Yangtse Valley. There was a medical hall, a library, and concert hall, an American and a British school. All were the result of private initiative and enterprise. A small staff was permanently engaged for managing, surveying, policing, controlling the coolie traffic, and for public health. The Land-renters paid a not exorbitant tax to enable these and other things to be done. There were swimming-pools and tennis courts, with their annual tournaments. Above all, there was Children's Day with children's sports. Children flourished in Kuling, and there were always children playing in the streams and roads and woods of her health-giving valleys.

The great joy of Kuling, apart from the gathering of all sorts of lonely exiles to some sort of homely society again, were the walks and flowers and picnics.

It was my holiday place, and the only holiday place I knew for thirty years, but it never palled, and I was still finding new places to visit as well as renewing acquaintance with old friendly spots again.

The highest point, the Han Yang Feng (Hanyang peak), was some 5,000 feet up. So there was still another 1,500 feet to climb over several miles of mountain path through sunshine, mist and cloud before you stood out on the peak and gazed through cloud after cloud upon the widespread carpet of fir-clad foothills, fields, and sunlit harvests beneath, with the Yangtse always there, winding its course along. Then there was the Lion Precipice, where, as in Mam Tor in the Peak District of Derbyshire, you look down the grassy slopes to Castleton on the one side and sharp down the cliff on the other. The main difference was that the Peak of Derbyshire and its Mam Tor was a sort of child's toy model of the real thing, the Lion's Precipice at Kuling.

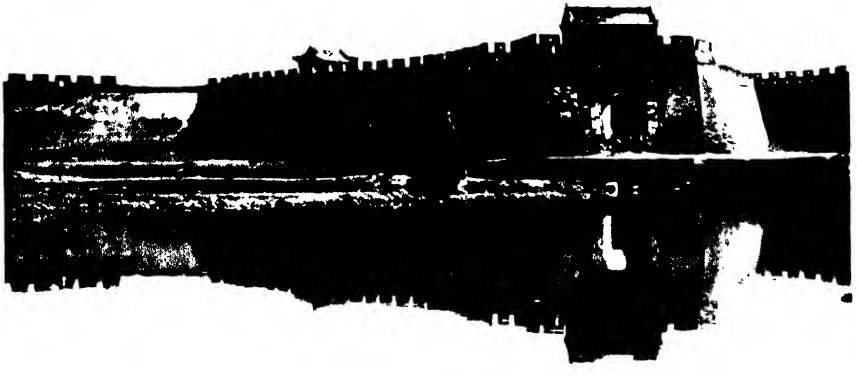
The Temple in the Clouds was a nearer rendezvous for picnickers. Its grass-clad slopes soothed you as at morning or evening you lifted up your eyes to the mountains. It meant a two hours' walk to reach the temple, and when you reached it there was no temple much to see. There was a lovely clean spring, a low cottage —half temple, half house—a short bench on which to sit and have your food, a monk to give you hot water. There were a few tomato plants and cucumbers and other greenstuffs the monk himself was raising. It was a temple. It was often in the clouds. The streams and flowers and grass and views varied whichever way you took, and there was no path you could not take, as long as you kept together and did not get lost hidden in the mist.

There was the lily valley too, with its Conference Hall, where Chinese Y.M.C.A. and other people held their Student and Summer Conferences. To wake up in the bungalow there, and watch the morning sun come up over the mountains and the Poyang Lake could be an unforgettable joy and a reminder that, after all, there might be something in a sunrise. Kuling's flowers were of many sorts and all of them beautiful. We used to return from our picnics with our arms full of tiger-lilies and a large scented pale bell-shaped lily. In the spring there were violets with a real violet scent, and the hillsides were carpeted pink or yellow or purple with azaleas. It was as though some artist angel had painted the mountain slopes with some great splash of colour.

Many of Kuling's trees broke out into rich, white, waxen flowers before their leaves appeared. There were honeysuckle, wisteria, and roses all growing wild in their season.

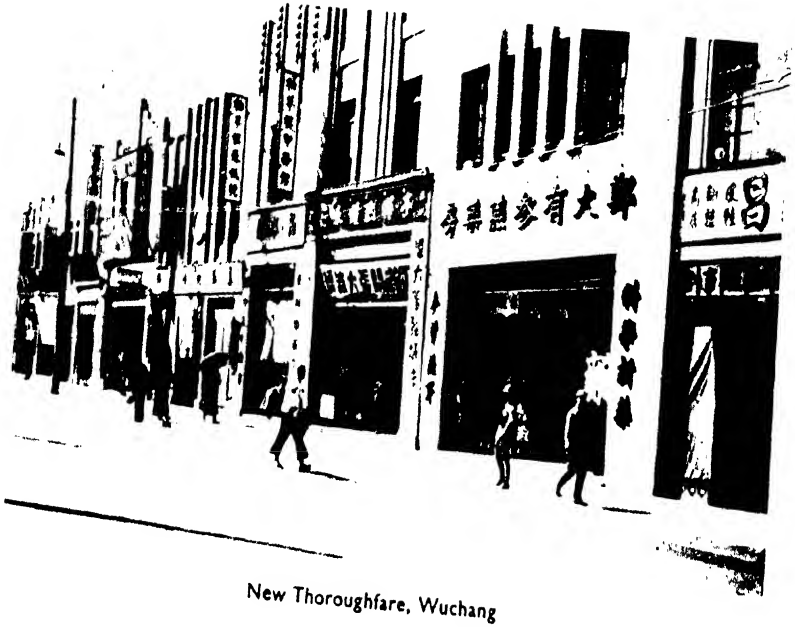
On the hills was rhubarb, ungrowable in hotter zones. The tomato flourished and the potato, as well as the more usual Chinese crops.

In the grounds of the Summer Palace, Peiping



A City Wall with moat

Main Street, Kunming



New Thoroughfare, Wuchang

Chinese pedlars brought their wares of silk and curios and pottery for you to buy. If you were prepared to spend hours bargaining with them, you could make good purchases of presents for your friends at home.

In later years the Chinese themselves came to see the value of Kuling as a health resort, and you would see them picnicking over the mountains too, though that at first seemed a strange and foreign habit.

China of the Nationalist Revolution is different from anything I have known before, and more and more Kuling was beginning to become a Simla—a summer meeting-place for Government officials from Nanking. Kuling has all been fully back in Chinese hands for several years now, though at one time it seemed like a little foreign island in the midst of China's beauties.

Chiang Kai-shek and his lady have come to love the place, and were frequently on the hill prior to the disastrous war year of 1937. No official could have lived there less fussily, or more free from care or protection. It was at Kuling that the Generalissimo heard of the Japanese aggression at the Marco Polo Bridge in the north. It was in Kuling that he was driven to take his final stand, and call upon his people for a resistance that shall only end with victory, whatever the cost.

Kuling that has sheltered the monks and temples of Buddhism, and the schools and teachers of Confucianism, that has given new life to missionaries and foreigners alike, has witnessed no greater act than the Generalissimo's call to resistance and to freedom.

## CHAPTER XXIV

## UNDER THREE FLAGS

ONE of the things of which it is necessary again and again to remind myself is that such experiences as I am relating have been encountered under three very different epochs of Chinese history. Between the year 1911 and the year 1912 there was a great gulf fixed, and between 1925 and 1926 in some respects an even greater gulf.

We who have lived in China are aware of the unwisdom of generalising our experiences, say, from Hankow to Peiping, or from Shanghai to Canton. What may have been true in one area has never been necessarily true in another part of so vast a country. It may not be quite as evident, and yet it is equally true, that it is as erroneous to generalise chronologically as it is geographically. This book covers three main periods—Manchu and pre-revolutionary China up to 1911; Republican from 1912 to 1925; and Nationalist from 1926 onwards. Young Chinese, or young foreigners, who have only known the last period at first-hand would be astonished could they realise the depth and the scope of the changes that have taken place. There is definite advantage, therefore, in drawing in outline a picture of the threefold scene that China, my China, represents to me. Deep-seated continuity is there, but such storms and upheavals also on the surface as make the three pictures in some respects almost unimaginably different, whatever their fundamental unity. The three pictures are represented by China's three flags. There was the yellow Imperial flag on which pranced the dragon rampant. There followed the five-barred flag—red, yellow, blue, white, and black—that was China's flag from 1912 to 1925. Finally, there is the white sun rising on the blue field, the risen sun in the blue heavens, of new and Nationalist China.

All is China. The blue-clad figures still crowd to-day, as formerly, along the street. Boats ply and coolies shout and carry as they ever did; but twice over the atmosphere has changed entirely. Naturally, time has changed me too, but the setting down of one foreigner's reactions to the changing flags, and all they stand for, may be a revealing way of describing changes that have taken and are taking place in changeless China.

The dragon flag was the Imperial flag. The yellow background

of the flag was the Imperial yellow. No one but the Emperor and the things of Emperors might be adorned with that colour. The dragon had five claws on each foot. The five-clawed dragon was the symbol of the Emperor. Only Imperial emblems, decorations, pictures, pottery, or flags might bear the five-clawed dragon. There were other dragons on China's pottery or porcelain. They might have three or four claws on each foot, but the five-clawed beast was the symbol of the Imperial Palace.

In those early years of mine, the Chinese dragon was still rampant on the flag, and the British lion was "a-lashing of his tail." The beasts were in opposition and in conflict.

In the Boxer troubles the dragon had taken a severe mauling, but, being a dragon, his mauling had not proved mortal. He was beaten, but not cowed or overwhelmed. He had had losses and been compelled, for his good conduct, to find colossal indemnities by any standard previously known to him; but there he ramped upon his flag and occasionally rioted throughout his eighteen provinces. Somehow, it was just at that time that less was being said than formerly about foreign "spheres of influence" and on the atlas the various colours that hinted at those spheres of influence were giving place to Chinese yellow. For that defeated Chinese dragon and his people were not agreeing to "*Kua Fen*"—the "splitting of the melon"—as spheres of influence and partition of China were familiarly called.

The dragon was an ancient creature of Western heraldry and old-time fairy story. He was a creature of Old Testament and Greek myth. Men talked then of the ancient Chinese giant. Somehow dragons and Chinese giants seemed to fit. All was a little unearthly and very old. So China seemed to us then a little forbidding and forbidden.

There was a veritable Old Dragon in the Imperial City in Peking. There are three cities in the old capital, the Chinese City, the Tartar City, the Imperial City; each within its own high wall and close-barred gates. That Forbidden City, where the Empress Dowager sat on the Dragon Throne, was full of eunuchs, intrigues, cruelties, and darkness. Foreigners were rarely admitted on any terms. Viceroys approached the Imperial presence in fear and trembling and prostrated themselves before the throne in their ceremonial reverences.

Eunuchs, dragons, giants were all of a piece, and all unearthly. China seemed a strange survival from a bygone age. She was very old, very proud, very resistant to all new thought. Her recent

defeat at the hands of the Japanese in 1894, and her punishment at the hands of the Allies in 1900, had somehow left her strangely strong, unchanging, and unchangeable.

There was an air of resistance and hostility to foreigners and all their ways, especially on the part of the *literati*. The farmer has ever been a genial soul, more concerned with his fields than with politics of any kind. The shopkeeper also was content, whoever might be in power, if he were only let alone and allowed to get on with his business. The heart and mind of China was in the keeping of the scholars, and they, with a few brilliant exceptions, could not see what to do with the Western world except resist it. Perhaps they instinctively felt that that world and theirs could hardly exist together. Actually that proved to be the case; for in the changes that have come to China one of the most radical is the passing of the old-style scholar, with all his dignity, self-satisfaction, and even pride, from the scene. Yet, right up to the overthrow of the Manchus, he and all he stood for seemed strong and impregnable.

He taught others as he had been taught himself. First, he memorised the imperishable classics, as the Jews of old their Scriptures. Then he learned of its treasured meaning, as his teacher was able to expound it. Then he moulded his writing on the ancient style of the classics, and set forms that had grown out of their study. What he read and wrote no one but another scholar could understand or interpret. So he wrote the letters for his neighbours. He taught such children as were destined for the life of scholarship. He and he alone was capable of holding any sort of official position. The pen was not only mightier than the sword: there was no substitute for the pen at all. The hand that held the writing-brush and rubbed the ink on the slab ruled the land, and ruled it according to an old-cobwebbed system, however chaste and wonderful. The village, the county, the province, the country were entirely in the hands of this educated group, only 2 per cent. of all the people. What the Scribes and Pharisees are represented as being in the Scriptures, the *literati* were in China. Nor was there any division among them. They, and they alone, were the leaders, and beside them were the "*Yu min*"—"the stupid people," "which knoweth not the law," the common folk. The country was stiff with them and their traditions, and they were, almost to a man, hostile to any innovations. They were the great wall that protected China, and to some extent kept its loveliness from our sight.

As I look back, I realise the inevitability of my early attitude to China. Somehow that wall kept me at a distance. I was always outside the city, sometimes peering through the city gate, or looking over the wall from a nearby eminence; but if the dragon flag and its standard bearers, the *literati*, had remained to-day, I wonder if I should have been nearer an appreciation of China than I was in 1910.

The Republican flag and the Republican years, 1912–25, altered all that, altered things, as I see in retrospect, far more than we realised at the time.

Part of that period of dragons and eunuchs and peacock-feathered mandarins had been a very sheltered womanhood, with its tiny, bound feet and a clan-like home in which no individual man or woman had arrived. Freedom was regarded as license. Life was ruled by custom. Customs and traditions were guarded, in the last resort, by the *literati*, and China never changed or seemed to think of changing.

The 1911–12 Revolution never could have happened if this had been the whole story. Among China's 460 millions were fiery spirits, far more wrought up about their stagnant country and its faded glory than any foreigner could possibly be. They moved in secret societies, and whispered to one another of a new hope and a new day. Books on revolt were written and handed round for students to read. I was aware of them in the classrooms of my Christian school. Church guest-rooms, we learned later, had often been the rendezvous of eager spirits of the Revolution. At the first anniversary of the Revolution, when Chinese and foreign guests were gathered for speechifying in the banqueting-hall of the Vice-President, Li Yuan-Hung, one of China's revolutionary leaders, in the course of his speech publicly thanked the Bishop of Hankow for the use of his church guest-rooms, because there, all unknown to him, as to the police, there had gathered in quiet and safety little groups of those who planned and schemed for the day of deliverance that had now come. That not all women, even in those days, were backward and sheltered is evidenced by the fact that even in 1912 one of the congratulatory speeches was delivered by a woman. She was, however, so exceptional for the period in Central China as to mark the event as somewhat epoch-making.

We kept that anniversary under the five-barred flag which had been set up in opposition to the dragon. Somehow it seemed a very prosaic piece of bunting after the rampant dragon on his

yellow ground. It was just five equal strips of red, yellow, blue, white, and black. The strips were five because there were five racial groups within the Republic. They were equal in width because it was a people's country in which all were to share equally, with no dragon or any other creature dominant and rampant.

During the period of the five-barred flag, 1911–25, much of China's old stateliness seemed to disappear. In place of the dragon came the people, and the people are not so picturesque as mandarins adorned with dragon and phœnix and peacock's feathers. Unbending China had become more human at least to the foreign observer. It was tragically human. With central authority shattered, and war-lords and bandits dealing destruction to field and farm, city and countryside, it was too often sad and pitiable. Yet, in the midst of this, I felt my mood changing. I was living close to them, saw, in particular, a new sort of official evolving. He was not necessarily highly trained in the old classical education. He was not always so imposing and dignified in mien and dress as his predecessors. He had new ideas and new aims. He was often unskilled in the ways of officialdom, and making new traditions instead of following old ones. Then China's isolation and insularity had disappeared the way of dragons before the morning sun. In education she was so keen on following what was then regarded as world knowledge that she got new schools opened before she had the teachers to man them. It really hardly matters whether the hen comes first or the egg, as long as, once established, the useful process of laying eggs continues, and the matter of teachers and their training advances through the years.

It may have been smallness and insularity on my part, but somehow it is a little easier to get alongside man or country when their pursuits are your pursuits and their desires yours. Chinese students in this period not only pursued Western knowledge because it was a good way of earning an income, but, large numbers of them, because it was really knowledge. They were awakening to the fact that those old *literati* had remained an immobile world whilst modern science and universal knowledge had pressed on and left them standing.

In this same period the dead hand of many an ancient custom lost its grip. From the first, freedom from the Manchu meant freedom from much else. Instead of the talk of "*Yu Ssu Tao, San Chiao*"—"Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism, the threefold reli-

gion"—we began to hear of religious freedom. Parents were encouraging their children to make their own choice in the land of new freedom, though the older generation were loth to let go the practices of ancestral worship. It was in this period that in a village area I heard of Peking students returning home, full of the new wine of modern science, and going into certain temples and breaking up the idols with their axes. This was carrying religious freedom to some lengths, and I think I somewhat shared the feelings of the shocked and startled villagers. It is one thing to take a serious decision for oneself, but rather different to go and smash up other people's idols in your fervour.

Under the five-barred flag, to me, an Englishman, perhaps the greatest and most meaningful of all the freedoms was the steady emancipation of girls and women.

No one seemed to decree it. It just happened. That old dragon flag had stood for restraints in all directions. Once the dragon was displaced by the five-coloured freedom, so many undreamed of things began to be. Girls were going to school like boys, with satchels and slates, unattended. Groups of younger and older women were to be seen in my city of Wuchang, on Women's Day, going to the new exhibitions of modern knowledge and manufactures that began to be opened. Above all, the movement for the abolition of bound feet made great strides. Though the binding of feet was kept on in village homes, there began to be a generation of girls in city homes who had never known the pain and tears of this strange idea of the feet beautiful.

So that in this period of new Chinese freedoms there were gains as well as losses, high hopes as well as disorders, laughter as well as tears. The atmosphere somehow to me became more friendly. One passed from the coldness and hostility of the *literati* of the ancient China into the friendship of people whose goals and aims seemed, after all, similar to your own. The very disasters of the time, the war-lords and the fighting, gave perhaps a false sense of prosperity to the life and institutions with which I was connected. All sides seemed to covet the friendship of the Western nations. The emblem of them all, the missionary, planted in the midst of the land, with his church and school and hospital, was no longer a bone of contention, but a somewhat honoured friend and helper to the new China with which he most sincerely sympathised. When, by reason of political distress and trouble, much of normal Chinese life temporarily broke down, the church and school and hospital carried on, and even opened their gates in the days of

emergency to panic-stricken women and children who might seek a refuge from the looting soldiery.

Then, with the death of Sun Yat-sen, there began a new movement with a new flag, all rather more terrible than anything in all my life in China I had hitherto known. The Shanghai riots and shootings of June 30th, 1925, were the first bursting of the storm. No one not present on the spot was capable really of knowing the truth. Yet we all had the truth, had it in a time of great tension and excitement, and all our truth did not agree. The Chinese, as a whole, said one thing and the English another, and both were sure they were right. The second episode was in Hankow. I knew and respected the British Consul who felt compelled to order the shooting lest a worse calamity should befall, and talked with him within a few hours of the dreadful occasion. I know how he loathed what he felt to be the necessity. Strangely, that Hankow episode was rarely mentioned afterwards. It was not counted important or significant in revolutionary history, though it was near and shocking enough to us. Within a matter of a few weeks there was shooting again around the little foreign-settled islet at Canton that goes by the name of Shameen, "Sandy Face." Great bitterness was engendered from that incident.

Then followed the declaration of independence of Canton from the Peking Parliament, and the lifting of the Kuomintang (Nationalist) standard, the white sun on a blue ground, the risen sun in the heavens, to take the place of the raging dragon of antiquity.

The more I remember, the more amazed I am at the change of mood of so many of us between 1926 and 1936 under this third flag.

In that first year we had felt ill-treated and almost outraged at the animosity that, through no fault of ours, seemed to be directed against us. We had wished China well. We had rejoiced in the freedoms of her new republic. We had sympathised with our friends in the sufferings of their country. We had helped them all we knew to the realisation of their dreams. Suddenly the land was all against us for the sheer sin of being British. We were not wanted, nor anything that belonged to us or was related to us. Even then a Chinese friend said to me, "This won't last very long. I say it to our shame. We Chinese cannot hate for very long. It will come right. You'll see." Some shame, I thought, not to be able to hate very long. I feel that is true of the British too, both our strength and our weakness. In many things we are curiously akin to the Chinese.

When these new standard-bearers were finally convinced that whatever might be our national policy, we ourselves were there as friends, and not in any sense as masters, conditions did become easier. Britain through those years, under the Foreign Secretaryships of Sir Austen Chamberlain and Arthur Henderson, did, as a nation, behave with amazing patience, understanding, and goodwill. There must have been knowledgeable people in British official circles.

Long before 1936 most of us, forgetting all resentments and perhaps understanding them, were as heartily pro-Nationalist as before we had been pro-Republican and anti-Manchu.

Something else had happened to us. We had realised the thrill of being in a nation where it was Easter, where the whole atmosphere was one of hope and spring; and it was good to be alive.

