

EASTERN HORIZON

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September 1980.



China's Development
Strategy



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EASTERN HORIZON

monthly review

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EASTERN DIARY

Fast and Slow

Things have been happening fast in China.

Following the proliferation of collectively owned and run businesses, private family businesses have also begun to appear. At least two family-run restaurants have won a write-up in the *People's Daily*, and they are said to be flourishing. One of them, operated by a young man and his sister, is said to be netting 200 yuan a month after all the costs and expenses, including the family expenses, are defrayed. To the reported clamours for legislation to control these and similar businesses, an editor added the comment, 'Yes, there should be legislation—to protect such businesses.'

Criminal investigations have been initiated over the accident which resulted in the capsizing of the off-shore drilling rig *Bohai No. 2*, resulting in the death of 72 workers and at a cost of 37 million yuan. Responsibility has been traced to the head of the Bureau of Off-shore Oil Prospecting and there are indications that this may go even higher. Two reporters of the *Workers' Daily* asserted that the accident was actually not accidental, but 'the inevitable result' of the wrong-guiding ideology and work method which the leadership of the Bureau of the Off-shore Oil Prospecting had become used to for a long time, showing a total neglect of essential safety measures and an indifference to human lives. A deaf ear had been turned to all appeals from the crew of the rig for precautionary steps to be taken before the removal of the rig.

A *People's Daily* editorial called for continuing the debate on the meaning of life started by a young woman worker, Pan Xiao, who wrote a letter to the journal *Chinese Youth* to disclose how her enthusiasm at the beginning of the Cultural Revolution had ended in depression, which still persisted. The response to the publication of this long letter a few months ago was immediate and strong, tens of thousands of letters having been received by the editorial department of *Chinese Youth*.

Now the *People's Daily* has also begun to publish such letters. It was revealed by the

State Commission of Agriculture that in 1979 the average per-capita income in 1,622 agricultural brigades had surpassed 300 yuan. It is true that the number represents only 2.3 per thousand of the 690,000 brigades in China. But this is only a beginning.

Production in the sector of heavy industry has begun to be exposed to the influence of market economy. The First Ministry of Machine-building has released the 200 categories of products manufactured in the plants under its control, with the exception of only one category (motor vehicles), from state planning and allocation. Plants producing these goods have been allowed to do their own planning in accordance with the contracts they directly sign with users, or the needs of the market.

In a front-page editorial, the *People's Daily* stressed that supervision by the people is indispensable if the Communist Party's working style is to be improved.

The personality cult suffered a severe setback when a directive of the Communist Party Central Committee put a constraint on image building through exaltation at public places and through the media for leaders past and present, especially those of the present. In front of the Tian An Men, all but one of Mao Zedong's portraits, together with his quotations, have come down. All forms of memorial structures for the dead will be severely restricted.

In the first seven months of this year, production in the light and textile industries rose by 23.3 per cent over that of the corresponding period last year. In the same period, heavy industry grew by 6.3 per cent. Collectively owned industry rose by 24.3 per cent, while that owned by the state by 11 per cent.

The state monopoly of employment and job allocation will be gradually eased. Enterprises given self-management power will be allowed to do their own hiring and firing. A growing number of people will be able to apply for jobs which they believe suit them best, and in which they can make their best contribution.

As things are happening fast, there are people who still drag their feet. But there are also people who would like to see things happening even much faster. As soon as the case of *Bohai No. 2* was revealed in the press, there have been letters to the editor which questioned why it was that no legal steps had been taken until 21 April, almost five

months after the accident. Recently it was again asked why no charges had yet been preferred, though a further four months had gone by.

Humanism and Alienation

Even more interesting is that, writing in the *People's Daily* (15 August) to refute the view held widely in China during the past two decades or so that humanism is a bourgeois and revisionist concept, Ru Xin not only called for a reassessment of humanism, but also brought out the importance of Marx's view on alienation.

Ru Xin is obviously a pen-name. But the editor of the *People's Daily* underlined the importance he attached to the article by announcing it on the paper's front page. It is important. For decades Marx's view on alienation has been all but ignored in countries where communist parties are in the leading position. In these countries, including China, it seems that this view has been considered a pre-Marxian concept which bordered on bourgeois humanism. It was only after World War II that it was resurrected by neo-Marxists in the West who found alienation more relevant to the conditions of the working class in the developed countries than blatant economic exploitation defined by Marx. It represents an important departure for the Chinese Communist Party organ to print and attach great importance to an article which aims at rehabilitating humanism and reasserting Marx's view on alienation.

Citing Marx in paraphrase from his 'Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844', Ru wrote:

Capitalist society represents the total forfeiture of man. Here, 'the rise in value of the world of matter and the fall in value of the world of man proceed in direct proportion.' The alienation of man has reached its apex of absurdity. The worker has turned into the slave of his own object and has to submit himself to the rule of a non-human force. The more wealth the worker produces, the more impoverished he becomes; the more merchandise he creates, the more he turns himself into cheap merchandise. Labour creates beauty, but deforms the labourer; it generates wisdom, but makes him slow-witted and dull. Such alienation is reflected not only in the results of labour, but also in the productive activities, that is in labour itself. Creative labour should be a characteristic

which differentiates man from the animal; it is precisely through creative labour that man wins freedom and all-round development, but now it has been substituted by labour which alienates man. To the labourer, labour has become a form of suffering. Instead of affirming himself through labour, he negates himself. Instead of freely developing his physical and mental powers, he sustains both physical and mental trauma.

