

rried out to their satisfaction before the Chinese courts will approach the western or Anglo-Saxon "standard!"

It is a queer coincidence that the same paper on the same day carried a story of the suicide of Spiers who was sentenced by a British court to ten years of penal servitude with an addition of 15 strokes of the cat-o'-nine-tails. While being taken to the "triangle" where the latter punishment was to be administered, he broke away and flung himself over the banisters of a staircase to the stone floor below to death. The special correspondent of the London *Evening News* describes the 'cat' as follows:

"The 'cat' is one of the most dreaded forms of punishment in the whole penal code.

"Hardened criminals regard it as second only to the gallows.

"A prisoner receiving the cat-o'-nine-tails is strapped with outstretched arms to the triangle and the punishment is administered in the presence of the prison doctor, who first of all certifies that the man is fit to receive it.

"After feeling prisoner's pulse the doctor says 'one—' and the first stroke is given.

"Punishment is continued to the limit ordered only if the man continues fit to receive it.

"It is stopped if he shows signs of collapse, and the balance is administered later on.

"Few criminals are able to take a severe sentence of the 'cat' at one time."

To one who reads history at all and has learnt to see man's social life in proper historical perspective, the "cat" is no cause for surprise. It takes no student of

penology to recall that the penalty for treason in England, hanging, drawing and quartering, remained in force until as late as 1870. "In the first decades of the same century women were branded and whipped, and until 1837 a perjurer was liable to be nailed by the ears to a pillory. There were 223 offences punishable by death, including the 'crime' of damaging West-minister Bridge, or appearing on it in disguise." When one is reminded of such barbarities, the "cat" would appear too humane for any hardened criminal.

It calls for no surprise either when the matter is viewed psychologically. Enlightened penologists may exert their utmost to reduce corporal punishment to the minimum, but human nature, the British notwithstanding, is so constituted that a certain amount of sadistic impulse, no matter how residual, will always remain and will make itself felt whenever there is a chance. The "cat" and "the third degree" in America are but expressions of this impulse, which and the like of which no amount of enlightenment, we are afraid, will ever succeed in wholly abolishing. It has even been suggested that unless a man is armed with a sufficiently strong sadistic tendency in his mental make-up, he is not fit to be a gaoler or a warden!

But the surprise is that those who created the system of extraterritoriality in China years ago on the ground that Chinese courts and prisons used torture are the very people among whom we find this interesting cat-o'-nine-tails. The greater surprise still is that extraterritoriality in China must be maintained in spite of Chinese reforms!

My Experience in Reading A Chinese Daily

By Lin Yutang (林語堂)

Mr. Durham S. F. Chen's article on "What Ails the Press of Shanghai?" in the last number of *The Critic* was both interesting and provocative. His account of the Shanghai press was hardly believable. I knew that, with the exception of the *China Times*, the respectable dailies of Shanghai have never been properly edited, but I thought Mr. Chen might have exaggerated. Having faith in human nature and human institutions in general, I spent eight coppers on one of the well-known local "big papers"—and who does not know their names?—and prepared to set out on a voyage of exploration for myself. I wished to see that the things aren't quite so bad, and that the so-called Chinese genius for business enterprise, backed by one or two millions of capital, coupled with the renowned Chinese capacity for "composing literature," and supported by a reading public of about a hundred fifty thousand readers, couldn't produce just such a silly thing Mr. Chen described it to be. I discovered, however, that things are never so bad that they might not be worse. My faith in human institutions was visibly shaken, and I had a vague sense of horror as to what would be "the journey's end."

Not that I was dissatisfied with the size or the weight of the purchase. On the other hand, I was extremely satisfied. Anybody who does not feel satisfied with getting over twenty pages of reading matter (but we will come to that by and bye) for eight or ten coppers must be a miser and an old grouch indeed. Supposing the literary burden in my hand to weigh four ounces, and supposing I should sell the old papers at six coppers a catty, I might still recover approximately one-fifth of my capital back, and think of all the educational, inspirational, and information-al matter I might glean from its pages before parting hands with it to the second-hand dealer! I told myself that the things of truth and beauty which I might find therein would definitely become a part of my personality and increase my spiritual riches.

I had, comparatively speaking, very little difficulty in locating its "front page," for if it is not on the outside, it must be on the inside. What surprised me was that the front page actually consisted of less than one third of a page, tucked away in what we would call the "lowest" bottom corner of the fourth page of the first

sheet, and broken up in the middle by advertisements of medicines that will respectively "make the hair grow," "keep the womb warm" (*sic!*) and "make the old young in spirit again."

