

PEOPLE'S CHINA



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1953

PEOPLE'S CHINA

A FORTNIGHTLY MAGAZINE

Editor: Liu Tsun-chi

CHRONICLES the life of the Chinese people and reports their progress in building a New Democratic society;

DESCRIBES the new trends in Chinese art, literature, science, education and other aspects of the people's cultural life;

SEEKS to strengthen the friendship between the people of China and those of other lands in the cause of peace.

No. 21, 1953

CONTENTS

November 1

For More and Better Works of Literature and Art	Chow Yang	3
The People's Railways in National Construction	Chen Tao	11
Across the Desolate Grasslands	Su Wen	15
To Mirror the Grandeur of a Great Epoch	Hsu Chih	18
New Day for Sports in China	Li Yu-wen	25
Spring in the Workshop	Tang Ke-hsin	27
Villages in New China	Sudhindra Pramanik	30
Lanchow—Trade Centre of Northwest China	Che Mou-chi	32
A Lane in Peking	Chen Ting-yu	34

PICTORIAL PAGES:

Building the Lanchow-Sinkiang Railway; China's 1953 National Athletic Meet; The Yunnan Institute for National Minorities	18-22
--	-------

IN THE NEWS	38
-----------------------	----

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR	39
---------------------------------	----

BACK COVER:

A Happy Harvester in Kaiyuan County, Yunnan Province

COVER PICTURE:

Work Hard for National Construction; Improve the Quality of Work! A poster by Chang Huai-kiang

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For More and Better Works Of Literature and Art

Chow Yang

*Vice-Chairman of the All-China Federation of
Literary and Art Circles*

FOUR years have elapsed since the First All-China Conference of Writers and Artists was held in 1949. During this time, following the directive given by Comrade Mao Tse-tung that literature and art should serve the workers, peasants and people's fighters, our literary and art activities have advanced together with the cause of the entire people. The new literature and art of the people have in general superseded the old, backward and decadent, feudal and bourgeois literature and art; they have gained a firm place among the broad masses of the people and are steadily expanding their scope and influence.

Our writers and artists are endeavouring to portray in their works the workers, peasants and people's fighters, with their new characteristics and moral qualities. But our writers are, of course, more familiar with the events and characters of persons with whom they were



Chow Yang

long in contact during the revolutionary war. The works produced during the last four years include the novels *Wall of Steel* by Liu Ching, *Fire Ranges Over the Plain* by Hsu Kuang-yao, *A Living Hell* by Chen Teng-ko, *The Flames Are Ahead* by Liu Pai-yu, *Flowers Spring Eternal* by Ma Chia, the play *Matured in Battle* by Hu Ko, and the films *The White-Haired Girl*, *Steeled Fighters*, *From Victory to Victory*, *Shangjao Concentration Camp* and *Red Flag Over Mount Tsui Kang*. All these realistically portray

the heroes of the revolutionary war and the War of Resistance to Japanese Aggression—men and women who personify the militant, unconquerable will of the people in those difficult years.

Our writers have also commenced to write about the great struggle to resist U.S. aggression and aid Korea. *Those Most to Be Loved*, the well-known collection of reportage by Wei Wei, evoked a most enthusiastic response from the wide reading public. *Over a Vast Expanse of Three Thousand Li*, a novel by Yang Suo, *Sangkumryung* by Lu Chu-kuo, and other short sketches describing the Korean war, imperfect though they may be in certain respects,

This is an abridgement of a report delivered by Chow Yang, well-known critic and Vice-Minister of Cultural Affairs, on September 24, 1953 at the Second All-China Conference of Writers and Artists.

give a definitely truthful portrayal of the noble character and heroism of the Chinese People's Volunteers inspired by a lofty spirit of patriotism and internationalism. Pa Chin, in writings characterised by great depth of feeling, tells about the battlefields of Korea and sings the praises of the heroes of our time.

Taking the productive labour of the industrial workers and the class struggle they wage as their themes, our writers have also endeavoured to depict the characters of leading cadres and model workers in industry. *Face to Face With New Things*, a play by Tu Yin and others, *A Forty Years' Dream*, a play by Li Ching-sheng and others, *For a Happy Tomorrow*, a novel by Pai Lang, are advances in this direction. Following his *Dragon Beard Ditch*, a play which describes the improvement of living conditions in a working-class district in Peking, Lao Sheh has produced a new play, *Spring Flower, Autumn Fruit*, which dramatises the great struggle of the working class during the *wu fan** movement against the illegal practices of the bourgeoisie.

The theme of marriage and the questions that arise in families today occupy a prominent place in works dealing with the new life in our rural areas. Young men and women now have a new attitude towards marriage which is entirely different from that of the past. They not only courageously seek freedom of marriage but consciously place the public good above personal happiness. The emancipation of women is inextricably bound up with the reform of the whole of society, and the independent and courageous character of our new women is tempered and steeled in the course of this acute social struggle. Several literary and dramatic works have reflected this struggle with very great skill.

The themes of the glory of our great motherland and the struggle waged by the people in defence of world peace have been vividly and truthfully dealt with in excellent

*A movement among industrialists and businessmen against the bribery of government personnel, tax evasion, theft of state property, cheating on government contracts and stealing economic information for private speculation.

works produced in the fields of poetry, music and the fine arts.

What is particularly striking in the sphere of literature and art is the fact that many new writers are emerging from among the workers and peasants. Kao Yu-pao is such a one. Another fact is that new writers have emerged also from among the national minorities. They are imbued with the spirit of fraternal love that exists among the various nationalities of our country; they have truthfully depicted aspects of the old and new life of their peoples and portrayed the advanced elements among their peoples. Their works mark a new development in the literature of the national minorities.

Our Cultural Heritage

In fostering new literary and art works, we have at the same time undertaken the reform and development of those traditional arts of our nation which are still living among the people, so that all that is best in our artistic heritage may be fully utilised by the people in developing their new cultural life.

The people value and love the fine elements in their ancient national art. With the elevation of their political and cultural levels and of their interest and appreciation of the arts, however, they demand reforms where needed in these various traditional productions. The reformed and improved repertoire of operas, for instance, which includes such productions as *Liang Shan-po and Chu Ying-tai*, *Reconciliation Between the Prime Minister and the General* and others, has earned the enthusiastic approval of the masses. The various provincial operas have besides gained some useful experiences and achievements in presenting themes taken from contemporary life.

The All-China Drama Festival and the All-China Folk Music and Dance Festival held in 1952 and 1953 have given a powerful impetus to the reform and development of our national drama, music, song and dance. A very rich source for the creation of our new music and dance has been provided by the folk arts both of the Han people and of the national minorities.

Our literature and art still lag far behind, however, in comparison with the achievements of our country and people and with their needs. Our fund of new literary and artistic productions is, on the whole, poor. There is a general feeling among the masses that there are not enough creative works, especially scenarios and plays. The people have rapidly become more matured both politically and culturally, and there is a corresponding increase in their demand for, and interest in, new works of literature and art. They demand not only that we produce enough works of literature and art, but that these works should be of a high level.

Oppose Bourgeois Ideology

The development of literature and art in the past four years was by no means a smoothly flowing process. Literature and art are one of the forms of expression of social ideology, and as such, they cannot but reflect the various interests and ideas of the different classes. Although the bourgeoisie in our country does not now make any contributions to or occupy any position in the literature and art of People's China, this does not mean, however, that our literature and art are not constantly subject to the attack of its ideology. Especially now when the working class is cooperating with the bourgeoisie, it is all the more important that we should heighten our vigilance against the dangers of such attacks.

Our literature and art must express the ideology and sentiments of the workers, peasants and people's fighters, and especially those of the advanced workers, peasants and soldiers. That is to say, we should sing the praises of their resolute and militant will, their selfless enthusiasm for labour and their boundless devotion to the collective welfare and the interests of the state and the people, so as to cultivate these excellent new qualities and a high moral character among the people and help them push forward the wheels of history. Bourgeois literature and art do just the opposite. In their attempt to consolidate the old ideology, old habits and incorrect ideas and turn the wheels of history backwards, they strive to propagandise themselves and propagate the ideals of individualism, the cult of

the outstanding personality and self-complacency; they inculcate the ideology of indifference to the fate of the country and the people, and disbelief in the success of the struggles of the masses.

The film *The Life of Wu Hsun* was extremely pernicious, because it subtly propagandised the ideology of submission to the reactionary feudal rulers and propagated the bourgeois doctrines of reformism and individualism. The stoicism of Wu Hsun, which the film extolled, was merely an abnormal and disguised form of individualism. The criticism on *The Life of Wu Hsun* initiated in 1951 by the Central Committee of the Communist Party and Chairman Mao Tse-tung gave a timely and effective rebuttal to the attack of bourgeois ideology against our new literature and art; at the same time, it gave an unforgettable lesson to the writers and artists, especially those who are Party members. This critical discussion and the movement for the rectification of erroneous attitudes that followed on it in literary and art circles, as well as the *san fan** and *wu fan* movements, which the literary and art workers actively participated in, and that aimed at combatting the corrosive influence of bourgeois ideology and the illegal practices of the bourgeoisie, have all been of great help to all literary and art workers in drawing a sharp line of demarcation between the ideology of the working class and that of the bourgeoisie. The criticism on *The Life of Wu Hsun* was a great victory on the ideological front for the working class, and it further consolidated the leading position already won by the working class in the realm of literature and art.

After the rectification of such erroneous attitudes in work and study in literary and art circles, many more writers and artists went to the factories, to the countryside and to the Korean front to gather by personal experience a deeper knowledge of the life and struggles of the people. This is the highroad which leads to the further integration of creative literary and artistic activity with the practical life and struggles of the broad masses of the people.

*A movement among government personnel against corruption, waste and bureaucratism.

The struggle against bourgeois ideology in the field of literature and art is a long-term task. Throughout its course we must oppose abstract generalisation (dealing in concepts based on abstract and not concrete terms), formulism (writing according to formulas) and other harmful anti-realistic trends in creative literature and art. Unless these deviations are overcome, it will be impossible for our literature and art to make any progress.

The struggle for realism in literature and art is another of our long-term tasks.

That there is a fundamentally realistic tendency in Chinese literature and art cannot be denied, and this should not be ignored. However, our literary works have not yet succeeded in producing an artistic synthesis or crystallisation of the rich experiences accumulated in every sphere of endeavour by the Chinese people during their long struggle. Our writers have not yet succeeded in creating typically outstanding, positive characters. Many works suffer from the defects of abstract generalisation or of writing according to cold formulas. It is in this that the weakness of the realism of our literature and art is shown. Certain writers depict life not according to the laws of development of life as it really is, but subjectively and according to predetermined formulas. The great majority of writers, however, are not consciously subjective in their work. They have lived among the masses and have participated in their practical life and various mass struggles. They are eager to portray life as it really is, but unfortunately, they do not have a truly penetrating and comprehensive understanding of life; while some of them, especially young writers, have not yet fully mastered the technique of writing and the realistic creative method of describing life. This is the chief cause of such abstract generalisation and formulism in our literature.

In order to overcome these deviations, it is of prime importance to raise the writers' knowledge of life and capacity to describe it. Many writers are, in fact, at the present time establishing closer contact with the life of the masses in the factories and plants, in the countryside and the army. They have realised more deeply from their own experience that

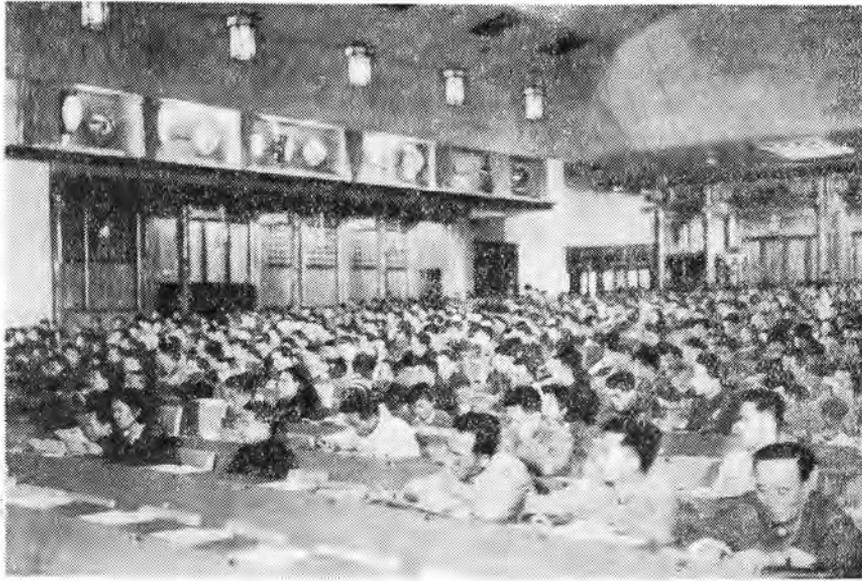
a true and close contact with the masses can only be made as a result of struggling side by side with the people and productive work together with the masses. At the same time, they have also come to realise that one must observe, appraise and study life from the standpoint of Marxism-Leninism and of the policy of the Party and the state so as to avoid going astray amid the boundless complexities of human life.

Art and Politics

One of the difficulties in overcoming these tendencies towards abstract generalisation and formulism in literature and art lies in the fact that the writers or artists over-simplify and vulgarise the principle of the subordination of art to politics.

The fundamental difference between literature and art and other forms of expression of ideas is that literature and art use images to express ideas. Without images there can be no art, and images can only be derived from real life. Some comrades in leading positions in the field of literature and art, and many writers themselves, fail to understand this fundamental characteristic of art. They try to make abstract political ideas take the place of realistic artistic images. They do not try to create typical characters with living force and individual personality in their writings, but are satisfied with the creation of characters who are simply the mouthpieces of certain ideas. As a result, the characters they create are not real men and women who have their being in definite environments, and act in conformity with the objective laws that operate in the development of life, but are mere puppets on strings moved by the writers; the writers' thought is not artistically incorporated in these creations, but is an abstract theory mechanically imposed upon them.