Therefore, only when he is carrying out his function as an animal (feeding and sexual activities) can he feel that he is functioning freely as a man. On the contrary, when he is working, that is when he is carrying out his human function, he feels as if he is nothing but an animal. . . . One of man's attributes should be that he is able to take free and voluntary actions, and yet now man's activities are reduced to producing his bare means of subsistence. Thus man loses himself and his value in being a man, and becomes 'mentally and physically a dehumanized being.' Therefore, the crime of capitalism is not only the oppression and exploitation of one class by another, but, more than that, it also leads to the forfeiture and subjugation of man. It is precisely because of this that the objective of the communist revolution is not limited to the overthrow of the capitalist system and the liberation of the working class from the rule of the capitalists, but should also be the achievement of the liberation of mankind as a whole. . . . Marx said, 'Communism is the sublation of private property and the self alienation of man' . . .

Concluding the article, Ru Xin wrote:

In the final analysis, the key to the vindication of Marxist humanism lies in the emancipation of the mind. We have to break through the phobia of humanism and confidently proclaim: Communists are the most thorough humanists, for the objective of the communists' struggle, for which they are not afraid to lose their lives and shed their blood, is to build a new world for mankind, a world which is more suitable for man to live in, and in which man can really attain full freedom and all-round development, so as to become the real man, putting an end to man's 'pre-historical period'.

Recent Experience

After tracing the development of the con-

cept of humanism in Marx's works in different periods, Ru Xin wrote:

Based on the foregoing observations, I am of the opinion that we must not indiscriminately and unreservedly set Marxism against humanism, nor should we denounce without due analysis humanism in its totality as revisionist. On the other hand we must not completely identify Marxism with humanism, for Marxism is not merely concerned with the question of man. But the principle of humanism is embodied in the theory of Marxism. Without such content, Marxism could turn into its opposite, becoming a cold and dead dogma in which man does not have a place, and which could even bring about a new form of alienation that reigns over the people. Haven't we had lessons like this in the history of the international communist movement?

This remark reminds one of what happened during the Cultural Revolution. In criticizing a work on political economy by Soviet economists, Mao pointed out that man rarely figured in this work. This may not be entirely fair to these leading economists, but it did show that Mao was keenly aware of the importance of man in society. But unfortunately this idea was never systematically developed.

Paying lip-service to man being the 'first factor', Lin Biao and the Gang of Four did all they could to push their scheme of the alienation and dehumanization of what they exalted as the 'socialist man'. On the one hand they put Mao on a pedestal and revered him as a god. On the other, they did their worst to turn young people into robots who were made to repeat 'quotations' and to pledge to carry out all the 'directives from the highest', whether they understood them or not!

The recent debate over the meaning of life touched off by a letter written by Pan Xiao shows what serious trauma has been inflicted upon the younger generation of the country by such alienation. But there are also signs that free discussion and debate on this subject will help most of the young people thus afflicted to sort things out for themselves and regain their bearings in society.

The Personality Cult

In answering questions posed by Dara Janekovic of the Yugoslav newspaper *Vjesnik*, Hua Guofeng said of the late Mao Zedong:

Comrade Mao Zedong was indeed a most outstanding figure in Chinese history, whose contributions to revolutionary

theory and practice surpassed those of any other Chinese leader.

Hua then continued:

But he (Mao) was a human being and not a god and therefore fallible.

This is of course not merely Hua's personal opinion. It also represents the view prevalent among the present party leadership, which has been discussing the question of Mao's contributions to the Chinese revolution and his shortcomings. Something similar to this had been said by other leaders of the Chinese Communist Party, but coming from the chairman of the party, and reported in detail by the Xinhua News Agency, the view expressed is of even greater significance. Furthermore, Hua went into Mao's contributions and shortcomings in greater detail than any of the other leaders who spoke about Mao before him.

Whatever mistakes Mao may have made in the period between 1935 and 1957, they are nothing when compared to the victories the party won during this period when Mao was at its head. They were:

- The victories won in the war against Japanese aggression and the War of Liberation.
- The party seized nation-wide political power.
- The socialist transformation of the ownership of the means of production was completed while the nation was building socialism on a large scale.

Here one notices that the flop of the hundred flowers movement and the ensuing anti-Rightist movement are not mentioned. Could this issue have been deliberately by-passed by the party leaders of today, or on it they have yet to make up their minds? Some people think that along with mischievous criticisms, the anti-Rightist movement unfortunately also silenced genuine criticisms which should have been important if the country and the party were to press forward.

Coming to the period between the Great Leap Forward in 1958 and the beginning of the Cultural Revolution in 1966, Hua Guofeng said that during that period the party 'committed some rather big mistakes in its work'. Specifying these mistakes, Hua said, 'We were over-ambitious in our economic work, and in some cases we erroneously

exaggerated the gravity of class struggle.' He was obviously referring to the Great Leap Forward and its related excesses and the struggle against Peng Dehuai and those who were accused as Right opportunists. But in spite of such mistakes, Hua still concluded that at that time 'the party line, taken as a whole, was correct.'

During the decade of the Cultural Revolution, however, 'the party made grievous, serious mistakes,' Hua categorically affirmed. And then he added, 'As Chairman of the party, Comrade Mao Zedong of course bore responsibility for these mistakes.'

