

Another cause which is responsible for our national degeneration is perhaps the ease with which we are satisfied with our own achievements. There was a time when a republican form of government was the goal toward which all patriots strove. Once that goal was apparently achieved, stagnation set in, and degeneration followed in its wake. To quote General Chiang again:

After, however, the establishment of the Republic, our comrades, thinking that the Revolution had already been brought to a successful conclusion, gradually degenerated into a state of complacent stagnation, which fact gave the chance to Yuan Shih-kai to stage his Imperial coup d'état.

The next goal which was set by Dr. Sun Yat-sen was the overthrow of the Peking regime. After years of struggle came the National Government which today is the embodiment of the principles of the Kuomintang. Apprehensive of a repetition of the old mistakes General Chiang has seen fit to warn the nation against moral degeneration which, as he rightly suggests, is worse than any aggression on the part of the foreign Powers. Aggression in its worst form is but an external factor but moral degeneration consumes the vital force of our national life.

Another cause which has doubtless contributed toward the moral degeneration is the changed outlook on life which is the outcome of the process of industrialisation and commercialisation. One's success is measured by one's material success. It is only too often that we hear the familiar expression that business is business. All sentiment is blown to the winds in the struggle for commercial supremacy. Such view on the conduct of

business cannot but affect one's outlook on life itself. Money, instead of being a means to an end, has become an end in itself. Those whose moral fibres are not made of stern stuff easily fall prey to the craze for gold, and their very existence becomes the negation of all virtues and morality.

A most serious cause of our moral degeneration arises out of the superficial knowledge of social life in the Occident. Personal liberty has been mistaken for personal licentious living, and equality between sexes the way to the gratification of the flesh. Women and men who have been kept in seclusion for centuries are thrown together overnight, and the result has been most disastrous. The average person who gains his or her knowledge of the West has gained it not through proper education but from the screen, and the exaggerations which are so obvious to the educated are taken seriously by the ignorant. The insidious influence coming out of our contact with the Occidentals has torn down the bulwark of our moral structure. The fault lies partly in our educational system, and the situation will doubtless improve as the younger generation comes to understand the problems of life in their true light, as the result of education.

As officials of the government and leaders of society, those in powers should set themselves as examples for the people. In the words of General Chiang, "If we conduct ourselves virtuously and honorably and in an upright and honest way, the rest of the people will follow our example, and the service we can thus render will be indeed invaluable." The question now is, is the Government properly constructed to enable the officials to conduct themselves virtuously and honorably? The future alone will tell.

Racial Superiority and Inferiority Complex

By Frederick Hung (洪紱)

Until quite recently all Chinese consider Europeans as absolute inferiors in every respect. They compare them to the nomads that invaded China at different periods and similarly called them barbarians. Even to this day the untutored peasant still calls the Europeans the "foreign devils" parallel with the "black devils," meaning the negro and Indian races. This regrettable racial arrogance was the natural result of sudden and unexpected contact of peoples unknown to each other. Under these circumstances it was quite as natural for the Manchu Emperor Ch'ien Lung to send special mandates to King George III to be "tremblingly obeyed" as for an uninformed American to think of China as a big chop suey restaurant surrounded by numerous laundry houses.

As contact increased between Chinese and Europeans the former universal contempt for the "white" and "black" races (which by the way are incorrect color indications) has been greatly modified or entirely changed. Today we

find practically everybody an admirer of one thing or another of the Europeans from the Ingersoll dollar watch to the Einstein Theory. There is even a small but bold group of the younger generation who holds the Chinese race as inferior to the "white races." Most of the people, however, continue to think of our race as inherently superior to that of our neighbors of lighter or darker skin. Indeed there is very often a set of superiority and inferiority complexes stirring within those who have constant or occasional contacts with foreigners. He constantly persuades himself of his unexplainable superiority over the foreigner, but frequently has to rationalize in order to disperse the inferiority complex.

With regard to this feeling we find most people falling under one of three categories. First, there are those who maintain that the Chinese race in spite of the temporary economic backwardness is essentially superior to the Europeans. Then, some men think exactly the contrary, and they interpret the present inglorious page

of Chinese history as due to the long climatic, geographical, historical and other fatal forces which have moulded the Chinese into a hopelessly weak race incapable of another revival. Lastly, a number of people, finding neither extremes altogether consistent, do not think any more of racial superiority and inferiority, pay equal respect to the genius of Pasteur and Edison as to the unknown but immortal inventors of the compass and the printing process, and they find themselves relieved of an unjustified pride or an unnecessary anxiety.