Literature and art should, of course, express the policy of the Party. To depart from the policy of the Party and the state means to depart from the leadership of the Party and the state. The implementation of a policy depends upon the masses and the cadres. Once a policy is gripped by the masses, it immediately becomes an irresistible



At a plenary session of the Second All-China Conference of Writers and Artists

force in changing and guiding the life of the people, and it becomes a decisive factor in the destiny of the whole nation and its people. To reflect policy in a work of art means, therefore, primarily to reflect the close relationship between the Party and the people, the leadership given by the Party to the masses, the struggle between progressive and backward forces among the people, the exemplary role played by Party members as vanguards of the people, and the superiority of the people's democratic system. Therefore, the true reflection of policy and the faithful portrayal of life should be thoroughly integrated. Faithfulness in describing life is the highest principle of realistic art.

For a Socialist Realist Art

IN his 1942 *Addresses at the Yen-an Forum on Literature and Art*, Comrade Mao Tse-tung pointed out that a working class writer should master the creative method of socialist realism. It is in this direction that the movement for a new literature and art has steadily made its way since May 4, 1919. Lu Hsun, a great revolutionary realist, the brilliant standard-bearer of this movement, emerged in the mature development of his literary activities as the great pioneer and representative of the

school of socialist realism. Such outstanding writers as Kuo Mo-jo and Mao Tun have been veterans of the new literature and art movement for the past thirty years and more. They have made great contributions to the creation of revolutionary literature and art. Comrade Mao Tse-tung has a very high opinion of this movement for the new literature and art of which Lu Hsun was the exponent. Guided by Mao Tse-tung's teachings on literature and art, and based on the revolutionary traditions of the May 4th Movement, China's socialist-realist literature and art has made giant advances with new and significant achievements since the *Addresses at the Yen-an Forum on Literature and Art*.

China is today undergoing a steady process of socialist reorganisation on an ever expanding scale. The socialist elements are growing rapidly and playing an increasingly decisive role in the daily life of the Chinese people. The powerful state-owned, socialist economy has assumed a leading position in China's national economy. The Communist Party, as the leader of state power, enjoys unparalleled prestige among the people. The theory of Marxism-Leninism and the teachings of Mao Tse-tung on the Chinese revolution are widely disseminated among the people. All

this has laid down a firm and broadening foundation for the development of a socialist-realist literature and art. Under these circumstances the need to further learn and master the creative method of socialist realism becomes of even greater practical significance and urgency. And there is no short-cut to do this. It has to be learned. But now we are provided with exceptionally favourable conditions: the tremendous achievements of the Soviet literature and art of socialist realism have set the best of examples for us to follow.

We regard the method of socialist realism as the highest criterion for all our literary and artistic work and criticism. Writers of the working class must work hard to raise the quality of their own works to the level of socialist realism, and at the same time they must give patient and enthusiastic help to all those patriotic writers who wish to make progress and set them on the path of socialist realism. Each writer or artist has to approach socialist realism in his own way, just as he has his own life story and his own way of artistic creation. But to become a genuine and matured master of socialist realism, every writer must undergo a process of tempering.

Our literature and art are closely and inseparably linked with the Party, the state and the cause of the people. Consequently, their activities must be far-reaching and many-sided, and their forms varied. We encourage the free competition of various artistic forms. Far from restricting the freedom of writers in selecting themes, forms of presentation and personal style, socialist realism helps a writer to secure such freedom to a maximum extent, so that a writer's creative spirit and initiative can be displayed to the full. "Discard what has outlived its time, develop the new, let all flowers blossom"—this is Comrade Mao Tse-tung's guiding principle for the development of our classical operatic arts, and this should become our guide in the development of literature and art in general.

Demands of Socialist Realism

Socialist realism demands of our writers, first of all, that they be familiar with the new life of the people, that they portray the advanc-

ed representatives of the people, their new thoughts and emotions.

Comrade Malenkov has pointed out in his *Report to the 19th Party Congress on the Work of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. (B.)* that:

The vitality and importance of realistic art lies in that it can, and must, discover and bring to light the lofty spiritual qualities and typical positive features in the character of the ordinary man and woman, and create vivid artistic images of them, images that will be an example to others.

In his *Addresses at the Yen-an Forum on Literature and Art*, Comrade Mao Tse-tung also laid particular emphasis on the fact that our literature must first of all portray the bright side of things and the real heroes of the people. He said:

...Soviet literature during the period of socialist reconstruction portrays mainly the bright side. It also describes shortcomings in their work and villainous characters, but such descriptions serve to give relief to the brightness of the whole picture; they are not there on a "fifty-fifty basis."

In that Address, Comrade Mao Tse-tung called on the writers in the revolutionary bases at that time to portray "the new people, the new world," to produce works like A. Fadeyev's *The Nineteen*.

Criticising the film *The Life of Wu Hsun*, Comrade Mao Tse-tung has clearly and trenchantly pointed out that:

As many writers see it, history develops not through the replacement of the old by the new but through the preservation of the old from death by various efforts; not through the overthrow of reactionary feudal rulers whom it is necessary to overthrow by class struggle, but, as exemplified by Wu Hsun, through denial of the class struggle of the oppressed people and surrender to the reactionary feudal rulers. Our writers do not study and learn who are the enemies that oppressed the Chinese people in past history; and whether those who surrendered to these enemies and even served them are worthy of praise. Nor do our writers study and learn what new social-economic formations, new class forces, new personalities and new ideas have arisen in China—in conflict with the old social-economic formations and their superstructure (political, cultural, etc.), in the one hundred and more years since the Opium War of

1840; and thus decide what should be praised and extolled, and what should not be praised or extolled; what should be opposed.

The central and most important task of present-day literary and artistic work is to depict the new people and their new ideology while fighting against the enemies of the people, and against every manifestation of backwardness found among the people.

It is no easy task to recognise the new and depict it. To do so, a writer must, first of all, himself stand in the foremost ranks of the people, and together with the people, fight in support of the new against the old. He cannot stand aloof from this fight like an onlooker, in an attitude of neutrality. He must have confidence in the inevitable victory of that which is new; he must be highly sensitive to it, and feel deep love for it. He must on no account compromise with or give way to the old and retrogressive. The writer goes out to the people not merely to seek out an "ideal" hero, but to seek out among the simple people all the forces that are progressive and active, helping to wipe out all manifestations of backwardness in the life of the people and so push society forward. It is impossible to portray the new hero of the people properly if the description of him is divorced from the struggles and contradictions between the old and new in the world of reality. The personality, character and qualities of a hero can be brought fully to light only in the context of a severe conflict. On the other hand, the complicated social, political and ideological contradictions of the time can be brought out vividly and in their typical forms only insofar as they are reflected through the personalities of the heroes and by the relations between them.

Use the Classical Heritage

We demand that in content, our literature and art should depict the people and express the ideology of our new era, and that its form should express the national style and spirit. Every writer and artist must make a serious study of our national heritage in literature and the arts; they should consider it a personal duty to assimilate and develop this splendid heritage.

We have inherited a rich legacy of national literature and art which has not yet by any means been explored and utilised by us to a sufficient extent. The May 4th Movement for a new culture introduced us to both the western bourgeois-democratic culture and socialist culture; at the same time it highly evaluated and elevated to its true classical position that portion of China's national culture that is popular in nature—such as the great novels *Shui Hu* (*Water Margin*, or *All Men Are Brothers*), *San Kuo Yen Yi* (*The Tale of Three Kingdoms*), *Hung Lou Meng* (*The Dream of the Red Chamber*), *Ju Lin Wai Shih* (*The Unofficial Biographies of Confucian Literati*). This re-evaluation of China's classical literature is an achievement of great historic importance. But the May 4th Movement did not correctly solve the problem of how to assimilate the splendid legacy of our national literature and art. At that time, some people even adopted a mistaken attitude of wholly disregarding our national heritage, and this, combined with a blind admiration for Western bourgeois culture, had a harmful effect on the later development of Chinese literature and art. This attitude of ignoring our national heritage was widespread and persisted for a considerable length of time among modern Chinese literary and art workers, and even now it has not been completely overcome. Not a few writers and artists take note only of the feudal and backward aspects of China's national literary and artistic heritage; they fail to realise that this heritage is a spiritual treasure house of our great nation, wherein are preserved numerous realistic works which are popular in character and which display a superb level of artistic skill both in truthfulness of characterisation and economy of means. Many literary workers, on the other hand, have grasped only certain of the minor and superficial features of these works while failing to comprehend their essential spirit. Theirs is a narrow and one-sided understanding of the value of our national heritage.

There are many excellent works of classical and folk art which can serve as examples for our writers and artists to learn from. Over a span of more than 2,000 years, from the *Book*

of *Odes* and the *Chu Tzu** down to the works of Lu Hsun, the realistic tradition of Chinese literature has radiated an undying light. China's national drama, its paintings and music all have their own long and splendid tradition of realism. The main lessons that we can learn from our national heritage is its spirit of realism in boldly disclosing the realities of life, and its artistic techniques. We can by no means accept indiscriminately the whole artistic heritage; we must selectively adopt only those portions that are healthy, full of vitality and beneficial to the people. We must resolutely discard all those elements of formalism which are opposed to realism.

Systematic review and reform and research into our national literary and artistic heritage is one of the most important tasks in our literary and artistic work. Our state literary publishing organisations must systematically edit and publish, according to a well defined plan, those Chinese classical works that are popular in character as well as all the material that represents valuable, serious research on the classical writers and their work. Literary organisations and associations must organise our literary workers to go deep among the masses and make extensive collections of works of folk drama, music, literature, fine arts and dancing, etc.; they must review and adapt this material and make needed improvements in it. Attention must also be given to the work of helping our fine veteran folk artists to sum up and develop their creative artistic experience. Systematic review and reform and research into our national and artistic heritage should be one of the central points in teaching and study at our institutes of literature and art.

Learn From Mankind's Heritage

At the same time we must also study and assimilate the advanced experience of the literature and art of foreign countries in order to enrich our own tradition and make good our deficiencies. The Chinese people have always been adept in learning and assimilating the advanced experiences of other peoples. We must continue to learn from the heritage be-

queathed to mankind by the great people's writers and artists of all countries and in all ages. It is absolutely wrong to refuse to undertake such studies. Our artists, musicians, singers and painters must study all the advanced techniques and creative methods of the peoples of other countries. Advanced artistic techniques created by mankind have no national boundaries. We should use the achievements of world art to develop and elevate our own national technique and to further improve our powers of artistic presentation, so as to bring our national style to a more potent level of expression. This can do us no harm, nor will it ruin our art. Isn't this just what we need to improve and renovate our techniques while preserving our national style?

A national style is, of course, not something forever fixed and immutable. In line with the general advance of the people's life and on the basis of preserving and developing our original national style, we must further endeavour to create a new national style which is better adapted to the depicting of our people's new life.

If in our artistic and literary work, we pay attention only to the tasks of elevating the quality of our work while neglecting the duty of popularisation, then we will be moving down the wrong path. The principle enunciated by Comrade Mao Tse-tung that literature and art should serve the workers, peasants and people's fighters, together with the principle advanced by him on the correct relationship between the raising of its quality and its popularisation—that "raising the artistic level must be on the basis of popularisation" and "popularisation must be directed by the need to raise the artistic level"—these are principles that must be strictly adhered to in our literature and art.

The working people are now masters of their fate. With the steady improvement in their material well-being, they demand a new spiritual life. The task of literature and art is to satisfy the ever-growing cultural needs of the people, to create outstanding realistic literary and artistic works, to educate the people by imbuing them with the lofty ideas of patriotism and Socialism, to inspire them in their advance along the road to Socialism.

*A well-known collection of prose and poems compiled in the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-220 A.D.).

The People's Railways

In National Construction

Chen Tao

CHINA'S railways are state-owned enterprises of a socialist character. Their 24,000 kilometres of lines link up the industrial centres with the agricultural areas, uniting them in a single economic entity. By timely distribution of materials and goods to the places where they are needed, they play an essential role in the new era of planned economic construction which China has now entered.

Since the liberation, China's railways have contributed greatly to the stabilisation and recovery of the national economy. Early in 1950, when the People's Republic of China had been in existence only a short time and the financial and economic situation had not yet taken a fundamental turn for the better, the People's Government used railways to move such important commodities as foodstuffs, coal, cotton and timber from surplus areas to deficit areas—meeting the needs of the people and gradually stabilising prices.

The People's Government also used the railway network to expand trade between cities and countryside. This had a decidedly good effect on the recovery of industrial and agricultural production. In 1951, over 224,000 tons of cotton were transported from the rural areas to urban centres, guaranteeing the continuous operation of the textile mills. In the spring of

the same year, more than 700,000 tons of soya bean-cake fertiliser were moved to the countryside to help peasants raise their crop yields.

The great Huai River project and other water conservancy undertakings have relied heavily on railway support. Between March and July, 1951, 350,000 tons of gravel were moved to the construction sites of the Huai River and Yellow River projects by the Tsinan Railway Administration (in East China) alone.

Increase of Freights

With the flourishing development of the national economy, the volume of freight transport increased from year to year. If we take the monthly average tonnage in 1950 as 100, it was 111.2 in 1951, 132.2 in 1952 and 150.4 in the first half of 1953. Industrial raw materials led the increase. In 1953 as compared to 1950, the monthly average tonnage of iron and steel moved by rail had increased 2.3 times, and of mineral construction materials, 12.3 times. For the construction of the steel centre of Anshan in the Northeast, daily deliveries of materials and equipment were 2.4 times in the same period. As China's industries grow, the railways are devoting more and more of their activity to serving them.

Advanced Management

The people's railways are a socialist enterprise. It is their task to serve the people at low rates, and at the same time to accumulate

The author is the Vice-Director of the Bureau Controlling the Movements of Trains, Ministry of Railways.