Before I read the news itself, my eyes lighted upon a very curious and, from the sociological standpoint, highly interesting advertisement immediately preceding it. Or rather there was a couple of parallel advertisements, which were headed (A) "Tang To's Home Has Been Robbed," and (B) "Tang To Is Sixty Years Old This Year"—all in very fine calligraphy, I must say. The text of the advertisement itself was printed in the artistic "Sung-Dynasty type," too. The self-proclamation to the world about a robbery was already extraordinary, and one could not think of any motive unless it were to let the world know that something important had happened to the said advertiser. However, that was his own affair, I thought, and the craze for front-page publicity was by no means confined to the orientals. But Ad. "B" was a peach. I was wondering what Mr. Tang's being "sixty years old this year" had to do with the general public. But I soon found the reason. In view of its great sociological significance, allow me to reproduce the first part in full:

"On the 11th of March, (being the equivalent of the 12th day of the second moon—the day when the hundred flowers come back to life—of the year Keng-u), (I), Tang To, have just reached the age of sixty. (I) propose to use the pretext of a birthday celebration to raise a fund for some honorable purpose. All ye my friends, relatives and members of the same clan who wish to present Tang To with birthday gifts, PLEASE GIVE ME CASH! (*big type is original*). Be so kind as not to send poems, scrolls or silver shields. SPECIAL attention is called to the fact that I DO NOT WANT TO RECEIVE hall hangings, ceremonial checks, puddings, dumplings, candles, and noodle . . . (*italics are ours but the caps are Mr. Tang To's original*).

"唐駝今年六十歲：國曆三月十一日(即庚午二月十二百花生日)唐駝六十初度，擬借做壽為名，集得現款，移作一件正當事業。凡我朋友親戚本家欲為唐駝祝壽者，務求惠賜現款，幸勿以詩詞屏聯銀盾見惠，軸幛禮券糕糰燭麵等物更不敢領。"

This was not the Wit and Humor Column: the advertisement was paid for, and even banks for receiving the CASH have been designated.

That is what Chinese birthday celebrations have become. But to go on with our voyage of exploration. I found that the editors had, as Mr. Chen said, a very great and simple way of classifying the news. Nothing could be more simply conceived and more simply carried out. I am informed that the editors themselves are classified, one belonging to the Domestic Department, another to the International Cable Department, another to Local News Department, etc. and I saw the classification and make-up of the News automatically followed the classification of the editors themselves. Here was the acme of simplicity and efficiency—no question of make-up, no soul-harassing problem concerning priority of

news to solve, no nerve-stretching and heart-rending counting of columns and lines and space, no wasting time pondering over which item is going into the front page and which to go behind. Here was an austere simple conception of newspaper technique that might stagger the Western journalists and have shamed Joseph Pulitzer himself. As it is, however, since ours is a "nationalistic" age, the editor of Domestic News naturally comes first and has the whole "front page" (or more correctly, the whole one-third of a front page) to himself. This makes all internal squabbles between the editors of the different departments a thing of the past. Moreover, it disposes of the necessity of having a chief editor at all, inasmuch as there is no necessity for co-ordination, and thus saves a heavy item on the salary of the editorial staff. For if everybody will mind his own business, and not bother about his fellow-editors' job, everything will go on smoothly, almost automatically. He has his allotted space, and he is there to fill it, and if he is a fast worker, he fills it quicker than all the rest, and may go home for an early supper even. Truly ours is the Land of the Free!

But this astonishing simplicity of method of editorial procedure could not be carried out without a second important discovery in newspaper technique. What if the Domestic Editor has a little too much "copy" for his allotted space? Suppose he has two or three lines left which cannot by any method of line-squeezing and space-saving be printed on his "front page," what shall he do? A graduate of the Missouri School of Journalism would think at once of using the column reference method. But the Missouri graduate forgets that this is an unwarranted waste of the editor's time and energy. No, the thing is much simpler than that. Let it go right on to the first column of the next sheet and to the Hell with repeated cross headings! As editors are also human beings, the next department man generally has no objection to this encroachment of his territory, for it must be acknowledged that this takes away part of the latter's responsibility for the day.

Generally, after acquiring some technique in turning over the sheets (Sheet No. One is followed by Sheet No. Two, which, however, in actual practice is not so simple as it seems, as all readers of the "big paper" will testify), the reader will soon have no difficulty in chasing the unfinished two or three lines. As it happened this day, I found several such pages beginning with the middle of a sentence, unhailed by any sort of heading. Thus, for instance, on page 7, I found immediately after the editorial, a column beginning abruptly with the words "how they treated you may be waived for the present" (對公如何，固無論矣). Who is this "you", I meditated? My common sense told me, however, that as page 7 follows page 6, which again follows page 5, and as all these preceding pages contained nothing but advertisements about quick cures for gonorrhea and syphilis, logically it could only have been the continuation of an unfinished paragraph on page 4 of the preceding sheet, or Sheet No. One. A few minutes' work soon proved that my guess was correct, and the world had

not yet gone to pieces, inspite of all that Einstein crowd may say about the fourth dimension and other such rot.