Those who feel their racial superiority assert that among other proofs China has a longer civilization, both material and social. Culture and art had already flourished in the Middle Kingdom while the contemporary Teutonic, Latin and Slavonic peoples were still "living in caves and drinking blood." Turning to the mental ingenuity of the Chinese race they point out that it was the Chinese mind who invented the compass and the gunpowder, paper and printing, cooking and bank-notes, and numerous others, without which the modern world could never have emerged from the European Dark Age. Chinese enterprising spirit and ability is unmistakably demonstrated by the settlers in the different Pacific Islands among whom one has but to mention the names of Ch'en Chia Keng, (陳嘉庚), Huang I Chu, (黃怡住), who built up immense industries from practically nothing to start with except the pioneer's spirit and confidence. The mental ability of the Chinese has been prominently brought to light by the many brilliant academic success of Chinese students in America, who stand at the head of their classes, win Phi Beta Kappa keys and other scholastic honors, in spite of the fact that they are working with a totally different language. There is indeed a world of difference between the brilliant Chinese student of Occidental things and the incapable Western pupil of the Oriental tongue, and this has led our racial snob to pity the foreigners for their total ignorance of Chinese literature and art.

The Chinese sense of beauty is not accustomed to the thick hairy skin of the average European, and many interpret it as an indication of savagery! They take the high and sometimes violently bent nose of the Westerner as inharmonious with good physiognomy, and look at their pugnacious appearance as inferior. They find the Occidental women coarse and sensual, and they are disgusted with Latin garrulousness. They prefer chop sticks to forks and knives, and consider European cooking primitive. In a thousand little ways they find the Western things uncouth and native, and are quite confident of their own inherent superiority.

On the other extreme we find a small but violent group of the young generation who blindly attack everything Chinese, including the Chinese race. Having had some experience of life in an American or European city, and being overwhelmed by the speed and wealth of modern civilization he can no longer tolerate the semi mediæval Chinese culture, and he begins to curse his ancestors and contemporaries for not Westernizing China. After travelling in aeroplanes and underground

railways he naturally considers wheel-barrow and sedan-chairs uncouth, and belonging to an inferior race. When he compares the timid and quiet Oriental girl to the modern European flapper that he meets in the dancing halls, holiday resorts, or even on the tennis courts and golf courses, he begins to pity the mediæval lady for her inability to follow closely the steps of Time. Quickly he joins the group of "gentlemen prefer blondes," and finds the lacquer-colored hair imperfect and the "almond eyes" homely. He is perhaps a frequent visitor to art galleries and music-halls of the Parisian type, and unconsciously he becomes an admirer of the beauty of lines, tempting him to draw the hasty conclusion that Oriental beauty is lacking in human lines. He considers the pale white color a prerequisite to handsomeness, and is quite disappointed to be born not possessing it.

He accepts with chagrin the actual athletic superiority of Europeans as a permanent state of things, and sees no hope in Oriental soldiery. Most of the time he is jealous and sometimes overawed by the imposing physical features of the European races, their deep chests, broad shoulders, heavy voice and their greater height, and feels rather ashamed of himself. Being ignorant of the laws of physical culture, he concludes without second thought that the "white" race is richly endowed by nature while the poor Oriental is wretched from birth!

Our racial fatalist is usually a vigorous propagandist. He goes around preaching the superiority of Western mentality and the hopelessness of Chinese conservatism. Admirers of loquaciousness, he looks at Oriental reserve and the golden silence of the Chinese lady as lacking in intelligence. Being perhaps frequently beaten in sports he concludes promptly that the Chinese race does not possess quick reflexes, and is by nature slow and inert. Unaware of Chinese commercial and social organizations like the Commercial Press or the "Red Spear Society" he regards his brethren as inherently lacking in organizing power and group life. In short he regards practically everything Chinese as inferior, from militarists and politicians down to chop sticks and century eggs, (松花蛋). He feels ashamed of his race, is deeply disappointed to be born to it, but flatters and congratulates himself to have seen modern civilization and to have lived in New York or Paris.