Members of engine-driver Cheng Hsi-kun's team exchange a briefing on their engine before changing shifts. This team initiated the campaign on New China's railways for bigger haulages on a 500-km. run a day

capital for expanded reproduction. Railway administration has therefore changed radically from what it was before the liberation.

In old China railway management was decentralised, and each line was an independent administrative unit. Most of the railways were built by British, American, French, Japanese or Belgian imperialists working hand in glove with the Chinese warlords, landlords and comprador capitalists for the sole purpose of exploiting the Chinese people. The Chinese warlords were backed by the various imperialists, and each had his own sphere of influence. The decentralisation and backwardness of railway management inevitably reflected this. The warlord Yen Hsi-shan even built all the railways which he controlled in Shansi Province on a narrow gauge—so that trains from other provinces could not get in!

The founding of the People's Republic of China brought unprecedented unity to the country. From the very start, the people's railways adopted the system of unified administration. Regulations for unified technical administration have been put into effect throughout the country. The distribution of locomotives has been rationalised, raising the rate of their utilisation and speeding up com-

modity circulation. In the past, there was no through train service between different lines. Now, through freight trains run from Manchouli on the Sino-Soviet border to Kwangchowwan in the south, covering a distance of over 5,000 kilometres.

For the prosperity of the motherland, railway workers and managerial staff members have displayed enthusiasm and ingenuity in improving the quality and efficiency of their work. In the traffic, locomotive, line maintenance, telecommunications and other departments, they have voluntarily adopted an individual responsibility system with good results. In 1949, the average

daily run of a locomotive was no more than 278 kilometres. This figure was raised year after year and reached 418.4 kilometres in the first six months of 1953. The average length of time required for the turnround of rolling stock, which is the best indicator of the technical efficiency of a railway in all aspects, has been cut year after year. It was more than four days in 1949, 3.34 days in 1950, 3.22 days in 1951 and only 2.9 days in 1952. In the same year, the labour productivity of railway workers and staff was 38.7 per cent higher than in 1950.

Freight Rates for the People's Benefit

The freight rate policy of the people's railways reflects how different they are in nature from those of old China. Under reactionary rule, freight rate schedules reflected national and class oppression and exploitation. When the Japanese imperialists held Northeast China, they set rates in such a way that cargoes moving to Japan from Northeast China were allowed a discount and cargoes transported from the Northeast to other parts of China were penalised with additional charges. This rate differential had the effect of subordinating Northeast China's economy to that of Japan, and separating it from the rest of the country.

Under the Kuomintang, goods carried by railway were divided into five categories each of which was subject to a different rate schedule. The charge for those in the first category was a little over five times that of those on goods in the fifth category. The result was that, on the one hand, valuables and luxuries in the first category were transported more cheaply than was justified, while articles necessary to the daily life of the working people did not enjoy a reasonably low rate. This freight rate policy was clearly in the interest of the landlords and big bourgeoisie.

In pursuance of the policy of promoting production and economic prosperity, the people's railways have adopted a reasonable freight rate policy under which cargoes are classified in 30 categories, with a wider range of rates. Charges on goods in the first category are 17 times higher than on those in the last. Freight rates for luxuries are rather high, but those for all other goods are, in general, lower than before the War of Resistance to Japanese Aggression. For important means of production and consumer goods, the rates are almost as low as the actual cost of transportation, which has been reduced far below prewar levels by more efficient and economical operation. To cite one example, the rates now charged by the Peking-Shenyang (Mukden) Railway for coal, iron, cement, lumber and foodstuffs are only about one-third of those prevailing before the War of Resistance to Japanese Aggression.

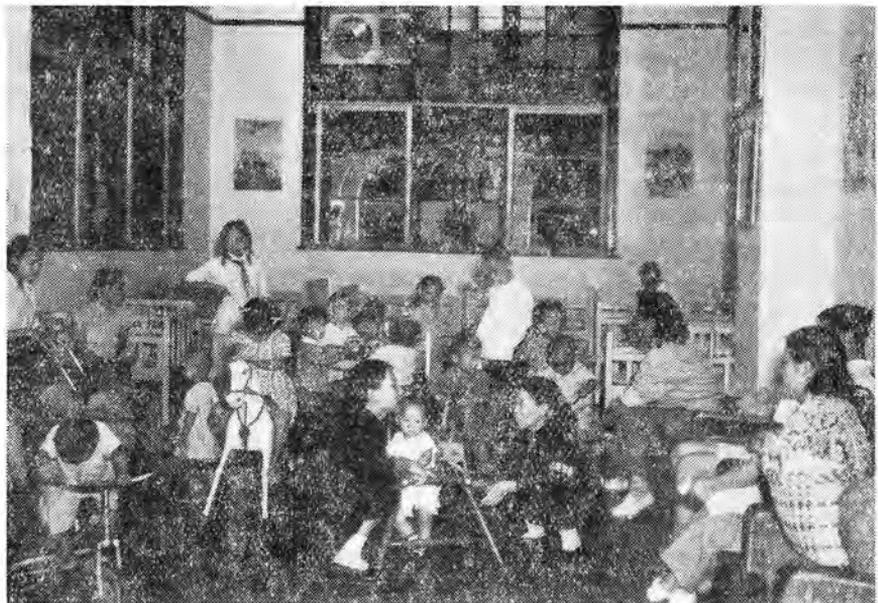
Moreover, in accordance with the needs of the country, specific products such as oil and asphalt from Northwest China and fur, leather and medicinal herbs from the national minority areas in the Southwest are granted especially low rates. Discounts are also allowed on the transportation of films, lantern

slides and books, which help to enrich the people's cultural life. During fishing seasons, fresh fish is entitled to reduced rates. These measures reflect the concern of the Chinese Communist Party and the People's Government for the development of production and the improvement of the people's livelihood; they stimulate urban-rural trade and broaden the markets for industrial and agricultural products.

Today the famous "chatsai" from Szechuan, bananas from Kwangtung, the delicious apples of the Northeast, sweet pears from Hopei, juicy peaches from Shantung and seedless tangerines from Nanfeng County, Kiangsi Province, which were once sent to the imperial court as tributes, all find good markets in many parts of the country. Bicycles, thermos-flasks, flashlights and other manufactured goods are widely sold in the countryside, where they were almost or entirely unknown in the past.

Planned Transportation

Planning is one of the basic characteristics of the people's railways, in sharp contrast to the planlessness of pre-liberation times. In capitalist, colonial and semi-colonial countries, the



In Peking station's special waiting room for children. A woman attendant helps mothers to entertain their youngsters

volume of railway transportation depends on the blind and spontaneous forces of the market. In slack seasons, freight cars stand idle; in busy seasons, bottlenecks develop and cargoes are held up. In New China, the railway administration enters into contracts with the chief economic departments and carries on transportation on a planned basis at all times. Railway facilities are utilised in a rational way, and seasonal fluctuations that would have an adverse effect on the economic construction of the country are eliminated. With the interests of the entire nation in mind, the people's railway administration takes measures to avoid hauling the same type of goods in opposite directions, excessively long hauls and round-about transportation. Thus, in Northeast China, the average distance of goods moved by railway in the first three quarters of 1952 was 32 kilometres shorter than that of 1951. The saving was tantamount to 185,000 million yuan in transportation costs, or 430 freight cars every day. This type of practice is fundamentally different from the management of railways in capitalist countries, by private owners who care for nothing but profits.

Improved Passenger Service

In the past few years, great improvements have been made in the passenger service. In the old society, the people found it hard to travel. There was no through train service between Northeast China and provinces south of the Great Wall, and passengers had to change trains many times. Long travel times made train trips extremely wearisome. Low speed, filth, lack of proper heating and lighting and excess crowding were typical of pre-liberation passenger trains. Since the liberation, the situation has changed completely. Every day, through trains leave from the capital for other major cities in China. To further promote the friendly relations between China and the Soviet Union, a Peking-Moscow through train service will be opened in the near future. Travel times have been gradually cut down. For instance, the time required by the Peking-Manchouli express (which covers a total of 2,324 kilometres) has been reduced by 17 hours and 7 minutes as compared with 1949. The three-class system of the past has been re-

placed by a two-class system of "soft" and "ordinary" seats. The unreasonable practice of providing dining car service only for first and second class passengers has been done away with. Today, clean and well managed diners serve all passengers at reasonable prices.

Musical programmes, the latest news and travel information are broadcast to passengers over a loudspeaker system. Books, picture magazines and games of all kinds are provided for their use without charge. Passengers are assisted in every way by polite and considerate train staffs. Rail travel in China today has become comfortable and enjoyable.

The People's Government has always shown a special concern for the well-being of mothers and children. The people's railways provide special waiting rooms for them at stations, with sofas, beds and toys. On the trains, they ride in spotless, disinfected special coaches, and they are helped in before the other passengers.

As a result of the improvement of the people's material and cultural life and the passenger service, more and more people are travelling. Those who found train trips an ordeal or could not cover the expenses now use the railways as a matter of course. In 1952, 84.8 per cent more passengers were carried than in 1949.

Bright Prospects

Working towards a truly nation-wide railway network, the People's Government has already built 1,400 kilometres of new lines, including the Laipin-Munankuan, the Tianshui-Lanchow and the Chengtu-Chungking Railways. Still more new lines are now under construction.

China's railways are developing by leaps and bounds. Achievements made in the past four years have been inseparable from the leadership of the People's Government and the Communist Party of China, the selfless and sincere assistance of Soviet experts, the joint efforts of railway workers and employees and those of the people living near the railway lines. The same factors ensure an even more rapid development in the future.

Across the Desolate Grasslands

Su Wen

This is the third article of our series describing episodes in the 25,000-li Long March of the Chinese Red Army. The author, who was a participant, describes here the difficult march of the Central Red Army through the desolate, swampy Grasslands situated in northwestern Szechuan Province, on the high plateau where Szechuan, Kansu and Chinghai Provinces meet.

THE Grasslands lie to the northwest of Sungpan County, Szechuan Province, on the 3,000-metre-high plateau where Kansu and Chinghai Provinces meet. This is a vast expanse of swamp and grass, desolate and pathless. We tried to find out as much as we could from the local people about it, but while some could say how far it was from where we were, none knew what the Grasslands were really like.

On August 23, 1935, following the vanguard units of the Central Red Army, our company, armed with iron rations, poles to set up temporary shelters and bundles of wood for cooking, left Maoerkai and headed north for the wilderness.

The sky was overcast. A milk-white mist shrouded the wild plain. Although it was only August, the air was extremely cold.



Sketch map showing the route of the Red Army's Long March across the Grasslands of Szechuan Province

In the afternoon, the sky turned still darker; the wind roared, bringing in its wake a thundering hailstorm and rain. As we had no raincoats, at first we tried to escape the downpour by taking refuge under shrubs. Then the storm caused a flood. It was no use standing still. So we resumed our march, advancing slowly. It was extremely difficult even to hold one's ground against the piercingly cold, swift currents which were flooding our way. The ground was treacherously slippery. With our trousers rolled up knee-high, we splashed through the water with the help of sticks. We got drenched to the skin, and the kits on our backs became sodden and heavy.

During a lull in the rain, we pitched camp at five o'clock in the afternoon. Using branches which we collected on the spot and the poles we had brought with us, we were soon busy putting up crude structures that were to serve as shelters. We reinforced them with oilcloths, umbrellas and rainproof straw hats. But when it started to rain again, the shelters proved too flimsy to cope both with the wind and the downpour; still, they saved us from complete exposure to the elements.

The shelters up, the next problem was to boil water. That proved a difficult job. We had used up all our matches and had to resort to flints. But the firewood was wet. We had to strike and blow again and again, and it was not until midnight, with everyone of us out of breath, that a fire was finally lit. We then had dinner which for some consisted of *tsingko** flour mixed with water and for others *ping†*

* A kind of green rye grown in the Tibetan areas.

† A plain pancake made of flour.

washed down with water which we had boiled in enamelled mugs.

After the meal, the smoke cleared. It was very cold, but the embers gave out a feeling, even if illusory, of warmth. It was time to go to sleep. It was impossible to stretch out in the crowded little shelters, so we huddled down back to back and soon fell into a deep sleep.

A Tragic Loss

The following morning, we were up at bugle call. The downpour of the previous night had flooded the district. We marched for about one kilometre and then came to a river. There were no trees around and there was nothing else at hand with which to make a bridge. Holding our rifles and bundles of clothes and rations above the swirling waters, we began to wade across the river, fighting against the rapid current. It was here that a misfortune befell us: two of our comrades were carried away by the stream. Two good swimmers instantly tried to rescue them, but it was already too late.

It was a tragic loss. The crossing was stopped. Something had to be done to prevent such an accident happening again. After a few moments' deliberation, our commander shouted out an order: "Comrades, unwind your puttees!" It took little time to tie the puttees together. A mounted armyman took the "rope" across the river and then men on the two banks pulled it taut while others held on to it to get across the stream. While we were crossing, the puttees snapped under the weight of the soldiers holding on to them, and two more of our comrades were swept away to their deaths. All efforts to save them were again unavailing.

These two tragic incidents were a bitter blow to us. Many of our comrades had fallen heroically in battles against the reactionaries. Now a new enemy had claimed four more of our comrades.... Who could tell what gallant role they might have played in our later fights against reactionary Kuomintang forces and the Japanese imperialist invaders if they had not perished in this stream? Our loss could not be counted; our sorrow was beyond description.

For a few moments, our commander could not say anything. He bowed his head in sorrow. He felt a deep sense of responsibility for this tragedy. However, for the sake of the safety of the rest of the unit, no time could be lost. He mastered his emotion. After further discussion, it was decided that we should cross in groups of not more than five. The puttees were tied together again, and in this way we crossed safely to the other bank of the river.

In the Grasslands

It was not until we had left the river far behind that we finally came to the Grasslands. A vast, flat expanse of marshy land with grass and water, devoid of any trees, spread before our eyes. The soil was so marshy, our feet sank deep into it as we marched. There were swamps everywhere. Some were deep enough to swallow up unwary men and horses who were drawn deeper into the morass the more they struggled to get out. One false move meant disaster. All day long we marched across the swamps cautiously following the trail blazed by our vanguard.