Clearly these mistakes have now been imputed, at least partly, to the personality cult, which, fanned by Lin Biao, came to its apex at that time. Whenever Mao's name was mentioned, what were called the 'four greats' were chanted. Though Mao openly frowned at and dismissed such epithets as 'nuisances', somehow they were never stopped. The practice persisted not only until the death of Mao and the downfall of the Gang of Four who took over from Lin Biao, but lingered on for quite a while after that. This reminded people of feudal times when emperors were dubbed 'the great', 'the wise', 'the clairvoyant', etc., etc. It was distressing that precisely at a time when feudal remnants were supposedly being battered down, some of the worst of feudal values and practices were allowed to run riot. It was only during the exposure of Lin Biao and the Gang of Four that people were awakened to the disaster precipitated by the 'modern superstitions' spread by Lin and the Gang of Four. Statues of Mao have long disappeared from public places, and now most of his portraits, quotations and calligraphy have also come down. A directive was recently issued by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China to severely restrict the image building for political leaders, past and present. The personality cult is to go.

Let us hope that the period of man has been ushered in and is here to stay. Among men and women there are bound to be those who are taller or even giants; but they are still men and women, not gods or goddesses. Modernization and progress in a socialist society can be achieved only when its members can unite with one another as equals and fight for their common goal. Mao's greatness will be remembered. But he will be remembered as a man, not as an infallible god.

Lee Tsung-ying

China's Economic Development Strategy

Roland Berger

The current phase of China's strategy for economic development dates from the Third Plenum of the Communist Party in December, 1978, two years after the downfall of the Gang of Four. At this meeting the principles of 'readjustment' were adopted, to be spelt out six months later at the National People's Congress. Intended to cover the years 1979 to 1981, the process is described by the Chinese as 'readjusting, restructuring, consolidating and improving'. It implies readjusting the relations between the sectors of the economy, restructuring the governmental and economic organs to suit current needs, consolidating industry and agriculture following the disruptions of the Cultural Revolution, and improving economic performance of the various sectors.

Yu Qiuli, head of the State Planning Commission, described the process as 'a major readjustment of the economic relations between the state, the collective and the individual'. It initiated, in fact, a new direction for China's economy.

Certainly more than a mere readjustment is the radical departure from previous practice by establishing priorities between the sectors as agriculture first, light industry second and heavy industry third.

This order of priorities, and the policy implications contained within it, was not new economic thinking on the part of the Chinese leaders in 1979. It was at the core of a policy adopted in 1956 at the conclusion of a major economic conference and summed up by Mao Zedong in the document 'The Ten Major Relationships'. It represented

a departure by the Chinese from the Soviet economic model. But, whilst lip service was paid in the past to the Ten Relationships, they were not until now put into practice in planning, investment policy or in any other aspect of the economy.

Whatever other problems beset the Chinese economy when the Gang of Four were toppled at the end of 1976—management, the restructuring of industry, the deficiencies of the technical infrastructure, the balance between the centre and the regions—the effective implementation of the three priorities, redressing imbalances in the country's economy, lies at the heart of successfully carrying through the readjustments.

A recent article in the *People's Daily* discusses this question and observes:

Only when the imbalances in the national economy are redressed can we create the necessary conditions for the comprehensive reforms in the system of economic management. . . .

In handling the relations between the readjustments and the reforms, we must focus our efforts on the former, subordinate the latter to it, and carry out reforms with the aim of promoting the work of readjustment.

The readjustment policy ushered in a period of economic realism. This is part and parcel of a 'new look' in economic as in political and social life—a more candid approach, an open exposure to examination of backward methods, outmoded practices left over from feudalism: stereotyped, generalized and inflexible responses to highly complex and diverse problems of economic policy and organization.

In looking at the direction China is taking and the challenge she is facing in the economic and other spheres, one should be careful

Roland Berger, a consultant to the British 48 group, has behind him a long experience in trading with China. This present article is based on a lecture delivered at the conference 'China's New Economic Strategies' organized by Zentrum für Unternehmensführung, Zürich, June 1980.

not to under-rate what is for her a monumental problem of casting off the burden of the feudal past—the building of independent kingdoms, pre-scientific notions and superstitions, exaggeration, flights of fancy and the papering over of difficulties. Paradoxically, the Cultural Revolution, through the operations of Lin Biao, Jiang Qing and the others, intensified and strengthened these feudal forms and attitudes.

An essential feature of the change in the readjustment process is to switch from a situation in which general political slogans were substituted for economic analysis and a study of the concrete conditions; a situation in which the economy was run by administrative orders from above—what the Chinese refer to as a 'patriarchal, concentrated leadership',—and to turn from this, to a recognition of objective economic laws, to be analyzed and then given appropriate organizational forms to put them into effective practice. In other words a move from economic management by administrative organs to management by economic organizations.

To illustrate what the Chinese have in mind, we can look at the Chinese factory as it has been run in the past. Under the Plan all finance, the wages fund, the welfare fund, the raw materials and components were supplied by the state and, at the end of the process, the output was turned over to the state. It came in one end and went out the other. The state decided on resource allocations, the size of the labour force, the specification of the product.

The responsibility of the factory itself, both management and workers, was limited. If production targets were met before time and further funds and raw materials were not available until the beginning of the next planning period, the factory stood idle, although wages were paid and the costs of overheads continued.