Both the racial snob and the racial pessimist undoubtedly believe in what they hold with good faith. However, neither group seems to be entirely satisfied about its confidence of belonging to a superior order or the fear of being an inferior one. The logic of facts contradicts once again the logic of rationalisation, and we find the superiority man disappointed at times, while occasional circumstances save the inferiority man from eternal chagrin.

Let us proceed to examine the ground of the superiority theory first. Just as the successors of King George III refused flatly to obey tremblingly to the orders of the Chinese Court so the fresher races of Europe refused vigorously to stay outside of the Great Wall and the

"four seas." Being caught in unpreparedness the pig-headed mixture of Chinese and Manchu Officialdom was repeatedly humiliated in a series of infamous wars. The long and continuous civilization was of no avail in checking the obnoxious domination of the peoples who at Confucius' time were still "living in caves and drinking blood." In this inglorious period which continues to this very day history certainly fails to demonstrate the superiority of the Chinese race!

The racial snob maintains that the Chinese mentality is superior by virtue of the richer and more profound literature that we possess; but this literary supremacy is gradually being challenged by the vigorous literature of the West. For one thing the author ventures to say without hesitation: that the Chinese mentality has to be rigorously modified before we can aspire to be successful in holding the leading position in this modern civilization as we have done in the ancient civilization.

The Chinese discoveries and inventions ought not to lead us to belittle the contributions of the Western scientists. They ought to help us appreciate the worthiness of their successors and to remind us that Chinese inventiveness has not been doing its share the last two hundred years. Instead of arming our pride to ignore Occidental inventions and discoveries, they should make us all the more eager to learn. If there is one mental attitude more disastrous than all others it is being too proud to learn, which pride nullifies all the good qualities that we may possess.

As social habits and usages do not indicate either superiority or inferiority we may just as well discard it altogether. Chinese cheese is just as offensive in smell as European cheese; Western clothing is no less unscientific when compared to Chinese robes and trousers.

Thus, after a critical inquiry we are compelled to conclude that in the main the Europeans are our equals, and moreover, they possess certain temporary advantages over us. This, however, need not worry us, as Japan has shown that these material handicaps can be removed by human efforts.

As to the fear of inferiority to Europeans a simple analysis will show that this is quite unnecessary. The endless list of evidences given by the superiority theory, while insufficient to prove its theme, is quite enough to counterbalance the list of the inferiority scare. Let us, however, examine the main points of the bolder theory from an equally critical viewpoint. To start with, let me say once for all that color has absolutely no connection with mental or physical capacity. Even the boldest racial snob hesitates to persuade himself that the "almond eyed" Japanese race is inferior to that of the pale white races. The Mongolian conquests in the Thirteenth Century demonstrates equally clearly that physical vigor does not depend in the least bit to the color of the skin. Nor is the pale white color a condition of beauty, as the brown sun-burned color of the seabathing girls are just

as attractive when at Palm-Beach or Deauville as in Paris or London. Our aesthetic reaction to the color of the human skin is purely subjective and relative. If the average young lady of the West is more pretty than her Oriental sister it is more of a fruit of modern civilization, especially of education and sports, rather than of her pale white color.

It is hardly necessary to say that the material leadership of the "white" race is an accidental and temporary thing due to the early exploitation of the very transferable body of scientific and technical knowledge. The industrial backwardness of China is due much more to geographical isolation than to the alleged conservatism of her people. To imagine that the people who invented the compass and gunpower are incapable of learning physics and chemistry or of applying them is simply absurd. Let us not feel offended by the recent assertion of a French writer that the Chinese is incapable of intellectual work—either he did not know what he was talking about or he was simply deceiving himself!

The racial pessimist is equally ignorant of the qualities of the Oriental mind as of the defects of the European mentality. He is unaware of the fact that the human brain is quite flexible, and that the Chinese mind is not incapable of adaptation as numerous facts have demonstrated. Intelligence tests conducted by both foreign and Chinese psychologists have shown that the Chinese brain is at least as quick and as realizable as that of his white brother. As to the realising power of the Chinese one has but to look at any one of the millionaire settlers in Malaya or in Manchuria, all starting from very modest beginnings.