By the third day we were growing weak from hunger and fatigue. We had marched more than 5,000 kilometres in the eight months since we left the central base in Kiangsi Province. Though often without adequate food supplies, particularly in sparsely-populated areas, we had fought a number of engagements with the enemy. By now, walking itself was a trying test of our endurance. Though not heavy in themselves, the bundles of the remaining firewood carried by each man seemed quite a burden. But these difficulties failed to dampen our spirits and our determination to build a base in the north for the war against Japanese aggression.

Our hunger grew more ravenous each day in the Grasslands, but we restrained ourselves, keeping strictly within the rations which had been decided on according to the number of days we expected to be in this desolate area. Food was the guarantee that we would emerge victorious, and here in the Grasslands, where we could expect no fresh supplies, it was treasured and consumed sparingly.

We marched through the swamps during the day and spent the nights in pouring rain.

On the fourth day, we came to a road used by merchants in spring and summer leading from Szechuan Province to Chinghai Province. Flat and dry, it was covered with grass, and gave unusual strength to our feet, which had been plodding in the soggy marshes for several days. The young fighters again began to sing and all the others joined in. But our exhilaration was short-lived. We marched only a little over five kilometres when we again came upon swamps.

Early at dawn on the fifth day, after hurriedly eating *tsingko* flour mixed as usual with cold water, the fighters set out in a cheerful mood, after a rumour had gone around that we had only fifteen kilometres more to go to be out of the Grasslands.

A Welcome Respite

That day, we reached some low hills. We spent the whole day crossing rivers and marching along hill slopes. The swamps even extended some way up the slopes, and falls were frequent during the difficult march. Nevertheless, we all were looking forward to leaving the Grasslands, and although we often slipped and fell and were covered with mud, our spirits were high. It proved, however, that our hope of "marching out of the Grasslands today" was based more on wishful thinking than on concrete reality. We covered seven and a half kilometres, then another fifteen, but the swampy hills were still there! Several kilometres more of difficult marching, however, brought us to a forest. The trees shut off the sky; the ground was dry, covered with soft grass, and happily there was no rain. Though we had not been able to leave the Grasslands that day, a forest like this was nevertheless a good place to camp in, something we had not enjoyed for several days. Since the trial in these marshes was drawing to an end, we allowed ourselves the luxury of a hearty meal.

Our hopes of the previous day had failed to materialise, but we all were sure that this would indeed be our last day in the Grasslands. As we resumed our march, we strained our eyes, hoping to see a village or some other sign of human habitation. We covered another few kilometres, and then we came to a vast plain.

The hills had been left far behind; we could just make out their outlines. The plain, fertile and thickly covered with grass, was a natural pasture.

The fighters were overjoyed at seeing houses some distance away, at the far end of the pasture. We quickened our steps, eager to reach them as quickly as possible. But when we got to the village, we found only some scores of dilapidated houses overgrown with weeds. There was not a soul in sight. The village proved to have been long-deserted. We were not too downcast, however, for the ruins showed that inhabited villages could not be very far away. So we continued our march.

"Forward to New Victories!"

Outside of the hamlet, we saw a new wooden sign set up by our vanguard units. It said that our forces had wiped out two Kuomintang regiments and encircled another one at Paotso on the previous day. Rejoicing over this happy news, we cheered for many minutes and forgot our hunger and fatigue. Our young bugler happily chalked up a few words on the wooden sign to encourage the comrades marching behind us—"Increase our efforts! Forward to new victories!" Later we learnt that these Kuomintang troops had been sent to prevent us from marching out of the Grasslands and so force us to starve in that desolate region, but they had been shattered by the first attack of our vanguard forces. This battle cleared our road to Kansu Province, though, as we learnt later, the Kuomintang forces were waiting at the strategic Latsekou Pass for another chance to stop the Red Army's advance.

Elated by this success, we marched on. The road suddenly swerved eastwards, and we again entered a mountain pass. Rugged pines and strange trees with broad leaves flanked the path, which ran downhill along streams, descending more than three hundred metres in the ten kilometres that we covered. Then, another world appeared before us. On the mountain slope stood huts built in the fashion peculiar to the locality. Fields of *tsingko*, peas and turnips spread before our eyes.

At last, we had finally marched out of the bitter Grasslands!

To Mirror the Grandeur of A Great Epoch

— The Second All-China Conference of
Writers and Artists

Our Correspondent

THE Second All-China Conference of Writers and Artists was held in Peking between September 23 and October 6, 1953. The 560 delegates and 189 observers who gathered in the Huai Jeng Tang Hall, meeting place of the highest deliberative bodies of the nation, came from all localities and nationalities in the country, and from Korea, where many of them had been working with the Chinese People's Volunteers. Prominent writers of many years' standing and young workers and peasants just emerging to literary activity; dramatists and performers of stage and opera in both the traditional and modern style; screen-writers, directors and actors; composers, musicians, folk balladists and raconteurs; literary translators; painters, sculptors and cartoonists; critics in every field—all were here to discuss how better to serve the people. The Conference sat for two weeks, summarising the achievements and shortcomings of the past four years, mapping the tasks ahead.

Meeting in the Huai Jen Tang Hall, many of the participants could recall the First All-China Conference of Writers and Artists, which had assembled in the same hall in July, 1949. The delegates to that conference had come, at a high moment when triumph was crowning the hundred-year-old revolutionary struggle of the Chinese people against imperialism and feudalism, to newly-freed Peking. Some were from the old liberated areas, some from cities freshly delivered from the nightmare of Kuomintang terror. All had united under Mao Tse-tung's clarion call to workers in literature and art—to turn their talents and efforts to the service of the workers, the peasants and the soldiers of the revolutionary army.

The environment of the Second Conference showed the enormous distance the Chinese people have travelled in four years. China is at a new turning point in her history. The great and difficult work of restoring the national economy has been completed. The country is well launched on the road to industrialisation, to the socialist transformation of its economy, its whole social structure and culture. Hence the new tasks of writers and artists today.

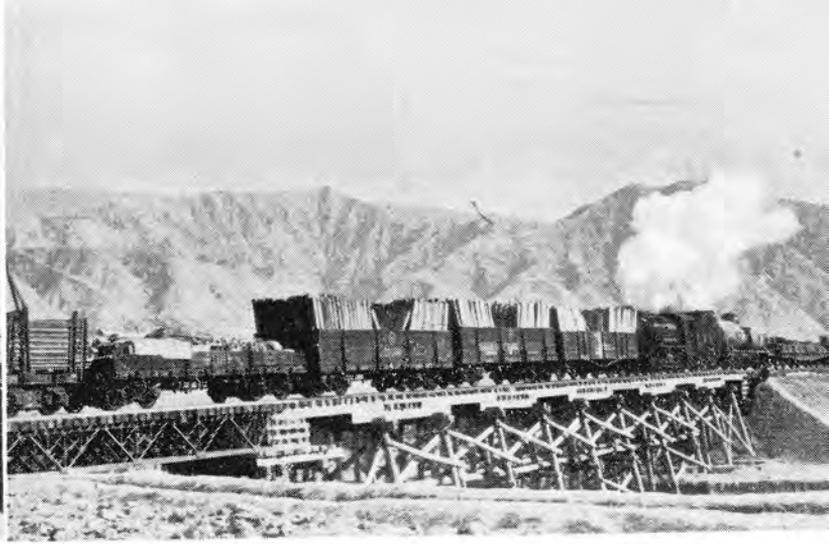
THE general direction to be followed was defined in an address to the Conference by Premier Chou En-lai. He called on writers and artists to continue and carry out still more effectively the policy of serving the workers, peasants and people's fighters; to join in the actual every-day work of the people; to raise artistic standards and produce more works; to create fine literary and artistic productions with correct ideological content and to help develop the literary and artistic activities of the masses of the people themselves.

In his report on the achievements of the past four years, Chow Yang, Vice-Chairman of the All-China Federation of Literature and Art Circles, pointed out the main concrete problems facing the writers and artists. These became the central theme of discussion among participants in the Conference.

The first was the development of creative work, particularly the depiction of positive heroes, the makers of the new China. "Our writers," Chow Yang said, "have not yet succeeded in creating types of outstanding, positive characters. Many works suffer from the



First train out from Yungteng. The Lanchow-Yungteng section of the Railway was opened on October 1, 1953



Freight trains on the finished section bring up building materials for new stretches of the line

Building the Lanchow-Sinkiang Railway

Construction of the Lanchow-Sinkiang Railway was started in October, 1952. Completion of this first railway in Sinkiang, China's westernmost province, will be a most important means of improving the livelihood of its many national minorities. Work is now proceeding on the difficult section running across the Wuhsiaoling Mountain range, 3,000 metres above sea level, northwest of Lanchow



Starting the construction of a bridge across one of the tributaries of the Yellow River



Construction work goes on day and night

China's 1953 National Athletic Meet

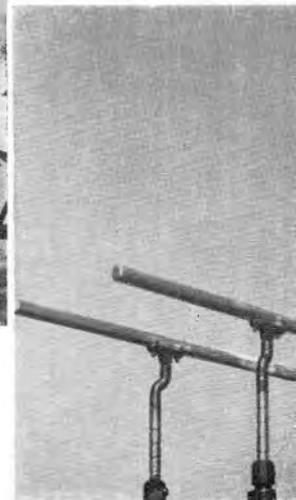
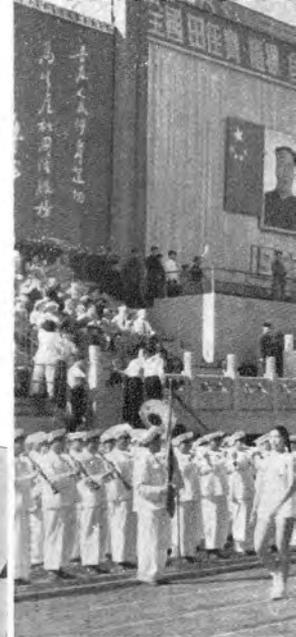
New China's first national athletic meet was held from October 2-7 in Peking's People's Stadium. No less than 19 records established in Kuomintang days were broken. The 658 entrants—40 per cent of them were women—took part in track and field, gymnastics and cycling events



Yitaoteg, Mongolian entrant from the People's Liberation Army, set up a new national record of 15 min. 48 sec. for the 5,000 metres



Lo Yun-chi (P.L.A.) set up a new national record of 12.19 metres for the shotput

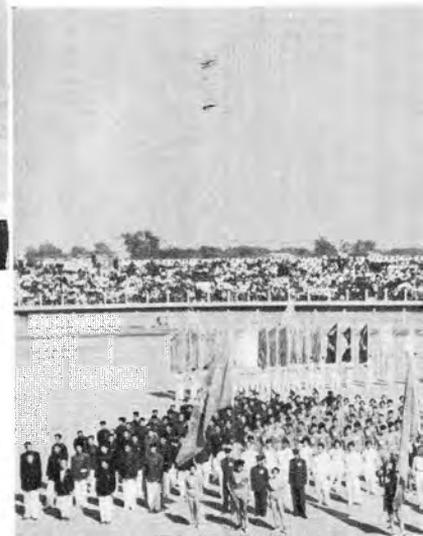


Yang Chien-n
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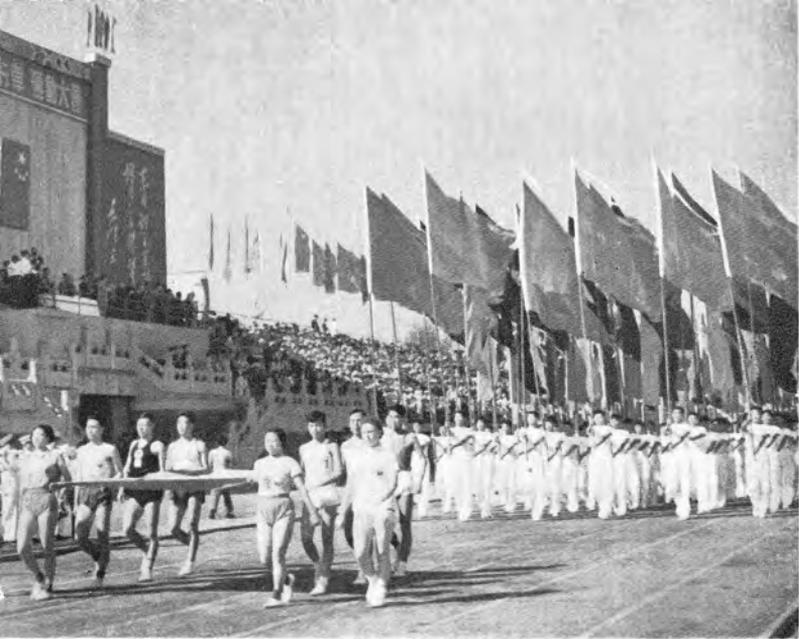
Liu Yu-ying (Northeast China) got the highest individual score for track and field events for women



Ma Yueh-han, Chief of the Board of Judges, handing souvenirs to the visiting overseas Chinese sports group from Burma