## CHAPTER XXV

## THE PASSING OF THE CITY WALL

THE Chinese have never felt happy about their city walls. They used them in time of trouble, with bandits and disbanded soldiers about. As an emergency provision, the Chinese were practical enough to see their value, but in regular times of peace they judged them to be a menace, or an inconvenience, or both.

The sight, all over Central China, of a quiet, cathedral-like city within the wall, and a busy, enterprising, shopkeeping section and market outside the wall, with its firm-barred and massive gates, revealed a Chinese tradition and a point of view. Official China was inside the walls; free, natural China stayed outside.

This cannot be emphasised too much. It was entirely characteristic of all China of which I had any intimate knowledge. The nation seemed to suffer from claustrophobia. The people would not in the ordinary way be shut within four walls. All of us, in our inland sojourn, shared that point of view. We were always particular to see that the back-door or gate was functioning. We, with the Chinese, strongly objected to being cornered without a means of escape.

Through Hankow, which in the Tai-Ping rebellion had three times been destroyed by fire, another characteristically Chinese invention was to be found. It was called a "*T'ai-P'ing Men*," or "Tai-Ping door." It was an actual door built into the thin wall that separated two Chinese houses. It was always locked and never to be used except in time of fire or other terrible emergency, when your neighbour had a definite right of way through that "*T'ai-P'ing Men*" into your house if that would save his life.

A Chinese city gate was locked and barred during the hours from dark till dawn. Then there was no way in or out except by official permit or by special favour. For eight to ten hours of the twenty-four a citizen's movements were definitely curtailed and could be restricted at any time that, for good reasons, the officials ordered the closing of the gates. Most of us had been locked in Chinese cities by day as well as by night. Certainly, with the dawn of freedom in the years from 1911 to 1925 there had been a considerable relaxation of the rigidity of the rules that controlled the city gates. It was then much easier, in times of peace, than it had

been in Manchu days to get into, or out of, the city at all times of the day and night, as many of us proved; but there were always difficulties in the way. The sense of freedom of movement that was mine when I lived outside the great East Gate of Wuchang was in striking contrast to the cooped-up feeling that I had when residing inside the city at Chien Chia Chieh. From that point of view I thoroughly shared the dislike of the ordinary Chinese freeman for the restraints of the city wall.

In 1927 and following years a tremendous change took place. Through wide areas of Central and Southern China city after city lost its city wall. Workmen were set deliberately to pull them down. The great stones or bricks of which they had been constructed were pulled apart, stored, sold, or used for constructional purposes. The earthworks which had been the substance of the wall and of which the stone or brick had merely been the outer facing, were either demolished or traversed by innumerable paths leading in and out of the city at will. In some cases the walls became the foundation of new and excellent carriage and motor roads. It must not be supposed that all this change was in every case quite sudden. During the Republican period the city walls had, in some places, begun to be used for utilitarian purposes. The new "horse road" at the back of Hankow, as has been mentioned, had been constructed along the course of the old and insignificant wall. Go-ahead Changsha had not waited for any second revolution to follow the Hankow lead. Speaking generally, however, there was no significant or widespread change till the armies of the Nationalists had swept up to the Yangtse and beyond. After that it was only a little time before it was deliberately decreed that city walls should be abolished as relics of feudalism.

It was not merely that the Chinese, as the English, cherished their freedom of movement and personal liberty; but that these glorious city walls were definitely condemned as belonging, shall we say, to the period of dragons, dragon flags, and other oppressors. From inside these walls Manchu and other Imperialistic generals and officials had dominated the life of the people. Inside those walls had been the *yamen* (official offices) and their underlings, the oppressors of the people. Inside those walls heroes of the Revolution had been caught and yielded up their liberty and their life. Now the walls, with a good many other old things, bad and less bad, had to disappear.

Any Englishman as he wanders about these islands of ours and

enters the castle ruins and sees them with an eye of imagination can understand the Chinese point of view. Their strength and beauty amaze and thrill us, but there were dungeons as well as banqueting-halls. There were cruel barons as well as genial masters. There were serfdom and its attendant evils. Whilst we may sometimes sigh for a glimpse of the glories of those old days, we know that it is better now to see them in their ruined, ivy-covered state than it would have been to live in the society of which these castles are the lasting symbols. I have friends who, on visiting China, have regretted the passing of those massive walls. They went to China to find something different and they mourn the passing of these great bastions of Chinese feudalism. That is natural enough for sightseers, for Chinese city walls were magnificent structures that seemed in the course of the centuries to be almost a part of the natural scenery. As you journeyed over the countryside and came, at sunset, within view of the gate-towers and crenellated walls of a Chinese city standing out among the trees, against the glowing sky, you had a picture of amazing beauty. The mere recollection of these things brings back visions of unforgettable experiences of Chinese city scenery. After all, however, Chinese city walls were never built for the enjoyment of foreign tourists. They were built as our old castles, small-scale cities themselves, were built for specific purposes. The Chinese Nationalists rightly judged that those purposes were not in accordance with the aims and needs of modern life, and those same Nationalists rightly determined that the walls must be destroyed. China has temporarily, at least, lost some of her ancient magnificence through this determination, but soon new and other magnificences will arise. A living nation will construct its own objects of beauty, and China has already begun to do so.

Whatever has happened since, I have seen a superb new library building in Peiping, a municipal office in greater Shanghai, Government buildings in Nanking, the Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall in Canton, and a university near the East Lake in Wuchang that more than make up, in my judgment, for the undoubted glory of the walls that have passed away.

Nothing has changed in Peiping. All the old marvels of walls and palaces and temples are there; for the Nationalist writ had not run as far as the Nationalist armies had progressed. This demolition of city walls was widespread in the south and centre of the country; but North China was the last and least affected part of the country. Japanese aggression did more to drive the north-

erners into the arms of the Nationalist centre and south than even the efforts of the Nationalists themselves. Perhaps, in the end of the day, the glory of old Peiping may be allowed to remain, for the Chinese will not wantonly destroy what does not stand in the way of progress. Whilst sympathising with the general trend of Chinese currents of thought, one would like to think that Peiping might remain a memorable city of the ancient glory of which the modern Chinese nation is the heir. In the interim period, anyhow, the walls, with their tremendous gates and watch-towers stand unimpaired, the old Imperial cities and palaces have been turned into museums and parks that all may share, whilst the peerless Temple and Altar of Heaven still stand gleaming pure amidst their groves with their mystic and mysterious appeal to all thinking men. Peiping's walls still stand, but Peking's name has been levelled to the ground. Peking means "Northern Capital," home of Emperors, location of palaces. Peiping, as the Nationalists call it, means either "Northern Plain" or "Northern Peace." The second syllable can mean equally "peace" or "plain," a level place where the valleys have been exalted and the mountains brought low, and all are on the level and at peace, where the city has no need of a wall, for the days of her warfare are accomplished.

When I revisited Peiping in 1940, it was significant to me that the Japanese had reversed the name once more and called it Peking, the Northern Capital. In this difference of name and the different attitudes to city walls you have two psychologies, and, in spite of what artistic loss may be entailed, I confess myself a convinced Nationalist.

The abolition of their walls the Chinese identified with the overthrow of feudalism. By feudalism they meant all tyranny of Chinese or of foreigners that hold the people down. The walls came down with amazing speed. Between two visits to a city the work of demolition appeared complete.

Speed, it seems to me now, was a mark of the Nationalist Revolution. In 1927 when the Foreign Office of China was located in Hankow, the first Secretary was a Chinese acquaintance whom I frequently visited on business. I remember him talking to me one day, when, as it seemed, they had moved so fast as to be in danger of wrecking the very chariot that bore them. "You think that we have done wrong in moving at this pace," he said. "You would like us to go your English way and gradually develop our autocracy to the use of the ways and weapons of

democracy. We tried that at first. We came, in the Republican period, to the old officials and we told them of our new ideas for China. 'Yes, yes,' they said. 'That's excellent. We'll see what we can do about it.' Then nothing happened. We were thwarted every time. It would have taken centuries to move with these men. So we determined there was nothing to be done but sweep them out of the way and work our new ideas ourselves. Evolution would not do. So we have taken to revolution. We'll clear them out and start again. There is no other way." As I think of that eager spirit, I realise more fully why the city walls had so rapidly and thoroughly to go.

From 1911 to 1925 there had been changes here and there, but no more than to give people a sense of direction. After a century or two, by slow and natural processes, these old walls and gates would have crumbled away that new roads and construction might take their place. In that case there'd have been no sudden dislocation. It just would have happened gradually, if, in the event, it had happened at all. After all, the original walls had been built round city after city in a circumscribed and clearly defined time, and it was logical and in accordance with the days in which we lived, if changes of this nature had to be made, to make them quickly. Perhaps, in the end, there would prove to have been less dislocation.

There were other walls than those of stone and brick and earth mounds. There were other feudalisms than the war-lords, and the men of force who from their city fastnesses had held the people from their liberties. There was the tariff wall and the treaty wall, which the Nationalists, following Sun Yat-sen, judged to be keeping China in subjection. "Overthrow the city walls and feudalism," were slogans of the period. "Overthrow Imperialism," "Overthrow unequal treaties" were even more common slogans, and especially that about the treaties.

The treaties were, of course, unequal treaties. Where, in history, are there treaties enacted after any war that are not treaties imposed unequally by victors over vanquished?

I don't suppose a majority of the Chinese people saw why their traditional walls were being torn to pieces. I am sure the better war-lords were convinced it was their duty to resist the overwhelming by the Nationalist armies. Feng Yu-hsiang and Yen Hsi-shan, in resisting Chiang Kai-shek in the 1920's, were contending for an old order that they believed to be better than anything they could see in the new; and there were few foreigners

who, at the beginning, shared Dr. Sun's or the Nationalists' views on the iniquity of the unequal treaties.

City walls might be irksome to restive freemen, but they had sheltered Chinese populace as well as officials in the day of stress.

So with the unequal treaties. But for them there could have been no international Shanghai, nor great trading centres in Canton, Hankow, and Tientsin. The rules and regulations of these settlements were not irksome. Their courts were just, and their police well-trained and efficient. On the whole, they were models of good and democratic government. They were windows into world life, and doors into world trade. It was, after all, the Chinese compradore rather than the foreign agent that made the money. Europe needed the Chinese market for its trade, and China's millions would be bettered by taking foreign goods. Their life would be enriched—was being enriched. Foreigners and Chinese had been getting to know one another better, especially in the years since the Manchus had been thrown out of power, on those little strips of leased land called "concessions," where foreign efficiency had built townlets of which no nation had need to be ashamed.

Why this sudden onslaught of the Nationalists? What had foreign business-men done to incur this odium? Obviously, in time all China's sovereign rights must be restored to her. Japan had won hers back from a similar system. Turkey and Egypt had got rid of their "capitulations." Why this hurry in China? Let the Nationalists show their ability to make true their dreams and ideals in actual life.

So the Chinese city walls might have said, and much else too—if they had had mouths. So, in effect, had Feng Yu-hsiang, Yen Hsi-shan, and other war-lords said by force of arms, when they resisted the Revolution.

From the first, the British Government in London was more far-seeing in these things than its nationals on the spot. It is easier to judge aright on great issues when you are not personally involved. At long last, in 1943, the British and American Governments not only gave lip service to this claim of Nationalist China, but have put their seal to equal treaties which end their inequalities and feudalisms. Just as Peking, the Northern Capital, has become Peiping, the Northern Peace, so these foreign strongholds, so useful once and again in my time to Chinese and foreigners alike, are now recognised to have had their day. That wall too is down. What will take its place does not yet appear, but it will be something,

as in the abolition of other walls, in which Chinese initiative will have large place. I associate myself with my fellow nationals in their attitude to the earlier agitations. I thought then, in the heat of the struggle, that the attack with the temporary bitterness was uncalled for and unfair. Now, I believe, through whatever path we have come, that British and Americans and a good many folk of other nations must recognise, as indeed they do, that the day for that old treaty wall is past. We must live now by equality and goodwill. There is no other basis for good and lasting business and a mutually friendly life.

My experience within the Church from 1926 to 1934, and my observation of these matters now from my English angle, has helped me to realise the hopefulness of the Nationalist position.

A wall that had to go down within the Church was foreign prestige. The time came when we could only register our schools and hospitals if the headmaster or mistress or medical superintendent was a Chinese and the majority of the Board of Directors were Chinese. We missionaries were no longer in the chief places, and we were always liable to be outvoted. We were assistants on the staffs of our own institutions. At first there were difficulties on both sides. The Chinese were not used to the first fiddle nor we to the second. We each had to learn a new instrument. Curiously enough, it was the newcomer who had greater difficulty than the old hand. This latter's years of life in China had already meant such changes and adaptations that a few more were easier to make. As time has passed, fears have been dissipated. No one among my friends has any desire to go back to the good old days when the Church was "your Church," the school was "your school," and the hospital "your hospital." The Chinese were formerly, in a sense, guests of the stranger within their gates. Now the stranger takes his natural place as guest in the house of his Chinese host.

The old order had to be at first. There was no other way. You had to begin, to lay foundations, to build your wall even. The difficulty then was ever to leave this thing that you had made, ever to get out from under the burden.

The Nationalist Revolution came along and threw down your wall of prestige, and lo! the thing you had hoped to do was done. It wasn't done quite after your fashion. But the city was not destroyed, even though your guiding hand had been removed. It lived again. It throbbed with life. It did not cast you out. It welcomed your friendly help. You rejoiced in the end, when adjustments were made, that the old wall had gone.

So the material wall of Chinese cities, the walls of Chinese feudalism, the walls of unequal treaties, the walls of foreign prestige have passed, or are fast passing, from the China scene. There is nothing left to us but "*ren-ch'ing*"—"humanity"—and humanity is enough.

## CHAPTER XXVI

## CHINESE COMMUNISTS AND OTHERS

In the spring and early summer of 1927 quite a considerable proportion of the world's most stormy petrels were gathered in Hankow. Tom Mann, after enduring the overland trip from Canton with the Chinese armies, was there. He addressed a huge mass meeting in the open air and enlightened his Chinese hearers on the iniquities of British Imperialism. I didn't attend political mass meetings and read of the speech in the local Press, but I did meet him one evening in a Hankow cinema, a smallish man with pointed, sandy beard and just as innocent and quiet-looking as many another revolutionist. With him was an Indian of like mind, and an American world-revolutionary. I have forgotten their names, though they were important at the time. Such is the impermanence of fame. There were a couple of American journalists who gave the revolutionary colour to the *Hankow Daily News*, which had become the English vehicle of the extremely leftist politicians who at that time dominated our Hankow fortunes.

I met one day Miss Anna Louise Strong, niece, so it was said, of a world-famous American Divine, who had been the industrious author of the *Concordance to the Bible* which bears his name and has been a boon and a blessing to me all my active life. When the collapse of the Russians came, with the outlawing of Communism, in July, 1927, she left with them up the railway and across the Gobi Desert. Then she took up residence in Moscow and in other parts of Russia, the country of her choice. She has become well known since for a number of books on China, written quite openly and confessedly in favour of the Chinese Communists, in whom she most heartily believes. She makes no secret of her sympathies, writes her history with a Communist bias, and believes that all should write their books politically and argue for the cause in which they believe. Yet someone has to try to arrive at facts as well as propaganda, or how should we ever ascertain the truth about any mortal thing?

I spent those months for the most part at our Hankow compound, two miles away right among the people in the very heart of the Chinese city. When the Nanking atrocities occurred in the spring, an agitated British Consul ordered us out of our homes and

down to the Concession. This was quite an unusual action for a British Consul to take in China. He tendered you advice when he was asked in times of crisis, but usually left the responsibility of decisions to yourself. He did not otherwise interfere with your liberties at any time. Our procedure, therefore, was to ask no questions of the Consul except on purely business matters. It relieved him of the burden of giving his advice and left us free. That, on this occasion, he should have taken the initiative showed how great was the tension and danger at the time. We knew we were pretty well placed for escape in case of danger, and were rather annoyed by his peremptory message. However, we swallowed our pride and moved down to the shelter of the Concession to sleep, exposing ourselves by making trips back to the compound by day. Life on the Concession had its compensations. I should not have met either Tom Mann or Anna Louise Strong but for that, or have had so much time to see and talk with other friends going through our revolutionary experiences.

All that spring and summer country travel was out of the question. Those of us left in Hankow just stayed to do what we could to meet the needs of preachers, teachers, doctors, and other friends who came themselves to see us or sent messengers and messages as to their well-being.

We were in quite a good position to observe the boiling of the revolutionary pot, and see what its brew might have for the weal or woe of those things in which we were interested.

Borodin, the Russian Adviser, had his residence just opposite the Office of Foreign Affairs, where the Trinidad-born Chinese Foreign Minister, Mr. Eugene Chen, conducted his business in perfect English and where, for various urgent reasons, I was a frequent caller. Chen was not a Communist, though extremely radical. His son went with the Russians and Miss Strong to Russia when the split came at the end of the summer. I never met Borodin, but my friend, the Bishop of Hankow, met him, as he met everybody, and described him as a pleasant-mannered man with a heavy moustache like Stalin's. He was mild and by no means aggressive in manner, gave advice when he was asked for it, shrugged his shoulders when his advice was not taken, and generally behaved in a polite and Chinese way. Which, after all, is the best way to live in China. Conversations with Chinese, who knew and met him, confirmed this impression. Later on the Bishop, passing through Moscow, rang him up, to find he was busy in the Central Executive Committee meetings of his party. So Borodin

was doubtless then a man of some importance, as, of course, his country's Ambassador needed to be.

A book[1] of great importance for the understanding of the relations of Communists to China for the next few years is a book that is seldom quoted; for it is not the sort of book that appeals to the general reader. It is the story of the capture and captivity of two missionaries of the China Inland Mission in Hunan on October 1st and 2nd, 1934. One, Mr. Hayman, was released on November 18th, 1935, after 413 days of wandering in captivity. The other, Mr. Bosshardt, was released on Easter Sunday, 1936, after no less than 560 days of captivity. On release he was relieved and nursed for a while in the Anglican Hospital at Kunming in the Yunnan Province. The Communist band that had held him captive captured the town further north of Tungchuan (Huitse) and looted our church and houses in the city. Terrible stories were told of their doings whilst in occupation of the place. Happily, the missionary, who joined up as an R.A.F. chaplain in 1942, had left the town with his wife a fortnight before or he might have had a book to write on his experiences had he escaped with his life, which was by no means certain to have happened.

Mr. Bosshardt dictated his story from his bed and declares that it "is a straightforward account of my experiences among Chinese Communists during a captivity lasting from October 1st, 1934, to April 12th, 1936." He says: "Many reports have referred to our captors as 'bandits' or 'robbers' because of their methods of working, but the truth is that the leaders are convinced Communists, disciples of Marx and Lenin, and do what they do from principle. They are in touch with the other bands by wireless, and work with U.S.S.R., referring to Russia as their 'Mother.'" That was written in August, 1936, after wandering as their captive through parts of the provinces of Kueichow, Szechuan, Hupeh, Hunan, and Yunnan. He thinks the journey must have been, all told, 6,000 miles. He had frequent changes of guard and calculates he must have had in all 300 different men in close contact with him as guards, and says that he was billeted in some 300 different houses. The language in which the book is written may not be pleasing to some readers but, as far as I know, there is happily no other first-hand document to compare with it as a picture of the actual conditions in Communist armies in Central China from the summer of 1927, when they first took shape, until the eve of the war against Japan in 1937. Mr. Bosshardt was a sick man when he

[1] *The Restraining Hand*, published by Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton.

wrote, after experiences such as few could have endured and live. He states that he had to write from memory and not from notes, which had naturally been seized and destroyed by his captors, but the general picture strikes me, who lived surrounded by such things for several years, as impressive in its verisimilitude, and confirmed by a good deal that will make up the substance of this chapter.

It may be well to add that I do not at all agree with Mr. Bosshardt's conviction that here is something, in its very nature, opposed to Christianity. He may, of course, be right. He has lived amongst them at very close quarters, whilst I have only felt and listened. Another good Churchman, with first-hand knowledge of China, Dean Hewlett Johnson, declares that to him the Communist new order is most near to the Christian social order of the world, but that as long as its tenets are tied up with atheistic philosophies a Christian cannot accept a party ticket. The Dean apparently does not think that Communism need necessarily be atheistic. I am no politician. My life in China, as a guest in the Chinese Church, meant that, as a foreigner and as a guest, I must remain strictly neutral to questions of politics, whatever my own personal opinions and convictions might be, but, in spite of all that may be written in this chapter, I too see no reason why Communism and Christianity must inevitably be considered as contrasted alternatives. In my view, Communism, as any other political theory and arrangement of national and international life, could and should be divested of its nineteenth-century philosophic basis. Its attack on the Russian Church I take to be an accident of circumstances. Russian Church and Russian Tzardom were so closely identified and so oppressive that both institutions went down together. I am convinced that in some shape or form the Church, in Russia as elsewhere, will rise again, and take its place in the new social order, whilst autocracy of the Tzarist or any other kind, let us hope, has passed away for ever.