Another, and different, example may be taken from the operation of China's foreign trade where, until recently, all transactions were conducted through centralized importing and exporting corporations. Although these organizations have acquired considerable experience and skills in international trade, they are essentially administrative bodies one degree removed from the actualities of import requirements and export possibilities. For the foreign supplier there has been the problem hitherto of contact with the end-user to get to know his technical and

other requirements, and for the buyer to work out with the producer the specification of goods to suit the demands of the international market.

To bring foreign trade closer to the economic realities, some of the industrial ministries have now set up importing and exporting corporations, such as the First Ministry of Machine Building (mechanical engineering products) in Equipex, the Third Ministry (aerospace) in CATIC, the Fourth Ministry of Machine Building in the Electronic Import and Export Corporation.

The fact that China in the past 30 years has made significant and, at times, dramatic advances in industry and agriculture, which compare favourably with most other countries of the Third World, is not blinding the Chinese leadership to several weak features, taking the 30-year period as a whole, especially in relation to the massive inputs of manpower, materials and finance. A recent statement emanating from the Economic Research Institute of the State Planning Commission commented that, despite China's achievements, the social wealth created is limited, average per-capita GNP is still very low, the capital construction front steadily extending; construction costs higher than in 1965 and profits and income for every 100 yuan invested in the state industrial departments in 1978 and 1979 33 per cent lower than in 1957. Economic strategy must, therefore, look to a better return on funds invested, a narrowing of the capital construction program and reducing excessive consumption of raw materials.

To return to the adjustment process. The review of the economic situation at the end of 1978 took a hard look at the realities and moved away from the over-ambitious and impracticable targets of economic growth, particularly in the industrial sector, which had been adopted in the heady atmosphere of early 1977, in the wake of the Gang of Four's departure from the scene, opting for a steadier and more consistent pattern of development. Vice-Premier Bo Yibo commented to me in Beijing in March 1980 that the emphasis today is less on a high-rate of growth and ambitious targets but, essentially, on steady and consistent development which serves the effective readjustment of the proportionate relations between the three sectors; agriculture, light industry and heavy industry.

The target for industrial growth has been scaled down from 10 to 12 per cent to 6

to 8 per cent, and the number of major projects announced earlier reduced. At the same time priorities were firmly set with agriculture No. 1, light industry No. 2 and heavy industry No. 3, with the major focus within heavy industry on the laggard sectors—power, transport and communications and construction and other materials—which have been and still are hobbling the other sectors of the economy.

The Role of Market Forces

The role of the market forces is now being widely debated, in line with the emphasis on the observance of economic laws. Chinese economists are discussing the law of value and its place in developmental policies and questioning the received wisdom of past socialist, especially Soviet, economic thinking that the law of value has no function as a regulator of the economy and that, in any case, it applies only or chiefly in the sphere of the circulation of consumer goods. Rather than viewing central planning as antagonistic or in contradiction to the play of market forces, Chinese economists are suggesting an inter-play of the two which, having common aspects, can be made to work together complementarily with beneficial results. We are observing, and will continue with some fascination to observe, the endeavours of our Chinese friends to find an effective relationship which combines the advantages of central planning with the dynamic injected by the forces of the market, especially in terms of local initiative.

In studying this problem the Chinese have identified a number of adverse features which, they say, resulted from the past policy of treating the market forces as being in opposition to and inconsistent with planned development. These are:

- (i) that production was separated from demand;
- (ii) that prices were divorced from value. The Chinese realize, however, that some 'social' or 'rational' prices, not strictly determined by value, must be retained, especially for the basic necessities, many of which are sold to the consumer below cost. Thus, even before the uplift in prices paid to the production teams, rice was bought at 16 *fen* (or about 10 US¢) a *jin* (0.5 kg), and sold to the urban consumer at 14 *fen* (8.6 US¢), the state bearing the costs of handling and transport;

- (iii) that the financial responsibility fell entirely on the state;
- (iv) that local economic organizations and enterprises were encouraged to seek self-sufficiency, regarding themselves as small producers rather than part of large-scale socialist production.

In my talk with Vice-Premier Bo Yibo, who is also Chairman of the recently formed Machine Building Commission, he referred to this latter problem, commenting that not infrequently the local cadres tend to regard the enterprises as their own private property, although they are within the sector of state or all-people's ownership.

Flexibility to Meet Diverse Conditions

Utilizing the market forces meshes in with a shift towards a more flexible policy to take account of regional differences of climate, soil, and other natural resources as well as disparities in the levels of economic and social development. An article of 16 May criticizes past methods. It says:

We have unrealistically demanded uniformity in almost everything and messed things up by issuing subjective orders.

This trend towards diversification and the utilization of local strengths and resources came to light during my discussions in April last (1980) with the planning authorities of the municipality of Shanghai and the province of Anhui.

Shanghai has since Liberation built up a relatively self-reliant industrial base with a range of industries reasonably well coordinated. Most branches of industry, the exception being mining and forestry, are to be found within the jurisdiction of the municipality. Compared with the rest of China, Shanghai has a strong scientific and technical force.