The closing ceremony of the meet



The opening parade of the meet



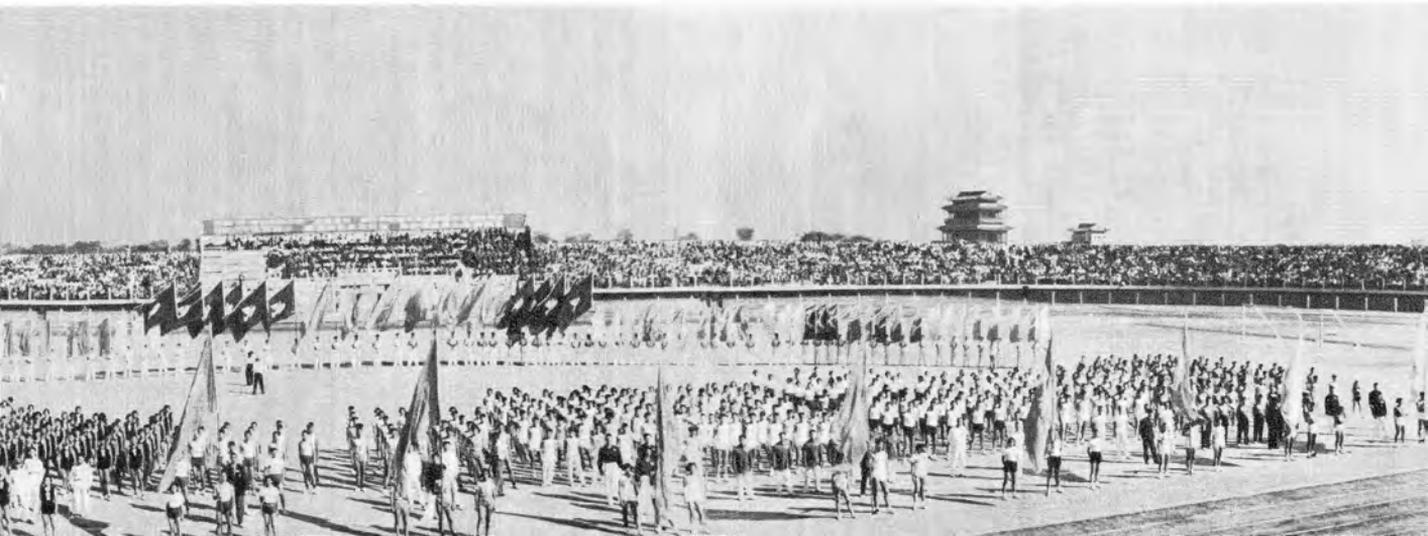
Ho Lung, Chairman of the Physical Culture and Sports Commission, opened the meet



in (North China), in his winning play on the parallel bars



The finish of the 80-metre hurdles for women





At the entrance of the Institute

The Yunnan Institute for National Minorities

The Institute for National Minorities in beautiful Kunming, Yunnan Province, is training students from 51 nationalities of the great fraternal family of China



A singsong after classes



A group of friends of the Yi, Miao, An and Yao peoples studying in the Institute's grounds

defects of abstract generalisation, or of writing according to cold formulas." To fulfil this task, Chow Yang stressed, writers and artists must themselves take part in the struggle between the old and the new—and show it in their works. "Deep knowledge of the policy of the Communist Party and the Government, the moving force of the development of the country and people, must be combined with a faithful and warm-blooded portrayal of life."

A second problem was the proper role of literary criticism. So long as a writer or an artist was on the side of the people, Chow Yang pointed out, the critic should approach his works with loving care, pointing out defects for the purpose of assisting in their correction, never indulging in mere denunciation. Only in this way would criticism help and encourage, instead of obstructing, the creative development of the writer or the artist. Writers and artists, on their part, should neither fear criticism nor ignore it.

The proper assimilation of China's cultural heritage was also stressed in the report. Chow Yang called for republication of the rich, popular and realistic portion of that heritage and for deep research in regard to it. Writers and artists should draw useful lessons from the Chinese masters of the past and from the great people's writers and artists of all countries in all ages.

Finally, the report dealt with necessary organisational measures to facilitate the carrying out of these tasks. Among such measures were the adoption of a new constitution for the Federation, and the freeing of the maximum possible number of writers and artists from administrative and other work, so that they could devote themselves to creative activity.

AFTER hearing other addresses, the Conference went into an entire week of separate sessions of the constituent bodies of the All-China Federation—the associations of writers, dramatists, musicians, dancers and workers in the graphic arts. Each discussed in detail, with special reference to its own activity, the general questions that had been raised.

Mao Tun, famous novelist and Chairman of the Chinese Writers' Association, made a speech expressing satisfaction at the way writers were drawing their subject matter from the

rich life of the people, and at the number of new writers that were appearing. "The new writers, by their youthful vigour, act as an impetus to the old writers, while the latter, in their turn, help the new writers by their experience," he said. Pointing out that, "the task of literature is not confined to a mere faithful portrayal of complex changes; above all we must help push forward this socialist transformation by the powers of art," Mao Tun made a searching analysis of the key problem of creating positive characters. Unless writers both know life and master Marxism-Leninism, he said, they cannot see things in their entirety, understand the realities of today and tomorrow, or become masters of socialist realism.

Ting Ling, winner of the Stalin Prize for Literature for her novel on the land reform, *Sunshine on the Sangkan River*, urged all writers, in an informal talk, to speak to the people through more and better works. To create typical characters, she advised, writers must have many intimate friends among the people, friends who would come to them with their joys when happy and with their complaints when things go wrong.

THE deep roots of New China's art and literature in every phase of life, the strengthened unity of the young with the best of the old, were evident from the people one saw in the Hall.

Here were Chinese writers who are taking a leading part in the world peace movement: Kuo Mo-jo, winner of the International Stalin Peace Prize, Mao Tun, the poet Emi Siao. Here too were the novelists Ting Ling, Chou Li-po and playwright Ho Ching-chih, all winners of the Stalin Prize for Literature.

From the battlefronts of heroic Korea came the poet Wei Wei, author of *Those Most to Be Loved* and other inspiring sketches about the Chinese People's Volunteers; the painter and woodcut artist Ku Yuan; the writer Liu Pai-yu, who is working on a movie scenario about a Volunteer at the front and his wife in their native village.

Among many writers and artists who came from the factories and busy construction sites of China's first five-year plan were the woman novelist Tsao Ming, author of *The Moving*

Force, the playwright Tu Yin, the scenario writer Yu Min, the painter Wang Shih-kuo and the sculptor Su Hui. The last four had spent many months in the country's "steel city," Anshan.

The poet Ai Ching, the short-story writers Chao Shu-li, Ku Yu and many others arrived from villages, where they are living with the peasants, creating works that show the new things and new people in the countryside. Kao Yu-pao, a young soldier from the ranks of the peasantry, represented the new generation of writers growing up in that great school, the People's Liberation Army. Before the liberation, he was completely illiterate. Now he has published an important autobiographical novel.

A notable feature of the Conference was the participation of many writers, artists and musicians from China's national minorities.

Among the many guests at the Conference were members of cultural delegations from Rumania, Czechoslovakia and Poland, the Vice-Chairman of the German Writers' Association, Stephan Hermlin, the Cuban poet, Nicolas Guillen, and others.

THE organised writers and artists of China today are growing in numbers and in breadth of representation. What unites them is faith in their country's chosen path of socialist industrialisation, led by the Communist Party and the People's Government. This was reflected in the resolutions of the Conference, the adoption of a new constitution by the Federation, the composition of its newly chosen executive committee of 103 members, headed by Kuo Mo-jo, Mao Tun and Chow Yang.

On the afternoon of October 4, as the sun shone radiantly on the beautiful garden behind the Huai Jen Tang Hall, the delegates and observers met the leaders of the Party and Government, headed by their best teacher and comrade, Chairman Mao Tse-tung. Chairman Mao's *Addresses at the Yen-an Forum on Literature and Art*, and his other classical writings, are the guiding star of cultural work in New China. For many years, he has concerned himself closely with the tasks of Chinese writers and artists, giving them encouragement and direction.

From their second national conference, writers and artists of China have gained fresh inspiration in their tasks of glory and honour. Their confidence and determination are well expressed by the novelist Chou Li-po who said:

"The greatest periods in Chinese history have been those of Han (206 B.C.—220 A.D.) and Tang (618-907 A.D.). In those days, Chinese culture flourished with eminent distinction. We only have to think how many prominent poets and artists appeared in these two dynasties. But our age is far greater than Han and Tang! We shall surely create a much richer culture!"

Leaving the Conference, the participants went back into the midst of the people, to the fronts of socialist construction—conscious of their mission to reflect the magnificent reality of China's greatest epoch—the era of Mao Tse-tung.

Sinkiang Writers and Artists Confer

The first conference of writers and artists in Sinkiang Province was held in Tihua recently to review their work and make plans for the future.

It also inaugurated the first local federation of writers and artists. It was attended by 281 writers, poets, artists, musicians, dancers, actors and cinema workers of various nationalities from all parts of the Province. They undertook as one of their main tasks to continue to develop the fine cultural heritage of China's many nationalities.

During the past four years, more than 3,000 local folk songs, 150 folk tales and 1,000 folk art objects have been collected. A historic Uighur song cycle constituting 167 items has been translated into the languages of the minority peoples. There are now 11 professional theatrical troupes and more than 40 amateur dramatic and musical groups in Sinkiang Province, and several magazines, including *Sinkiang Literature*, which is published in the Uighur and Chinese languages, and *Sinkiang Pictorial*, in the Uighur, Kazakh and Chinese languages.

New Day for Sports in China

— China's First National Athletic Meet

Li Yu-wen

CHINA's first national athletic meet, held in Peking from October 2-7, saw nineteen pre-liberation track and field records broken by the sportsmen of New China.

People from all walks of life packed the colourfully decorated Peking People's Stadium to cheer the track and field events, gymnastics and cycling. The meet developed into the triumphant victory of the champions of the New China over the records established by the old.

Each day was full of thrills and excitement. The women's 800-metre run was climaxed by a photo-finish. All the first five runners broke the old national record of 2 minutes 35 seconds, the winning time being 2 minutes 33.1 seconds.

The Mongolian shepherd boy Yitaoteg won a sensational victory in the 5,000 metres. He beat East China's saw mill worker Yiu Yun-ting, the student Li Chi, and the Northeast's fine runner Chang Hsi-ling, who were a good 50 metres ahead of him at the start of the last lap. The first three runners all broke the old record with Yitaoteg clocking in in 15 minutes 48 seconds, beating the old record by 8.2 seconds.

These were not the only occasions on which several competitors in an event broke the record. The men's 1,500 metres and 5,000 metres, 200-metre hurdles, 4 x 400-metre relay, 1,500-metre medley relay and the women's 4 x 100-metre relay records were broken in similar fashion; while both the winners and runners-up of the women's javelin and shot-put shattered the old marks.

A grand performance was given by the 18-year-old girl Liu Yu-ying, a junior student of the Port Arthur Pedagogical College, who won both the 100 and 200 metres in record-breaking time, and was the mainstay of the Northeast 4 x 100-metre relay team's victory which also broke the record.

At the end of the meet, silver-haired Ma Yueh-han (John Ma), the chairman of the board of judges and Vice-Chairman of the All-China Athletic Federation awarded special prizes to no less than 58 record-breaking athletes in nineteen events. It was a rare moment in his more than 50 years as an active promoter of physical culture and amateur sports both in China and abroad.

Competitors at this meet were teams from Northeast, Northwest, Southwest, Central-South, North and East China; the Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region, the China Locomotive Sports Association (the railway workers), the People's Liberation Army, and a visiting overseas Chinese sports group from Burma. Altogether 658 athletes, 40 per cent of them women, participated. Winners of local selection meets, they were the pick of the millions of new sportsmen in factories, villages, institutions, schools and army units throughout the country. In view of their generally short experience in organised amateur sport, their achievements were remarkable.

The experience of P.L.A. truck driver Kao Hsu-kwei, champion broad jumper at the meet, is typical. Kao won his first victory in the Fukien army sports meet in August last year with a leap of six metres. At succeeding

meets in East China and all-Army selection heats, he improved his style, and in this meet he jumped 6.93 metres to win the event and break the old national record of 6.912 metres set twenty years ago.

North China's champion hurdler Liu Cheng, a post office clerk, ran the women's 80-metre hurdle in 16 seconds to win the 1951 Kueisui city sports meet. She reduced her time to 12.6 seconds to set a new record at this national meet.

Long distance runner Yitaoteg, now a cavalryman of the P.L.A., won his first big race in the 1952 all-Army sports meet, running the 5,000 metres in unorthodox style. Not yet used to track shoes, he raced in his bare feet. Now a seasoned runner after a year's training, Yitaoteg made his new national record by clever planning, taking full advantage of his stamina and last-lap spurt.

The form of these young athletes shows that the present national records won't survive long. Given time to mature and with improved training, this growing crop of champions will quickly raise Chinese sports achievements to a new high level. And behind them are millions of sports enthusiasts eager to contribute to this field of endeavour newly opened to the people.

New Day for Sport

The successes achieved in the 1953 national athletic meet are unprecedented in many ways in the history of Chinese sports. This is the first national meet ever held on such a scale in China. For the first time gymnastics and cycling were featured in national competitions. Of the 34 track and field events, 19 produced new national records. Nine of these were made by women athletes. Competitors came from every social stratum. These facts show what a fundamental change has taken place in the field of sport in China.

Only four years ago modern track and field sports were the exclusive pastime of the small leisure class. Because the narrow social foundation of sports left vast reservoirs of athletic talent untapped, records established remained unbroken for as long as twenty years

despite the fact that they were not outstanding according to international standards. The broad masses of the people, sunk in poverty, undernourished and overworked, had no time or inclination for sports activities. They never set foot in a sports arena either as participants or spectators. Sports were seldom even heard of in China's vast countryside.

All this was changed after the liberation of the country. The Chinese Communist Party and the People's Government pay the greatest attention to the development of sports and the recreation of the people. A government commission for physical culture and athletics has been established with General Ho Lung as its director. State organisations have built a series of big new stadiums, skating rinks, swimming pools and other sports facilities. The Hongkew Stadium in Shanghai has a seating capacity for 30,000 people, an oval 400-metre track and a 3,000-metre steeple-chase course, besides a football field and basketball and volleyball courts. Two indoor tracks are under construction. And this is not by any means exceptional for sports facilities in the bigger cities. The Peking People's Swimming Pool has an area of 40,000 square metres. The Canton Swimming Pool has stands for 10,000 spectators. Chao County in Anhwei Province had practically no sports facilities in the past; now it has 152 basketball and volleyball courts. This is not unusual now for rural counties. Ball games today are a big attraction at county fairs and holiday festivities throughout the country. Chungking City alone has more than 2,000 ball teams, half of them composed of factory workers. Such figures give some idea of the extent of the organised sports movement throughout the country today.