To me, who have seen good Christian Conservatives, Liberals and Socialists, it seems quite natural that there might be good Christian Communists too. At any rate, I will be no party to this alleged inevitable conflict between Communism and Christianity. I know that others who went through the storms and stresses of 1926–36 will disagree. I have heard them denouncing, as Mr. Bosshardt does in his Preface, this Antichrist that has come into the world. I am persuaded that he and those who share his views are confusing the temporary with the essential. There are other things in religion than conviction, devotion, and sacrifice.

Communists, as Socialists, Liberals, and Conservatives, need religion. Once get rid of Hegelian philosophy, and I cannot see that there is any reason why Communists should not be Christians and Christians Communists if they are so persuaded.

Everyone knows that Communism was adopted as a theory of State with the 1917 Russian Revolution. It was, therefore, very young when the Nationalist Revolution began in Canton in 1926. At that date it had not had ten years' trial, and even Russian history was in its infancy. Whilst rivers of blood were flowing at the beginning of the Russian, as of the French, Revolution, we in China heard of Chinese men of violence taking their part in the terrible business. Who they were, if any, we never knew and had no means of enquiry.

When in the spring of 1925 a colleague told me that a youth or two of his school were Communists and he had thought well to expel them, I was amazed and unbelieving. He mentioned Changsha in Hunan as a place where Communists were known to be organised. It seemed to me incredible that, for all its Revolution, China had gone as far as that. On return from furlough at the end of 1926 there was no difficulty in believing anything of the kind. The Communists, though few in numbers, were a definite party and openly joined with the Nationalists in the Revolution. Eye-witnesses of the fighting in Canton told me they had seen the Russians and the Chinese fighting side by side and dying for the Revolution. Even then I thought of the Communists as Russians and the Chinese as Nationalists and the Russo-Chinese Alliance seemed to me to be another name for the Communist-Nationalist alliance.

Somehow, at that date and long after, Communism seemed so alien to the Chinese tradition that we could hardly believe in Chinese Communists even when they were there before our eyes.

Then followed the first six months of 1927 in Hankow, and we realised there were Chinese Communists, and no mistake. The outstanding men were few, but they seemed to be, in every way, men of considerable force of character. In those early months of 1927 the Revolution was by no means secure. Once and again the city of Wuchang was in danger from the counter-revolutionary war-lords, but the Wuchang general was a young returned Communist student from Berlin. When others fled, he stood his ground, and on one occasion saved the city by taking out troops of Boy Scouts and posting them on the hills with their flags. The attackers got the notion that there were large unexpected forces in the

vicinity, and Wuchang was saved. Whatever that man's ideology, he was a man of courage and resource, and how could you but admire? Our centre during those months became alarmingly left-wing. Citizens were said to have been seized and tortured, accused of capitalism, the new crime. Terror was in the air, and only those who have experienced terror know what terror is. Wang Ching Wei, "the sage of the Revolution," and Chiang Kai-shek's perpetual rival, was the leading politician in Hankow, and things had become so extreme that no one knew whether he and his friends were Communist or Nationalist. His group, anyhow, meant to wrest the power out of the hands of Chiang Kai-shek at Nanking, and run the Revolution themselves. The Nanking tragedy, when conquering revolutionary soldiers took such cruel toll of foreign missionaries and other residents alike, was thought to have been a deliberate Communist attempt to weaken Chiang Kai-shek in the eyes of the foreign powers. However that may be, Chiang was too strong for his opponents, and Russian soldiers and advisers were soon hastening from the country and the Communist Party of China was outlawed and declared to be counter-revolutionary. This was in the summer of 1927, when the country was only half won and the revolutionary armies had hardly advanced beyond the Yangtse.

In that summer something happened that brought things home to me. That Wuchang Middle School where I taught outside the Great East Gate had become the High Court of China. The Head of the Department of Law, if not a Communist, was at least so hostile to General Chiang that he fled at the same time as the Russians, and left the school swept and garnished, but empty. In times of trouble you never leave a building empty, and we arranged to turn the place into a convalescent home for wounded soldiers. The Military Council agreed and gave us the necessary permit. A day or two later a young officer called on me. The Fourth Route Army was to be quartered in the school. Would I consent? I declined the offer with thanks; for soldiers are the most destructive of tenants. Well, whether I consented or not, they were going in, anyway; so I might as well consent. This again I refused on the principle of "Resist the devil and he will flee from you." For, in those days, we always found if you yielded an inch they took a lot more. It was much better to let them take things by force, if they dared. Their moral position was not so secure. This man dared all right; defied Central Military Council, Foreign Office, and all that, took possession of the school and in a week we

had lost thousands of dollars worth of stuff, as we knew was to be expected. Then the troops moved out and we took possession and picked up the scattered bits, never to have the place empty again for a single day. That was the army of the famous Chang Fah Kuei, who captured the city of Kai-feng in Honan at such terrible cost. The army retired into Kiangsi and on its way split into two parts, one part being the first group of regular troops to turn Communist. Those troops roved around Central China for years, always disciplined, always executing capitalists at drumhead trials, always taking the contents of rice-shops and oil-shops and selling them at dirt-cheap prices to the common people. This very band, under the same commander, a few years later captured the town of Chungsiang in North Hupeh, killed our preacher and threw his corpse out on the open ground, burned our school, and attacked our hospital.

The Irish lady doctor lay hidden for five days, but learned what was happening around her. The preacher had been a member of the Nationalist Party, which, after all, was the legal party. He may or may not have carried out party actions inimical to the Communists. I could get no evidence on this point. His wife died with him, as she followed the soldiers and pled for his life. Other executions, as usual, took place within the city. At the end, that lady doctor, knowing the way in which the General and his men had conducted the city business, told me that, in spite of it all, she had more respect for them after than before they had come.

One of the second rank of communist officers was Pen Teh-huai. He seized a city in South Hupeh where we had had a hospital for many years. The Chinese qualified doctor went to him and found him in the magistrate's office dressed in straw sandals and private's clothes like a common soldier; so that, till he was introduced, he could not distinguish who was Pen Teh-huai. "You Communists care for the poor," he said. "So do we in our hospital. Ask anyone about our reputation and you will be glad to give us your protection."

"Not so," said Pen. "The only place for you is in the Red Army. We need doctors. Come with me, and I'll give you a good position. What you are doing here is merely helping people to bear the unbearable. What we want is to change everything. Your place is with us." The doctor declined the invitation and hastily made himself scarce. Pen Teh-huai carried off ten men nurses with his army. Most of them eventually escaped. They were not Communists, nor persuaded by the things they saw to join the party.

From that same hospital an English missionary, a friend of mine, had, a little time before, been seized by another Communist army and held in captivity. We sought the help of a Communist leader we had formerly known. He was a mere boy of twenty, who had ridden on a white horse into a neighbouring town at the head of red partisans and captured the city. There he had held a court and summarily executed for capitalism and oppression some of the leading citizens. Now, for old time's sake, he secured certain alleviations of the captive's hardships and had much to do with his eventual release.

In another town on market day two men with pistols stalked on to a crowded street, seized two landlords, and with a little crowd of gaping countrymen standing round recited their crimes. "Ought they not to die?" said the Communists, making a show of their pistols. "Ought to die," said the unarmed crowd. Two shots were fired. Two men were dead, and the executioners with smoking pistols walked calmly off, unmolested by the frightened crowd.

Stories like these of idealism, bravery, and cruelty can be multiplied by many who lived in Central China in those ten years. I do not judge between them: that is their affair not mine. Communism seems an alien thing to Chinese tradition, and the Nationalists are truly Chinese in resisting it.

On the streets of Hankow, as in most places, where the Nationalists had power, scores of young men and women Communists met the executioner's bullet. But the matter was not all on one side. The Communists were at least equally fierce to their opponents. It is simply silly, ignorant, and untruthful to write, as famous books have done, of the idealism of the Communists and the bloodiness of the Nationalist oppressors. Their tender mercies could, in fact, be very cruel. You have, in reality, two sets of "idealists" in a life-and-death struggle. Neither side could afford to give any quarter.

In 1937, in face of national peril, they were reconciled again. The alliance is an uneasy one. There are people on both sides utterly intolerant of the other. Yet it is not good for a house to be divided. The problem of China is the problem of the world. Is compromise or reconciliation possible?

## CHAPTER XXVII

## MOTHER CHINA

I HAVE seen all sorts of revolutions in China since 1902. There was the revolt against the Manchus and the establishment of the People's Country in 1911–12. There was the Nationalist Revolution in 1926, with its aim of attaining deliverance from warlords, capitalists, and foreign oppression, leading on to the abolition of the unequal treaties in January, 1943. Connected with these changes have been the freeing of the individual from the family, the freeing in places of the farmer from the landlord, the freeing of thought and education from the dead hand of the past. Underlying all have been fundamental changes in the status, the life, and the prospects of China's womanhood.

I imagine many a Chinese lady in her twenties or her thirties may be hardly aware of this, so settled have the new ways become, as though they had been there for ever. She may have known freedom and modern ways all her life, especially if she was brought up in privileged circles. My life, however, goes back to China in 1902, when there were no cinemas, no wireless, no talkies, no aeroplanes, no cars or buses; and only the Peking-Hankow Railway. Even the Shanghai-Nanking, the Pukow-Tientsin, and the Wuchang-Canton railways were still unmade. We need to pull ourselves up and think sometimes. China of 1902 was unimaginably different from China of 1942 in innumerable ways in the places where I have lived. That old China still goes on in the Shantung plains and in the Yunnan mountains, though even there with a difference. Changes in Shanghai and Canton may have predated changes in Hankow and Changsha. I write of Central China, and I do not hesitate to say that the most striking of all Chinese revolutions in my time is in China's women.

There have been changes in England's womanhood too. It is not thirty years ago that there was hardly a girl moving in to office work in London every morning. It was not long ago that the only outlets for an average girl's energies, apart from the home, were the nursing or teaching professions. In England great changes have come about in my lifetime, but the changes in China are immeasurably greater. I write, of course, as a mere male spectator; but this is how it all seems to such an onlooker from the heart of China.

In my early days we were told to be very careful of China's manners and courtesies. In town when we called at a Chinese house, we should never see a man's wife nor ask after her health, and as for shaking hands, if by any chance we should meet, that would be a very shocking thing to do. He was her "outside" man. She was his "lowly inside." She was his concern, and not yours. Your women-folk might visit her; but men and women who were not related by marriage or family ties must keep apart.

In our churches the men sat on one side and the women on the other, with a curtain or wooden partition down the middle of the seats. Even that was rather *risque* and dangerous, and the women of more refined homes would not expose themselves even in a church, for it was not seemly for even the minister to gaze upon them there. There were never so many women as men at the service. In the country chapels there were hardly any women at all.

I had a bachelor friend, a missionary, of course, who in a country town in Hunan, in a flourishing church, had to take the women's class himself; for there was no lady missionary and no Chinese woman qualified for such a task. He got over the difficulty by sitting on the front seat, with his back to the female audience and preached and talked to the wall at the back of the pulpit. He may have had the over-sensitiveness of a bachelor of the period, but he felt this was the thing to do to preserve the proprieties and the modest self-regard of the would-be women members. No wonder he took the earliest opportunity of taking to himself a missionary wife. What bachelor wouldn't run the risk to escape from such an embarrassing situation.

In those days there lived in Hankow a foreign missionary who, for kindly reasons, had his sister-in-law as well as his wife living in the same house. Next door there lived a doctor married to a motherly lady whose counsel and advice the single lady missionaries were constantly seeking. The consequence was that there were always other ladies than his wife in and out of his house.

One day a discussion was heard in the locality as to whether the minister with two ladies permanently in the house, or the doctor with several coming and going, in addition to his wife, was the richer person. The assumption was that such freedom of movement was only possible under special relationships. For such freedom was unheard-of at that date in Chinese circles in Hankow, unless secondary wives or concubines were involved. It seems laughable now to think about it; but I remember how careful we

had all to be then in all our social relationships. For in Central China of that date the sexes did not meet in a social way. East was certainly East and West was certainly West in matters of that kind, and our Western freedom was felt to border on indecency, if it had not actually transgressed the rules of morality.

If those things seem strange to foreign readers, it may be well to realise how our Victorian grandmothers would have been shocked by the freedom of the sexes to-day, with their mixed dancing, mixed bathing, mixed cocktails, and plain speaking about some of the reticences of life. As one reads the modern novel, one wonders if the Victorians were wholly wrong. The pendulum has swung a long way. For China there never was any Indian *purdah* system. The country, with its outdoor work, was always freer than the town, and the poor than the rich. A woman had her place in Chinese tradition which had its roots in Confucianism with the "Three Obediences" or "Three Followings." Their sage had said that, as a girl, she was to "follow her father"; as a wife, to "follow her husband"; and as a mother, to "follow her son." Character counts, and there were plenty of quips and jokes about the henpecked husband and the woman wearing the trousers. On the whole, however, the world that I first knew was definitely a man's world, and that for well-recognised reasons. All down Chinese history there have been outstanding and remarkable women. Mencius's mother was held up for esteem for the way in which she watched over the conduct of her son, but, after all, she was even then technically "following her son." The way in which every Chinese man in pain and distress calls for "*Ngo-tih-liang*"—"My mother"—is perhaps a healthy reminder that, in the deepest things, there is and never has been an East or West. Secondary things, such as education and position in society, do, however, matter much, and that is where the incalculable revolution has taken place.

In an earlier chapter it was pointed out that in pre-Revolutionary China the unit of humanity was the family rather than the individual. For that reason the Chinese world, as I first saw it, was a man's world, for the continuity of the family and its name depended on the man. Chinese civilisation, though so ancient, was, as it still is, essentially based on agriculture. In the peasant, farming home to have sons is to have great wealth. Religion came too into the matter. The earthly family was, through ancestral worship, vitally connected with the heavenly. Such worship used no priest. Its simple rites were performed by the oldest surviving

male in the direct descent. All these things, together with the Buddhist doctrine of transmigration, which assigned a lower position to women than to men on the wheel of life, had their inevitable consequences on the position and life of women.

Child betrothals were arranged by the family, but the place of the bride in that old order was to come to her new home for the express purpose of becoming the mother of sons. Till a son or sons were born to her, her position was by no means secure. Should the offspring of the marriage be only daughters, she herself would sometimes beg her husband to take a secondary wife or concubine that there might be sons in the home. Her position as the one legal wife was unchallenged, and the sons of the concubine were the legal wife's sons. When, however, in a house there are several women contending for the affections of one man, jealousies and other difficult situations arise as is recorded in the stories of the Bible patriarchs. Often in richer homes there were less worthy reasons than this for the practice of concubinage. There is no question that for women to reach a stage of true equality with man complete monogamy is one of the necessary essentials, and in pre-Revolutionary China, though monogamy was the practice in most homes on the simple grounds of economy alone, as a social institution it was not unchallenged or secure.

When her little son was nestled in her arms, the Chinese mother's joy was full, and one anxiety had passed away. That was her function in the home, and it had been fulfilled. There was no real place, or need, for an educated woman in such society, and though there have always been brilliant exceptions here and there, neither mother nor daughter thought, as a rule, of school or schooling.

It has again to be remembered that though education in China has always been highly prized and official position was entirely obtained through education, the scholar class were a privileged and very small minority. It was quite inevitable that neither parents nor their daughters should at that time have had any ambitions for girls and women in that direction. Daughters, anyhow, potentially belonged to the families into which they had been betrothed, and it was for that new home rather than the old to interest itself in such matters.

It was for these and other reasons that the daughters grew up in the home, behind the scenes, learning early the lessons of home-craft, busy and unlettered, waiting for the great adventure of marriage and the motherhood of sons if the goddess of mercy should grant their petitions.

To go to the new home was really an adventure. There she would share the homestead with other daughters-in-law under the kindly or arbitary rule of her husband's and their husband's mother. That woman, like herself, was unlearned in books, could probably neither read nor write, but might be experienced and educated enough in the things of life. The daughter-in-law, under these circumstances, whilst exposed, it may be, to the whims and tempers of her mother-in-law, was sheltered and protected from many of the evils and temptations that to-day she may have to meet herself. I have always felt that somehow this system worked out for a simplicity and sincerity of character which was denied her brother or her husband, who were exposed to the snares and illusions of China's "Vanity Fair."

In her comparatively quiet life, she knew more of the teachings of the Buddhist monks than her menfolk had ever time for. Whilst they were busy in field or shop, the monk and the travelling pedlar came her way and taught her all of the world she knew, except what came from the gossip in the home or the talk of visiting relatives. She was busy and, though illiterate, knew such things as it was essential for women to know. It always had been so. It always would be so. But in China, as elsewhere, "mystery, thy name is woman," and it is not possible to describe the homes or womenfolk of 460 million Chinese quite so neatly and exactly as all this.

The revolutionaries, and especially the Nationalist revolutionaries, had no illusions about the matter. Nor had the Communists. From the first, some of the leaders of the new China have been women. For another process had begun for some of them before the end of the nineteenth century, and though the full stream of the emancipation of women everywhere is hardly flowing yet, from trickles and brooklets there is already flooding out the beginnings of a new time, which, human nature being what it is, seems to me to matter perhaps more than anything else that has happened in China in my lifetime.

That strange and ancient fashion of binding the feet of little daughters that they might be as other daughters and be considered attractive in their husband's eyes has, in Central China, disappeared except in the most remote part of the countryside. Tight-lacing, a possibly more harmful though less painful custom of the West, has also disappeared with the freer and more athletic life of modern women.

In the first Revolution of 1911, men's queues, the badge of submission to the Manchu yoke, all but disappeared from China,

though even now on some country road you can meet an old daddy clinging to this relic of the past.

In the second Revolution of 1926, young women began to cut off their plaited hair. At first it was the mark of extreme radicalism to go about with bobbed hair, and in the heat of the Nationalist-Communist conflict it is to be feared that some Chinese maidens lost their heads as well, as they were thought clearly and openly to have shown their Communist errors by taking such a shocking step as to go about with hair cropped like a boy's. I have little doubt that there was generally better ground for the death penalty than this, though terrible decisions are taken on slender and hasty grounds in the fires and fears of revolution.

The countrywomen and the older generation still follow the ways of their mothers in these things, but, speaking generally, the younger generations of womenhood and girlhood have adopted the bobbed hair, and in this there is an enormous saving of time. Certain girl nurses said to a friend of mine, "How can we compete with the boy nurses in examinations if we have to spend so much time combing and oiling our hair?" How, indeed?

There is a charm about the modern dress and modern coiffure of a Chinese lady, marching in line with world trends and yet always and distinctively Chinese, that needs no praise from me. It speaks for itself and shows Chinese womanhood to be as attractive as the womanhood of any race in the world. Against that modern face, I set in my mind the peaceful, experienced, honest, open face, with its deep lines of character of some wonderful old granny of the old régime. Woman of that period may have been restricted in her movements and liberties, but character will out, and there is something in that old gnarled countenance that tells you of the patience and the greatness of this race. The unbound feet, the modern sheath gown, the beautifully coiffured hair, the painted lips and eyebrows, of a modern Chinese lady are the outward manifestations of changes that would have been quite unbelievable in the days of the Empress Dowager.

At the beginning of the century, even in Church schools, it was with the greatest difficulty that Chinese parents could be persuaded that there was any good thing to be had from education for their daughters. Education they, of course, revered. But what had it to do, they generally said, with the requirements of home affairs or the upbringing of good women? Even if it might be argued for in itself, how could it possibly be a preparation for the life that their daughters had eventually to live?

I remember a Chinese Nationalist pointing out to me, in the summer of 1927, how many of that group of returned students who were taking leading positions in Hankow at that time had returned to China with American, French, or English wives. They had been abroad. They had seen the freedom and equality of women in foreign lands and universities. They had been at the age of mutual interest and attraction; but I cannot but feel that the underlying motive was that they wanted wives who were obviously suited to be their helpmeets and their life-companions. The numbers of such women in their own land available to them and their kind at that date were strictly limited. It is not so now. Not merely infant schools, primary schools, and middle schools are full of bright and athletic girls, but colleges and universities throughout the land are co-educational as ours are. That, in forty years, China's girls should have advanced from the illiterate seclusion of the old home to the full freedom and wide curriculum of a modern university, looks like a nation being born in a day.

There have been many forces at work to bring this about, but, at the end of the day, no other group will be worthy of so much gratitude as that devoted band of cultured women of the West who from high religious motives have given themselves to sister all the world.

Out of a change so fundamental, equally great results have come and will increasingly be made plain.

The Chinese are a great family people. The family has been the centre of their life, and even of their national thought. They are great lovers of little children. New Chinese women, as their mothers, will only be satisfied when their homes and lives are brightened with their children's shouts and laughter.

How different is the new childhood that has come and will continue. More and more, young men and women are choosing their own helpmeets now. When the children come to fill their homes with joy they come to mothers who know how to read and write, who have been taught modern hygiene and mothercraft, and in some cases are citizens of a very wide world indeed.