The proportion of heavy to light industry, at present about fifty-fifty, will be changed in favour of light industry. Apart from two major projects, the Baoshan Steelworks and the Jinshan Petrochemical Complex, Shanghai will concentrate on sectors requiring technical expertise, precision and skills, areas of high technology involving relatively lower consumption of energy, imposing less of a burden on transportation and not requiring massive inputs of raw materials with which the municipality is not well endowed. Existing enterprises which do not fit into this general pattern will, over time, be shifted to other areas.

Anhui, on the other hand, with a popula-

tion of 47 million, is relatively backward, has little industry and a small industrial labour force (1 million). The province is, however, rich in certain basic resources (coal, iron ore, copper, zinc and timber). Under the plan, the ratio of heavy to light industry will be kept in rough balance. The average yearly increase of industrial growth in the period to 1990 will be of the order of 11.6 per cent, almost double that of the national average. The main features will be the development of two major coal fields with associated power stations—Huainan and Huaibei and the Ma'anshan Steel Works.

A recent circular of the Central Committee has initiated a development plan for Tibet taking account of the specific conditions of the area and giving the local people the major say on the policies and principles to be followed.

Development of Economic Advantage

Building on local strengths and resources implies that the localities well endowed will develop faster than others. The view currently advanced is that these differences have to be recognized as reflecting the speed of economic development; that the advantage to the economic health of the whole country will make it that much more feasible to help to narrow imbalances in the future.

This is reminiscent of the view expressed by Mao Zedong in the Ten Major Relationships where he dealt with the relationship between the industrially well-endowed coastal regions and the interior:

Making good use of the old industries in the coastal regions and developing their capacities will put us in a stronger position to promote and support industry in the interior.

The application of such a policy raises complicated questions of financial and other resource allocations. Unless carried out with both short-term tactics and long-term strategy carefully balanced and monitored, polarization could obviously become a problem.

Capital Construction

As early as 1957 Zhou Enlai was warning against excessive investment in capital construction and of undertaking too wide a range of projects. The problem has persisted. Part of the adjustment policy is to reduce the total number of projects and concentrate on those which serve current priori-

ties, provide a relatively quick return on investment for which power, transport, water and other essential supplies are available.

One feature of decentralization has been to increase the funds at the disposal of the localities. This has in fact militated against the policy of narrowing the capital construction front. Thus, in 1979, even though the level of capital construction investment covered by the national budget remained at the 1978 level of 39,500 million yuan, investments by departments, localities and enterprises rose by 25 per cent to reach 10,500 million yuan. The result was a rise of 4.4 per cent in the total investment in capital construction.

This situation has been corrected in the first half of 1980 as a result of a 20 per cent cut in the number of big and medium-sized projects under construction. Compared with the corresponding period of 1979, total capital investments in the first six months of the year dropped by 4 per cent.

Thus, implementing the policy of scaling down to suit China's financial, energy and raw materials availabilities is in the nature of a tug-of-war between the centre and the localities, with the provinces in many cases resisting the closing down or postponement of projects which, judged solely from the viewpoint of the locality, seem to be badly needed.

Decentralization

It is generally agreed that the economy has been over-centralized. However, to reach a satisfactory balance which combines the necessary controlling and allocatory functions of a central plan with scope to the localities to run their own affairs and exercise initiative is no easy matter. The play of market forces is one feature of this decentralization process.

As an experiment some 3,000 enterprises were given a larger measure of self-management. The first results seem to be positive with higher productivity, higher profits, economies in the consumption of power and raw materials and greater scope for workers' participation in management.

Various methods are being tried, usually based on a certain percentage of the profits retained by and at the disposal of the factory for bonus payments, welfare schemes, and for development.

Reporting on the first six months' experience of operating with enlarged functions of management, the Shanghai Textile Bureau and the Bureau of Metallurgy announced that profits handed over to the state increased by 28 per cent and 15.4 per cent respectively.

The Textile Bureau retained 130 million yuan and the Metallurgical Bureau 57.46 million yuan which were applied to the expansion of production, collective welfare services and bonuses for the workers. In these cases the formula approved by the State Economic Commission and the Ministry of Finance is for the Textile Bureau to retain 9.5 per cent and the Metallurgical Bureau 40 per cent of their annual profits over and above the 1978 figure. This arrangement will stay in force for the five years 1979 to 1984.

The Metallurgical Bureau has decided to devote 37 million yuan of its retained profits on 29 technical improvements to expand production of steel products for the textile and other light industries, and the building industry and for exports. The use by the Textile Bureau of its retained profits illustrates the new direct enterprise-to-enterprise relationships. The Bureau has invested 20 million yuan in the Wuhan (Hubei) City Metallurgical Bureau and Shanghai Metal Materials Corporation in exchange for steel products needed to expand the textile industry. Part of this sum will be used to improve the housing conditions of the textile workers.

In many cases the factory is free, having fulfilled the planned quotas, to dispose of its surplus production.

Increasingly a system of contracts between the producer and the user is being put into practice which ensures production according to the user's rather than a centrally decided specification, imposes appropriate quality standards and specifies delivery times. These contracts usually include provision for either side to have recourse to law, in the event of failure to fulfil the contract terms.

Distribution

The first steps are being taken towards a more rational distribution policy which in the past was organized in three categories: (i) state distribution; (ii) ministry control; (iii) local control. A tentative plan has been adopted which reclassifies the three categories, giving more emphasis to the character of the product and the level of production at which it operates:

- (i) Distribution under the State Plan covering means of production of national importance, fuel, vital raw materials and major equipment;
- (ii) Materials sold mainly by commissioned supplies enterprises—means of production of general use, machinery, electrical equipment, some metals, chemical products and construction materials. Producing enterprises working under the supplies organization are free to sell surpluses after fulfilling production quotas;
- (iii) Items sold mainly by the production enterprises themselves—all materials not in categories (i) and (ii) which, in principle, can be freely produced and sold by the enterprises.