To foster sports and physical education, the All-China Athletic Federation has also sent a number of sportsmen to be trained in the Soviet Union, and in December, 1950 invited a Soviet basketball team to play matches and give instruction in China. A highlight of the first national athletic meet was the guest display of gymnastics put on by the visiting team from the Soviet Union, winners of the 1952 Olympics. Their faultless technique and splendid physique set a new standard for China's sportsmen to emulate.

With the rising living standards of the people and particularly of the workers and peasants, with their rising cultural standards and greater opportunities for cultured leisure, rest and recreation, athletics and sports are becoming a mass activity.

Sports and athletics are actively fostered not only by the government but also by the people's organisations such as the trade unions, the youth organisations and the women's federations. Trade union regulations, for instance, stipulate that all state enterprises pay every month a sum amounting to 2 per cent of the total wage fund to the trade unions for the financing of recreational and cultural activities. State enterprises in addition bear all the expenses for the building and upkeep of sports grounds and other permanent sports facilities.

It is on such a broad mass basis that twelve nation-wide meets for various sports

have been held in the four years since liberation, culminating in the present national athletic meet.

The 58 athletes who have broken the old national records eloquently demonstrate the rapid progress that sports have made in New China. The majority of them come from the workers and peasants. Their achievements are only the first fruits of the beginning of the development of organised mass sport in China. Sport in China has entered a new era, and the day is not far distant when China's athletes will advance to the standards of international contests.

But it is not only international records that this movement aims for. Those will be a by-product of the main achievement—a high general standard of physical fitness and sportsmanship such as can only be developed in a country in which the people themselves are the masters.

Spring in the Workshop

Tang Ke-hsin

IN times past, we textile workers used to like the winter and dread the summer. This wasn't because our job was to spin and weave, and we therefore had clothes on our backs. No, indeed. As the old saying goes, "There's not even a door-sill in the carpenter's home," and in the old society we were merely living machines to make profits for the bureaucratic capitalists. The reason we disliked the summer was that it was a time of particular suffering for textile workers.

The author is a worker in the Shanghai No. 6 State Textile Mill.

Think for instance of the situation in the weaving shed. It used to be like a big closed-in box, or, rather I should say, a "steam-oven." Workers there were shrouded in a white mist all the year round. In summer, the temperature was usually around 100°F. The air was foul as water in a stagnant pool and full of particles of cotton and size, so that it was hard to breathe. The few windows were tiny, no bigger than a bean-cake, and even these we were not allowed to open. Why? Because if the windows were opened, the dry cool air coming from the outside might cause more

broken ends and a drop in output. And who would be responsible for that?

The bureaucrat-capitalists had a saying: "If a machine breaks down, a new one costs money. If workers die, new ones come by themselves!" The workers toiled more than ten hours a day, legs and hands going incessantly, like machines. They sweated from morning to night, the perspiration racing down their backs like mountain springs that never run dry. When their throats were parched, they drank the water from the tap; this at least was cheap and plentiful. Once the day was over, they returned home with heads dull and heavy and no desire for food. They could think of nothing but just flung themselves on their beds. The next day, they would again drag themselves, with weary, leaden legs, to the mill. Their hearts sank as soon as they saw it, but what could they do except clench their fists and enter!

After liberation, our mill changed hands. We ourselves became the new masters. Now we were no longer living machines for others' profit. No longer did we toil so that others could live in skyscrapers and feast on the fat of the land. We wanted to build up our motherland. We wanted to live better and better as the days go by. To achieve all this, it was necessary to raise production. We could not, however, stand working in the "steam-oven" any longer, we had to find a way out.

But our Chairman Mao Tse-tung thinks about our welfare even more than we ourselves do. He thinks of our comfort day and night. Last year, he issued an order: the temperature in weaving sheds must not rise above 96°F and the temperature in the spinning rooms must not exceed 100°F. And a year later, he was no longer satisfied with this. In 1953, he directed that the temperature in the weaving sheds must stay below 92°F, and in the spinning rooms it should be less than 98°F.

This is not a simple matter. I don't know how much money has been spent during the last two or three years to lower temperatures in textile mills. What I do know is that, last



The author of this article, Tang Ke-hsin, examines the air-conditioning equipment for the weaving shed in Shanghai's No. 6 State Textile Mill

year, over 2,000 million was spent in our mill alone.

A Little Debate

Last summer, our budget for over 2,000 million was approved. At the same time, an order came down that we were to install air-conditioning in the mill. But the money was enough for only one set of air-conditioning equipment. The question was where to put it. After careful study and consideration, the director of the mill felt that the spinning room should have air-conditioning first, because it was hotter than the weaving shed. After this, it was still necessary to have the workers discuss the matter, to explain the reason to them so that no one could say the director was partial to one department or the other.

As was expected, some of the weavers said in the discussion: "It is hot in the spinning room, but we are hot too. They want to increase production. So do we. Why should they have the air-conditioning while we don't?" One woman, whom we call Third Sister-in-Law, just could not get over it. "We are all human," she said. "The conditions should be

the same for all." The discussion leader answered: "We haven't got enough money to install air-conditioning everywhere. Our economic condition does not permit us to do so yet." The foreman of the workshop said: "We can install exhaust fans and Benson atomizers in our weaving shed—for the time being."

Last year, the temperature in the weaving shed generally did not go up over 90°F. Several times, when the temperature reached 96°F, the foreman phoned the director, who said: "Stop the machines for a while and let out the hot air!" But whenever this situation happened, the workers brought up air-conditioning again. Third Sister-in-Law would shout in her husky voice: "Look how much we lose in our output by stopping the machines? Doesn't this hurt production?"

This spring, when we were still wearing woolens, a temporary shelter was set up on the mill's big playground. When the galvanised-iron air ducts were laid out we realised that another air-conditioning unit was to be installed.

By the middle of May, the sun was like a fireball soaked in gasoline, and getting hotter all the time. The workers were all worried, remembering what summer had meant in the past. But this year is different. It is a year of construction, a year of planning; every minute is precious. We must not stop the machines as often as we used to. If the plan is not fulfilled, the people will reprimand us: "You workers there, thousands of you, how have you held up your end?" But could the air-conditioning equipment be fixed up in time? This was the question that bothered all of us.

The fitters in charge of installation were reassuring: "No matter how hot it gets this year," they said, "you won't suffer from the heat. Don't worry, we'll finish before summer is here."

One evening early in June, the fitters fixed up the last screw on the air-conditioning equipment in the weaving shed. Next morning, the Party secretary, the director of the mill, and the chairman of the trade union all came to

the shed. None of them spoke; they only smiled at us and we smiled back.

Spring Finally Came

At half past nine the motor of the centrifugal fan began to rotate and the water pump started with a deafening sound. Red and green ribbons flapped in the grille of the air duct. Cool air rushed in, moist and sweet-smelling. The exhaust fans on the wall also started to work. Fresh air, filtered through the air-washer, poured into the workshop through the duct, then was drawn out by the exhaust.

Naughty Little Wang ran over to Third Sister-in-Law and asked her: "Is it cool?" Third Sister-in-Law smiled as if her heart was blossoming. She is an old worker who has been working for over thirty years. In the old days, she had toiled in many factories, in Japanese and British as well as Chinese mills. Then she had always thought, superstitiously, that unless the weather changed so there were only three seasons—spring, autumn and winter but no summer—the weaving shed would never be cool the year round. But now, although the weather had not changed, the workshop had changed. She shot a glance at Little Wang and retorted: "What do you mean, cool? I'm freezing!"

This new thing, unlike anything that ever happened before, has changed life in many ways. You can no longer see wet towels hanging from the workers' shoulders, or a crowd of women workers wringing their towels beside the faucet. Now the tea tanks in the shed are never over-turned by the workers in their rush to get a drink. They stand in neat, undisturbed lines. The orderly hears no more complaints about the tea being either too hot or not hot enough. During the rest period after meals, people no longer crowd near the entrance of the lane to get a breath of cool air. Everyone seems eager to start work earlier so as to get into the workshop more quickly.

July 1 is the birthday of the Communist Party of China. The people know that it is only under the leadership of the Party that we can create a happy life. They also know the best way to thank and repay the Party. That is why, in the middle of June, a new emulation campaign was launched throughout our mill.

Villages in New China

—As Seen by an Indian Trade Union Delegate

Sudhindra Pramanik



THE people of China, in their overwhelming majority, live in villages—as in India. The rapid industrial progress of New China in the various sectors of the national economy is truly admirable. But more remarkable still is the transformation that has taken place in the villages during the brief period of three and a half years of liberation from age-old feudal serfdom and imperialist oppression.

The villages I have had the opportunity to visit bore the unmistakable marks of progressive changes following the people's revolution. Gone are the old days of slavery and drudgery, unemployment and starvation, forced labour and expropriation of the fruits of their labour.

Before the liberation the toiling and suffering multitudes had no land and no real homes of their own, not even the natural human right to their own wives and children. Feudal lords and rich and powerful despots could and did take away a man's wife or children as if it were their right. There was no lawful protection even against such brutal oppression or against frequent beatings and torture.

Happy People

Now the peasants have their own lands and homes and they can sleep peacefully with their family members after a day's honest work of a voluntary nature. Everywhere we found them gay and cheerful, and engaged enthusiastically in their own productive work and friendly emulation drives. Their carefree talk

The author was the leader of the delegation of the All-India United Trades Union Congress which attended the Seventh All-China Congress of Trade Unions held in Peking in May this year.

and smiles and lofty bearing, told an altogether new tale. They were very evidently inspired with a new spirit and sense of responsibility for the reconstruction of their own country and progress of their own free society. No beggar could be seen anywhere. This is no small achievement.

A Case Study

In the village of Tientsun, west of Peking, for example, before liberation 18 landlord families owned 1,484 *mou** of land out of 2,800 *mou* available to the entire village; 70 families of middle peasants had 13 *mou* of land for each family of five members on an average. The poor peasants, who formed more than 60 per cent of the population, were left with an average of less than 0.5 *mou* of land per capita.

Poor and landless peasants were, therefore, compelled to toil on the lands of the landlords, with starvation wages, as their principal means of livelihood. The peasants had to pay heavy taxes besides various kinds of extortions.

In the winter of 1949, land reform was carried out in this village. The total land taken away from the expropriators amounted to 1,594 *mou*. This was distributed among the landless and land-poor peasants, with the result that the average share per capita was 2.5 *mou*. Landlords received an equal share of land.

We also visited a landlord's family. This family has 16 *mou* of land and the ancestral house of ten rooms, mules, a cart and a water-wheel. The father now earns money as driver

* One *mou* is one-fifteenth of a hectare.

of his cart, having besides a good income from his land. Although he was defranchised, he has been permitted to have all these things which give him quite high earnings.

From 1950-1952, the Government loaned to this village, through its co-operative, more than 170 million yuan to buy fertiliser and purchase 29 water-wheels, 42 head of cattle and 16 carts, to dig a number of wells and irrigate 300 *mou* of land. All the people now have lands and houses of their own. One ordinary peasant living with his wife and one child was found to have three rooms including one spacious and well-ventilated and well-lighted room with glass windows and furnished with cots, tables, chairs and other furniture and household necessities.

Village Co-operative

There is a supply and marketing co-operative for the disposal of village products and sale of various articles to its members and the villagers. There are 1,041 members of this co-operative, the contribution of each member being 15,000 yuan per share.

While the peasants get fair prices for all their produce, sold through their own marketing co-operative, they also get all necessities at cheap prices through their co-operative as well as a share in the profits. The price of coarse but good rice is 1,300 yuan per catty, which is equivalent to half a kilogramme. An umbrella costs 14,500 yuan, less than three rupees. Ordinary clothing is also cheap.

This year, 18 families jointly formed one agricultural producers' co-operative to till their lands collectively while retaining their individual right to their own land. Their 1953 production plan is to raise from their 1952 total yield of 47,000 catties of grain to 170,000 catties.

The whole village planted groundnuts on 700 *mou* of land and reaped a total of 200,000 catties last year. The maximum yield of grain per *mou* of land was 150 catties before the liberation. This was raised to 220 catties in 1950, 300 in 1951 and to 330 in 1952. This year they plan to raise it still higher.

Before the liberation most of the peasants could hardly get more than one daily meal of maize with some vegetables of poor quality. They could not afford to eat even very coarse

rice or wheat. Since the liberation, they have had sufficient rice and wheat to eat. They also take white flour, vegetables, eggs, fish, meat and fruits. Their consumption of nutritious food is moderately adequate. They can buy clothing and other things and have money for entertainments. Their consumption of rice and wheat sold through their co-operative store alone rose from 240 million yuan in 1950 to 670 million yuan in 1951 and to 1,000 million yuan in 1952. During January-March of 1953, total sales of rice and white flour amounted to 297 million yuan. All this clearly shows how their standard of living is rising.

Educational Opportunities

Before the liberation only 180 children, mostly belonging to landlord and rich families, used to attend the primary school. The number of pupils is now 285, most of them children of the former landless and poor peasants. There are also night classes and spare-time classes for adults. The free school has good electrically-lighted buildings with benches and desks for students, all necessary equipment and a library. The children are very cheerful, lovely and warm-hearted. Formerly there were four teachers. Now there are 11 teachers including four women. While on the subject of education, one should say that secondary and higher education in residential universities and colleges are also free. Moreover, all students get employment upon graduation. This is, indeed, a great achievement. By the quick learning method many illiterate peasants and other workers have learnt to read Chinese characters.

Every ten families are entitled to elect one representative to the village council. All except the secretary serve in an honorary capacity. Since the liberation no act of stealing or any other criminal act has occurred in this village.

The cost of living has been stabilised. China has checked inflation and ensured stable purchasing power to the earnings of workers, peasants and other working people.