In old days their mothers or their grandmothers were brought up on old wives' tales, or listened to the stories of travelling mendicant monks, or passed their lives under the prophecies of the fortune-teller unable even to bring good fortune to himself.

The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world. It always has and always will. The mother-heart is there in every woman, be she East or West, old or young. As I have passed through the class-

rooms of modern Chinese schools and seen their smart and clever pupils, girls and boys alike, as I have seen free-footed damsels playing tennis, drilling, racing like and with their brothers, as I have seen girl nurses, girl teachers, girl doctors, girl pupils. I have said to myself "Mother China is transformed, and with that transformation all is changed."

## CHAPTER XXVIII

## "SISTERS"

*"Now all the words we wish that we had said,*
*Yet never could have told her face to face,*
*Swell in our hearts, and we would try to trace*
*The lovely story of the life that's fled:*
*For Grace, whom we all loved, our Grace, is dead!*
*She had a courage born of trust, a grace*
*Of selfless sympathy, yet strong to brace*
*Our souls to higher effort where she led.*

*"Truly in her the Grace of God was seen:*
*In body's agony she thought and prayed*
*For us: on her, our sorrows all were laid.*
*Chastised herself, she gave us pure serene.*
*Her storm-tossed body laid at last to rest,*
*Lord, grant her spirit peace upon Thy breast."*

A. P. H. (1942.)

THE writer of that sonnet was interned in Shanghai at the time. Prisoner of the World War from 1914 to 1918, he found his way to China as a missionary at the beginning of the Nationalist Revolution of 1926, and has hardly known a year of quiet since. With his wife and children in England, he has lived in an isolated station in North Hupeh, very near the Chino-Japanese fighting line, cut off from the communications and the friendship of his fellow exiles. When the Japanese attacked at Pearl Harbour in December, 1941, he, with a great company of other folk, for a second time in his brief life was deprived of liberty and eventually was taken to Shanghai, where the friend of whom he writes, unable to get the drugs which for many years had warded off distressing and persistent attacks of asthma, at last succumbed and was laid to rest with a Japanese grave on one side of her and a German grave on the other, and Chinese Christians lying round about. Her fellow internees took her frail casket there. "That was what she would have wished," they said. Chinese, Japanese, German, and English all at last at peace together.

This chapter is in the main the life-story of two bachelor ladies, one an Englishwoman and one Chinese, who represent a great multitude of those who have made the events of the previous

chapter possible. They have both fallen victims to the Far-Eastern conflict.

The one whose story is so finely limned by the poet quite early in life lost her mother. Born in the West Indies, she grew up with relatives in Canada, where she became an accomplished pianist and trained for a business career. In London she was the private secretary of the head of a well-known firm. Her parents had been missionaries in the West Indies, and she in turn sought out her Missionary Society at the time when a woman of her gifts and experience was most urgently needed in China.

It was thus that for twelve years she worked by my side as secretary and friend. Soon she fell a constant martyr to acute attacks of asthma. There would have been good ground for sending her home, but missionary doctors are up-to-date and resourceful men and women, and she had proved herself such an acquisition to her friends that a technique was arrived at by which, with the help of the increased knowledge of the cause and treatment of this distressing complaint, she was able to go on with her work with but little hindrance for twenty-one years, till the circumstances related above brought about her premature death.

Precluded by her trouble from all serious hope of marriage, as so many others whose suffering is faced up to and accepted, she remained a woman of singular simplicity, peace, and happy friendliness. Popular with all children, she became a sort of universal friend of their elders too. Her duties did not demand a knowledge of Chinese, but it was unthinkable to her that she should live in China and not have the language, the chief means of being friendly, at her disposal. So, in her spare time, she picked up Chinese, cared for a Chinese school for the blind, and became as friendly to the Chinese women and children as to her own fellow countrymen.

Efficient at her own job, she was able to train a series of Chinese secretaries in the minding of day-books and ledgers in Chinese, as she kept hers in English.

It all sounds very prosaic, the very sort of thing she might have been doing in many an office at home. It is not what you do, but how you do it that matters. The thing that counts most of all in China is simple friendliness. She was everybody's friend. That is her epitaph.

There is something else to be said. She was a type of person of whom China had seen little in former years. They understood the home and the contribution to the world of a mother through her

children. The gift and help of the unmarried woman they had not understood. There were Buddhist nuns, but nuns, like monks, were living their lives in celibacy and other-worldliness, not for the world's sake, but for their own. There was no good thing to do with this world, so full of desire and enticement, except to leave it and all who clung to it to perish as they might. So they had entered a nunnery.

This unmarried woman from the West, so full of fun and life and friendliness, so highly trained and capable—this was a new thing in China, and not dreamed of in her ancient philosophies.

In the early days the wives of missionaries had entered into the life of China as they were able, but their children and their household duties and their frequent ill-health put severe restrictions on their activities. Then someone was bold enough to think of sending out unmarried nurses, doctors, teachers, and others, free from family cares, able to give their whole and undivided time to becoming friends with the girls and women of China.

Accepted as quite normal and natural now, it was quite a new experiment in living when it happened. What strange people these foreigners were to let girls grow up like this unmarried. What had their parents been doing not to provide them with suitable husbands? Could they be as good as they looked, to be alone in the world? It is all forgotten now, when everything has changed, but in the Empress Dowager's day such thoughts were common enough. In the course of the years, many of these ladies have married and built up homes of their own, to which they brought a knowledge of the country and its people, learned in school or hospital, that made that home a more adequate and useful place than a merely English home projected straight into China. There was always a danger of that being far too much like a castle—wall, moat, drawbridge and all complete.

The places of those who married were quickly filled by others, and it was at least in the first instance to these bachelor women that the Nursing Association of China owes its rapid progress and development. It is thanks to these same folk that the education of China's womanhood owes so much of impetus and continuance.

They have wandered in and out of Treaty Ports feeling and looking a little dowdy, compared with the up-to-date and smartly dressed wives and daughters of foreign merchants or officials. They have taken no outstanding place in the books of globe-trotters and letter-writers, but for simple friendliness and efficiency at their job no one has surpassed them.

What the poet has so beautifully said of Grace is true in some measure of a great host of other nameless folk, whose children are the lives that they have helped to reach completion. To write of Mother China and of a lifetime of experience in changeless, changing China, and leave out Sister Britain and Sister America would be a grave lapse of memory indeed. In China they were called "*Hsiao Chieh*"—"Little Sisters"—and surely they have earned the right to the name.

The second friend that this chapter mentions died in Chungking in the summer of 1942. She was a tiny little Chinese lady. Shall we call her Miss Willow? How she came to occupy the place she did in our regard came about as follows.

When the Nationalists took charge of their own country in 1927, they were genuinely alarmed at the encroachments of foreign Powers on the liberty of China. "Overthrow the unequal treaties," which was their most loudly shouted slogan, meant ever so much more than it said. It was not only treaty revision that was called for, but a complete change of heart. China was no longer to be an old civilisation born again as a little child to be ruled, guided, and taught by the West. She was to be herself with her own freedom and dignity. China, from every point of view, was to be for the Chinese. What was the good of overthrowing unequal treaties if you left her schools and colleges under the authority and tutelage of foreigners? It wasn't that China rejected foreign teachers. She had them in her own Government schools and colleges. But here was a little compact and very efficient *imperium in imperio* growing up in China, a sort of foreign educational system growing up within the Government system, and she determined that if this went on, then China could hardly be mistress in her own house.

To China education is vital, and the place of the student central in the life of the country. The very first practical measure the new revolution took was to secure control of the entire educational system of the country, including the numerous Christian schools and colleges. The new Government's method was quite simple. No school could be registered unless it had a Chinese principal and a board of directors whose chairman and a majority of whose directors were also Chinese. We were also given to understand that unregistered schools would not be allowed long to continue.

It seems all reasonable enough at this distance, but when the edicts were announced they found us singularly ill-prepared in Central China. Principals of sorts were, of course, to be had; but

the securing of efficient Christian principals, able and willing to carry on schools of considerable size and importance along the lines and principles for which they had been founded, was a very different matter. If our schools were just to be Government schools, with no difference whatever, then it was logical to close them down, and let the Government pay and staff them, and we could turn our minds to other activities. China's Christians had something to say about that. It will have been realised what a stormy period the first half of 1927 was. All our schools were closed. It was impossible for them to function. Government schools were open, but, to my surprise, I found my Chinese friends were either not sending their children anywhere or were engaging private tutors to teach little groups in their houses. It was an anti-religious period, and they were unwilling to send their children to be taught by teachers who were negative to all the parents believed, they said. It was refreshing to realise that in the midst of a storm like that my Chinese friends knew their own minds. I had nothing to do but to listen, and, listening, to see the way.

Obviously, the schools had to be re-opened. Just as obviously they had to be registered, whatever the practical difficulties. Boards of directors, at once loyal to the authorities and loyal to their own principles, had to be discovered, and, most difficult of all, suitable headmasters and headmistresses had somehow to be secured.

Our main school for girls was in the town of Hanyang. It was a boarding school of some 200 scholars then, and one of the best in the area. Our local school of nurses and normal school for women teachers were recruited from its pupils, whilst nearly all our new homes were founded by old girls of the school.

We had had a continuous and highly qualified series of missionary teachers and, especially since 1911, the school had grown and flourished. In spite of all, girls' education had nothing like the long history of boys' education. The majority of girls educated in our schools naturally, and early, became wives and mothers; and it looked as though it would be much harder to find a headmistress for the Girls' School at Hanyang than a headmaster for the corresponding Boys' School at Wuchang across the river.

Then Miss Willow turned up. She did not seek the post. Strictly speaking, she was not academically qualified for it. Strangely enough, she too was an unmarried Chinese lady in her early thirties. By what strange chance a woman of that age, at that

time, had remained unmarried, I do not know. There, however, she was; a diminutive little person of some five feet odd, trained as a primary school teacher, but not for the secondary school to which we called her. She had been head of a country boarding school and shown real administrative ability. In the storm, she had been appointed acting head of the Blind School in Hankow, and again shown marked ability in face of most curious physchological and political circumstances. There was still the matter of her qualifications; for the younger teachers over whom she held sway were most of them college girls from a well-known ladies' college. So, after we had tested her in the new position, we arranged for an acting head in her absence, and brought her over to England to get some sort of educational diploma, and, anyhow, gain the great prestige of being a returned student from abroad. How she revelled in England. I remember meeting her in Birmingham, where she had gone to study, and offering to see her off to the station. "Oh, there is no need for that," said she. "Everything is so easy here, and everyone so kind. I know my way, and, anyway, I can always ask a policeman."

Once she found herself at Euston with an hour or two to spare, no one to meet her, and nowhere to go. She was quite equal to that. She went out on the Marylebone Road and with her full five feet addressed herself to the first policeman she met. I wonder if he remembers. "I've about two hours to spend in London before going north in the train. Can you tell me where I can spend the time to advantage?" The great man rose to the occasion. "Cross the road and take an 18B or a 30 bus and ask the conductor to put you down at Madame Tussaud's. You'll have to cross the road. Stay as long as you like, but watch the time. When you come out, take the same bus back on this side of the road and it will bring you back to Euston Station." She spent a pleasant hour or two, and took that story back to China as one more evidence of the politeness and efficiency of British policemen. If the policeman be so good, what will the judges and magistrates be? How it is with other nationals I do not know, but that silent and efficient figure in blue ranks rather high among Chinese exiles in England. He has done a great deal for British prestige—far more than he has ever dreamed.

"Do introduce me to that little Chinese girl," someone said to me at a conference in England. It was not surprising. She seemed very young.

"With pleasure," I said. "She's thirty-six and a headmistress."

We saw her off rather disconcolate. I think she had found England had been "home from home."

How able she was. Soon her school was full to overflowing, and a great new hall erected to which she and her pupils had secured generous help from Chinese sources. Then the Japanese invasion came. I found her and her missionary colleagues on the French Concession in Hankow in the spring of 1940, pestered by Japanese inspectors, not knowing how long the French authorities would give her any measure of protection. Her school of 300 pupils was meeting in private houses, and in the vestry and lecture hall of the local church. Accommodation was so insufficient that the pupils had to come in relays—some in the morning and some in the afternoon. We went to see the *Seven Dwarfs* at the local picture house, and then Miss Willow and her two missionary colleagues and I sat and chatted over her problems. She was just one competent little packet of pluck backed up by two great and well-equipped Englishwomen. Her only bother was that, if by any means she was compelled to close down, would we have any use for her? "Good women are scarce," I said. She did not quite catch my meaning and pressed again. "Do you think, as long as we are here at all, we shan't have a place for a person like you?" I said. She just didn't know what a big thing she was doing. It was all in her life's work. That was all there was to it.

In that fateful month of December, 1941, when the Japanese declared war on Great Britain, her missionary colleagues were interned, her money was cut off, and she could do nothing but disband her school. The girls scattered too, many of them making their way to "Free" China. After a while, she was heard of in Changsha, in "Free" Hunan, wondering if she could start again there. Unhappily, the missionaries were away, and did not meet her. She went on to Chungking, took dysentery on the way, and died soon after reaching the capital. Somehow these two friends and colleagues of mine seem to belong together. Both were so friendly, so competent, so single-minded. They were both quite ordinary women, one a Chinese and one an Englishwoman. Both were bachelor women, without home or children of their own. There is a great host of them, doctors, nurses, teachers, evangelists; and their names will not be forgotten by the great family that they have sistered. Such people hold a vital place in the affections and the life of "brave new China."

## CHAPTER XXIX

## THE MOUNTAINS AND THEIR PEOPLE

As we revelled summer by summer in Kuling with its flowers and picnics, its slopes and valleys, its streams and woods and waterfalls, we wondered if there were any place on all the earth to match it. Here we were living in a valley higher than the summit of Mount Snowdon, with healing, warming sun by day and refreshing, cooling breezes at night. What bagfuls of glowing descriptions went across the oceans to our homelands. Then refugees from Szechuan, in the year 1912, spent a summer with us at our wonderful resort. Yes, Kuling was quite pleasant, they said, and a very nice place for a change, but in Szechuan there were mountains, real mountains. In fact, in Szechuan, Kuling would reckon as a sort of "foothill." We received this word without bothering to believe, and wondered if they had any sour grapes in Szechuan.

It was not till 1934, and again in 1939, that I really saw China's mountains. In Szechuan I only glimpsed them from afar, but in Yunnan I have seen them east and west and north and south, and I have travelled by motor and lorry right across the neighbouring province of Kueichow, and I now know what mountains are, as well as foothills.

My first journey into Yunnan was made by rail across the Indo-China plain from Haiphong to Hanoi. From there we took to the narrow-gauge railway that pulls you up in three or four days to the city of Kunming. Landslides were so common and so unpredictable that you spent each night in a station "hotel" and began your journey again early next morning. There was no traffic of any kind at night. It was too dangerous. I have travelled from Vancouver to Montreal and crossed the Rocky Mountains; but the way in which, from the carriage, you looked down from the train and saw the road by which you had come winding in and out beneath you was something unparalleled by anything I had seen in Canada.

The destruction of one essential bridge of the Hanoi-Kunming Railway, over a seemingly bottomless chasm, by the Chinese in 1942 definitely removed all fear of the advance of a Japanese army up those Yunnan mountains. At last we reached the city of Kunming, with its famous Ta Hsi Lake, at a level hundreds of

feet higher than the highest peak of Kuling. It simply staggers the imagination that there should be a lake, many miles long, at a level twice as high as Snowdon's peak, surrounded by wooded temple-crowned hillside.

The general level of the fertile plains, with their rice-fields, in that part of Yunnan is 6,000 feet above sea-level. Travel in this area means going from 6,000-feet level on one plain over mountains rising to an additional 2,000, 3,000, or 4,000 feet to another plain 6,000 feet high, surrounded by hill-country. Always there are higher mountains beyond, blue in the distance, rising from 12,000 to 20,000 feet and higher, until they fade away into the enormous mountain masses that make Tibet. Even in summertime there is snow on some of them. In winter the snow scene on these mountains must be an amazing sight. Through each plain a river now flows; but one gets the idea that each plain is really a dried or silted-up lake of which the river was always the heart.

The plains appear to be very fertile, and rice is the main crop; but cotton, wheat, oats, and pea-nuts were there in their seasons, and the general appearance of the farming was much the same as that which I had known in Central China. One crop was new to me. In all my years in Central China I have never seen it growing. Yunnan has been far away from the strong hand of the Central Government, and it is, therefore, the less surprising that the growth of the poppy and the manufacture and smoking of opium was only too apparent in this earthly paradise.

When you rebuked the coolies for their evil habit, they told you of the strange relief that came to hard-pressed men. As long as they were strong and well-fed, there was little sign of its ill effects. Opium, however, is an insidious peril. The time will come when the aims and purposes of the central authority will reach out even to the remote border mountains. The chief glory of the Chinese Communists is that they will have no dealings of any kind whatever with this pernicious drug. It is, of course, comparatively easy for a small and well-knit group, such as the Communists, to set its face absolutely against the traffic. Down the years the Church has been equally emphatic and equally successful in its opposition to opium. Any thinking man can see that the task before the Chinese Government is infinitely harder. Instead of dealing with scores or hundreds of thousands of carefully disciplined members of a Church or community, the Government has to handle the entire many-coloured and many-purposed population of 460 million people. The political upheavals of 1911 and then of 1926, followed

by the war of 1937, absorbed the energies of the Chinese Government. Whatever may have happened in other places, whatever deterioration may have come to enemy-occupied areas, there on the mountains, amidst all the sublimity and splendour of Nature, is this sinister evil which I have no doubt will, in the end, be mastered. That it needs mastering no resident or traveller on Yunnan's caravan routes, over plains and mountains, would for a moment deny.

When I visited Yunnan in 1934 the only means of travel within the province was by chair or horse or afoot. I chose a mountain chair and varied the riding with walking, truly a luxurious bit of holiday if one was not too pressed for time. In this way I travelled north five days over the mountains from Kunming to our station at Hueitse, and, after a brief stay there, northwards once more for another five days to Chaotung.

All this road was practically a footpath with, here and there, the beginnings of a motor road. The whole distance, some 300 miles, was divided into stages, ending each day in a tiny town with several inns—some for men and some for mules. For it was a feature of your journey that you constantly met with files of mules from forty to a hundred strong. There was always a leading mule, gaily caparisoned and with a bell at its muzzle and looking very proud. Long before the team came in sight, as it wound around the contour of the hills, you heard the tinkling of the oncoming bell and had time to adjust your movements so that each party could pass the other without danger on the perilous path overhanging some deep glen or mountain valley. The mule teams were alternated with files of coolies who carried great slabs of rock-salt on their backs. Each man had a stick, half staff, half resting-stool, on which he could rest his heavy bundle without unloading, as, perspiring and panting, he halted here and there to gather breath. If ever opium were permissible to human beings, surely it was to these heavy-laden carriers journeying from stage to stage on life's mountainous way.

The other main burden, besides the salt from Szechuan's salt lakes, consisted of crates of large brown fowl evidently being carried long distances to adjacent towns. But salt, the ever-necessary salt, seemed to be the main cause that kept these mule and men teams on their perpetual course over these caravan routes. Occasionally a merchant would come in sight riding his pony and escorted by one or two men-at-arms. Somehow, to meet a worthy burgher like this, threading through the woodlands of a

Yunnan mountain, made you think of Robin Hood and where he might be waiting with his merry men.

Nor would your thoughts be far from the mark. These mountains are apt to be the hunting ground of bandits, especially at the slack farming seasons or when travellers, at China's New Year, are returning home laden with gifts for their home folk. One head of a China mission told me he had been captured eleven times in ten months. When, however, they found he was a mere gospel preacher, and not a rich traveller, they let him go again without suffering any harm.

These little townlets at the end of each day's stage were generally compact places easily defensible against ordinary bands of marauders. Doubtless, if danger was too great, the people would take to hiding-places in the hills, leaving the bandits to take what they could find.

The mule-inns were two-storeyed. The beasts champed, fed, and fouled the atmosphere below. Their muleteers slept in the loft above them. We sought accommodation in men-inns. The bedroom was a rough inner room with an arrow-slit for window, and a bed of built-up mud bricks. On this we contrived to fit our oilcloths, camp-beds, and mosquito nets to guard us against the insect life that is apt to take delight in the fresh blood of travellers in a wayside inn. We were generally able to get a toothsome Chinese meal, for there would be few days on which the inn was not full of travelling guests who were needing to be fed each evening time.

Whilst the accommodation was rough, after all the road led over high and lonely mountains, and the general amenities were not inadequate for those who were compelled to take these necessary journeys. Tourists were neither wanted nor expected. These inns were provided for all who were upon their lawful occasions, and not for luxury passengers.

I journeyed through perfect weather, blue sky, and scudding clouds, and a sun hot enough to warm you pleasantly. Naturally, in mountains such as these, weather was variable. In the early morning you were often in the mist for an hour or two, and during the day might pass in and out of drifting clouds. When it rained you just got wet; for you might travel for miles without any sort of shelter.