In addition certain measures have been taken by the supply departments to promote the circulation of materials.

- (i) To adopt an open-door policy for goods in full supply;
- (ii) Supply to meet actual needs—especially replacements and maintenance items,
- (iii) Coupon system—allocation of coupons on quota basis—used in supply of non-ferrous metals,
- (iv) Product specifications—rigid product specifications formerly imposed on localities and departments have been abolished in favour of the buyer ordering according to specifications that meet his actual need.

Coordination

Effective coordination between the various sectors of government and the economy has been a besetting problem in China for many years. It is an area where feudal ideas, especially the striving for 'independent kingdoms' exert a negative influence. To quote one example, a recent Chinese report on the electronics industry is critical of the situation in which no less than five central bodies—the First, and Fourth and Sixth Ministries of Machine-Building, the Chinese Academy of Sciences and the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications—have subordinate to them enterprises producing electronic equipment, with overlapping in production and construction projects. The first steps are being taken to effect some integration. Coordination becomes all the more essential in the current situation when there is a tendency for eco-

conomic organizations to proliferate and for functions to be decentralized.

In the days when Zhou Enlai was active, he and a group working with him exercised a coordinatory function. To meet present requirements, additional commissions under the State Council are being formed—the Import-Export Control Commission, Foreign Investment Control Commission and so forth. On the industrial side, a Machine-Building Industry Commission has been established under Vice-Premier Bo Yibo to coordinate the operation of the eight Ministries of Machine-Building. One result may be to divide into specialized ministries the multiple functions of the First Ministry of Machine-Building.

Agriculture

An exaggerated emphasis in past years on grain applied universally across the length and breadth of China, whatever the soil and other conditions, and a policy of 'uniformity in everything' has produced a lop-sided situation in which agricultural sidelines have been neglected, communes in areas unsuited to grain production have often stagnated and local economic advantages have not been exploited.

Today's policy is, therefore, one of diversification to suit local conditions and the setting up of agricultural bases for grains, industrial crops, animal husbandry, fishery and forestry in areas in which intensive cultivation is feasible.

Alongside this development, production teams, the basic level of the peoples' communes, are being freed from the shackles which imposed cropping programs from above and are encouraged to develop sidelines which provide the team with significant income.

There is less talk about mechanization as the key factor in raising agricultural production. The Minister of Agriculture, Yang Ligong, in an interview published in July 1980, stated that the original goal of mechanizing agriculture by 1980 has proved impracticable. 'China should concentrate its efforts, Li said, 'on mechanizing farming in the three Northeast China provinces and in some parts of Inner Mongolia, Xinjiang and the Yellow and Huai River valleys, where farm machinery can be employed to the greatest advantage. In fact, the policy from 1967 of utilizing farming aid funds mainly to finance the mechanization of agriculture has come under criticism

since in practice it favoured the better-off production teams, the really poor teams being unable to afford machinery at all and others, able to purchase equipment but not able to meet the cost of using it and the expense of maintenance and repairs.

With agriculture as the first priority, more funds in aid of farming and a larger proportion of capital construction investment is being allocated to this sector. The percentage of the Capital Construction Fund devoted to agriculture increased from 10.7 in 1978 to 14 in 1979 and will rise to 18 in the next few years.

At the same time, it is realized that finance to carry out all the large-scale capital construction projects required for the modernization of farming and supplying modern machinery to the rural areas is simply not available from state funds. The amount has been estimated to be of the order of 1,000,000 million yuan.

As in the case of industry, it is recognized that notwithstanding the limits on financial inputs, significant growth can be generated in the countryside by tapping existing potentials, given the size of China, the land, natural resources and available man-power.

Accepting that state financial assistance cannot meet the total demand for funds for the modernization of agriculture, steps are being taken to improve the ability of communes and production teams to generate their own funds and examples are quoted of advanced models who raise 70 per cent of their farming development funds through their own efforts.

A major source of accumulation are the 1,520,000 commune and production brigade factories with a labour force of 28 million which in 1978 realized an output value of 49,100 million yuan. Far from diminishing the role of these commune-run enterprises, the modernization program envisages not only their extension but also their integration with the main industrial sector by supplying components and equipment for state or collective factories at the county or provincial levels.

The allocation of funds to aid agriculture will in future have two prongs, one to focus on key localities developing bases for grains, cash crops, animal husbandry, fishery and forestry where quick returns can be expected, and the other to support the poorer regions in remote mountainous and border districts, minority nationality areas and certain regions

suffering from protracted low outputs and grain shortages.

Despite massive financial support over the years in the form of capital construction funds, circulating capital and operating expenses, the achievements of the 3,000 state farms have been far from satisfactory, especially in average grain output and financial losses. The financial management of these farms is being restructured with the purpose of making them responsible for their profits and losses. The state farms, with the exception of those in areas poorly endowed with natural resources, are being enjoined to turn their losses into profits within this year or next and to supply more grain and other commodities to the state.

