

The Chinese "Chiu-pa." (丘八)

By P. C. LIN (林步基)

WHAT the Chinese call "Chiu-pa", is the same as what the English call "Tommy", or the French call "Poilu", a nickname for the common soldier. This term consists of the two component parts of the Chinese character 兵 "Ping"—a soldier. When the English or French speak of their "Tommy" or "Poilu", it is with a feeling of familiarity if not of endearment, but when the Chinese speak of their "Chiu-pa" however, it carries a sense of disrespect and even contempt.

Now this is a strange thing, nay a serious thing, for a nation to foster such a low idea of the soldiers—people who fight for the country, and defend the life and liberty of the people. Let us therefore study why the soldiers have been held in such low esteem in China, and what can be done to help them, and to erase the opprobrium on their name.

We will first examine if in Chinese history, the soldiers have always been a despised class of people. No. On the contrary, we find words of praise and appreciation for them. For instance:

"Brave and stalwart men in arms,
Kings and princes save from harms."

or, "The Royal Army—a mighty host—
Swoops like an eagle on its prey;
Like the Yangtse, like the Han,
Like a mighty avalanche,
Like a torrent in full spate,
Nothing can its power withstand;
Prostrate lies Hsiu's conquered land."

The above are taken at random from Shi Ching or the Book of Odes, and there are many such strains of appreciation. The soldiers occupied a high place in popular estimation, and they were civilian soldiers or farmer soldiers, not mercenaries or the offscourings of society. Under the feudal system of government, the states were many and small, and they were in constant danger of being invaded by a neighbouring state. The prosperity or weakness, rise or fall of the state directly affected every citizen in that state, and it was the duty of every male citizen, therefore, to take up arms for the protection of his country and home.

Also under the feudal system, the lands were supposed to belong to the lords, held by farmers in return for services rendered to their superiors, and these services always included military service. The farmers and soldiers were identical, and "three seasons of the year were devoted to agriculture, and one season to the art of war." Of the four classes in the social structure, the farmer-soldiers occupied the second position, inferior only to the scholars.

Since the unification of China under the Chin and Han dynasties, the frontiers were pushed far away, and the menace of foreign invasion with direct disaster to the masses of the people became less and less. There were less urgent calls of the people to arms for home defence. Soldiers needed for the offensive and defensive wars against tribes living in regions

corresponding to Mongolia, Manchuria, and Chinese Eastern Turkestan of today, were recruited from among the people more or less according to their free will, and they became professional troops. Now those who enlisted were not from the best homes of the land, but the unemployed, the worthless, and the undesirable elements of society. Such being the case, could there be wonder that the soldiers as a class began to fall in the esteem of the people? Any way, the ancient system of farmer-soldiers ceased to exist, and the soldiers both for civil and foreign wars began to be looked upon with disdain. The ranks and files were filled sometimes with condemned criminals, and we have on record by the great historian Sze-ma Chien, that Emperor Wu of the Han dynasty amnestied one million criminals, on condition of their either joining the armies engaged in foreign campaigns, or forming part of the military colonies he established on the borders. With these were associated 700,000 refugees from a region devastated by flood. The professional "Chiu-pa" consisting of bandits, convicts, and refugees could not but be regarded with disrespect and contempt.

This state of things continued until the last Ching dynasty, when soldiery reached the lowest ebb. Neither the "bannermen", Manchu soldiers fed from the Imperial Exchequer, nor the men of the "Green Regiments", Chinese who lived on government revenue, lived up to the ideals of the army. Corruption was rampant, evil practices in connection with military offices sapped the very vitality of the nation. Time after time, foreign encroachments and invasions revealed the impotency of the once dreaded vast empire. One Chinese historian says of the army of this period as follows: "The rank and file were compounded of rogues, knaves, desperadoes, surrendered bandits, and once in a long while, a few adventurers." The common saying that:

"Of good iron none would make a nail,

Nor a good son a soldier in mail,"

was not indeed devoid of truth. The "Chiu-pa" thus became a byword of reproach.

What can be done to help these "brave and stalwart men in arms"? We see plenty of them nowadays in the streets of Shanghai, and in other parts of China. These were the men who bravely defended Shanghai in the initial stage of this war. They fought valiantly in the battles of Tai-er-chuan, Changsha, and many other fields. They are the heroes who recently drove the enemy from Kueichow, and recaptured the cities of Liuchow and Kweilin. They have won for us the signal victory, which we are celebrating with so much enthusiasm these days. Certainly the right idea of thankfulness and respect should be inculcated amongst the people towards our worthy warriors, nicknamed "Chiu-pa" if you like.