Yet the seasons were regular, and if you were not a carrying coolie or a muleteer and his beasts, you could choose to travel in the good-going season.

That 1934 trip was concluded by an overland tour, with a "Good Companion," down the northern slopes of the mountains to the Yangtse at Suifu in Szechuan. We moved through beautiful scenery, past waterfalls, woods, and flowers. The hills in their season are splashes of purple or pink or yellow azalea and rhododendron. Dog roses and violets and lilies of various shapes and colours add to your many joys. This part of the world is the botanist's paradise. Apart from the missionary, it was the botanist from Kew or Paris or Amsterdam and a stray traveller or two who among foreigners ever penetrated into these fertile valleys or scaled these mighty mountains, with their light and shade and colour.

We slept on Chinese "streets" in rather more elaborate inns than the mud buildings of those earlier and higher "stages." We crossed bridges of bamboo rope or sometimes bridges of iron-chains. Planks were under your feet, a rope hand-rail by your side, but the bridge over some roaring chasm swayed and swung under your weight and you were glad when the passage was finished. I noticed that the pigs didn't like it any better than I but the mules took it in their stride, all as a matter of course.

A curious composite memory remains of that journey. There were mountain masses stretching range after range, bluer and bluer with distance, into infinity. There were sometimes bank after bank of clouds beneath you, and through the fleecy holes, bored by the wind, you could see the sunshine on the fields beneath. There were the coolies, the mules, and the travellers, and always a wonder as to what bandit might be lurking round the next shoulder of the mountain. There was the beauty of flowers and foliage and the song of birds. Particularly the cuckoo haunted me. At an earlier point in my life in China I should have said that there was no such bird in China. Instead, we had in spring and summer time a four-noted bird whose call "*Ku'ai-ku'ai sha ho*" or "*Ko-ko shao ho*"—"Quickly, quickly sow the crops" or "Elder brother, light the fire"—sounded over the countryside, calling the farmers to activity. On the Yunnan mountains it was a different story. There the climate must have been suitable, and all day long they called from hill to hill and vale to vale, "Cuckoo, cuckoo, cuckoo," till you thought the things would never stop. This is one more example of how unwise it is to generalise about anything in China, even about cuckoos.

Between 1934 and 1939 a great change had come over the mountains. In the former years it took some three weeks to cover

600 miles. In the latter I found motor roads following most main routes. The most famous, of course, was the Burma Road from Kunming to Lashio, in Burma, a six days' journey when there were no landslides or torrential rain. I travelled over its mountains, zigzagged up and down its valleys, cruised along its contours, marvelled at its stupendous panorama. I watched the mule-teams and coolie-files still journeying the old flag-stone Marco Polo route up hill, down dale, that men and horses' feet have traversed down the centuries from China into Burma and across to India. I saw the break-down gangs of lowly tribesmen, constantly at work upon road repairs. The Burma Road was the marvellous outcome of China's determination and manpower in her hour of need. What was formerly a day's journey now takes approximately an hour. Everybody has heard of the Burma Road. Few realise that it is only one small part of a great system linking up the great mountain areas of China and that this system is still being developed and extended. Turning east, I went along the continuation of the Burma Road for three days to Kueiyang, whence three more days of motoring would have brought me to the Yangtse at Chungking. From Kueiyang I rode on for two days to Hunan and within that province moved everywhere on even better roads. Turning north from Kunming, I journeyed on a third road designed to meet the Yangtse at some point opposite Chengtu. These were only three roads out of many that link the former wastelands of inaccessible mountain areas.

I seemed to see in these roads the best hope for the end of the evils of the mountains. If men and baggage can be carried by bus and lorry, as increasingly they will be, for there is nothing even in China so expensive as manpower, then the coolie will cease to face those terrific journeys with his heavy burdens, and will no longer need his opium to ease his aches and exhaustion. Where roads are good and frequented, bandits will inevitably and naturally disappear, in China as in other lands. For down these roads can come with speed the organised powers of Government.

In China, a country as big as Europe and with a population of equal size, it is necessary to see the picture whole. Those outside the law have hitherto been able to maintain themselves in the hill country which separates county from county and province from province, and especially in the inaccessible hill-country of the west and south-west. The blazing of motor roads and linking up of communications definitely put a date to the end of all this.

Into these difficult hills for centuries the earlier dwellers in

China have retired in their own self-defence. The new roads, on which many of these tribal folk have been and are employed, have brought them into the light of a new day, and brought new knowledge of the world to them.

These early people are of many tribes and tongues and dress. Formerly it was the missionaries alone who seemed aware of their existence and their worth. Now, when the Burma and other mountain roads have so largely been the work of their hands, small wonder that the Chinese Government has seen in them still another source of its enormous manpower.

Near Tali, on the Burma Road, I have moved among the Min-Chia, "the people," as they are called, perhaps in distinction to the invading forces who found the Min-Chia in possession of the plains and mountains. Near Kunming are the Gopu. Weining, 300 miles to the north of Kunming, is the centre of an area where Nosu, substantial land-owning farmers, live. At Stonegateway (Shih Men K'an) in the nearby Kueichow Mountains is the Mecca of the Flowery Miao, who came to be known through the work of Samuel Pollard, who died among them in 1915. The uplift of these people has been so remarkable through their contact with the Church that neighbouring tribes of White Miao, Black Miao, River Miao, as well as the Nosu farmers, have been greatly affected. The Chinese Government has been so convinced of the improvement in these people's social and national usefulness that it has given active support to similar work amongst the tribes-people of Szechuan.

Around Kueiyang I watched, as I motored along, groups of these tribal elements, some well set up and sturdy, like the Min-Chia of Tali, others obviously poorer and more depressed, probably of Miao connection.

There are many millions of these earlier tribes in China's mountains. They are reported from Hunan, Kiangsi, Fukien and Canton, as well as in the regions mentioned.

In Yunnan alone, a third of the total population of eleven millions are said to consist of fifty tribes varying in dress and language and in numbers. In Burma and Thailand there is the same sort of many-coloured, many-tartaned tribal life.

It is one of the chief glories of the Church in China that it has stepped into this human situation and has brought new life into these old mountain peoples.

On the mountains are said to be ancient graves and tumuli, such as you find elsewhere among the early centuries of the

human race. These I have not seen, but one day as I walked along, hundreds of feet above a mountain stream, there was pointed out to me, high on the opposite slope, a row of square stone coffins that had been laid bare in the exceptional floods of 1931. No one previously knew of their presence there. Their remains have been investigated by Chinese scientists, and doubtless they will find their place in the history of the mountains. What treasures of knowledge here await the patient investigator.

## CHAPTER XXX

# CHINESE VALUES

THE virtues that we look for in the good Englishman are courage, fair play, public spirit, and truth. These qualities are the product of our history. They are not unconnected with our faith, though in that faith are other virtues. The British virtues have grown out of our personal, social, and national experience.

We take them for granted as we do the air we breathe, and are sometimes too unaware of their special relationship to us and of their strict limitations: for the perfect man is much better and bigger than the perfect Englishman. There is admiration for all these qualities among the Chinese too, but China's history has been longer and wider than ours, and there are other values which loom large in Chinese eyes and thoughts.

The Chinese admire courage, but they have no great tradition of crusading knights and chivalrous deliverance of fair damsels. They have not been brought up on the background of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. Their aristocracy is not like ours, an aristocracy of fighting men. A missionary doctor, a friend of mine, joined up with the R.A.M.C. and went through the 1914–18 War and was posted to the Guards. Every officer except himself was the scion of some noble house of England. Only one of them—and he was disabled—except my friend came through those four years alive. *Noblesse oblige* is a costly motto in Britain. In China such aristocracy as there is has been of scholars rather than of soldiers. Hence, though courage is bound to have its place in the picture of any gentleman, it does not stand in the forefront of the canvas as, under our vastly differing circumstances, it inevitably must.

Fair play is something, whilst human and general, which in its special emphasis is peculiarly British. Till lately, at least, few other nations have glorified their games as we have. You don't bother about fair play if you have no play. When I went to China the national play consisted in kite-flying and tossing shuttle-cocks with your heels. Then there were chess and games of chance that were, theoretically, illegal if they were played for money.

The idea of outdoor games—football, cricket, baseball, even tennis—had simply not arrived. The scholar of that period was a dignified person who was not expected to indulge in any sort of

rough horse-play, and the farmer and the coolie got more than all the exercise they needed at their daily toil. They simply did not understand the foreigner's habit of taking his walks abroad except for business and journeys to which he was compelled.

With this background of play or playlessness, small wonder if the very words "fair play" were absent from the Chinese vocabulary. That the idea was there is clear from Confucius's attitude to shooting at a sitting bird. It was not sporting. The princely man simply did not do it.

There is no nation more aware than the Chinese that life has to be lived by rule or there will be disaster, but they did not think of life in terms of a game in which you must play fair. Their word translated "custom" literally means the "compasses and square." It refers to the "set square" and compass of the carpenter. To fall in with custom was to keep the carpenter's rules, to be square or round, according to design.

That is their picture of the standards of human conduct. It is the right measurements of a Chinese carpenter's shop, not the keeping of the rules of the game on a British playing field. Yet that carpenter's shop may not fill the place quite so vividly in Chinese life as sport and its fair play does with us. It's all a matter of tradition. That old Chinese "custom" *Kuei-chu*—"compasses and square"—is getting rather worn. British sport and playing the game remain the centre of our way of thinking.

As to "public spirit," there is a tradition of an ancient dynasty who "*Chia T'ien-Hsia*"—"made the Empire a private (home) matter." It has been held up to obliquy all down the centuries.

"*Puh Kung Tao*," say the Chinese. "This is not the public way." It is unfair; private and not public. It will not do for others' use. This is very near our emphasis on "public spirit." Where we use the abstract word they use the definite picture, but the ideas are so near as to be indistinguishable. Truth or sincerity, whether we follow it or not, we feel to be the very bed-rock of all life—personal, social and international. I wonder if old China sees things after quite the black-and-white pattern of old England?

I remember, in my early years, preaching to a Chinese audience a very definite and dogmatic sermon on Pilate's question, "What is Truth?" A Chinese minister, whom I greatly respected, as we continued our journey on the following day, said suddenly, "You know it's impossible always to tell the truth. I was sent on a mission recently to a certain place to investigate a scandal. If I had not concealed my name and disguised my identity, I couldn't

have got the information that was needed. You can't always tell the truth." I think what was in his mind was that it was rather crude for us young foreigners to come out in our slap-up way for the truth as though there were no other aspect of life. I was young then and he my senior, but I don't believe it was simply that age paints in the shades of grey as well as the young man's white and black.

I doubt if an Englishman would have reacted quite in those terms. To that Chinese friend it had been a shock to have truth painted quite so forthrightly. He reverenced truth; no man more so. Through twenty years of friendship I never knew him fail in sincerity. Yet I think he was meaning to say that when you deal with truth you cannot deal with it just simply in the abstract. We English, especially if we are young enough, regard truth as an absolute.

These, then, are the marks of the English ideal man—courage, fair play, public spirit and truth. Enough has been said to suggest that whilst China endorses and approves them all, the ideal Chinese makes rather a different picture.

The classical virtues of China are love (or human kindness), right, courtesy, wisdom, and loyalty.

I prefer to write rather of the Chinese as I have met and known them, and the outstanding qualities of the good man appear to me to be an amalgam of courtesy, kindliness, wisdom, caution, patience, dignity and poise, moral integrity, and hard work. I have no doubt they can all be embraced in the five virtues of tradition, but, as in the case of the English virtues, there is some use in recording impressions that are quite first-hand and personal. I definitely place courtesy first; for it has always seemed to me to be the cardinal virtue of them all.

Almost the worst thing a Chinese can say about you is that you "*puh chiang li*," "*puh tung li*"—you "don't express courtesy," you "don't understand manners." We British folk realise that many a good man is a boor. Something is lacking, we suggest, in his birth or training. We wish he were a little less rough; but, after all, he is sound. It is very hard for Chinese to look upon a rough man with anything but disfavour. He is committing a sin against the fellowship. He is unthoughtful of others' feelings. Old China was wrapped around with a most elaborate code of etiquette as to precedence on the road or at a feast, and the manner of addressing persons high or low. Most foreigners never had the perseverance to master this code in all its intricacies. Many were impatient of all

its niceties. With the Revolution, a great deal of all this has vanished with the mandarin hats and gowns and peacocks' feathers of Cathay; but China, new as old, is the land where almost everything will be forgiven you if you "*chiang li*"—"express courtesy"—and by word and deed respect your neighbour's feelings.

In my early days it was the matter of "face" that worried us most in our acquaintance with the Chinese. It seemed to me that "face" was greater than truth and anything else in their world. The difference was that we said "face" *or* "truth." To this the answer in China, as in Britain, is the same. But the Chinese believe that in 999 cases out of 1,000 it is possible to preserve face as well as truth. You must never take a man's face away if you can possibly avoid it. A man without face is a pitiable object, and a man who has no face, e.g. who doesn't care any longer about it, is an utter scoundrel.

When you are courteous you are considering the face of your fellow man. This is much nearer to English manners than we always realise. After all, it is much easier to talk of a man's faults behind his back than to tell him "to his face." Somehow when you see him "face to face," unless you are in a tearing passion, the things you meant to say find words more gentle than those you had it in your mind to say before you saw him. So I have found, and I don't think it is only my years in China that have been the cause.

The converse of all this, of course, is that where the British are most apt to fall down in Chinese eyes is in this matter of courtesy. They do not wish us to be false. They admire immensely British standards of truth and honesty. Our goods in their markets are popular because they are reliable and up to standard, though they would like them a little cheaper. All these things they appreciate, and would appreciate them still more if in our dealings with them we had not only truth, but grace.

They marvel at our dumbness. Why are we so reticent? Why can't we open our mouths and be chatty like the French or the Americans? It never occurs to them that we are merely stupid and tongue-tied and sick with ourselves for being such social failures. On the other hand, it was a revelation to me when a great Chinese scholar, whose upbringing had been largely American, but who had lived in Britain, said one day, quite in an ordinary way, "I'm ten parts English and two parts American," referring to the difference in educational system and social outlook.

Evidently behind that courteous face someone had been taking notes and a mind was working. This would not be the verdict of a great number, but it was the statement of one of China's greatest souls who had got behind our manners, or the lack of them, to the realities.

Next to courtesy, and perhaps allied to courtesy, I should place kindliness as characteristic of the good Chinese. Literally nothing seems too much for them to do for you if they judge there is need. I have come late at night to a Chinese preacher's house after wandering cold and lorn over a delayed journey and seen the wife get up from her bed, light up the stove, and cook me a hot meal in spite of my remonstrances. Had you known the trouble to which you were going to put her, you'd have tried to find your way to an inn. As she performed her gracious kindness, you felt somehow that it was the accustomed thing. Trouble never entered into her mind. Here was a friend cold and hungry; it wasn't enough to give him a place to sleep. She couldn't have been happy had she not gone the second mile.

In all relationships between Chinese and Chinese, and Chinese and foreigner alike, "*ren-ch'ing*"—"human feelings," kindliness—is the key. Obviously there are weaknesses in this. It is very hard to refuse the request of a friend, even though the request may not be in accordance with your ideals.

China, in spite of appearances, is not a good country in which to win your way by force. The grass bends before the storm. It stoops, but only to fight better. The militarist has not understood this. It is kindness and good fellowship that win.

On an earlier page (p. 184) I have quoted the statement of an old Chinese friend as to his shame at the inability of his race to cherish hate for long. His judgment then seemed to me as strange as it was revealing. From what depths of his shrewd and thoughtful mind had such an opinion arisen? Was it his own thought or was he speaking from the experience of his people? To-day, I am inclined to ponder his words rather than reject them.

An American friend told me of a conversation he had heard about that time between a well-known Indian leader and an equally well-known Chinese leader in Nanking. The Indian said, "There's one thing about the British. You defy them and oppose them, but when it's all over they bear you no resentment." The Chinese concurred. "It was most enheartening to hear them talk about Britain like that," said the American. I believe such a verdict is true of China as it is of Britain. They cannot hate for long.

The key to the hearts of rich and poor alike is courtesy and kindliness. It is hard to say which is the deeper. Perhaps they cannot really be separated.

As my stay in China grew longer, and my acquaintance with the people closer, I came to feel how wise the good Chinese can be. The bad of all countries are essentially fools. Socrates knew what he was saying when he said that virtue was a sort of wisdom.

There is, however, wisdom and wisdom. The wisdom of China seems sometimes to halt and hesitate. It is never in a hurry. They have seen so many hurriers come to grief that it is an essential part of their experience that "In hurry there is error." I don't suppose any Chinese feels that all truth is wrapped up in one proverb, and there are times when China knows how to hurry; but, speaking generally, before China makes up her mind, she looks all round a question, and the final verdict is sound.

When I was young enough I was, of course, always right and the Chinese wrong; but the longer I lived there the more I respected their judgment. They took into account all the factors of the situation. It was so easy for me, a foreigner, to overlook some of those factors. Often, now, in committee work in England, I picture a similar group of Chinese planning and talking together and long for their wise minds to be applied to our pressing problems. In the long run, they seemed to me, in committee, to act as swiftly as the British. They put the trivial items where they belonged and were not all talking at once. Wisdom, I suppose, cannot be hereditary. It just comes out of the tradition, early acquired, that is all around you in China. After all, little Chinese have long ears. They have not been shut off from their elders, and from their babyhood they have heard the pros and cons of things discussed. There are Chinese of my acquaintance whose advice on an intricate problem I should more hopefully seek than that of most Englishmen. We British are so young beside the hoary wisdom of old China's culture.

To wisdom, caution is allied. "*Hsiao-sin*"—"Contract your heart," "Be careful"—they are always saying. You see a big-hearted fellow going down a road, swelling with good humour, careless of all danger, and you know that in this troubled world he will come to grief. Big-heartedness is a good the Chinese recognise and approve, but not all the time and in every place. When you come to a railway crossing, the notice says "*Hsiao-sin*" —"Little heart." When a mother sees her laddie run across the street, "*Hsiao-sin*," she says. "Little heart." Above all, when she

sees him playing with fire of any kind, "*Hsiao-sin*, my son, *Hsiao-sin*." The wisdom of China perhaps overdoes its caution sometimes.

The patience of China is proverbial. That coolie trotting across the country thirty miles a day, day after day, what patient endurance is there. That farmer in the field before the dawn bringing his tools home at dusk, what a picture of patience is there. The making of the Burma Road by the patience of her manpower, the recovery of the fields after the passing of the armies; how you come to take it all for granted. The patience of China seems to me like the patience of the eternal hills.

Not merely in outward, physical things is this true, but in inward and spiritual things as well. The Chinese student at home or abroad is surely one of the most hard-working and patient of his class. I remember talking to a Chinese police inspector in the midst of the political upheaval of 1926–30. "These politicians think they can solve our problems by overturning the war-lords. There is no salvation but in work," he said. "There are no short cuts. There is nothing for it but work—patient work."

Cautious, kindly, wise, patient, hard-working Chinese gentleman. Out of it all comes a certain dignity and poise. He does not need to advertise himself. He never thinks of thrusting himself forward. He believes, as his great Prophet did, in a moral universe. He is an optimist at heart. He knows the universe is sound and that good is rewarded, and evil punished. This is inescapable, though you do not see it for the moment. His Buddhist beliefs strengthen his Confucian experience.

In this chapter I have spoken of the good Chinese as I have spoken of the good of my own race. There are, of course, all sorts in China, as in every land, but in China there are so many more than there are in other lands and no two are quite alike.

One of my Chinese friends was always concerned about revenge, "*Pao ts'ou*"—"recompense enmity"—as he called it. He held a responsible position, with many opportunities of giving offence. His wisdom was so to act and speak as never to make an enemy who would "*pao ts'ou*"—"avenge the offence." He thought revenge was likely to come unless you were cautious in this way.

It may be thought that the good Chinese suffers from excess of caution. He would like to avoid awkward situations of every kind. Certainly to the Chinese even the good Englishman seems to be too boldly forceful and aggressive.

The good human plant is beautiful and attractive wherever it

is grown. Whether in China or in Britain, it is obviously the same common humanity, with its heart of kindliness and sincerity. It has flowered a little differently in different soils and climate and under different gardening. Each plant is something short of perfection. Together they add delightfully to the garden of the human family, At points they seem to be identical. Sometimes I have thought what a perfectly wonderful growth the blending of the two would make. I seem to remember something from an old book written by the hand of a Jew about Chinese grace and English truth being gathered into one.

## CHAPTER XXXI

## CHINA'S SORROWS

"THE highways are strewn with unburied corpses. Villages are deserted, and for miles trees have been stripped of their bark which has been eaten by those too weak to join in the trek westwards and southward for food. The Governor of the province has stated that millions will die before June unless adequate aid speedily arrives."—*Times*, Chungking correspondent, March 28th, 1943.