But we have already inadvertently come to the Second Sheet. And here again was a wilderness of advertisements: Hazeline Snow, Baby's Own Tablets, Key to the Stomach, Longevity Tablets, which are good for "your wife, if she is weak" (尊夫人 the ad. says), Cod-liver Oil Emulsion, and lawyers', publishers', merchants', and college presidents' advertisements (the college presidents' names generally appearing in big type), all staring at you from the middle of the page. But all, on the whole, still quite respectable, with the exception of the ubiquitous Yao Tso-tun Gonorrhoea Tablets (姚佐頓白濁丸) and a few aphrodisaics.

Lying somewhere in dangerous proximity to Yao Tso-tun's ad was the editorial. The editorial, in consonance with Chinese humility, was a very unpretentious affair, appearing in very small print, including its caption. I had been prepared for some school composition on "Thrift" or "Obedience to Heaven," or "The Importance of Patriotism," or "The Greatness of the Chinese Nation," for I must confess that I have read this daily before. It was therefore a pleasant change to find that today's editorial dealt with an economic problem, namely, that of Unemployment. As some readers seldom have the opportunity of getting acquainted with the Chinese editorial line of economic reasoning, I shall reproduce the most pertinent remarks. The reader need not be alarmed, however, even if I reproduce it in full, for it consists only of fourteen lines. However, even this is unnecessary, because the line of reasoning is perfectly straight and simple, and the style lucid.

"The problem of unemployment has already become almost the most important problem in the world. (Any problem under discussion is always "the most important" in the world). Not to mention the poor countries, even the strong countries like America, England, Japan, and Germany, which are all highly developed industrially and strong in capital, have no way of dealing with the unemployment problem. So much the less is to be expected of the other countries.

"According to the method of the American Government in dealing with the unemployment problem, the way is to provide funds for carrying on constructions as a means for absorbing the unemployed workers. This is because they deeply realize that the great number of the unemployed is largely due to the excess of goods over demands. The buying power of the world market is daily becoming weaker, so if they should put the workers into the factories, this will increase the excess of the goods over demand still more For instance, the recent fall of silver is also an instance of the fall of price due to the excess of the commodity. . . ."

The editorial at least has the virtue of brevity. It does not try to talk too much about a thing concerning which there is apparently so little to be said.

Now we come to the news proper. The editor of Domestic News is still holding his ground. I notice the editor has a very good sense of geographical sequence, not even allowing the topic of the news to interfere with his geographical arrangement. Thus, little one-line or two-line telegrams from Nanking follow in close succession, each having to do only with itself, and each being graced with a special head. After a regular succession of telegrams from Nanking, come those from Peiping, and then those from Tientsin. By the time we are in the midst of telegrams from Tientsin, we have already come to the bottom of page seven, and hence our commonsense tells us that the next telegram from Tientsin is to be found on the top of page eight, and on top of page eight it is indeed. We thus make a mental tour with the Domestic editor through Hankow, Tsinan, Tsingtao, Foochow, and Amoy. The great number of undistinguished and inconsequential small headlines, together with their happy-go-lucky distribution, gives the reader a sense of the extreme variety and richness of the news, although one feels that all the items are equally important or equally unimportant. I was already in fear and trepidation for the things of truth and beauty I had been hunting for. And now we come across the ubiquitous Yao Tso Tun and his anti-gonorrhoea tablets again right in the midst of the reading column. This page eight is literally broken up with patches of advertisements, as a besieged city wall might be riddled with bullet marks. And as the advertisers generally vie with each other in having their insertions printed with as big characters as possible, the editor has no ghost of a chance against them unless he were to make the headlines louder and bigger than the characters in the advertisements. As this manifestly cannot be done, what the newspaper reader sees is not domestic or international news, but Ovomaltine, Hazeline Snow, and the big characters of Yao Tso-tun, shouting to the reader "Those Who Believe In Me Come Quick! Quick!" (信我者來快快). Mr. Yao evidently has a message to the nation which seems almost prophetic. One might think it possible for the editor to come to the advertisers for an agreement so that the ads will appear in one half of the page and the news in the other. So far as a layman can see, no sacrifice of space is thus entailed. But into the mysterious workings of the editorial mind we will not prove. He who interferes makes trouble. There have been too many new-fangled ideas already nowadays.

