

## OVERSEA CHINESE

EDITED BY LIN YU

## Overseas in Formosa Push on Organization

THE Chinese in Formosa recently celebrated the 10th anniversary of the inauguration of the Chinese Residents' Association in Taipei, according to a Hwa Lien dispatch. Besides the celebration, measures calculated to push this all-inclusive Chinese organization in the island figured large in the business meeting, which also considered the following questions: how to obtain the permission from the Japanese government for the establishment of oversea Chinese elementary schools in the island; how to secure changes in the Japanese immigration law so as to allow the landing of Chinese laborers with proper passports; and how to complete the industrial development of the Hainan Island. As all these need the government help, it is hoped that the Chinese authorities, both central and local, will spare no effort to help achieve the desired results.

ACCORDING to local information, the Chinese in Czechoslovakia numbered over two hundred. Most of them were peddlers and had been doing quite well, each saving over \$1,000 a year. But most of them were expelled from the country last November by the Czechoslovakian government. At present only one Chinese diplomat, one vice-consul and one Chinese company remain in Czechoslovakia, according to the Hwa Lien News Agency.

THE shipping business to and from Siam has been largely in the hands of the British, though Chinese steamers are also to be found. Lately Japanese have made an inroad upon the Siamese shipping business. This roused the Chinese there and they are now promoting a Sino-Siamese Shipping Co. on a bigger scale than any Chinese shipping companies hitherto in existence.

WITH a brisker trade, the rice mills in Bangkok are finding it necessary to raise the rice price. But some of the more far-sighted mill-owners are organizing themselves to beat down the price. This must be done, so they claim, in order to enable Siam to compete with other rice-producing countries in foreign rice markets so that the

ping documents covering the products, or mortgages on livestock, or a combination of these. The rediscounting facility so extended by these banks relieves other institutions which are interested in rural financing of the risk attendant upon such practices of sinking their capital into slow moving or frozen assets. At the present time in China, we have the Central Bank to assist in government financing; we have the Bank of China serving as a foreign exchange bank; and we also have the Bank of Communications for financing industrial enterprises. What we need is a government land bank to supply rediscounting facilities to the rural credit institutions and to participate in financing conservancy and other farm improvement projects. As fifty per cent of the farmers constituting nearly one half of our entire population need some sort of loan, it is hoped that the government will devise a program that will relieve their pressing need.

## THE LITTLE CRITIC

## Preface To "Sui Hu" (貫華堂古本水滸傳序)

By CHIN SHEN T'AN (金聖歎)

Translated by T.K.C.

The following is a free translation of the preface to Sui Hu. Although it has been attributed to the pen of Sze Nai-an (施耐庵), scholars today nevertheless all agree that its author is in fact Chin Shen T'an, the famous essayist of the Tsing dynasty. No apology is perhaps needed for translating it, because to my mind, it is without a doubt one of the most excellent examples of familiar essays in the Chinese language.—T.K.C.

A MAN should not marry after he has reached his thirtieth year, neither should he assume office after he has become forty. The amenities of home life are not for a man who is under fifty, while travelling would not suit a man who is already sixty years old. The explanation is this: there is time for everything, which, when lost, would never come again. It is my custom to get up with the dawn, and when the morning is still chilly, I would wash, dress, and then have breakfast. When that is over, I would ask about the time, and would generally find that it is already high noon. My morning is thus spent, and before I knew it, the afternoon would be gone too. With me, a day passes by easily, and even if I were to live thirty-six thousand days more, it would still be very much the same. Thinking thus makes me sad, for wherein am I to look for happiness? When I hear people say that they are so many years of age, it always puzzles me; for by that, they evidently seem to mean that the years are heaped together, and one by one they could count them. But that surely is something which no one can do. What I was, I am no longer now; when I am writing this, what I have written before are here no more. Such then is the tragedy of life, and out of it one can perhaps find only one consolation. Friends are a perpetual delight, and talking with them is to make us forget our life's sorrow. That, indeed, no one could deny, but even then, it is not always that we could be together with our friends. On wintry or rainy nights, or on days when we are ill or in a strange

trade may expand steadily. Otherwise, there might be a bloom and short-lived prosperity. But the big mills are fighting for the control of the organization, and the small mill-owners are resisting their attempts.

THE cigar business in Batu Pahat is once more picking up. More and more woman laborers are being absorbed in the trade. Also Chinese tobacco is, because of the heavy import duty, losing the market to the native product.

A TOTAL of 36 certificates of nationality were granted to residents in Havana, and 7 in Chile, by the Chinese legations in these two places.

THE Indo-Chinese government deported 160 Chinese from Annam, and they arrived at Swatow last week.

country, we have to endure ourselves alone, much as if we were shut up in a dark prison cell. My house faces the river, and under the shade of the trees on its banks, my friends and I would lie on a summer day. There are in my house-hold four old women who serve as cooks and kitchen maids, and more than a dozen boys whose duty it is to look after the comfort of my guests. In winter, when nights are long, I would teach them to make broom-sticks with which to sweep the ground, and also straw mats which serve as seats for my guests. When all of my friends come, they are altogether sixteen in number, but such big gatherings are after all rare. Usually, there are six or seven who come everyday, and only when it is stormy, would they be absent. When they come, I never compel them to drink wine, for we do not find pleasure in drinking, but in talk. We never worry ourselves about affairs of the state, not only because we have no political ambitions, but also because we do not wish to waste our breath on what are apparently rumors or hearsays. Neither do we discuss people's faults, because we do not believe that people have any faults worth mentioning. Whatever we say we say it not with the intention to astonish, and as the result, people are not astonished. We do, however, wish people to appreciate us, but we generally fail in the attempt, because it is beyond the ability of the busy people to understand the meaning of utterance which have sprung from the innermost of our being. All my friends have learning but are disdainful of worldly goods; from time to time, they would discover truths which had never been discovered before. Sometimes, we tell our-

selves too that we ought to collect our thoughts into a book, but so far none has taken the trouble to do it, the reasons being: first, we do not want fame and we are all very lazy; secondly, to talk is always pleasant, but to write would be a painful mental exertion; thirdly, we have fears that after our death, no one would be able to read our writings; lastly, what we have written now we may regret afterwards. The Story of Sui Hu in seventy-one volumes is mostly written in lamp light after my friends are gone, and also on rainy nights when I am forced to keep indoors by myself. Its plot has been fermenting in my mind for a long time, therefore even when I am taking a walk in the twilight by the hedgerow or waking up before dawn in my bed, I would be composing it out of mere habit. People may ask why it is that I should turn author when I have professedly shunned book writing. My answer is: first, such a book would not bring me fame, but neither would it do me any harm, even though I may not finish it; secondly, I write only when I have nothing else to do, so that it would not become a burden on my mind; thirdly, a book like that can be read by the learned and the ignorant alike; fourthly, whether it be well written or not is after all a small matter for which I care very little. Life, alas, is short, and there is no way of telling how this book would be thought of by readers after I die! All I know is, my friends have enjoyed it—and that, to me, is sufficient. For all I know, people who live after me may not even have a chance to come across this book. Why, then, should I care!

冠生園

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