In these words an Englishman describes appalling famine conditions obtaining in the Province of Honan in the spring of 1943. Such messages have unfortunately had to be sent out every few years of my life in China. Yet you need to see even such a calamity as this in its proper proportions. China is a continent by our standards of size. Her population is as big as that of Europe, including Russia. If 5 million people were reduced to starvation and death by the Honan famine of 1943, there would still be left 455 millions unaffected by this disaster, however great their own troubles might be. We must take account of the sum of happiness as well as the accumulation of misery. In my China years, although I knew of the devastations of drought and flood, it was the exception, and not the rule, to be brought into direct contact with their consequences.

There is a delightful and very illuminating book of a century and more ago, *Macartney's Embassy to China*. The book is a description of the visit of Earl Macartney to the Court of China in 1792. He was sent to the Emperor of China with shiploads of gifts from the Court of England. His chronicler twice records the fact that in the course of the journey of the Ambassador and his entourage across the entire country from Peking to Canton not one Chinese beggar was ever seen.

That is intelligible enough. The Earl was bent in every possible way on impressing the Chinese Court with the might and majesty of England. The Chinese Court officials, on their side, were equally concerned to impress the British representative with the magnificence and splendour of China. It would not have helped at all to have had beggars lining the way. Doubtless there would be strict orders on the matter. The chronicler, however, goes in for some unwarrantable conclusions.

He assumes that in China, at that date, there was neither undue poverty nor beggary, the clear proof of poverty. He ascribes this happy state of affairs to the Chinese family system. That system, he assures his readers, in a quite natural way cares for all the unhappy and unfortunate members of the nation. If it had, indeed, that power, we should all want to scrap all other forms of social and national organisation, and follow the way of the Chinese family. For who would refuse to abolish poverty, disease, fire, and flood if it could be achieved on such simple terms? When drought or flood stalks abroad over great areas of the continent, and most of the people live on the land, the family, the clan, the county, even the province are almost as helpless as the individual. China has ever been a land of great sorrows and perhaps her high birth-rate has been her answer hitherto to the calamities to which she has been at ever-recurring intervals exposed. As in Nature generally, a high birth-rate means a great survival value. There may be a sense, therefore, in which Earl Macartney's chronicler was partly right, though not quite in the way he meant. The family system does, of course, mitigate the question of unemployment, but, in addition to that, its value with its high birth-rate has been, not that it abolished poverty, but that it caused the nation to survive in spite of all her sorrows.

The question has sometimes been put as to what would happen to China and the world if wars and revolutions, floods and famines, which have so ruthlessly kept the population down, were all to be controlled—as they are, in fact, more and more controlled. May not the answer be that there are deep secrets in Nature, that not only are these crude evils being mastered, but other great and momentous changes are happening in all nations and in China too, and that much of the problem may solve itself? There seems good prospect to-day of sufficiency of food for all who come to share the produce of the earth. The main problem is one of distribution rather than production, but when the stern necessity, in the interests of survival, of the large family is no longer with the Chinese, other forces may get to work.

We talk of Nature, the established order of things, the way things happen. They need not and will not happen always as they happen now. Past, present, and future are rarely quite the same.

Living in Hankow, we were aware enough of the incidence of poverty. Apart altogether from the organised beggar class, there were the squatters beside the carriage road which ran over the old city wall. These squatters appeared to be victims of the old village

life. Perhaps it had been flood or drought that brought them; perhaps the lure of a great city to those whose life was always on the poverty line. They set up their little mat huts by the side of the road, which, being the old city wall, was public land. The whole hut in which a family lived was some ten or twelve feet long and four feet high. So that it was impossible for anyone but a little child to stand erect inside. Yet the hut was at least as roomy as the inside of the little boats in which innumerable families are reared. It was more spacious, really. For outside the hut was solid ground on which, except during deluges of rain, it was possible to pursue your household tasks. The man spent his day pulling a rickshaw or engaged in other remunerative tasks which brought him much gain compared to his wages as a day-labourer in the country. For it was mainly the landless folk that came to Hankow to begin life again.

The wife bore and minded the babies; did the simple washing and cooked the food. That was the first stage, but it rarely seemed to end there.

One day you passed along the road and found the hut had vanished. The rickshaw coolie was taking a few hours off; and with the help of his wife and perhaps a neighbour, was erecting a frame to which would be nailed or fastened more of these reed mats. When it was finished, he had a little house with a room or two in which you could stand up, and a brick stove something like that in the country farmhouse from which he had come.

The third stage was the replacement of this mat house by a wooden house and then finally there were brick walls and tiled roof and windows and a painted front, possibly a two-storeyed building with a tea or other shop below and the family, or a family of lodgers, in the loft. I have no means of knowing if that was the evolution of a single Chinese family, but certainly it was the evolution of a squatter's hut, and we always knew it was only a matter of a year or two before it happened. So that man's hope and work had its reward. He never was a beggar, always a worker, but very near to poverty. Others, hearing of his bettering fortunes, came to join in that ever-prospering town. There it might be explained to the newcomer that what was now a street of flourishing shops had only two or three years before been a lane of smelly, comfortless, four-feet-high rounded mat huts. It was poverty, dreadful poverty, by our standards, but poverty with hope. There was always hope. How few are the absolute and undiminishable necessities of life every soldier and many Chinese missionaries

know. Food, sleep, some shelter from the worst of the rain and blast—you can live if you have these and a wife who asks nothing more than to share your fortunes with you. These things the Chinese squatter had, and he always hoped there was good fortune round the corner. He was very near to the starvation line, if he ever thought about it, but in Hankow there was always work of sorts for a strong body and a willing mind.

This living near to poverty is characteristic of an old agricultural country. All China's wealth is based on land. Till the Communists appeared the Chinese judged that in spite of all life's calamities, there was always the "good earth." Floods or drought might destroy your crops, soldiers or bandits might loot and destroy your houses, but, when they had passed, always the "good earth" remained. Your servant, from his scanty earnings, would buy a little field which his brother in the country might till for him. The contractor, from his greater profits, would add field to field near his old country home. Everybody sought to be a landowner. There were, of course, great estates owned by some who had prospered in business or official life but were still rooted in the country. In addition, there were innumerable small peasant holders. The big landowners could surmount any natural calamity: for their wealth was not confined to the country. The lesser folk lived from hand to mouth, grew their wheat, rice, maize, pea-nuts, cotton, and all sorts of vegetables primarily for their own consumption. In a good year they would take their surplus crops and sell them and gain a little money. In a bad year they tightened their belts, looked at the sky, worshipped the "*T'u-ti*"—"local" idols—and hoped for better days. There was always cheerfulness and hope, but they were always very near the edge of calamity.

When the heavens were shut up and no rain fell for months, when the Yangtse or the Yellow River burst its banks and overflowed the land, the rich might flee, but the peasant farmer, hoping to the last and having no other place to go, hung on till he was compelled for life's sake to move and become that beggar of which Earl Macartney's chronicler was unaware—eating grass and bark of trees and all that would for a moment stay the pangs of hunger, till he fell by the wayside or found refuge at last in some little mat hut outside a busy town.

China always has been subject to these incalculable occurrences of Nature. In 1931 there occurred such flooding of the Yangtse as had not been known in living memory. Whatever provision had been made for the dykeing of the river, such a calamity could

never have been foreseen. Apart altogether from those who died from drowning or disease, we had 80,000 homeless people for many months on the Hanyang hills opposite our houses. The Chinese Government speedily took care of them. It was a problem before their very eyes and compassable in size that they could handle, but one shudders to think what would have happened on the plains of Shantung or Honan. When we know more about long-range weather forecasts, something may be able to be done even about rain and weather. I was surprised and gratified to know that an old Chinese student of mine, studying meteorology in London a few years ago, was engaged upon this very problem. As usual, he was optimistic that something helpful would be discovered. Meanwhile, the best is happening. Motor roads, largely for Government and military purposes, are being made in every province. They are, for this purpose, better than the few grand trunk railways and may, anyhow, act as auxiliaries to them. It is much more feasible, in time of famine, to take food to the people than bring the people to the food. I see in this fast-developing and ever-increasing network of roads China's greatest hope against this sorrow. To turn China's military roads into supply routes bringing food sounds much like turning spears into pruning-hooks. Any Chinese, as any English, government that feeds the people in their hour of extremity will be secure in the affections of all. Confucius more than hinted that that was the main purpose of all good government. Otherwise soldiers and politicians may come and politicians and soldiers may go, but why should the people bother their heads about them?

The incidence of disease in China has always seemed to me comparable with the destruction of flood or drought—almost an affliction of Nature. We foreigners all understood it and suffered from it. Strangely, we lightly felt that perhaps the Chinese were immunised because they were born and bred in the country. We foreigners "*puh fuh shui t'u*"—"did not agree with the water and earth"—and therefore suffered inordinately. That was the regular Chinese phrase when a stranger took ill and there must have been something of their ripe experience in it. Conditions of "land and water" were not agreeable. The mountain man was not fitted to the plains, nor the plain-dweller to the mountains, the foreigner to China, or the Chinese to foreign parts. This whole matter of acclimatisation to new conditions has to be faced everywhere. In a Hankow summer, when your digestive organs, anyhow, were in a delicate condition, to fall asleep in a temperature of 100°,

with no covering but a sheet, and wake up with the thermometer suddenly dropped to 80° or less and a wind blowing with a deluge of rain, was likely to prove a strain even on seasoned old residents. That was a matter of acclimatisation: knowing from experience what was likely to happen in the night, and protecting yourself accordingly. That was a matter primarily of adjustment to "water and earth."

Few foreigners in China have escaped definite diseases; dysenteries of various kinds, typhoid, malaria, even cholera and typhus. How much more true this was of the hundreds of millions of people by whom we were surrounded. Yet, through our Western prophylactic medicines, we were protected against as well as warned of the dangers to which, especially at certain seasons, we were ever exposed. We came to dread the fly much more than the mosquito. At least the latter did warn you with her music before she struck and put poison into your blood. The fly, with her filthy feet, soiled everything and you never knew what had happened till your loved ones were suffering from the foul diseases she had spread. China eats hot food and drinks hot tea. Your Chinese servants warned you off cold dishes. Except with the greatest precautions, you neither drank cold water nor took cold food. All drinking water was boiled for at least fifteen minutes and then kept in covered vessels. All cold food was carefully screened, but, unfortunately, never carefully enough.

I have no doubt that it was China's experience of disease that had led the Chinese to their ideas about food. The universal use of tea was due to the fact that it was made with boiling water and kept in closed pots to which no disease-bearing fly or other pest had easy access.

All life in our part of China was prolific. The gardener did not care to plant flowers in the garden lest they should multiply like weeds. In the soil they spread and were beautiful in colour, but they lost their scent. One of China's sayings was: "If you care for flowers, you will not mind about their scent." So the gardener would keep his flowers in the flower-pots, where he could control them, rather than plant them in the flower-bed, where they would soon run away from his control. I suppose it was the humid heat of the rich Yangtse Valley that was the cause of this great urge to multiplying life. Disease, which, after all, is a sort of inimical life, spread too at the same alarming rate, and it has often seemed to me that, but for her prodigious birth-rate, even China's millions would have been wiped out by China's diseases. As it was, doubt-

less the fit survived the perilous years of childhood. Of those who were left in the land of the living, many suffered and died from widespread summer diseases. They were certainly not immune. The wards of every hospital bore witness to that. Yet on the whole the enormous population of China not only conquered flood and drought. It triumphed also over the mysterious and sinister enemy, disease.

This sorrow is always with us in every land. Yet the modern outlook on disease in East and West is no longer the superstitious fear or the fatalistic submission that it was. In China, as in other lands, science is welcomed and followed. A most important concern of the Nationalist Government is the public health service under learned and able Chinese modern doctors. War has begun on flies and rats as well as on mosquitoes, the commonest bearers of disease germs. Public vaccinations and inoculations are a part of every civic programme.

The Government authorities have wisely sought the co-operation of the missionaries and their hospitals, the pioneers in modern medical service. What a stupendous task it is to care for the health of 460 million people from one central health bureau. To me it seems a bigger problem than even education; for it appears at every stage of every human being of every age and place who draws breath. Yet this sorrow, as the trouble of flood and drought and famine, may be coming near that stage where, as far as disease and ill-health can be mitigated or cured by modern knowledge and modern skill, sadness and sighing shall be done away. Some day I believe it will be acknowledged how greatly China has benefited from the fact that so much of the modern medical ideals and standards has been given by Christian men and women. The medical, as other professions, is not so much good in itself as dependent on the character and ability of the personnel employed in its service and the standards that they follow.

One other devastating sorrow of China's in my time has been the scourge of fire. After all, this affects the vast majority of China's population but little. Most of the millions dwell in villages and hamlets where there is a strict limit to the extent of any conflagration. In places like Hankow, however, it was a different and a very terrible thing. The town had grown up anyhow, just as towns do in England. Great sections were much congested. In the long, dry autumns the buildings largely built of wood became like kindling waiting for a match. The overturning of the brazier on a windy night, the spilling of a tin of oil, almost any trivial thing

might be the little cause that meant the destruction of a whole section of the town from which it was impossible for quite large numbers to escape. Loss of life and property was often very great and terrible.

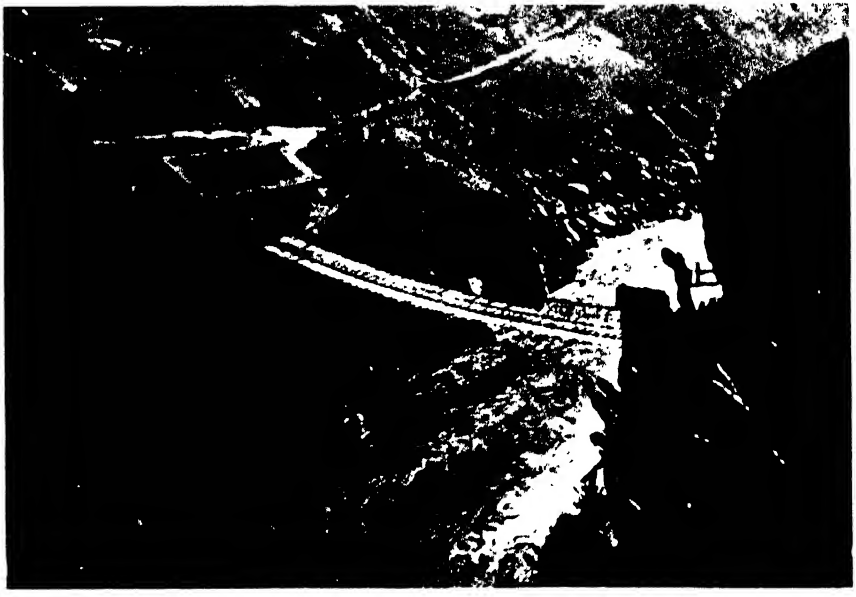
The Nationalists, who have pulled down the city walls, have blazed new and wide roads throughout Hankow and almost every city where their influence has come. By so doing they have improved the value of the property on the streets, they have made roads that cars and buses and carriages could use, but, above all, they have taken the terrors out of the fire demon who was such an active enemy of China's congested city life.

China's sorrows are still with her, and deeper sorrows too, but there are hearts moved with compassion as there have always been. I think the moving inspiration of all the revolutionary toil and fervour of the great Sun Yat-sen was his care for the sorrows of his people—many of them remediable—their poverty, their sicknesses, their unnecessary sufferings. His dreams and visions will for long be the stuff from which Government policies are made.

On the Yunnan Mountains

**Through Hupeh's Paddyfields**

Stone-Gateway, Kueichow, in winter. Miao women and Chapel



A Chain Bridge over mountain torrent at Changti, Yunnan

## CHAPTER XXXII

## "FOREIGN TEACHING"

"YANG CHIAO" is the colloquial in Chinese for "Christianity," in distinction from "*Hui Chiao*"—"Muhammadanism"—and "*Yu Ssu Tao, San Chiao*"—the threefold religion of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism. "*Yang Chiao*" means the "foreign teaching," which seems the most appropriate title for this chapter. It is the stigma of foreignness that has been the greatest difficulty that exponents of the faith have had to face.

The Church in China has been in more constant and continuous trouble than in any other part of the world in my lifetime. In the dread "*Keng-Tze Nien*"—the "Boxer Year"—of 1900, 186 missionaries and thousands of Chinese Christians were butchered in a mad orgy of reaction to things foreign, engineered by the Empress Dowager. This in the West went under the name of the Boxer Rising. In China it is simply called to this day, "*Keng-Tze Nien.*" There had been "*Keng-Tze Nien*" every sixty years of the old Chinese cycle, but only this one dreadful year is remembered by that name to-day. So it is with the name of Judas. There had been many glorious bearers of that name but, for all time, there is only one Judas now.

It took long years for the waves of that storm to be still, and not till 1911 did there come the "*Hsun Feng*"—the "favouring wind"—which really helped the good ship along. It was from the *literati* that the strength of the opposition came. Partly it was a matter of national pride. To them missionaries must have seemed much like the pre-war onion-sellers did to us—all a little strange and ridiculous. Who were these foreigners to invade China with their "foreign teaching"? Had they never heard of Confucius? If you were interested in religion, were there not already the "three religions"? What need was there, in China, for anything more at all?

Partly it may have been due to a shrewd summing up of the real situation. The Chinese are no fools. They, the holders of authority as well as the preservers of tradition, realised that here, maybe, was new wine that would burst the old bottles. Their world, in which they were all powerful, and this world were incompatible. They may not have reasoned about it: they hardly needed to. They knew instinctively that there was something here to be

resisted. Even the foreigner to-day with any imagination can see the situation with which they were faced. The Boxer Rising had had most disastrous consequences for China. The Court had fled. The nation had had to promise huge indemnities. Proclamations were posted through the land permitting missionaries to reside where they were needed for their work and guaranteeing their protection.

Our standards of life, compared with ordinary Chinese standards for housing, food, and clothing, seemed very high, though they were, as nearly as we could make them, an exact counterpart of similar standards at home. They must have felt that here was growing up in China an *imperium in imperio* over which they had little or no control. If they were cynical as to our motives, they were only going by experience. Confucianism is non-missionary. Its whole theory is that a man has only to be a "princely man" for his virtue to be immediately effective. He does not need to advertise his goods. They advertise themselves and need no preaching.

Buddhists do good works, but they do them for themselves; to pile up their own merit. They may give coffins to the "*Shan T'ang*" —the "Virtue Hall"—or money to the beggars; they may scatter rice-tickets to the needy in the winter, or set fish and eels free from the market; they may go on pilgrimages or build pagodas. Yet all these "good deeds" are personal and individual; performed in the interests of the doer himself. Buddhism builds no church and sets up no organisation in this world or of this world. Here were these foreigners seeking converts, building them into societies, teaching them to turn from ancestor-worship and to refuse payments for autumn theatricals which were an accompaniment of idolatry. In a word, some organisation was being set up that was breaking down the ancient and universal customs of the land, an organisation that in the proclamations was specially protected by foreign treaty. It was very difficult for the *literati* to believe that hospitals, schools and chapels were opened, looking for no reward, out of pure philanthropy. There must be something sinister in it all. In their own classics Confucius had spoken of the spontaneity of love but, like much in the classics, they had not seen it working out in life.

However harmless and kindly we looked, there must be some evil design working in our hearts. What the connection between missionaries and their governments might be, they could not for the life of them know. In the Boxer year and its aftermath there

clearly was a connection. No one believed we were there just in the interests of China and her good.

Such things as these had their roots in earlier history, but I am trying to picture the Chinese state of mind from the "*Keng-Tze Nien*" till 1911.

There were other forces at work. There were Chinese law-courts where at that time justice was bought or sold or given to the man with the largest influence. In those post-Boxer years the Church was full of people who said they were persecuted. If they had been, it was no business of the foreign missionary to interfere in China's civil disputes. The Chinese in those days were fond of litigation. They got the notion that foreigners, including the foreign Church, must be very powerful indeed if they had brought the Empress Dowager to her knees. So many of them professed conversion, knowing that their very name as Christians would add great weight to their case when it came before the mandarin for decision. He had a notion that, whatever he thought, it was good policy to give the verdict on the side on which the foreigner, with his influence, was thought to be. All this changed with the Revolution, but it was a very serious part of the situation in my early years in China.

I remember one summer's day, years afterwards, standing on the deck of the steamer-hulk at Wusueh, waiting for a steamer to take us up to Hankow. It was a warm summer night. A young Chinese gentleman came and stood by me and, as we leaned over the rail together, we talked of this and that. By and by we parted. I remained outside and he went into the waiting-room, and I heard him talking to his wife. "You know," he said, "some of these Christians are good. They are not all bad." If such a statement seems surprising, then you must take it on the background of an area where the good name of the Church had been consciously or unconsciously compromised by law-suits, where it had always been assumed that Christian preachers and missionaries had ulterior motives, where the Church had cut across the sacred rites of ancestral worship and the common man's joy of his country theatricals. For less than this Christians in the old Roman Empire had been called "haters of the human race." The devil hasn't many new tricks. You were, no more in China than in Rome, persecuted for being a Christian on a clean and straight issue, but always for something else.