First of all, there are altogether too many soldiers in China. Now that the war is over, and the nation is unified, the number of troops should be drastically cut down. It is perhaps impossible to obtain exact figures of the men in uniforms today, but we should imagine they are well over several millions. For peace

time purposes, one-tenth or one-fifth only may be necessary for the national standing army, the rest should all be demobilized and sent to their respective places for farming, mining, highway and railway construction, etc. During the last thirty years or so, our country was dominated by the militarists and warlords of all descriptions. In order to maintain their power, it was necessary to raise armies, and to wage constant civil wars among themselves. One province might even have three or four of these warlords. With the unification of the country under one central government, and with the termination of the militarist regime, it is high time that the number of soldiers should be greatly reduced. The trimmed standing army, will then be the one national army, charged with the sacred duty of defence against any foreign aggression, not for the support of the petty war-lords; this is the first prerequisite for restoring the prestige and respect of the soldiers.

Secondly, the soldiers selected according to high standards of requirements, should be better paid, clothed, fed, and trained, so that they may favourably compare with those of other first rate powers. There is no dodging the fact that the present state of things leaves much to be desired for. Inadequately clothed, fed, trained, and provided for, these "Chiu-pas" loiter in the streets and out-of-the-way places, to seek what pleasure they can, and to engage in what legitimate pursuits they need, and it is very difficult for them to elicit the respect and admiration due to them. This is a point which the army authorities have to deal with, we as laymen therefore will not say anything more.

Thirdly, we are not going to take up the question of compulsory military service for the future of China. Many reasons pro and con can be enumerated on this subject. But we do maintain that the soldiers, either free recruits, or those impressed into the service, should be civilians of the right sort. Ex-bandits, refugees, and the offscourings of society should on no account be allowed among the rank and file of the army. Of course a certain amount of literacy and education should also be required.

Fortunately a new chapter in Chinese soldiery has already begun, the men and officers of the New Sixth Army for instance, elicit no end of admiration from the onlookers. Dressed in uniforms of the finest quality from head to feet, equipped with the most up-to-date arms of American origin, young and robust and healthy, they veritably answer to the description of "brave and stalwart men in arms". More and more of these men will help to raise the status of the soldier in popular esteem.

Fourthly, much can be done for the comfort and welfare of the service men. Experiments have been made in England for their Tommies in the way of co-operative stores, supplying them with such things like cigarettes, candies, soaps, towels, tooth-brushes, socks, and many other articles of day necessity, and they are very successful. The canteens have become part and parcel of the army. Apart from the convenience and trustworthiness of the articles obtained in these canteens, the boys have a lot of interest in them for they are the share-holders. The annual dividends pay them handsome sums too, for the goods transported to these canteens are at the expense of the government, even to distant parts of the world, and free of tax. Thus they are able to compete with local dealers. In the United

States of America, the Army Exchange Service is something of the same order. Something along the same line should be started in the Chinese army for our "Chiu-pas."

Fifthly, the nation as a whole, and school children in particular, should be taught to respect the soldiers. Of late, the Chinese people have been quite soldier-minded. Many popular songs have been written in praise of the soldiers, calling them "the new wall of ten thousand li", and "the vanguard of life and liberty", etc. The way the Japanese people, young and old, men and women, bow to a sentry may not be what we like to imitate, but we do need to cultivate a sense of veneration for these people, whose sole duty is to guard the country and protect the people. To harbour any sense of disrespect and contempt is a sin unforgivable. They should be regarded as men, made out of the best iron or steel. Parents should be very proud of their sons, going to join the colours, and becoming "Chiu-pas". Girls should be very happy to marry a soldier or an officer, thus having a little share in the important duty of national defence.

Sixthly, civilian organizations can do a good deal for the welfare of the soldiers. In the past eight years, time and again civilian bodies have done things along this line, presenting food and other gifts to them—shoes, towels, writing-paper, etc., etc. In Chungking, a very large scale organization consisting of both officials and public bodies, undertook the task of providing comforts for the men at the front last winter. When victory was declared in August this year, we still remember the great enthusiasm with which the people vied with each other in sending comforts to the soldiers who returned or arrived in triumph. All these go to show the gratitude that people cherished towards the fighting forces of the nation.

Our duty towards the soldiers however, does not stop in time of peace. It should go on, so long as there are soldiers in our midst. The Navy Y.M.C.A. for instance, is what the American civilians do for their marines in Shanghai. An entire building on Szechuen Road is devoted to this purpose. There is something in the way of service to soldiers, carried on by the Chinese Y.M.C.A. too, but it is very inadequate. The time has now come for us to consider what we as civilians can do for our "Chiu-pas", as auxiliary to what the government can do or ought to do for them.