Already some improvement has been recorded. In 1978, state farms and land reclamation departments suffered a loss of 90 million yuan. This situation was turned round in 1979 when a profit of 300 million yuan was realized.

Light Industry

Output of light industry rose in 1979 by 9.6 per cent (compared with a 7.7 per cent increase for heavy industry).

The rate of growth has accelerated in the first seven months of 1980, when the value of output of light industry registered a 23.3 per cent increase over the same period of 1979. The greater part of the higher production is absorbed by the domestic market with an increase of consumer spending resulting from increments in industrial wages and the stepping up of peasant income.

Light industry is given priority in supplies of power and raw materials and in transport as well as a foreign currency allocation of 300 million yuan for the purchase of foreign equipment and raw materials. Bank loans to the textile and other light industries are expected to reach 2,000 million yuan this year.

Heavy Industry

Within heavy industry the focus is on the laggard or precursor sectors which are at present holding back the growth of all other sectors, and on the needs of farming. A recent evaluation in the *People's Daily* suggests that generally speaking the products of heavy industry are in full or excess supply, while light industrial products are in short supply. This clearly does not apply to the laggard or precursor sectors, especially the energy industry.

For the present, energy will be supplied on a selective basis and the drive for a reduction of consumption, which already began to show results in 1979, will continue with the following targets for savings in 1980.

Coal	23,000,000 tons
Fuel oil	1,500,000 tons
Coke	1,500,000 tons
Electricity	7,000,000,000 kw

Other factors which will make for lower consumption of coal, oil and electricity are the slowing down of steel output and the stress on light industry which is less energy-intensive than heavy industry. For the longer term, a start was made in 1979 to increase production capacity which will begin to redress the inadequacies in coming years:

Coal	13,930,000 tons
Crude oil	8,000,000 tons
Natural gas	1,830,000,000 cu.m.
Power generating capacity	4,650,000 kw

China is exceptionally rich in *hydro-power resources*, less than 5 per cent of which have so far been tapped. An American report of May 1980 observes:

China has the world's largest hydro-electric resources. Although the bulk of these resources is located in remote areas of West and Southwest China, an estimated 145,000 to 220,000 mw of exploitable hydro-electric capacity can be transmitted to major industrial centres using China's existing technology. This is about three to five times China's total installed capacity (thermal and hydro) at year-end 1978.

The Ministry of Power has announced a program designed to achieve a rational distribution of hydro-electric power throughout the country, but because of the long leadtimes involved, the larger hydro-electric plants are unlikely to come into service much before 1987.

China is the world's third biggest miner of coal and new large reserves are being discovered. She will concentrate on coal as her major source of energy, at least until the large hydro-electric stations start to produce. The chief bottle-neck is transport from the mines. A large part of railway development will be devoted to moving coal from the pitheads to industrial centres and to the ports for export.

China's *petroleum* policy in the short term is to keep extraction at roughly its present level whilst exploratory surveys both on and

offshore are being completed. Several new large reserves have been found in Xinjiang, Henan, Shandong, Qinghai and Liaoning and seismic surveys are being conducted offshore in joint operations between China and some 16 foreign companies. Only when these surveys are completed will a production strategy be decided upon.

China has decided to cut back her target for crude steel in 1980 by 1,400,000 tons whilst increasing output of rolled steel and finished products. Imports of steel have been slashed. Meanwhile the concentration is on improving the performance of existing plants. The only foreign steel plant going ahead is at Baoshan near Shanghai which will eventually produce six million tons.

Whilst speeding up the growth of the lag-gard sectors, and the development of the textile and other light industries, the plan for industry will also give priority to aiding agriculture by increasing the production of chemical fertilizers, insecticides, farm machinery, building materials for rural use and providing technical services for farmers.

Accumulation and Consumption

As far back as 1958, the danger of excessive accumulation at the expense of consumption was being voiced by Chinese leaders. Despite these warnings the rate of accumulation rose to around 40 per cent during the period of the Cultural Revolution. At the National People's Congress in June 1979 Zhang Jingfu, Minister of Finance, advised that the rate of accumulation exceeded reasonable limits.

With the raising of incomes of both peasants and workers and the allocation of increased funds to improve housing and other social amenities, the rate between accumulation and consumption is being modified in favour of the latter. 'One lesson of post-Liberation economic experience', stated an economic commentator in the *Workers' Daily* of 23 July, 1980, 'is that high rates of accumulation slowed down the pace of developing the productive forces against the wishes of the planners'. At about 30 per cent, the rate is considered to be above a satisfactory level. The policy to bring it down to around 25 per cent is seen as a gradual process in order to avoid dislocations to the economy which could be caused by too abrupt a change.

Restructuring of Industry

The system of totally integrated factories, a number of them supplied by the Soviet

Union, may have been an inescapable necessity for China in the middle 1950's when she was at the start of her industry-building program, given the supply and transport conditions prevailing at that time and the level of technical manpower then available. The country was emerging from a pre-industrial agrarian economy in which the greater part of industry, such as it was, was of an handicraft and repairshop type.

The legacy of pre-Liberation China, as R. H. Tawney described it, bore heavily on these early attempts at industrialization:

What exists in China. . . is less an organized industrial system than a labyrinth or spider's web of small undertakings, each working under conditions peculiar to itself, and isolated by difficulties of communications from all but those in its immediate neighbourhood.

