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The New Patriotism

UPON the sentiments as expressed in Mrs. Pearl S. Buck's article "The New Patriotism" that appeared in the last issue of *The Critic* one cannot but give one's hearty indorsement. The Chinese people used to be great and serene in the face of hostile criticisms, confident of their inherent righteousness based on the practice of the Confucian ethics. As Mrs. Buck remarks, China was too great to need defence. If there is any people on earth that are "too proud to fight," it is the Chinese people. But the Manchus made a mess of China's international affairs, brought the country into a series of disastrous wars the outcome of which has given us a "fear complex" that revolts at anything smacking of unfavorable comments. This explains the sensitiveness of some of our countrymen who organise boycotts against some such films as the "Welcome Danger" and who require that the foreign tourists take pictures of only the beautiful spots of China and leave out the mud and the dirt and the squalor. But it would be a mistake to think that *all* of us are of the same mind with these sensitive children. God be praised that among a touchy people there are at least a handful of men and women who are too proud to take offence. Bedbugs exist everywhere. While we resist every encroachment on China's legitimate rights, we by no means close our eyes to the many evils that dwell in this land. So far as we know, we are not conscious of a single instance in which we express the slightest contempt for "the millions of toiling mortals." On the contrary, we have always sympathised with the underdogs (*vide* the *Critic*, Vol. IV No. 14, April 2, 1931). When some foreign journalists chose to laugh at a Chinese lady who almost lost her honor in a Dutch packet, we wrote, "The sympathies of our good friend the editor are probably with the immortals: with the gods above or the imps below. We are satisfied if we can stretch a hand to or shed a tear for *human* beings, wherever they live, in huts or in tents, on lands or on waters, in a Chinese cottage or in a Dutch mail-boat." (See *Vox Populi, Vox Dei*, Vol. III, No. 51, Dec. 18, 1930). When capital punishment went to extreme, we wrote the "Lost Art of Decapitation" (*The Critic*, Vol. IV No. 17, April 23, 1931). And in another place, we said, "Such is man that he fawns on the great and sneers at the little, blandishes the victor and kicks the underdog, always ready to desert the sinking ship in order to worship the rising sun" (*The Little Critic*, Vol. IV, No. 6, Feb. 5, 1931). Not once have we expressed a scorn for our farmers, our wheelbarrow-men, our ricksha coolies. It is, however, a shame that some of us have done so, especially our returned students. These men we condemn unreservedly. Let Mrs. Buck's article be a perpetual warning for all of us, including us of the *Critic*, so that snobbishness may be forever

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banished from this land and a broader, larger understanding may come to us through a sympathetic contact with the unfortunate, the unknown, and the unhappy.

Well Written!

A handsome and amorous young man is said to have been uncommonly chagrined when his dear sweetheart replied to his message of love with the cryptic persiflage—"Well written!" A certain spokesman of Nanking has already characterised Mr. Eugene Chen as "China's most beautiful Lothario" (中國最美男子). Now will Nanking reply "well written!" to his passionate outburst? Than Mr. Eugene Chen perhaps no public man in China is more forceful and direct. And we have the latest piece of his eloquence in which he disclaims commitment to communism—a fact, he adds, that is "well known to Chiang Kai-shek and the members of the Soong ménage, including the Boeotian figure known as H. H. Kung. . . ." In the art of coining deadly epithets Mr. Chen has shown himself a past master. According to him, Chiang Kai-shek is a "Ningpo adventurer", a "petty speculator", and a "man with a medieval mind"; and C. T. Wang's conduct of foreign affairs is "macaronic diplomacy" labored upon "in the manner of a Y.M.C.A. 'drive'"! But surely Mr. Chen has not exhausted the many "figures" in the Nanking Government, and as likely as not a new barrage of fires is coming from Canton. It remains now to see how Nanking will react to the Parnellian eloquence, a thing strongly reminiscent of the storm and stress in Victorian politics. Nanking, no doubt, is waiting to see Mr. Chen make good his pledge for "a final liquidation of the regime bottomed on the unequal treaties . . . in terms of reasoned statesmanship." But until that time comes, a possible answer might be found in the enigmatical words of the dear, sweet thing to her handsome, young man:—"Well written!"

Wanted—Builder's Ethics

RECENTLY, two rows of buildings in Chapei collapsed while the work was in progress, causing two deaths and six casualties. One of the wounded was reported to be very serious, and the wife and brother of the contractor, as well as some foremen were arrested, the contractor himself being away in Ningpo on business. The cause of the collapse was traced to the flimsy foundation. The site of the building being lower than the surrounding place, it was levelled up, but the instruction of the Public Works Department of the Municipal Government to have wooden poles driven into the ground so that the foundation of the building would be strong was neglected by the contractor in order to make as much money as possible. Evidently money was everything, in the contractor's mind, and the safety of human life was nothing, or else, he would not be so unmindful of the safety factor in building houses. However, the landlord must also share part of the blame, for if he had been willing to give more than five hundred dollars for each house, he would have been able to obtain some more reliable contractors. Thus, what do we find? The spirit of

"get rich, quick" was really responsible for the whole affair. In such an age like ours, this spirit is almost inevitable with certain class of people. Our old ethics is no longer adequate to meet the condition of the complex society of today. In the West, the transition from a simple to a complex society was more gradual, and the West has developed professional ethics to meet its need. With us the transition is almost overnight. While material things can be acquired overnight, the assimilation of moral values must take at least decades. Thus those unpleasant facts that keep cropping up in the papers are really not so much proof of the lack of sterling moral quality of the people as signifying a time of transition, when material progress runs far ahead of social and moral adjustment. The two do not keep pace with each other, and the individual feels free to do anything as he sees fit. However, if the individual has a pride in his profession, and feels that there are limitations placed on him by his profession which even for his own good he must accept as his rules of conduct. This is professional ethics, and in our present case, builder's ethics. But as it has been impossible even in this enlightened age to have peace and social order resting on ethics alone, so too we can not rely entirely on professional ethics, the government should take a hand here, enforcing measures that will make for public safety.

More Impeachments

ACCORDING to the *Kuo Min News Agency*, two more impeachments were to be taken up by the Control Yuan, one involving a member of the Legislative Yuan in an attempt to "use his personal influence in interfering with the case of one Yeh Feng, a local rascal, (in Anhwei) who had been sentenced to penal servitude", while the other case involved the former head of the Telegraph Department, Ministry of Communication, who "was accused of overstepping his power by granting humiliating concessions to the Great Northern, and Eastern Extension, Telegraph Companies last year in violation of China's rights to telegraph autonomy and the fundamental principles laid down by the Ministry of Communication". Why should a member of the Legislative Yuan interfere with the case of a local rascal must forever lie beyond our comprehension. The charges against the former head of the Telegraph Department of the Ministry of Communication are, more specifically, (1) "instead of being cancelled, the privilege of landing cables, which has hitherto been claimed by the foreign companies only on flimsy grounds, has been given formal and legal sanction in the new draft agreement" reached by the accused and the foreign companies; (2) the accused "had even advocated that control over the transmission of messages be entrusted by the National Government to the foreign companies"; and (3) the agreement reached for the apportionment of the earnings will cost the National Government "an actual loss of from \$2,000,000 to \$3,000,000." To an official who is, as it were, throwing away rights and privileges that were public trust placed in his hand, surely "punishment should be meted out in