As I said, after the Domestic Section comes the International Cables Section. There isn't much space left on page eight now, and he who looks for continuity of reading is heading for trouble. For all readers of the said "big" paper must remember that page eight is the last page of Sheet No. Two, and Sheets Nos. One and two are folded together, while Sheet No. Three is the first sheet of second set. To the Second Set, therefore, we go. The conditions here are all similar to what I described for page eight, namely, advertisements with big characters spread all over the page, while the news proper with monotonous and invariable heads are in-

serted in the rectangular or square or oblique spaces left over by the advertisements. As we probably have not yet finished with International Cables, we can go right on with them. If the page happens to begin again in the middle of a sentence with no repeated head, the reader can go back to page eight of Sheet No. Two and pick up his cue. After half a column or so of this unfinished international matter, comes the "Important News" section, the definition of which is, contrary to the general simplicity of the editorial scheme, somewhat hard to find. Classified under these "Important News," I find, for example, the resolutions of the Third Plenary Session (although the man with the new-fangled idea might regard this as front-page stuff), but one's sense of confusion begins gradually to increase, when one finds the following items regarded as important, viz., the increase of customs duties in Amoy, the burning of a railway station along the Nanshin Railway, the official Inauguration speech of a Hupeh provincial committee member, etc., etc.

If we proceed, in this cautious and guarded manner, we shall soon come to the murders, suicides, elopements, rape, seductions, abductions, hold-ups, snatching of hand-bags, capture of bandits, divorces, fires, and shipwrecks. Here the "Dog-gone-it" editorial policy is seen to the greatest advantage, for, though the case of some shop apprentice running away with the master's daughter may be written up large, the various items are generally left to stand in their pell-mell order. The editor has thus resisted, from a matter of habit and sheer inertia, the temptation to play up crime and disasters, which is the common weakness of western journalists. . . .

By this time, my frayed nerves were already feeling the strain, and I became possessed with a crushing sense

of the futility of my hunt for educational, inspirational, and information-al reading matter. Perhaps it is not fair to expect the "things of truth and of beauty" in a modern newspaper, no matter in what language, but one is not exactly prepared for the "PLEASE GIVE ME CASH" of Tang To, or for the cry of "Those Who Believe In Me Come—Quick—Quick!" of Yao Tso-tun, not to mention the numerous insertions about massage by "young Parisian Girls," "young European girls," "young western girls" which appear everyday in the Want Ad. Columns.

Generally speaking, this way of editing a newspaper must be conceded to be by far the most pleasurable way yet found in any country. One feels no obligation to say anything important or offensive in the leaders. The political news is generally a wholesale, indiscriminate and unedited reproduction of the official communiques of the government organs. There need be no classification of news bearing on the same topic or movement, no worrying about writing leading paragraphs, no selection and co-ordination of news material, and above all no sub-heads, which implies that the editor has no obligation to go through the copy at all. There is more desire on the part of the different editors to accommodate each other with unused space, and the general fellow-feeling and moral tone in the editorial staff is greatly heightened. The demands for consideration of the average newspaper reader have not inconvenienced the editors to any appreciable extent, and the editors, on their part, promise also not to interfere with the reader's business, so that peace and amiability may prevail and everybody may go his own way. So long live the Shanghai Big Press and long live the Land of the Free!

Railway Problems Of 1930

By Thomas Ming-heng Chao (趙敏恆)

In a lengthy memorandum submitted to the Third Plenary Session of the Central Executive Committee of the Kuomintang which opened in Nanking on March 1, the Ministry of Railways made four important proposals.

1. The National Government be ordered to issue stringent orders which would forbid the interfering with railway administration by military officials. Those who did not obey such orders would be immediately punished as counter-revolutionists.

2. The practice of local military officials' taking part of the railway revenues for the payment of their military expenses, and all irregular transportation dues collected by the various local military authorities be abolished.

3. The National Government be ordered to promulgate in the immediate future laws governing the reorganization of China's debts and the rehabilitation of public credit, so that the railway debts can be reorganized and refunded accordingly.

4. The Ministry of Finance be ordered to hand over to the Ministry of Railways two-thirds of the Sino-Russian and Sino-Italian Boxer Indemnity Funds for the completion of part of the Ministry's railway construction program.

In order to have effective control and efficient management of the various railways, the power of appointment as well as dismissal of the personnel of the railway administrations must be in the hands of the Ministry. It is an open secret that the various local authorities are constantly interfering with the railway administration. Mr. Shih Yi-hsuan (史譯宜) managing-director of the Tao-Tsing Railway, (道清鐵路) in Honan Province, left Honan for Nanking in October, 1929, on an official mission. During his absence, however, General Han Fu-chu, (韓復榘) Chairman of Honan Provincial Government, appointed Mr. Li Wu-chen (李無塵) to become the railway director. When Mr. Shih returned to Honan, Mr. Li refused to hand over the railway to him.