Turning to the comparison of the physique of the Chinese and the "white" race one cannot but admire the force, the energy and the plastic beauty of the European. However, this must not lead us to neglect the qualities of the Mongolian race, such as resistance, suppleness, address, and others that raise our physique to the same coefficient of personal efficiency. Even the greater height, strength and superior plastic beauty of the European is certainly not the final state of affairs. It is physical culture and hygiene which will say the last word concerning the virility of races. In short, our fatalist needs neither feel ashamed of himself or of his race. Natural features such as the light brownish skin, the black hair, or the physiognomy of the nose or of the eye-brow are of no practical importance whatsoever, its possessor may neither feel proud nor ashamed of it.

The racial superiority and inferiority complex is an absurd and stupid thing which converts useful human energy into collective hatred and suspicion. Many wars and wasteful destruction of life can be traced back to the origin of the false conception of racial superiority. If the principal Mongolian and white races continue to breed contempt and suspicion for each other as they do now there can be but one ultimate result: an endless and desperate struggle bringing civilization to an inglorious end!

19, after made really effective, is useful to us for the purpose of revising inapplicable treaties only as a last resort ⁽²⁶⁾ and never as a short cut.

When I say that our concern in the Article lies more in its last clause, I am thinking of Manchuria. The conditions there are certainly fraught with elements of another catastrophic conflagration like the last War in the near future. The Japanese have persistently extended their influence into Manchuria. They long have the intention of annexing it. Only a few days ago, the late Japanese minister Saburi was harsh and rash enough to pronounce in an address delivered at Shanghai that Manchuria is one of the grounds for Japanese colonization and expansion—the words which have lived out their splendour in Europe still colour the current history of the Far East.

For evidences of these, we really have too many. The Twenty-one Demands, the illegal erection of military establishments and equipments in Manchuria, such as strong barracks and so on, and constant intrusion and intervention into Chinese internal affairs either openly or secretly, so as to make conditions in China always favourable to the Japanese to realize their desires.

In spite of the *fait accomplis* existing in Manchuria, China will never, never allow herself to be bereaved of a large part of her territory. She would rather choose to lose her life in a struggle for integrity of territory than to live in a mutilated fashion. So, on the one hand, there is the pre-War chauvinistic spirit and the 18th. or 19th. century colonization movements in restless action, and on the other hand, there is the national consciousness of a colossal people pressing itself hard for a healthy expression. Whenever and wherever the two conflicting forces meet, there can hardly be avoidance of a quarrel—a hot controversy, if it were between individuals as was the case in one of the remarkable meetings in the last Pan-Pacific Conference, and armed hostilities, if it were between states. Certainly, any such rupture to happen in the present age would very greatly embarrass the position of enthusiastic peace-makers, and also undo absolutely the work accomplished by the peace-making institutions. Moreover, both China and Japan are Members of the League and signatories to the Paris Peace Pact. Since the latter still lacks machinery for taking effect, the world naturally looks to the League to be always ready with its weapon and to do away with any threat of war or any conditions whose continuance might endanger the peace of the world. We are only too glad to bring the present conditions in Manchuria to the attention of the Assembly under Art. 19 before things might develop for the very worst. Such a use of the Article, we should notice, has never been once made since the birth of the League. A very best and wise use of it would not only "gain the confidence of those doubting Thomases who are still skeptical" towards it, but also win the support from every quarter of the world for subsequent growth and development as well as perpetuity of its very life.

(26) As a last resort, the article is, however, really very useful, for we cannot always look on the bright side of things—we should remember there is always Japan to deal with.

NATIONAL FRIENDSHIP AND WORLD PEACE

Los Angeles, Calif., Dec. 4, 1929.

Dear Editor:—

I am a constant reader of THE CHINA CRITIC, through the courtesy of your distinguished countryman Mr. Kwang Pu Chen, whom I traveled with on the French line last spring. I was surprised to know that you have so capable a paper published in English in your country. I must say that I read it with great pleasure and pass it on to others.

I am sending you a poem I wrote after visiting the battle-fields of Europe and seeing the ravages of war. It was impressed on me that if each nation would build on its own foundation, the cause of war would be removed. I hope you may find the lines worthy of a place in your paper.

J. R. Clark.

Let's make national' friendship,
There's room enough for all,
If each on its own foundation,
Builds its stately statue tall.

No more the boom of cannon,
No fields with blood made red,
No homes bereft of loved ones,
No fields strewn thick with dead.

All questions settled fairly,
For weak as well as strong,
Let justice be our motto,
And right will conquer wrong.

Write peace upon our banners,
Let peace be in our songs,
A peace to last forever,
A world made right from wrong.



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