Here we would like to make a practical suggestion as food for thought, for the public-minded patriots of Shanghai. Of the many properties seized by the allied command from our former enemies in Shanghai, one should be devoted for permanent use by the Chinese soldiers, in which the civilians can render desired service to them. The programme may consist of something as follows:

- (1) Physical activities: gymnastics, boxing, Chinese and foreign style, outdoor games, baths, etc.
- (2) Cultural activities: reading room, library, lectures, study-classes for those with little education. Teaching them to read and write would be of great service.
- (3) Moral activities: ethical and religious talks, and religious services.
- (4) Entertainments in general: Canteens, indoor games, moving pictures, sight-seeing trips, etc.

The slogan of "Union of the military and the civilian" usually means that the soldiers go to help the civilians, especially the farmers in whatever service the latter need of them. Here is an experiment in what the civilians can do for the soldiers, in a city like Shanghai, where there is no lack of public-spirited

people, in a project which is most worthwhile, and much needed. Are we going to let these thousands of "Chiu-pas" in our midst alone, or are we going to do something for them? In the answer is a true test of our patriotism.

Vitalizing A Universal Library Service in China

By V. L. WONG (黄维廉)

IT has been frequently remarked by careful observers that past Japanese aggression in China has taken many forms. To be sure, the undeclared Sino-Japanese war of 1937, like all wars, was guilty of many unpardonable sins. The indiscriminate aerial bombing of such cities as Shanghai, Soochow, Nanking, Hangchow, Wuhu, Canton, and other places in the interior, during the early years of the war, had brought many calamities to cultural and educational institutions in the whole of China, but especially to those along the coastal provinces. Libraries which have been powerful agencies in the intellectual development of the country during the last two decades have not escaped destruction.

Many of the valuable treasures of these educational institutions have been lost through "international robbery", army ravages, personal maladministration, and other means. With the return of peace, many of the books thus lost need to be replaced, and many of the collections thus broken have to be completed. It will probably take years to put these libraries in order again and put the books back on a workable basis.

Indeed, China needs at present a nation-wide program of post-war reconstruction, and the library is fundamentally and logically a democratic institution. Established by municipal or state law and maintained by public funds, it offers to all equal privileges with as few restrictive qualifications and requirements as are consistent with efficient service. It is therefore not only proper but absolutely necessary that the public library of today should ask itself whether it is in harmony with the conditions of the day and to examine honestly whether it is returning full value and its highest services to the community which maintains it.

If it is to be a useful agency in a democracy and its service is to be a potent factor in this practical world, the library must not be a place to be visited only. It must go hand in hand with the interests and work of the community. It must be a part of the day's work and the day's play of the individual members of the community. Its material must be organized—and organized in such a way that the library becomes a useful and recognized complement to all the neighborhood interests, activities, and industries. The library must not stand alone, but must form intimate associations with other community agencies, and through them and with them find a definite work to do.

With a view to accomplishing its aim, it is only proper to formulate the objectives of a proposed public library program as follows: first, to make the library contribute as effectively as possible to the needs of the community; second, to teach the people how to use books effectively; and third, to lead them to love books and form the good habit of reading. Just as in the

case of the school, college or university library which must aim to contribute to the instructional program of the institution, the public library must necessarily aim to contribute to the life of a democracy.

If such objectives were to be achieved, it would involve changing many traditional patterns of library service, it would require the expansion of library facilities, and it would necessitate the use of varied experimental plans and procedures. Such plans, particularly during their experimental stages, would be costly, and since these proposals would involve experiments, the results of which might have significance for other organizations instituting these libraries, appropriate figures must be provided in financing the plan.

The next problem would be that of personnel. Since the library program is basically to be concerned with teaching and learning, with adapting the library to educational needs, and with improving community work and achievement, it should be early decided that the librarian or director would be both an administrator and educator. As a librarian administrator, he would know the library, its resources and its possibilities. As a librarian educator, he would know the educational needs of the community. He would thus be in a unique position both to adapt the library to the needs of the community and to aid its readers more effectively to use the library. It is not so much that the man for the position must have preconceived convictions of how the library should be administered; but rather, he should approach the problem with an open mind and be eager to adapt the library to the group and individual needs of the community.

To do this particular service, the librarian must therefore know his community—its interests, its work, its play, and its problems. The philosophy of the program demands that the entire attention of the administration and the staff be centered upon defining and meeting the needs of the community. In such a community it is quite natural that plans should be evolved for a library program conceived in terms of aiding each reader to expand his or her interests and to meet his or her individual problems. The public library of the future, if it is to serve adequately the needs of the community, must become an active community center, a place where the many civic and welfare activities gather, an organization which touches the many-sided life of the community.

Of the three elements—the book collection, the staff, and the building—which together make up the library, the most important in its influence on the success or failure of the whole is perhaps the book collection, but the mere possession of books does not make a library when a good book collection is