All these facts demonstrate the notable progress made by New Democracy in China's vast countryside. No wonder the common people feel that they have really become masters of their own land, their homes and their country for the first time in their long history.

Lanchow

—Trade Centre of Northwest China

Che Mou-chi

LANCHOW lies on the fertile banks of the Yellow River on the Northwest China plateau. It stands at the entrance to the narrow sleeve of the Kansu Corridor, on the ancient Silk Route to Sinkiang and Central Asia. Its markets are crammed with fruits of all kinds, particularly the great green melons which have earned it its nickname of the "Melon Town."

Lanchow is the capital and the most important industrial and commercial centre of Kansu Province, which has a population of 10 million. The city itself has 240,000 inhabitants. Among them one meets people from all parts of the country, and particularly many representatives of the national minorities—Mongolians, Huis, Uighurs, Tibetans.... Its streets and markets are always crowded. Modern cars and trucks now dominate the roads. In the main thoroughfare, prominent among the private stalls and shops, stands the state department store. Its display windows feature textiles and other commodities made in Shanghai, Tsingtao, Tientsin, Wuhan and other cities. Branches of the state trading organs buy local produce and sell industrial goods. East of the city is a large civil air port.

Today, Lanchow has all of its old importance as the key communications and trading centre of this area. In addition, it has acquired new status as the administratives and planning centre of Kansu Province at a time when the whole Northwest stands on the threshold of a great upsurge of production and construction.

Before liberation, the chief access to Lanchow was by highway. The railhead of the Lunghai Railway linking the Northwest to the east coast and the Tientsin-Pukow and Peking-Hankow north-south trunk lines, was far to the east, for many years at Sian, and later at

Paochi, both in Shensi Province. Goods were also carried on the junks which plied the Yellow River. Economic ruin caused by long years of warlord and Kuomintang misrule, had reduced Lanchow's trade to a trickle.

Rapid Rehabilitation

The economy of the Northwest was rapidly restored after the liberation. The land reform provided a basis for the development of both agriculture and industry. It raised the purchasing power of the population, which is predominantly agricultural and pastoral, and expanded trade. To serve this growing market and construction in this area, 70 per cent of the trucks in Northwest China were concentrated on the Lanchow-Sian Highway, and the volume of goods transported on the Yellow River was increased within a short period to 30 times over the pre-liberation figure.

Even so, it was impossible to cope with the large quantities of raw materials of all sorts which Northwest China produces for export to other parts of the country. The economic advance and industrialisation of the Northwest demands, in the first place, more adequate communications. A big step towards solving this problem was made with the reconstruction of the Sian-Tienschui section and the opening of the new 360-kilometre-long Tienschui-Lanchow Railway.

In the first four months following the opening of the railway from October, 1952 to January, 1953, the average monthly volume of freight transported in either direction between Lanchow and Sian by rail amounted to 41,000 tons as against only 6,000 tons on the old Lanchow-Sian Highway, a nearly sevenfold increase as compared with the corresponding period in 1951-1952.

The trucks which formerly served the Lanchow-Sian Highway have now been concentrated on the roads west of Lanchow. At the same time more lateral transport lines have been organised to feed the railway at different points. Through new building and repairs, roads leading to the national minority areas will soon have an overall length of 2,000 kilometres. A new highway is being built between Tienshui and Changchiachuan to the north, which is an important leather and fur centre in the Hui minority area.

At the request of the Tibetans, the Lanchow-Linhsia road has been extended to the border region of Kansu and Szechuan Provinces. This newly built 458-kilometre highway goes via Labrang, famous trade centre of the Tibetans to Langmuszu on the Kansu borders.

The truck transport of gasoline from the oilfields at Yumen in western Kansu Province, as well as of skins and furs, medicinal herbs, pig bristles and sausage casings, is still relatively costly and slow on the difficult roads of the Northwest. But the Tienshui-Lanchow Railway has already greatly increased the volume of goods transported, and created great savings in both time and costs.

Busy Mart

The state trading organs now buy more local products than ever before, 18 types instead of eight, much of them for export to the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies. The leading item is sheep's wool, coming chiefly from the livestock-raising districts inhabited by national minorities, the Mongolians and Tibetans in Chinghai and Kansu Provinces. These districts also export animal casings, sheep-skins, hog bristles and rare furs. Some of the more than 200 medicinal herbs are exported in large quantities.

In return, from the eastern areas of the country Lanchow gets machines, building materials, cloth, tea and other daily necessities for the peasants and stockmen. After the opening of the Tienshui-Lanchow Railway line, prices of industrial goods dropped sharply, while those of local produce went up.

The Northwest has very little industry of its own, and its handicrafts production can-

not, of course, satisfy all local needs, so trade with other areas plays a big role in the daily life of the national minorities of the Northwest. Before the liberation, Kuomintang officials and merchants deceived the people of the minority nationalities and robbed them by fixing exorbitant prices for their own goods such as cloth, brick tea, etc., in terms of local produce. For 50 kg. of wool the nomads would formerly get between five and ten bricks of tea or a roll of cloth. Now, the Lanchow state trading organisations pay good prices for local products and sell industrial goods reasonably. By last year, 50 kg. of wool could buy up to 47 bricks of tea or four or five rolls of cloth.

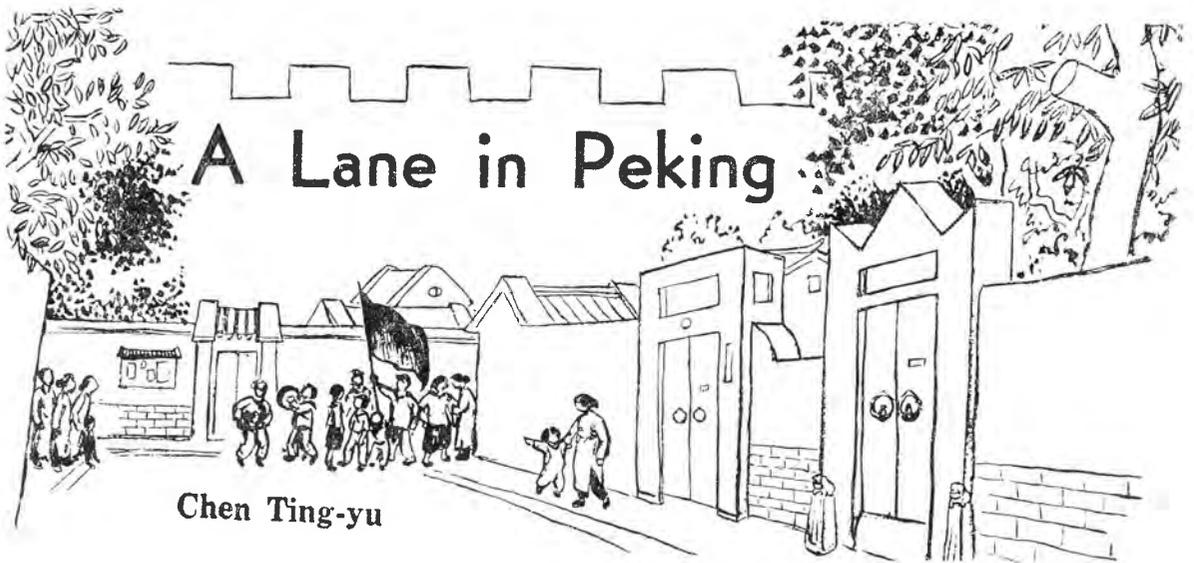
In the past, the average Tibetan could afford only the cheapest sorts of cloth. But in 1952, state trading posts in areas populated by Tibetans sold large quantities of woolens and other high-quality fabrics.

The co-operative network based on Lanchow has also expanded greatly. In the last half of 1952, the turnover of Lanchow co-operatives increased by 104 per cent, while the turnover of private trade rose 16.5 per cent.

Such developments have brought real prosperity to Lanchow. Never before was the city's population so closely linked, economically, with other areas of China. For the first time in their lives, they see rails produced by the Chungking Steel Works and dynamos made in Shanghai and Northeast China. Sugar cane and tropical fruits straight from South China are on sale in the markets. And the people have thousands of new neighbours—employees of state-trading organs and construction workers from all over the country.

The railway station at Lanchow is the hub of the communications network of the Northwest. Day and night, trucks loaded with gasoline and other goods stream along the wide roads leading to the city. Convoys of carts and caravans of camels plod into its markets. Scores of new warehouses have been built near the station, but these are already not enough to store the huge amounts of goods that are constantly arriving.

And in the meantime, still further to the west, the new Lanchow-Sinkiang Railway is being built.



Chen Ting-yu

SOME time ago I returned to Hsueh Yuan Lane. Everything was familiar and seemed to greet me—the well-remembered landmarks, the large shady trees on the north side and the fruit seller beneath them, the varied gateways with the old style doors and double brass knockers; to the east of the lane, the busy thoroughfare, and to the west, the grey city wall which stands like a screen.

The only thing which immediately struck me as being different from the past was that the lane was better kept and really clean.

A Street-Sweeper

Just before I reached my destination at the western end of the street, I met an old acquaintance, Mrs. Wu. With some other people, she was sweeping the street energetically, with the thoroughness of a good housewife. Peking's small lanes are not yet asphalted. The municipality does all major repairs, but residents themselves daily sweep together the litter which is removed by municipal dust-carts. Each home cares for its own frontage.

Mrs. Wu greeted me with real warmth and wouldn't let me go on till I had told her, at least in a few words, what I had been doing since I last saw her, and I couldn't help asking her: "How comes it that you are sweeping here? Isn't your house down by the middle of the lane? Have you moved?" She was all smiles as she gave the explanation that evidently pleased her: "Well, I did start from

in front of my house. But what does it matter if I sweep a bit further? Isn't it better if the whole street can be swept a bit sooner?"

Mrs. Wu is the middle-aged wife of an architect; she is well to do, an industrious and painstaking housewife; her house is a model of cleanliness. But she had never in the old days bothered about the stacks of garbage left elsewhere in the lane. In those times before liberation, it was considered a disgrace for a woman of her social standing to sweep the street. That was considered "coolie" work. But now she was proud of sweeping the road!

So the lane really only looked as if it were the same as before! I was eager to hear how Mrs. Wu had changed her ideas, and I would have asked her more if someone had not called her back home. Perhaps she guessed what I was thinking, because she called back: "You remember old Mrs. Hsu, don't you? Now she is the vice chairman of our lane residents' committee. Go and talk to her!"

The Vice-Chairman

Straight and narrow Hsueh Yuan Lane has two hundred families. They come from many walks of life. Some are factory or office workers, others are teachers, tailors, small merchants, pedlars and so on. What had happened to them since I left?

I went to visit Mrs. Hsu at No. 32. Now she looked cheerful and healthy; a neat black velvet cap covered her grey hair. Pinned on

her new blue gown was a badge awarded her by the district people's government for "distinguished work" in local sanitation. I could hardly believe that this was the haggard, careworn and shabbily dressed Mother Hsu whom I had known before.

She told me that after liberation, her daughter-in-law and elder daughter had both gone to work in a factory, and what with their wages and the earnings of her two sons who drove pedi-cabs, the family was well off as never before. Her three younger daughters were at school—school fees were a trifle now! Her husband.... But at this point Mrs. Hsu covered her face with her two hands and laughed with happiness. I was puzzled, for old Mr. Hsu had once been a byword in the lane for a lazy, good-for-nothing. But Mrs. Hsu teased me by refusing to say any more about him and left me to find out for myself what the story was.

What she wanted to talk about was her work. She told me that as in other Peking lanes, at the call of the municipal people's government, the lane residents' committee had been set up by the residents after the liberation to look after their common interests. They meet regularly, and their joint suggestions are submitted to the district people's government. If the government calls on the people to fulfil any community task such as the improvement of urban sanitation or mass education, or if opinions on the work of the government have to be collected, then the residents' committee goes into action. All the committee officers are elected, and the majority of them are housewives. They work in three groups to look after publicity and education work, sanitation, and aid to the families and dependents of revolutionary martyrs, people's volunteers serving in Korea and People's Liberation Armymen.

The Great Clean-up

Mrs. Hsu served on the sanitation committee.

"Sanitation work was much more difficult to handle in those early days than it is now," she said to me. "It took me quite a bit of time to understand its importance and how to organise the work." Mrs. Hsu used the phrases of the young revolutionary workers as if she

had been born to them. "I didn't have a mass line! I started off by ordering others around—that was 'commandism!' Of course that was no good. Then I learnt how to mobilise the masses by setting a good example myself and getting the activists to help the backward ones with the work. Finally, everyone got interested.

The district government helps us all they can. All the garbage we collect is promptly carted away. In the old days it used to lie and rot on the streets. They say we'll soon have regular mechanical road-sweepers to help keep things clean!"

During the Kuomintang days, dirt had steadily accumulated in the lane like a symbol of the filth the whole regime was spreading through China. How often I had wondered in the past how this squalor and dirt could ever be got rid of! But here it was done, led by the People's Government in the person of little Mrs. Hsu, backed by an organised and enlightened public opinion.

Hsueh Yuan Lane had in fact become a model among the lanes in our district. At its eastern end there was a white board with red characters reading: "Model Lane of the Health Campaign." The germ war launched by the U.S. Government gave a special sense of urgency to the sanitation campaign, but the basic thing is that all the neighbours now understand that "health is national wealth!" and that sanitation is "everybody's business."

Most homes have pledges of good work in their "patriotic pacts" framed on their living room walls. Formerly the lane was full of flies and our summer days were tormented by mosquitoes. But now flies and mosquitoes have been pretty well wiped out. The mice have gone too, in many cases caught in traps ingeniously made out of two ordinary China bowls with a peanut as bait.

"The world is changing, and our sleepy old lane is changing too," said old Mrs. Hsu, with deep satisfaction. She went on to describe how.

One of the most remarkable changes: the policeman, who at that moment happened to greet her as he passed by. Today the police truly take protecting the people as their prime duty.

