

reaching to the farthest corners of the Republic and down to the humblest peasant must be brought into being. For just as education was the force which held China together through the centuries, just as education was the force which alone could penetrate and undermine that ancient system; so today education must be therefore to build up and bind and control the new China in the steady course

of a modern nation. The pact between Chinese educational and social life must be renewed. This is a primary problem facing Chinese national life today. Only inasmuch as China is able to set up and maintain a suitable educational program will she be able to develop a healthy and significant contribution to the world civilization of the present century.

## Racial Mockery in Motion Pictures

BY FREDERICK HUNG (洪紱)

Recently when Harold Lloyd's sound picture, *Welcome Danger*, in which Chinese are represented as murderers and opium smugglers, was shown in Shanghai, the Chinese public interfered with its projection on the screen and agitated until the government issued a nationwide ban on all of Lloyd's films. The ban was shortly afterwards lifted when Mr. Lloyd gave a tactful public apology, but the incident left nevertheless a deep impression on the Chinese which reflects unfavorably on Hollywood.

I do not mean to blame Mr. Lloyd, not at all; I am simply taking the antagonism which his *Welcome Danger* provoked as an illustration of how the jokes and distraction of one people may wound the feelings of another nation, just as the Greeks said: the meat for one person may be the poison for another. This is not the only case, nor the first one, in which racial mockery in motion pictures arouses violent animosity on the part of the race or people depicted as criminals, traitors, or villains in general. The Mexicans, Italians, Jews, and Irish have one after another remonstrated more or less vigorously on the undesirable role formerly more or less forced upon them. To-day, Chinese and Russians divide the monopoly of hyperbolic criminal rôles—rôles of such excessive atrocity that autochthonous villains, even the basest kind, cannot substitute.

These unfavorable exotic characters generally fall under one of the following three categories: the most often is that of using foreign figures in wicked characters, such as murderers, traitors, law breakers, torturers, and what not; secondly, in exposing the customs, habits—both past and present,—and religion of a foreign people to the ridicule of the world, the most flagrant of which is the Chinese queue, which one finds in numerous cinematographic films, notably in Douglas Fairbank's *Thief of Bagdad*; and lastly, in representing the foreign people, from the standpoint of a national group, as brutal or stupid, or both, which misrepresentation the Mexicans, Italians, Russians, and Chinese suffer in turn.

Perhaps the photo playwrights, scene directors, and "movie" exploiters in general do not realize the evils such films can do in creating racial misunderstanding and enmity; when the desire for money becomes intense and exclusive enough, it may blind all sense of justice or delicacy. Too often they forget that the motion picture is not only an instrument of amusement and distraction, but unavoidably also a medium for the spread of information or misinformation, whether meant for it or not. Thus, people

who have never been to China easily get the impression from the movies that China is a nation of crime and torture; similarly, others are led to imagine that Russians, both in Tzarist and Soviet days, are sneaky, traitorous brutes; while foreigners document their rudimentary knowledge of American life chiefly with movie scenes, and think that the most important occupations of Americans are dancing and bootlegging. Millions of movie goers thus acquire a distorted and unhealthy view of foreign peoples which serves to create suspicion, disdain and resentment.

The motion picture is not only an industry, but also an institution. It is an institution no less than the church, the school, or the press; and to a considerable portion of the world's younger generation it is unfortunately their only church and school and press. Unconsciously Hollywood has written and is writing the most popular textbooks in images of geography and history and ethics not only for America, but for the whole world. Once in a few days the movie goer is transported to a distant land, amid real or imaginary barbarians; or brought to live in a past age with all the grandeur and intrigues of the old world; or led to go through a course of lessons in current manners and popular morality. Just as Charlie Chaplin is the most famous man of our epoch, so is the movie the most powerful propagandist institution in the world. There red-blooded people learn to hate Russian autocracy; and to disdain Chinese conservatism; and to make fun of foreigners in general, pertinently or otherwise. Every evening thousands of cinematograph theatres thus sow suspicion, hatred and animosity among peoples of every race and color.

What surprises us most is not so much the unscrupulous defamation of the Chinese people by Hollywood—we do not misunderstand that in doing this the film industry is reaping enormous profits—as the conspicuous silence of liberal opinion on the subject. American educators, preachers, and social critics who are usually so outspoken in defending truth and justice are surprisingly mute on the question, as if it is something of no importance. It would be impertinent of me to repeat here the powerful influence of the movies, written in the only universal language, that of images. Unmoral in itself, it influences morality more than people can imagine. It can be a servant of God or of the Devil: it can bring nations together in universal brotherhood or separate them by mutual hatred; it can make one people understand or misunderstand another; it can create a new world with the wisdom of all cultures, or help to destroy civilization by spreading follies

## THE LITTLE CRITIC

EDITED BY LIN YUTANG

Once I owned a car for nine months. By the end of that nine months, the car had literally evaporated into thin air inspite of my paying Tls. 66 for complete insurance against accidents, thefts, fire and third-party claims, and also inspite of the fact that the insurance agent was a personal friend of mine. Maybe it was my lot to meet some sharks, but I had entered upon the car-owning career strictly on a business and scientific basis, and I am sure many car-owners will be able to relate the same kind of story. It was surely not an exceptional case.