The Church in China has suffered also from its friends. Years ago Sir Hiram Maxim, after a stay in China, attacked us in the

English Press. I remember saying to myself: "What particular knowledge and authority has a skilled inventor of guns when it comes to a discussion of the Church? If he wants a few scandalous stories about some of the four thousand missionaries, we can tell them far better than he. But then we should have to set against them stories of devotion, sacrifice, heroism, competence, and success which make all the criticism but the small dust in the balance." Those Yangtse and coastal steamer saloons were often full of gibes at missionaries. When ordinary conversation failed the captain after dinner, it was always easy to fall back on the latest yarn about them. One of my friends, in mufti, sat listening to these after-dinner stories one day. He suddenly began to talk of engines and horse-power and machinery, and all the table fell silent.

"I suppose you wonder why an ignoramus should talk like this about these things," he said.

"Well, we did rather wonder," said the engineer.

"So did I when you were talking," said he. "You know as much about the missionaries as I do about engines, and that isn't very much."

A few of my best friends were shipping folk and business men, though our paths did not often cross. We suffered a lot unnecessarily because, from the very nature of our lives, we saw so little of one another. I am convinced that this is the main reason for misunderstanding on the part of our fellow nationals. They did not know, and mistook common talk for fact.

We were misunderstood by the Chinese and by the foreign community alike, and, being after all only human, what missionary would dare to say that in either case he had never given grounds for misunderstanding? Misunderstandings clear up like the morning mist with time, and that is what has increasingly happened in China.

After the Revolution of 1911 things turned full swing in our favour for a time, and hardly a Church in China was unaware of it. That stubborn Chinese resistance was gone. Actually, the resisters had gone. The old *literati* as a class just faded away.

The new official judged justly, and the law-courts were no longer at the mercy of the highest bidder or the most influential litigant.

We had religious liberty, and the boys and girls used it to go their own way independently of parental and ancestral control. Our schools filled up and expanded. Ambitious youths and maidens

wanted Western education, and where should you get that better than where Westerners were teaching? Our Red Cross work in the time of strife popularised the hospitals. Old suspicions and prejudices melted away in the presence of our obvious surgical successes; for it was surgery rather than medicine that won fame for the Church hospitals. Then Feng Yu-hsiang, the Christian and model soldier, rose up. He taught his soldiers trades as well as religion. His troops were well-disciplined and, contrary to the ways of some troops, paid readily for all their purchases upon the street. There was no or little gambling, debauchery, or opium smoking where Feng Yu-hsiang held sway. Town after town set up tablets to the blessings that Feng and his troops had brought while garrisoning the area. This was doubtless to encourage the others, who, in turn, promptly pushed the tablets flat in the mud.

So good appeared the signs, that it was felt opportune, in the spring of 1922, to gather students from all the world to Peking to attend the World's Student Christian Federation. Hospital patients, schoolboys and girls, members and enquirers never were so numerous. With the coming of justice to the law-courts, the Church ceased to view each new enquirer with suspicion. We judged that, at long last, we could take an earnest enquirer at face value. In the earlier 1902–11 period an old minister had summed up the conditions by saying, "We baptised them on suspicion." Bitter experiences of disappointment lay behind that cynical comment. Now all that was changed. Enquirers sincerely came, and after appropriate training were confidently welcomed into the membership of the Church and there was hardly a Church organisation anywhere whose membership was not increasing by leaps and bounds. The two periods 1902–11 and 1912–25 were unbelievably different. To those who had experienced the former difficulties it had become very joy to be alive. With swelling numbers there was developing quality. The scholars were growing up from the inside and replacing the old teachers on the staff of school and college. Football and tennis were now all but universal sports. Students in Government schools, as in Christian schools, took their place in the field of sport with the students of all lands. When missionaries and Chinese leaders of the same communion came together, they enheartened one another with these things. It was a consequence of these changing conditions that, in the autumn of 1922, a Great Church Conference was held in Shanghai's Municipal Hall. There were 1,200 delegates, half missionary and half Chinese. This was an amazing thing. Each ten-year

period for many years there had been conferences of missionaries to consult together about common problems and common tasks. In 1913 I had attended two such conferences, mainly of missionaries, one in Hankow and one in Shanghai. This was entirely different. After little more than a century of Protestant missions, we seemed to have done our work so well that here we were on an equal basis, Chinese and foreigners, to confer together on our common purpose.

The thing that startled and delighted me was the manifest ability of some of these leaders whose names I had never heard before. There was T. Z. Koo with his rosy, boyish face, equally master of English and Chinese, and in either language making statements of great ability. There was Timothy Ting-fang Liu from Peking, who, when a slight difference arose over some theological point, exhorted us to "Agree to differ but resolve to love." Fancy a Chinese scholar talking to us like that in spirit, and in sheer ability to coin the perfect English phrase. Of course, there was Dr. C. Y. Cheng with his degree granted by Edinburgh University at the Edinburgh Conference of 1910. Who could have been more worthy? I served also on a sub-committee with Dr. H. H. Kung, later Minister of Industry, Prime Minister, and Minister of Finance in the Nationalist Goverment. He was then a returned student from America, head of a college in Shantung, and already married to Miss Sung of Shanghai, whose sisters were to become the world-famous Mesdames Sun Yat-sen and Chiang Kai-shek.

There we sat listening and debating day by day. I had been, practically without a change, working away quietly in Wuchang and Hankow, thankful for the growing success of the little things in which my hands were engaged. I went back to Hankow to tell my friends that I had seen a new thing and that within ten years I would not be surprised to see the Chinese in charge of their own Church. When I left the country in 1934, already in Anglican and Roman Catholic churches there were Chinese bishops and assistant bishops, and the successor to my administrative post as Chairman of a (Provincial) District was an old Chinese colleague of many years' standing.

The Meetings of the Conferences in Peking and Shanghai were the occasion for the beginning of an anti-Christian movement which, in 1926 and 1927 and some of the following years, reached a great pitch of violence. It was not the work of old-fashioned Confucian Pharisees this time, but of returned students from

abroad, notably Mr. Wang Ching-wei. Wang, a man of unusual mental gifts, called the Sage of the Revolution, had had some part of his education in Paris. Under the sceptical influences of certain centres of Western education, he had no use for religion of any kind, probably saw what clerical parties had done in France and elsewhere, and thought it better to end the institution of such a party in China before it had well begun.

With the Nationalist Revolution of 1926, this anti-Christian movement was intensified. We maintained a steady sympathetic and friendly attitude to China's Revolution, registered our schools under Chinese regulations, and gradually won our position of live and let live, so long as the country's claim to rule in her own house was acknowledged. For under the Nationalist, as under the Republican, régime religious freedom was a mark of the new China.

The conversion of Chiang Kai-shek in October, 1930, made no difference to the situation. By the principle of religious freedom, General Chiang had a perfect right to adhere to any religion or no religion as he might choose. Actually, he was not alone in his return to religion. The "*Kuo Min T'ang*"—the "Nationalist Party" —as such had been negative to religion, and so continued for the early years of the revolt. Whether the elimination and outlawing of the Communists from the party came into the matter is not clear. What is clear is that China had tried the path of no religion and found it wanting. Some of the leaders reverted to Buddhism and Confucianism: General Chiang chose Christianity as the best religion that he knew. There is no doubt in my mind that, following this, his character and personality were greatly enlarged and enhanced. The Japanese say that he cannot be Chinese; for he is so different from the others. I wonder if it has ever occurred to them to measure the influence of the Church upon his life.

All through this chapter I have talked of the Church and not of any mission: for, whether within or without the Church, China has no use for a Chinese Church that is the outreach of a missionary society. They do not think of a white mission extending into China, but of a universal Church which, in their part of the world, is to be Chinese and controlled by the Chinese.

In this attitude of mind I find myself whole-heartedly in agreement with them, and would like the very word "mission," as well as the thing to perish from the Chinese earth. It means a deep revolution for the missionary. He takes an auxiliary and advisory, rather than a directing and controlling, position.

It is foolish and ignorant to gird at the early missionaries. In their day there were only the missionaries and their handful of converts. Now there are Chinese Anglican Churches, Chinese Congregational Churches, Chinese Methodist Churches. It is the Chinese Church and not an instrument of foreign ecclesiastics or Missionary Societies of which they think or speak. "I am not a member of your missionary society: I am a member of God's Church in China." More than thirty years have passed since that Chinese friend and colleague startled me into new ways of thinking with that statement. There are obvious dangers in such an attitude. People nowadays deplore our divisions. The greatest and most hurtful division of all would be to be divided by nationalism. To the Chinese Church has come dignity and self-respect, and it is good. For that dignity to be enslaved by nationalism would be deplorable indeed. The Chinese are very wise. Some of my friends already see the danger. The terrible experiences of the years 1925–43, including revolution, war, and great suffering, will prove the refiner's fire in which some of this dross will be burned away. After all, what centuries of development has the Chinese Church experienced in the last forty years, and she is as full of hope as she is of good works, the final proof of religion in China!

## CHAPTER XXXIII

## GOOD HUMOUR

WHEN one thinks of China, there is so much that comes to mind. There is light and dark and every shade between. There is almost infinite variety. The only advocate to suspect is the man who has just one simple adjective or two to describe this quarter of the human race. How can you rightly simplify the complexities of such hundreds of millions of fellow human beings? Some are now, as ever, as brilliant intellectually as people to be found in any age or any place. Great masses seem to be just hard-driven, plodding farmers, but who knows what powers may reside here and there amongst these ploughing hosts? Who to-day is unaware of the unusual capacities of many of China's daughters? What a panorama of humanity you passed any day as you walked the length of Hankow's busy street. Once and again as, in South Kensington Museum, I have studied the skulls representative of the various ages of mankind, I have fancied I could find fellows to every one of these skulls among the living Chinese I had known or seen upon the street. They are no more alike in face and form than the Europeans of the West. There are rich and poor; there are the diseased and the healthy; there are the sinful and the saintly. Some of the modern womenfolk are of amazing beauty, and some of their grandmothers strangely attractive in their simplicity and characterfulness. "Scholar, farmer, worker, vendor" is far too simple a classification to-day, as perhaps it ever was, for the variety of their life and occupation. If, in all that manifold life, one dared to generalise at all it would be to say that the most abiding memory one carried away is the amazing "good humour" of the race.

The stored-up experience of China has been contained in her proverbs, especially her common proverbs. Until but yesterday, such a small proportion of her vast population was literate that general education and the handing on of the great tradition depended on the story-teller, the actor, and, above all, upon the "common saying," as the proverb was called.

The phrase for proverb is "*Suh Hua*," which just means "common talk." The Chinese idea of proverb is manifestly the saying that everybody knows and everybody uses. It is every-man speaking, the digested wisdom of the past.

The commonest proverb of them all is that about good and evil and their results quoted on p. 152. Perhaps the second most common is this: "*Hoh ch'i fah ts'ai*"—"The good-humoured man grows rich." We speak of the happy "bedside manner" of the popular doctor. They apply the same *bonhomie* to every type of business. Where you were brought up on "Honesty is the best policy," which I think no long-range Chinese would deny, he is brought up on "Wealth depends on good-humouredness." Happily, honesty remains the dominant notion still in British business, and it has that reputation in China to this day. "Good humour" holds the corresponding place in Chinese business. I never thought of "good humour" having any special market value till I got to China. No one needs to think for long before realising what a shrewd judgment of reality that "common saying" enshrines.

Many years ago I was attending a meeting where there were complaints about the arbitrariness of a Chinese preacher. Apparently feeling had run high, and the usual courtesies were dispensed with. "No shopkeeper has a mad dog at his front-door," said a critical brother; "his business wouldn't flourish if he had." Of course it wouldn't. It's not the mad dog, or its owner, that does the good business. It's good humour that leads to prosperity. You could see the mad dog being removed. You could see the shopkeeper, all smiles and courtesy, welcoming his customers. You could see the fast-accumulating cash being dropped into his two feet of a bamboo cashbox. Business was thriving now the mad dog had gone, and the smiling merchant had taken the central place. Ordinary Chinese speak at all times in pictures, illustrations, and concrete terms. It is only in modern education that abstract terms are being used, and most of them, thanks to the suppleness of the language, are far less tenuous and abstract than the words we use.

"Good humour leads to wealth" is a proverb of the shop. China, as England "is a nation of shopkeepers," and whatever applies to the shop is applied to most other things too. Many of my friends have amused themselves listening to the eager conversation of passengers across the country or down the street. This was not eavesdropping, for most travellers went in a single file and shouted back and forth to one another, so that not only each, but all, could hear. It was their deliberate verdict that nine-tenths of these travellers' conversations ranged round the two subjects of "*ch'ien*"—"money"—and "*fan*"—"rice" or "food"—the two most important things in shops—or out of them, for that matter—that concern the physical needs of men and women.

"Good humour leads to wealth" was a "common saying" with very wide ramifications, applying to nine-tenths of the daily conversations of passengers on the street or travellers through the fields. As near as could be, it was and is of universal application in all the concerns of life.

When I meet old China hands to-day, their attitude to China seems always to contain this element. "John Chinaman," they say, "is such a good fellow to get on with if you treat him with anything like dignity and respect." It is a feeling of friendliness at ordinary times that we have carried away. There are few of us who, in the last generation or two, have not eaten a good deal of bitterness at times. That busy, hard-working kindly people was capable of being worked up into a fury of riot; but somehow bitterness was the exception and good humour was the rule. There were, at certain periods of greater unrest, disbanded and out-of-work soldiers and bandits to be encountered. Their tender mercies could be very cruel. Yet somehow this was not China; this was the deterioration, the atavism of China.

The China of the shop and street, the China of the farm and field, the China of our friends and acquaintances was the China of "good humour," a land where, once their fears were allayed, the sun of kindliness shone on everything. It's the good-humoured man that gets on in business. It's the good-humoured man who thrives in society. It's the good-humoured man who is the popular official.

Good-humouredness and goodness seemed very near akin in Chinese eyes.

The ideal man of the classics "neither cursed heaven nor reviled men." He did not vent his spleen on heaven or earth. In calamity, it was no good being angry. If, when trouble came, he examined himself and found the fault was not in himself, he submitted to the will of Heaven and did not curse his fate. He had a fundamental trust in the goodness of things, and even in trouble he pursued his way patient, good-humoured, and always with a gleam of hope upon his path. For he believed that good humour was at the heart of the universe.

You watched your servants, when the day's work was done, with their evening bath or wash completed and changed into some thin, clean garment, sitting chatting together in the garden full of jest and quip and royal good-fellowship.

You sat in your chair, a living burden on the strength of China's coolies, your chair-poles bearing heavily upon their shoulders, the

sweat streaming from their bodies. Every few miles they stopped and rested and drank tea. As they sped along, they talked and chatted imperturbably, with minds at rest, whatever their bodies might be suffering. Sometimes they grew tired and irritable, but on the whole, especially when you got acquainted by several days of continuous travel, how good-humoured they were and how friendly to the end.

The portly figure of John Bull, in his square felt hat and his knee breeches and double chin, is a kindly figure too; and it seems at first amazing that these two Johns, separated from one another by the width of the earth, and doing so many things in ways mutually topsy-turvy the one to the other, should in this matter of "good humour" be so near akin.

It may be something similar in the structure of both nations that is, at least in part, the explanation. We in Great Britain are a free amalgam of several peoples. In the course of history, wave after wave of invasion has passed over these islands. Britons, Norsemen, Danes, Romans, Normans, Angles, Saxons have all left their mark upon our language, our placenames, and our structure. These are but some of those who have dwelt in these isles. Others have entered into our life, Huguenots and others seeking refuge from religious persecution, weavers from Flanders, Jews from Europe. On the outskirts of Great Britain, and in mountain districts, there are those who may still be the inheritors of one single human strain. In this union of nations there are necessarily accommodations to various traditions. The only way in history to drive things to their logical conclusion would have been to exterminate opponents and leave only the one all-conquering victor to live upon the land. That was not the way our fathers took. After periods of strife, they settled down together, accommodated themselves to one another, and made this illogical British race. Therefore, compromise is a virtue among us. It is one of the conditions of our being, and compromise is only possible where there is good humour.

There are strange beliefs in the world about the "peace-loving Chinese" that find little proof in history. China has had great conquering soldiers whose hand has rested heavily on Europe and on Asia. More commonly China herself has been the victim of invasion after invasion, mainly from the north. Some of the tribal elements to-day on the mountains of Yunnan, Kueichow, and Szechuan have traditions which point to the Yangtse Valley as the home of their forefathers not many centuries ago. In the time

of Confucius, and before his day, there were many differing kingdoms in what is now called China. What is going on to-day in tribal China may well be typical of the trend of things for centuries and millenniums. Chinese civilisation is the highest form of human society known "within the four seas," and the highest tribal life definitely gravitates in that direction and is proud to enter China in that sense. The unifier of China is Confucius and his disciples. It is they who have spread the culture and extended the civilisation. The sword may have been mighty, but the pen is mightier still. In China, as in Britain, compromise is one of the working theories of life, and for the same reason. Unless you are prepared to destroy all who are not of you, some form of compromise is indispensable to life.

Like the English, the Chinese do not live by the rules of logic. They are practical people living a real life, where compromise is essential and, once more, compromise is only possible where good humour has its place. In fact, compromise and good humour act and react on one another.

Even at the ends of the earth similar conditions bring about similar results, and that may be why, under great superficial differences between Britain and China, there are fundamental matters that should give them mutual understanding and sympathy.

"Good humour" in both civilisations is not something universal and from above, but something which is intertwined in the very structure of the nation. So across the world John Chinaman and John Bull shake hands and hail one another British fashion, or shaking their own hands, reverently, bow and salute one another Chinese fashion, as those whose ideas on practical life and attitude to life are very similar.

"Good humour" and simple "humour" are not very far apart in word or in reality. There is a brightness and a twinkle in the eye of the good-humoured that is always ready to break out into a smile. There again John Bull and John Chinaman are curiously akin.

The "laughing Buddha" fits happily into China. That happy figure, with its broad smile and billowing flesh, is so unlike any of our preconceived notions of the Buddha as to be rather shocking when, for the first time, you gaze upon its image. The "sleeping Buddha" you can understand. That signifies the peace of Nirvana attained. The great, calm image, undisturbed by worldly desires, placed upon the lotus, diffusing peace, is clearly an embodiment

of the "peace beginning to be, peace as the calm of the sea" that is generally associated with the teaching and experience of Gautama Buddha. If there were an ascetic figure, we should recognise him too as being truly Buddha. What has the way of Karma really to do with that jolly figure with his rolls of fat, what, except this? In China such a figure denotes humour, good humour, and prosperity. He is a figure who has attained the goal. Other idols may be stern or calm, threatening, frightening. This good-humoured figure is singularly at home in China, and Buddhism has been very accommodating to Chinese ways of thought and life.

As I walked through a street of an "occupied" Chinese town in 1940 with Japanese sentries controlling traffic at the barriers and the Japanese flag, with red sun on its white ground, flying overhead, a companion said to me. "Do you know what the Chinese call that flag?" There was I in a city where there was the usual harshness of the invader, the usual humiliation of the defeated, the usual misunderstanding between conqueror and conquered, and the usual clashes that ensued. Life was hard and somewhat joyless. Many a pessimist was assuaging his grief and forgetting his cares in the licensed opium den. It seemed no time for humour, or good humour either. "No," I said. "What do they call it?" "*Poh-Tan*," he replied. "Poached egg." Proud and victorious Japan's glorious rising sun, after all, nothing more than a "poached egg." The mentality that could think out such a jest, in the midst of physical and mental sufferings so great, commands my unbounded admiration. None but a nation of great maturity and poise is, I think, capable of inventing such a phrase.

No question is more frequently put to me than whether the Chinese can see a joke. It is, of course, a very searching question. There are all sorts of laughter. That two nations should be able to smile together is perhaps the greatest bond of understanding.

Here is a revealing story that a Chinese friend told me one day in England. Shall we call him Dr. Li? This was his story: "I was the guest of honour at an American Women's luncheon. During the luncheon I got into great difficulties with some slippery, fried, crisp potatoes. I couldn't manage them with my knife and fork at all. An American lady, an old China friend, seeing my predicament, passed me a pair of ivory chopsticks. This I greatly appreciated and was able to get on with the meal without further hindrance. The President of the Club, a prominent woman educationalist, was my hostess and was sitting by my side. She

watched my chopstick work with the greatest interest and finally said:

" 'Dr. Li, how is it that a civilised nation like the Chinese should eat its food with chopsticks?'

" 'Am I supposed to know everything, madam? ' "

" 'Yes. Everything Chinese,' " she said.

" 'Well, madam, you see, about five thousand years ago our ancestors, yours and mine, were savages. We all ate with our fingers. Then the Chinese developed and took to knives and forks. After about fifty years of it, they got tired and gave them up, and have been using chopsticks ever since.'