In the old days the police were local despots. At the New Year and other festivals residents had to send them "gifts." The visit of a policeman was a disaster. It meant either a new levy, an arrest or a beating. At the station no ordinary resident dared to sit down and talk with them. Once Mrs. Hsu had gone there and on her knees begged them for the release of her eldest son from conscription. But he was dragged away all the same.

Now the people's police serve the people. No one worries about the danger of robbery any more. Besides, the people now take all sorts of problems and proposals to the civil affairs department of the station to get them settled. When little Wang fell ill recently and there was nobody at home to take care of him, the police immediately took him to the hospital. They help poor families to apply for subsidies from the government if they need them. In the cold winter of last year the police saw to it that no one lacked heating or padded cotton quilts.

I think the significance of the term the "people's government" has come to be well understood today down Hsueh Yuan Lane.

Newspaper-Reading Group

I've found people really for the first time in their lives have got to know each other in a neighbourly way. There is now a real attempt to understand each other's problems and give help if needed. There are many opportunities now to get together that did not exist in the past. Besides the lane meetings to which each home sends a representative, there are the newspaper-reading groups. One of them meets in Mrs. Hsu's house. Every Sunday evening, her three rooms are packed with people who have come to listen to the reading. The old women bring their mending or stitching of cloth soles; the young women bring their knitting and often their babies. The old men smoke as they listen. Most are still illiterate or are just learning to read. The group helps them know what's going on at home and abroad.

What with questions and answers, there are often lively discussions on many topics, big and small. There are talks on why our volunteers resist U.S. aggression in Korea, and on the truce negotiations, on how people sometimes get poisoned by fumes from coal

stoves, and ways to catch rats. The Marriage Law is always sure to lead to an earnest exchange of opinions. About 40 neighbours usually gather.

The group has been a big incentive to learn to read. Eighty per cent of the illiterates in the lane are now studying two hours every evening at special classes started for them in the local primary school. Families try to free their servants and nurse-maids for these classes.

How to Get Domestic Harmony

The newspaper-reading groups owe their start and success in the first place to Fu Wen-ching, the 60-year-old chairman of the residents' committee. He has shown a real ability for developing good neighbourliness in our lane and has quite won the trust of everyone. We often call him "King of the Children," because he is so fond of them; and they in turn love him. It was he who set up a children's reading room in his own house, getting new picture books and magazines for them from the district People's Club.

What makes people who had often quarrelled over trifles in the past now live in harmony? I discussed this with Fu Wen-ching. He took no credit for the change but remarked how, during these past few years at work places, through press and radio, cinema and theatre, people are being re-educated in the new outlook of regard for public property and for the common welfare. The stresses of living in embittering poverty and insecurity have



vanished. People now meet frequently in various social activities. This leads to new friendships and gives them better understanding of each other. Most quarrels which still crop up are solved through the mediation of the local residents' committee. When there's trouble, neighbours rally round like one big family.

And there is enormous satisfaction all round when a problem is settled. Take for instance, the case of Mrs. Hsu's husband. She told me: "You see, he doesn't try to prevent me from doing community work any more. Sometimes when I come home tired, he even heats the food for me! Now, don't laugh! You know what he was like in the old days..."

Old Man Hsu

Hsu is sixty-eight—eight years older than his wife. He had worked at various jobs: brick-laying, pulling rickshas and as an usher in the theatres. The humiliation and hardships suffered by working people in the old society had literally made him hate work. Whenever he lost a job, he would just loaf around and live on the meagre earnings of his wife and their eldest daughter, who took in sewing. After liberation, all his older children brought home good wages. Old Man Hsu enjoyed his "late luck." He sat back, growing a long beard and enjoying his old age.

He liked wine, and cats. At home, he quarrelled with everyone except his favourite white cat. His feudal ideas still made him want to maintain his dictatorship in his home. He wanted his sons to do things entirely his way, though most of the time his way was wrong. He wouldn't let his daughters speak above a whisper in the house. It goes without saying, that he was enraged by Mrs. Hsu's social activities. He just couldn't accept the fact that things had changed. "Now every damned woman wants to be in power!" he would shout.

The actual turning point in his outlook came with the newspaper-reading group. Since he had nothing to do, he would sit around at the readings and there, time after time, he heard talk about the new Marriage Law. He listened attentively to the discussions that went on about new happy family relationships. He began to turn things over in his mind: "What kind of a family do I have? Can we ever be happy together, without quar-

relling?" He heard talk of the need for criticism and self-criticism and the constant advice: "Look at yourself first!" Slowly his attitude to his family changed. He no longer applied "family discipline" to the settling of problems. The rest of his family unobtrusively encouraged the change. In fact, Mr. Hsu was one of the main reasons why they held the newspaper-readings in the Hsu home!

Family Conferences

At the beginning of this year, like many other families in the lane, the Hsus began to hold family conferences to discuss problems. Usually the meetings were presided over by the older son. Democratic discussions were also held on family finances: how the budget should be divided and what the joint savings should be spent on. Frankness in criticising oneself and other became the rule. Thus new relationships, caused by the swiftly changing times, were amicably established.

Mrs. Hsu is proud of her family life now and uses it as an example to educate others.

Good neighbourliness in our lane was even more evident on the recent Army Day. On the morning of August 1, Fu Wen-ching, chairman of the residents' committee, led a procession to visit the families of revolutionary martyrs, People's Volunteers far away defending peace in Korea and People's Liberation Armymen, distributing gifts from the local government. In front went a band with drums and cymbals. They stopped at each door decorated with the red star of a martyr to the revolutionary cause or the yellow star of a Chinese volunteer fighting in Korea or a P.L.A. fighter. In the courtyards, the children danced under the coloured flags and the young people sang songs during the ceremonial presentation of gifts.

At the gate of the Yang family there was a moment's consultation. Mrs. Yang had not long ago received news that her daughter had been cited for bravery in action as a nurse with the people's volunteers in Korea. An appropriate song was chosen:

*A rainbow lights our sky above,
Red flowers blossom on the ground.
Right and justice arm our side;
We'll crush aggression, never fear!*

The words resounded along the length of Hsueh Yuan Lane.

IN THE NEWS



Textile Industry Grows

This year, for the first time in history, China will be self-sufficient in cotton fabrics. The output of cotton yarn and cotton cloth will be more than 200% over the 1949 figure.

In 1952 and early 1953, six new state-owned cotton mills were built in the cotton-growing areas of North, Northwest and Central-South China. Nine more new mills are now under construction, and over a score of publicly or privately owned mills are being expanded or renovated. By the end of this year, the number of spindles and looms will be 15.5% and 21%, respectively, higher than in 1950.

Before liberation, the country's textile mills were situated far from the areas supplying the raw material and from the vast rural markets. Now mills are located in the major cotton, wool, jute and flax producing regions. This cuts costs and also helps to improve the economic life of the people in the areas concerned. In Northwest China, for instance, the Kwan-chung Plain in Shensi Province has an annual cotton yield of some 80,000 tons, enough for the operation of 400,000 spindles. But the entire Northwest had only 100,000 spindles. The new cotton mills now built in Shensi are using a large proportion of locally-grown cotton. Cotton yarn and cotton cloth output in this area this year will be four to five times more than in 1949, and local cotton-growers will be supplied with large quan-

ties of cloth at lower prices than that brought in from outside.

Shanghai's Industries

Shanghai, China's biggest city, accounts for one-fifth of the nation's total industrial output and contains one-third of the nation's machine-building industry.

Taking output for the first seven months of 1952 as 100, the production of rolled steel stood at 215 in the corresponding period this year; of generators, at 238; and of copper wire, at 221.

Giant cranes, lathes, conveyors, turbine generators, grinding and milling machines, ore-dressing machines, vacuum filters, rolled steel products and dam sluice gates are among Shanghai's new products.

Since the beginning of this year, Shanghai has supplied Anshan, China's steel city, with generators, pumps, crushers, cables and automatic equipment. Over 70 kinds of rolled steel products were turned out in Shanghai this year to meet the needs of 400 mines and industrial enterprises throughout the country.

Private enterprises in Shanghai are turning out five times as much building machinery as last year. The state has almost tripled its orders for machine tools from private industry.

While bringing its production into line with the heavy industrial needs of China's first five-year plan, Shanghai retains its leading position as a centre of light industry as well. It accounts for nearly half of the nation's spindles. Its output of cigarettes this year is

two and a half times greater than last year.

Timber Felling

Fukien Province, one of China's richest forest areas, has completed its plan for this year's felling of timber. Already 70% of the timber felled—enough to provide railway sleepers for a 1,600-kilometre line—has been shipped to various parts of the country.

Hunan Province has also fulfilled its timber delivery plans for 1953. More than 400,000 cubic metres have already been delivered to many industrial enterprises in Northwest and Central-South China. Ninety-five per cent of the timber, including pines and firs, is to be used for construction, as poles for transmission wires, railway sleepers and pit props.

Kwangtung Province has already overfulfilled its timber felling and delivery plan for this year by nearly 20%.

Stocks for Winter Shopping

State shops and co-operatives all over the country are busily preparing to meet the heavy shopping demands that follow the autumn harvest.

In Northeast China, state shops have laid in 67% more woolen clothing than last year. Supply and marketing co-operatives have been delivering horse-drawn farm implements, chemical fertiliser, insecticides and other supplies to customers.

In North China, supply and marketing co-operatives have prepared 140,000 tons of fertiliser, 40% more than last year's, for the winter wheat-sowing.

In East China, a big demand for farm tools, fertiliser and seed is also anticipated. Textiles make up a large proportion of the new stocks.

In Southwest China, both state shops and co-operatives in Szechuan Province have increased their stocks of sugar, matches, towelling and hosiery following the rich harvest this autumn.

In Northwest China, too, state shops have stocked great quantities of textiles—raincoats, canvas bags, sports wear, woolen clothing and blankets—for industrial workers,

and increased amounts of brick tea for the national minorities.

Autonomy for Tibetans

Another Tibetan autonomous region was established recently in southern Kansu Province. It has an area of some 50,000 square kilometres and a population of over 300,000, half of whom are Tibetans, the rest being Hans, Huis, Mongolians, Salas, Tunghsiangs and others. The majority of the population engage in animal husbandry and the area is noted for its big, hardy horses. Cedars and medicinal herbs abound in the region's forests, which are also the home of deer and bears.

During the past four years, over 20 hospitals, clinics and mother-and-child care centres have been set up in the region. New buildings are going up all the time. This year, the amount spent on construction will be twice that spent last year.

Sino-Soviet Oil Co.

The Sino-Soviet Joint Stock Petroleum Company celebrated its third anniversary on October 2. The output of oil is now 18 times what it was in 1951. More than 2,000 skilled workers and technicians have been trained by Soviet experts since the founding of the Company in 1950.

Many new oil wells have been sunk. One new oil refinery was built and an old one renovated last year. An up-to-date oil-cracking plant is now under construction. Various auxiliary plants, as well as workers' homes, have been erected and many amenities provided.

Foreign Guests at Kuanting

Many foreign guests visiting China made a trip in early October to Kuanting Reservoir on the Yungting River, one of the biggest projects in China today.

The visitors included the Polish Cultural Delegation, the Czechoslovak Cultural Delegation, the Delegation of the Viet-Nam-China Friendship Association, the Delegation of the France-China Friendship Association, the German Cultural Delegation, and the Delegation of the British Electrical Workers' Trades Union. There

were also many guests who came to China individually to attend National Day celebrations. Among them was Ikuo Oyama, Chairman of the Japanese National Peace Committee.

CHRONICLE OF EVENTS

October 8

Foreign Minister Chou En-lai issues a statement endorsing the proposal to convene a conference of the Foreign Ministers of the five Great Powers, made by the Soviet Government in its note to the Governments of France, Britain and the United States.

October 10

Foreign Minister Chou En-lai issues a statement in reply to the three communications of the United States Government concerning the Political Conference and proposing that representatives of the Korean-Chinese side meet with a U.S. representative to hold discussions on the question of the Political Conference, its place and time and "what is more essential," the composition; with Panmunjom as the place for the discussions.

October 15

Broadcasting Co-operation Agreements are signed in Peking with Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland and Rumania.

October 19

Foreign Minister Chou En-lai sends a note in reply to the communication of the United States Government concerning the Political Conference which was transmitted through the Swedish Government on October 14, 1953. The note agrees that representatives of the Korean-Chinese side will meet with the U.S. representative at Panmunjom on October 26 to discuss questions of the Political Conference, its place and time and various procedural, administrative and related questions; it also reserves the right to raise for discussion and settlement at the discussions, the question of the composition of the Conference which the Central People's Government holds is the more essential question.

October 20

Marshal Kim Il Sung and General Peng Teh-huai send a letter to

J. E. Hull, C-in-C of the U.N. Command, asking the U.N. side to account responsibly and specifically for every one of the 98,742 captured Korean and Chinese personnel known to have been held by the U.N. side.

LETTERS

To the Editor

One Mighty Step

LONDON, ENGLAND

Reading your magazine leaves one amazed at what the people, when unchained, can do, proving as it does what democracy on the march can do. For example, one reads in the press here nearly every day of rises of prices of essentials, whereas in China, quite the opposite is happening. In China new railways are being built; while in the "West" railways are being closed; and so *ad infinitum*. One thinks of the Chinese people's pride very slightly tinged with envy, for as Mao Tse-tung has said, you have marched but one step in a ten thousand li march, but we haven't even taken that!

I would like to record my gratitude to the C.P.V. who not only fought for the Korean people but for the conscience of the world.

Kenneth Weller

The Red Poppy

WROCLAW, POLAND

With much pleasure I inform you that an eminent success was scored by our State Opera ballet in Wroclaw producing *The Red Poppy*, a Soviet revolutionary ballet dealing with incidents in the Chinese people's magnificent struggle against imperialism and feudalism.

I am glad to know that *People's China* seeks to strengthen the friendship between the people of China and those of other lands in the cause of peace. We all stand for peace and democracy here in Poland

Waclaw Pomorski



A Happy Harvester in Kaiyuan County, Yunnan Province