It was one autumn afternoon. I was at peace with all the world, and was caught by a sudden mood of irresistible elation. I will not yet tell why I was in such a mood, but my spirit was buoyant, and it seemed there was nothing I could not do in this great, big world of ours. I felt like one of the college graduates immediately after the commencement ceremony, hugging home a college diploma, and ready to conquer the world or readjust the universe single-handed. Every one has had such moments. To say that these are our "optimistic moods" is to do an injustice; they are really our "conquering moments," when we are all possessed with that indomitable spirit of conquest which leads generals to ever-victorious battle, sets Arctic explorers to accomplish the impossible, and forces writers or scientists to undertake huge, life-long tasks that would stagger our imagination in our calmer moments. At such moments, to wish to own the Sassoon Building on Nanking Road, for instance, is the same as to possess it already. "What is a couple of million dollars or so to me?" the spirit questions and allows no chance for the flesh to give an answer. Much less to worry about owning a contemptible second-hand car.

Well, I will now tell why I was in such a conquering mood. It was the eve before the Autumn Champions. If I had my way, I would make the Autumn Champions' Eve a red-letter day, and put it before Christmas Eve in importance. For while the latter is a Festival of Remembrance, the former should be a Festival of Hope. As I was in such a fine, conqueror's mood, I purposely took a stroll to one of the garage show-windows. My spirit caught sight of a grand-looking 1924 New Day Jewett Two Door Sedan. From that moment on, I owned the car already. While in Peking, I had seen a beautiful Jewett, and thence-

and absurdities. A huge question, therefore, hangs over Hollywood: is it going to enlighten the world with the blessings of modern civilisation and human progress? or, on the contrary, as some pictures are now doing, poison humanity with the ideas of mutual hatred and suspicion? It is a question which ought to interest not only those peoples habitually misrepresented in American films, but also all those who desire better international understanding and cooperation.

forth the idea of owning a Jewett had always remained in my fancy. Of course, taste in motor-car models has changed greatly since 1929, but there was a simplicity of straight lines about the Jewett that was good to look at then. I also mentally associated Jewett with Jowett, as I had associated Jowett with Plato; so the name, all in all, sounded very classical to me. Nothing, therefore, could restrain me. I had to own the car. I went in and asked for the price. Tls. 1,400. Somebody secretly tugged at my sleeve, by which she meant to remind me of my pocket-book. But I would not be deterred.

I talked with the manager as if I was only buying a casual toy, having nothing better to do that afternoon, and being ready to consider a sporting car for summer and a limousine for winter some other day. I would have it, if it was cheap, I said. Doubtless, the manager was impressed. I left him my card and asked him to drive it to my house the next day.

Champions or no champions, I bought the car. I never had vain regrets: Perhaps the wave of buoyancy of the Autumn Champions' Eve was enough to carry me through for another week. (Even if I had paid ten dollars just for those weeks of expectant buoyancy and to know what Hope means, I would call it cheap). If the manager found my house not quite as he had imagined, he at least found me a very pleasant fellow to deal with commercially. I had no patience for details, and haggling seemed to me very unpoetic. In fact, he was so impressed by my straightforward dealings, that he presented me with two new tyres. I was struck aghast by his generosity. I did not understand what he meant. Later on, I understood, and thought he should have presented me with four.

This purchase, then, was a triumph of the spirit over matter. When the Sweepstakes numbers were published, I realized where I stood, but I was not frightened. Why, I had made a four-year honeymoon world tour with my wife, with nothing better than a one-way passage and a clear conscience, but the Lord had helped me through! I paid Tls. 700 down, the rest to be paid in two instalments, in three months. Naturally the following three months saw my heightened literary activity and increased literary output. I wrote two books, in which I discoursed magnanimously on Spingarn, Croce, Heine and Chinese Phonology of the Sixth Century A.D. If the books did nobody any good, they made me read a great many authors. That was the influence of Sweepstakes on learning and scholarship in the Far East. Talk of the demoralizing influence of the races! I met my obligations promptly, and a great many items besides, including the following:—

To two new tyres.....	Tls. 76.00
To one new battery.....	40.00
To repairing clutch wheel.....	20.00

The "Num Ber Wun" of the garage asked me if I had bought my car blindfolded.

Now I was not such a hopelessly romantic and un-businesslike fool that my readers might take me to be. I