"She looked at me for some time without saying a word, and then: 'Dr. Li, is that true?'

" 'If it isn't true, it ought to be,' I replied.

"After a little while she added:

" 'Dr. Li, I shall introduce you with that story.'

" 'Please don't,' I said.

" 'I absolutely insist. I certainly shall,' she answered.

" 'Madam, I wish you wouldn't,' I replied. 'You see, some of the people sitting here might not know it was a joke.' "

When we'd done chuckling over that, he told me that another Chinese, a mutual acquaintance, had been asked in a Californian city how it was possible to eat soup with chopsticks and had replied, "Oh, that is very easy. All you need to do is to bore a hole down the middle and suck it up, as you sip lemonade through straws." He had been told that subsequent Chinese visitors to that city were still being asked if that is really the way that the Chinese nation takes its soup.

Silly questions are asked of Chinese visitors to the West. Silly questions are asked of Western visitors to China. Silly questions are sometimes much more useful than the questions of the wise. The only impossible human being is the one who, for fear of being thought a fool, never asks a question. The Chinese share with children the capacity for asking questions.

I have been seeing again that Hankow street full of moving, jostling, shouting, busy life. I have been thinking of broken dykes, flooded villages and refugees. I have seen soldiers retreating or advancing into battle; I have seen the Revolution in its hottest and most nerve racking changes. I have heard the screeching and the cursing of a woman in her anger, and gone to separate a man half-killing another over a mere matter of a half-cent piece. I have thought of poverty and sickness, of famine and refugees, of war

and terrors, and forty years of trouble. It is through these things, and in them, that China down the centuries has continued on the whole to be good-humoured, and, above all, to crack a joke and smile.

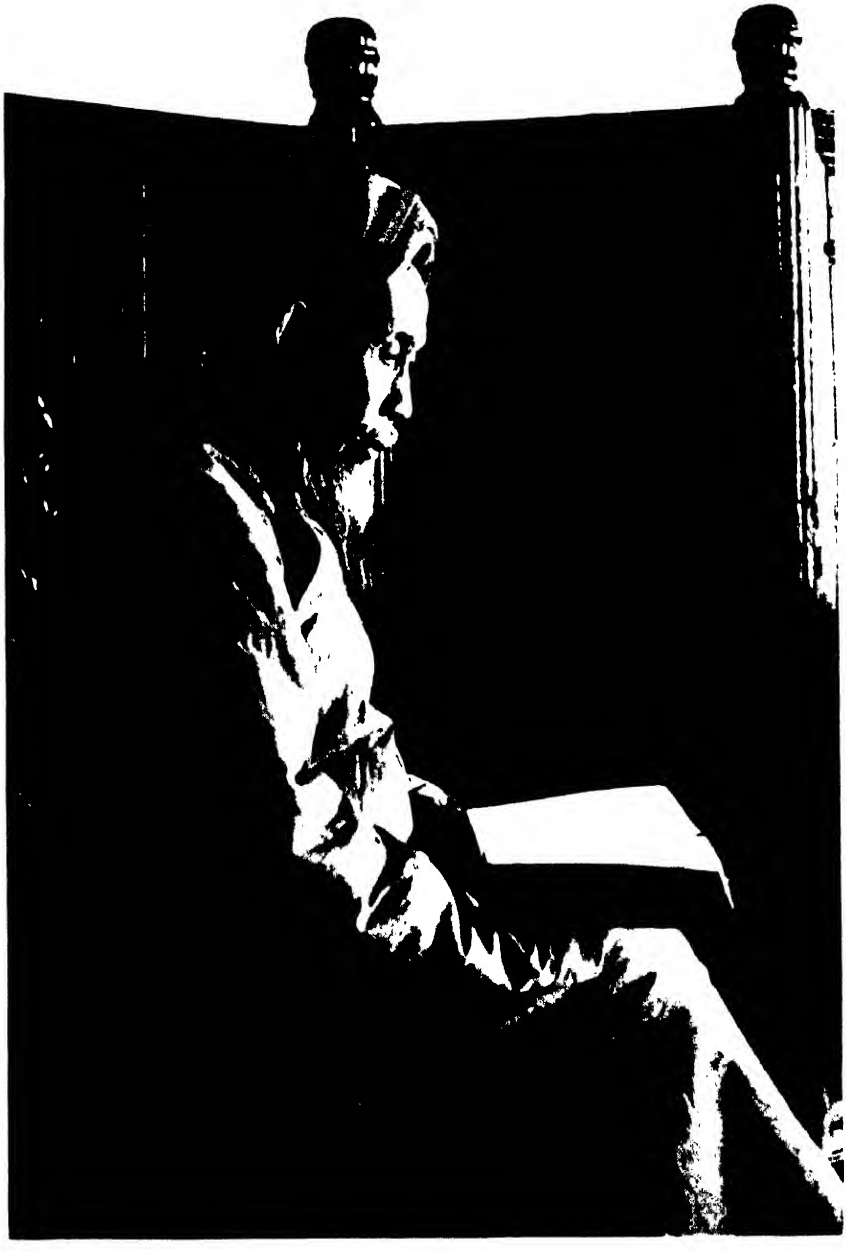
There are dangers in "good humour." There is perhaps a time when it is more moral not to smile. If after 1914–18 Britain had been less "good-humoured" and more intense and earnest, the Second World War would not perhaps have burst upon us as it did. I am not sure. Who can be sure? It is just possible that the triumph of "good humour" down the Chinese millenniums is indeed the survival of the fit. "We cannot keep our hate," said that Chinese friend of mine. Somehow when the storm is over they settle down to the calmness of their nature. The storms are only for a little time. Peace, calm, kindliness, and patience win out in the end.

May not these things, if true, have much to say to all our future relationships with the sons and daughters of China present and future? We are learning to know one another better than we did in former times. The more we know the more we shall recognise the fact of underlying common values. Hitherto China has tried to play off one nation against another to her own advantage. Britain and other nations have too largely looked upon China merely as a market. In the days that lie ahead, peace and progress are to grow, not in the old way of exploitation and manipulation of others for self-centred national aims. We work together as allies in war and more than all, as fellow-builders in peace. My China is a friendly China with clear conceptions of a moral universe.

If John Bull and John Chinaman, so curiously different in their good-natured appearance, and yet so surely one in heart, could make common cause for the building of the common life of all the nations, what a blessing to the whole world that would prove to be. John Bull, there's a real comrade over there, worth your knowing. John Chinaman, there's a true friend of all good things here, if only you can get behind his dumb reserve.

A Christian Nurse of Paoking, Hunan

A Fortune-teller on almost any street



Scholar and Preacher

## CHAPTER XXXIV

## FOR EVER CHINA

(B.B.C. Postscript to the News, January 31st, 1943)

"THE China of to-day isn't the China of the past." She's China, but not Cathay—not a dreamland ancient and quaint and mysterious. The old name has passed away with the age that has gone, but under all the tragedy and chaos of the present war, China is a country throbbing with vigorous life and new hope. And if you'd seen her as recently as I have, you wouldn't dream of denying that China is different.

You see, I've watched the aeroplanes flying through her skies, and the steam and motor boats plying on her muddy waters. I've bumped along, by car and lorry, over her new roads, scattering the chickens and the piglets out of the gutters, as we honked through the slush and the smells of the roadside hamlet and threaded our way up hill and down dale, past wheat and rice, and cotton plants and tea shrubs, and turnips, and cabbages and pea-nuts and the innumerable crops of the toiling, sunburned, blue-trousered peasants. The wireless sets tuned in to our Empire wireless, the broadcasting station sending out its messages from Chungking to all the world, the Red Cross units and the hospitals with their modern surgery—all these are no more parts of China's past than the machine guns, the tanks, and the bombs, or the slogans of Communism and Nationalism you see nailed to her telegraph poles.

Chinese boys from her towns and villages, dressed in peak caps and two-piece grey uniforms, and smart Chinese girls, in their white blouses and black skirts, learn the same lessons as our lads and lassies. In their spare time they are worried by the same problems and debate the same subjects. Their books, their teachers, their thoughts, and even their hopes and aims are much the same as ours.

Fifty years ago, you might have guessed at some of these changes, but would you have dreamed of China's sheltered, home-keeping, illiterate womanhood moving into the life of to-day? You see, young women are marching with the troops and tending the wounded, young women are teaching in the new schools and

colleges. Many of them fall in love and marry and set up homes like ours. Bound feet have gone and gone for ever, and some at least of China's emancipated women were to be found, even five years ago, dancing with their boy-friends in the ballrooms of Shanghai and other modern cities.

Yet there are those who say that China's changes are skin-deep, that the old Chinese giant is only turning in his sleep, and that soon the old order of the mysterious and anti-foreign China of the past will come back again. Skin-deep? Do you think changes like these are only superficial?

Think with me a little. Once you were a baby in the cradle, only conscious of your need for food and love. You came to girl-hood, played and studied and dreamed your dreams. Then you married, and the children came; and now your work is never done, with all your worries and your household cares.

What deep and tremendous changes have come upon you as you journey from the cradle to the life-that-is-to-come. Yet through it all—babyhood, adolescence, the vigour of life and advancing age—you, changing all the time, have never changed and never will. Your identity, your personality remain. And so it is with China. She is no longer the China of the past. There is a leaven at work now, however little visible at present, which will never stop till the whole is leavened. Yet through it all, there's something that is for ever China. Let me tell you what I mean.

About 150 years ago an English Ambassador was sent with presents from the King of England to the Emperor of China. In the account of that historic visit, it's a China of great grandeur that is pictured. All her glories were laid bare to the eyes of the astonished visitor.

You watch the Embassy sailing slowly up the coast, lavishly entertained in the capital by the Emperor and his mandarins, returning across the Yellow River and the Yangtse by way of the Grand Canal, and then climbing up through high mountain passes to Canton. You see the veiled Chinese bride locked in her red and gilded bridal-chair; and the funeral procession with its priests and banners, its white-clad mourners scattering their cash-paper as they go along and its musicians with their shrill pipes and clanging gongs. There is the farmer tilling the soil behind his water-buffalo and wooden plough, and here the merchant in his windowless shop, among his Chinese silks and porcelains. It's the China of 150 years ago, land of the willow pattern, truly of the past. Yet, as I read, I got the feeling of my China. It was still the

same country I myself had known for thirty years in this very twentieth century and which I'd come to love.

And now I've just been reading a very modern book, a tale of a journey through the cities and villages of her war-ravaged country by a young Chinese woman. It's amazing in its ability, knowledge, and up-to-dateness. You pull yourself up and say, "Did a Chinese girl of twenty-two really write all this?" and then you plunge with her right into the inner stream of Chinese life. One moment you're under the table with her in a bombing raid; and the house falls, crashing bricks, tiles, and dust all about your ears. Another moment you're in the ancestral home with third grandfather and fourth aunt, cracking melon seeds with your teeth, eating sweets and pea-nuts, idling around, as though there were no time, no clocks, no hurry. Well, there it is, new and old, all mixed up and yet all one, and over all a charming dignity. What difference, after all, does 150 years make to such a country as this?

It was only the other day someone said to me, "I'm interested in Chiang Kai-shek and all these great men and women, of course, but what I really want to know about is the plain, ordinary Chinese. Tell us about them. That's what matters—the people."

When he said that, a British working man came very near the heart of China. You see, it's the people who matter in China to-day, as they've always mattered really. I remember how, before the Revolution, an old China hand said to me, "These are the freest people in all the world." "Oh," I said, thinking of Manchu emperors and viceroys, of war-lords and their oppressions. "Yes," he said. "Look at them. However poor, each man lifts up his head with dignity and goes about his job in the way that he thinks right. You can't drive him. You must convince him. He's a man and an equal, and he lets you see it in his courteous way."

The lovely name for the new China of the Revolution is "*Chung Hua Min Kuoh*"—the "Chinese People's Country." This feeling of the people for the people is now, as ever, one of the deepest things in Chinese life. The people are rooted in the "good earth." The vast majority always have been and always will be farmers. They live in tiny villages among their rice-fields and their maize crops, taking their produce to the nearby streets and markets. Cities and towns, with their new factories, contain but a tenth of her people. But town and country are closely intermingled and the new life that begins in the town is soon flowing in the villages. The scholar, the farmer, the craftsman, the merchant are to-day all of

them pulsing with new life and adapting themselves quite naturally to the changing world as free men can and will. And now to men and boys, you must add the girls and women, if you're really to see the people as they are. What things these people do.

Do you remember the Chinese Exhibition held in London not long before the war? "We never realised there were such lovely things in China," people said. Tea and silk, and rice and chopsticks, many of us had always associated these things with the mysterious land so far away, but most of us had never dimly realised the beauty and the depth of China's culture. For myself, I came away saying, "You wonder at this? I'm most disappointed. The half has never been told. In every Chinese city I've visited there are things just as beautiful and marvellous as these."

Do you realise that for tens of centuries China has been a land of culture? She's a land of culture still. In times past every problem that has puzzled the human mind has been wrestled over by her thinkers. The country has often been torn by civil war and ravaged by the invader, but from the times of Confucius and long before his day the stream of thought has grown and swelled, hidden now and then under the surface, but always swelling up again and never ceasing.

In China to-day nothing has been more living and characteristic through all the welter of the Revolution and the invasion than the pride of the country in its ancient culture and its hunger and thirst for the new learning. It's in the midst of universal destruction that she has built new schools and colleges, and recast her educational system. China simply can't live without culture. She hasn't changed in that one whit.

There's one thing more to be said about this people. There are so many of them—460 millions. Think of them one by one—and, in spite of appearances, no two are quite alike. There are some who break your heart and others who fill you with hope and courage. All down China's history there have been traitors as well as patriots. But is there anything strange to Englishmen in that?

China to-day has her fifth columnists, black-marketeers, and puppets as she always has had. Is there anything strange in that? You've got to remember that along with all the throbbing of the new life there's plenty of the inertia of the old.

China, through the centuries, has given great gifts to the world. And now for her resistance and her sufferings the people of Britain owe great gratitude to China's people. Somehow, they seem to me to be strangely akin to us.

Even in Britain's short history, our national honesty, our love of fair play, our mercy for the fallen, our conviction that each has a right to his own point of view, these things are not growths of a moment or of a little time. They are like the slow development of our English oak, which has grown in all weathers and for long years.

China, in her much longer history, has developed a tolerance for others, a long patience, a kindly humour, a fatalism born of hope. For what does a hundred years matter to such a people?

At the heart of the nation the deep conviction remains of the righteousness of the Universe, and that surely brings her very near to us.

And it's for the good of all mankind that we of the British race and peoples should understand and share the friendship of this the greatest family of the human race, that amidst all her changes stands unchanged, deep-rooted, patient, kindly, humorous—for ever China.

## GLOSSARY OF CHINESE PHRASES

"*Ahung*"—"Travelling Mullah," "A term of respectful address used among Moslems" (Mildred Cable), 54
"*Amahs*"—"Children's nurses," 16, 47, 98, 99

"*Ch'ang Chiang*"—"Long River," 163
"*Chao Shan*"—"Tread the hills," 157
"*Cheng Chieh*"—"True Street," i.e. Main Street, 113
"*Ch'eng-Tzu Wei Kuei*"—"Truth is nobility," 65
"*Chia*"—"Family," "Home," or "House," 44
"*Chiang li*"—"Express courtesy," "Be courteous," 228
"*Chiao*"—"Teaching on religion," 150
"*Chia T'ien-Hsia*"—"Made the Empire a private (home) matter," 226
"*Ch'ien*"—"Money," 250
"*Ch'ien Chia Chieh*"—"Thousand House Street", 55, 76, 133
"*Ch'i-liao fan ba*"—"Have you eaten rice?", 92
"*Chin-hsien*"—"Go ahead," 67
"*Choh-tse*"—"Table," 163
"*Ch'uh-chia*"—"Come out of the home," "Leave home," 148
"*Chung Hua Min Kuoh*"—"Chinese People's Country," 73, 259
"*Chung Yung*"—"Doctrine of the Mean," 40
"*Coolie*"—"Bitter strength," "A labouring man," 166

"*Erh-shih-ch'i-hao*"—"Number 27," 121
"*Erh-shih-pah-hao*"—"Number 28," 121

"*Fan*"—"Rice" or "Food," 250
"*Fan hao-liao. Ch'in Sien-sen lai ch'i-fan*"—"The rice is ready. Please, Master, come and eat," 101
"*Fen chia*"—"Divide the home," 44
"*Fu*"—"Wealth" or "Blessedness," 160
"*Fa-Ssu*"—"Teacher of the law," 144

"*Hai-tse*"—"Child," 163
"*Hao Tung*"—"Good to understand," 18
"*Hao-shih*"—"Good deed," 126, 167
"*Hey-Hoh-Ti*"—"A coolie chanty," 107
"*Hoh ch'i fah ts'ai*"—"The good-humoured man grows rich," 250
"*Ho-Shang*"—"Buddhist monk," 148
"*Hsiao*"—"Filial piety," 46
"*Hsiao Chieh*"—"Little Sisters," 213
"*Hsiao-sin*"—"Contract your heart," "Be careful," 230, 231
"*Hsin Ssu Ch'ao*"—"New Tide of Thought," "New literary movement," 86
"*Hsing-ku*"—"It's hard to bear" or "Bitter luck," 89
"*Hsing-ku teh hen*"—"My luck is very bitter," 89
"*Hsiu Ts'ai*"—"B.A.," 17, 23
"*Hsun Feng*"—"Favouring wind," 241

"*Huan ssu ih ko yang-shih*"—"They are a different brand," 100
"*Huang Ho*"—"Yellow River," 164
"*Huang Pi*"—"Leather," 125
"*Huen-Kang Shan*"—"Saddle-Back Hill," 157
"*Hui chiao*"—"Muhammadanism," 241
"*Hung San*"—"Great Hill," 54, 136
"*Hung-ts'ai-t'ai*"—"A special red cabbage for which Wuchang was famous," 53

"*I Hsioh*"—"Righteous school," "Free school," 126
"*I pu i pai*"—"One step, one worship," 5
"*I-tse*"—"Chair," 163
"*I-Yen T'ang*"—"One-word hall," "One-price shop," 106

"*K'ai chih-ssu*"—"Opened his intelligence," 127
"*Kang*"—"An earthenware bath," 14
"*Kao pih tze*"—"A high nose," 9
"*Keng-Tze Nien*"—"Boxer Year," 73, 241, 243
"*Ko-ko shao ho*"—"Elder Brother, light the fire," 221
"*Ko-nien*"—"Cross the year," 156
"*Kou-tse*"—"Dog," 163
"*K'o-T'ou*"—"Bow with head to the floor," 69
"*Kua Fen*"—"Splitting the melon," 179
"*Ku'ai-ku'ai sha ho*"—"Quickly, quickly sow the crops," 221
"*Kuei-chu*"—"Compasses and square," "Rule," "Custom," 226
"*Kung-Kwan*"—"Official house," 52, 56, 67
"*Kuo Min T'ang*"—"Nationalist Party," 247
"*Kwan-Ti*"—"The god of war," 54
"*Kwan-Yin*"—"The goddess of mercy," 110, 157, 161

"*Lao Chia*"—"Old home," 89, 125
"*Len-chi*"—"The cold gathering," 32
"*Lien Hua Tung*"—"Lotus Flower Cave," 173
"*Lohan*"—"Happy Chinese," "Buddhist saints," 136
"*Lun-Yu*"—"The Confucian *Analects*," 38

"*Ma-chioh*"—"Medium," 34
"*Ma-lu*"—"Horse road," i.e. "Carriage road," 106
"*Man-tsou*"—"Slowly go," 93
"*Mang tsung yu ts'o*"—"In hurry there is error," 20, 104
"*Mao-tse*"—"Cat," 163
"*Miao*"—"Temples," 132
"*Mieh-hoh-tih*"—"A sheep person," "A barbarian," "A foreigner," 91
"*Mu yu lien*"—"He has no face," 27

"*Na-li k'e*"—"Where are you going?", 92
"*Nan Nu p'ing teng*"—"Equal status of male and female," 48
"*Ngo-men yu fah-tze*"—"We have methods," 85
"*Ngo-tih-liang-a*"—"My mother," 143, 204

"*Wai-kuoh ren*"—"Outside countryman," "Foreigner," 9, 93
"*Wang*"—"King," 97
"*Wang Ssu-fu*"—"Wang servant," 97, 98, 100
"*Wu Shen Miao*"—"The Temple of the Five Spirits," 125

"*Yang-tse*"—"Ocean River," 163
"*Yamen*"—"Mandarin's office," 77, 187
"*Yang Chiao*"—Christianity," 241
"*Yang kou-tze*"—"Foreign dog," 9
"*Yang kuei-tze*"—"Foreign devil," 9
"*Yu-min*"—"Stupid people," 36, 180
"*Yu pao-hu*"—"There is protection," 77
"*Yu Ssu Tao, San Chiao*"—"Confucianism, Buddhism, Taoism, the three religions," 140, 182, 241

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