The totally integrated type of enterprise obviously cannot meet the needs in equipment and components sufficiently specialized and of a quality to satisfy the requirements of a diversified economy, still less match up to the demands of the Four Modernizations. A recent Chinese report observes that 70 to 80 per cent of the machine building factories have their own foundries. 'Their production is characterized by small batches, backward technology, high consumption and very low labour productivity.'

Steps toward specialization have already been taken in the textile and other light industries and tentative changes towards specialized component production instituted in the agricultural machinery industry. The province of Heilongjiang, one of the bases for grain and soya bean production, will be given priority in farm mechanization. It set up in July 1980 an integrated tractor company, in which two tractor plants and eight diesel engine and tractor component factories will cooperate. These changes have not been so difficult to bring about, but when it comes to the major integrated plants with all their complexity, such as the No.1 Truck Factory in Changchun, Jilin (Kirin), the change-over can only be gradual if a serious loss of production is to be avoided during the period of transition.

An experiment in restructuring of another kind was instituted in July 1980 when the Nanjing Radio Company was inaugurated, by an agreement between the Fourth Ministry of Machine Building, Jiangsu province and

Nanjing municipality. This company is described as a joint entrepreneurial venture combining plants under the jurisdiction of a ministry at the centre and plants under the jurisdiction of the province and the municipality, covering enterprises in state or all people's ownership as well as collective enterprises, and bringing under one umbrella plants producing complete sets of equipment and others only components. The jurisdiction, the financial system and the ownership of these individual enterprises, however, remain unchanged.

China's Way to Modernization

The 1978 decision to effect the readjustments was not merely to set a new direction for China's economy, it also represented a considerable shift of emphasis with less stress on foreign technology and the utilization of foreign loans. Much more attention is being given to China finding her own way to modernization and to avoid the negative effects which has accompanied industrialization in other countries. Here, a major factor is the realization that China has substantial industrial capacity which, at present, is only partially utilized owing to shortage of power, transport and materials, inefficient management and outmoded production methods. In industry, therefore, the first and major thrust is to modernize existing enterprises, by raising the technological level of the production processes, to realize higher productivity and improve the quality of the product.

There is a switch from building new factories to upgrading the production methods of the existing ones, many of which, the Chinese say, are at the level of international standards of the 1950's and 1960's.

Accompanying this move towards modernizing existing capacity is a turn from the blind drive for mechanization across the board—'microchips with everything'—which figured in industrial policy in the first flush of the modernization proposals. A more realistic approach has supervened, taking account of the present low level of the country's technical infrastructure, the financial stringencies which restrict the possibility of heavy investments in projects giving a relatively slow return and the problems of servicing, maintenance and calibration of highly sophisticated equipment. Overlaying these considerations is the spectre of unemployment which could be exacerbated by overhasty modernization of industry in the period before the policy of further restricting population growth has had its full effect.

Recent pronouncements suggest a more flexible and realistic policy for the next period, giving more attention to middle-level technology, which is an advance on existing equipment and which can be successfully and smoothly incorporated into the production process without unduly straining the present capabilities of the technical labour force.

The Chinese are squaring up to the fact that labour-intensive enterprises will have to continue for some time and that the way forward in industry will necessitate a blend of mechanization, semi-mechanization and, in places, manual methods.

The present is, for China, a period of questioning, reviewing past performance, experimenting with new methods, new organizational forms and new types of relationships between economic organizations. Some features are relatively clear, others still very fluid and many questions still unanswered. It is the intention that these various strands will, in due time, coalesce into a major economic reform.

As the process of readjustment opens out, new problems and new insights into the realities of the Chinese economy, both positive and negative, are coming to light. The readjustment period may well have to continue beyond the original target date of the end of 1981. Certainly the time required for the laggard departments—coal, power and transport—to catch up will be significantly longer, stretching into the Ten Year Plan now in preparation, the details of which should be announced by the end of this year.

What is important is that the economic results of 1979 and the first months of 1980 indicate that the process of evening out the disproportions has begun. Productivity in state-owned industries has risen by 6.4 per cent, quality levels have improved, in some cases surpassing previous peaks, the consumption of fuel has been reduced and the number of state enterprises operating at a loss is 15 per cent lower than in 1978.

Within the framework of these developments, the range of opportunities for foreign trade and technical cooperation are quite diverse.

The technical updating of factories will in many cases necessitate the importation of specialist equipment. In some enterprises the renovation of a complete workshop within the factory complex can be undertaken by

foreign experts. The Chinese are now realizing that the use of truly independent foreign consultants can prove to be a most economical method of jacking up their industrial technology.

New techniques developed in the West of materials substitutes, the use of additives and other techniques to enhance production without significantly adding to costs are of great interest to our Chinese friends in their search for higher output with minimum investment.

Several of the major projects now going ahead are linked with loans at favourable rates of interest—such as the Belgian power plant and the six Japanese projects to develop coal mines and the railway and port-handling facilities for coal and oil to be exported to Japan.

The purpose of joint ventures involving foreign capital is, as the Foreign Investment Control Commission explained to me, principally to inject new technology into Chinese industries. One should be clear that these will never represent a major portion of China's total investments or her foreign trade.

These new forms call for more ingenuity and adaptability on the part of China's trade partners and also require a deeper understanding of the specific conditions in China.

Foreign Trade

An encouraging feature is the rise of China's foreign trade in recent years, especially seen against a situation in which world

trade is slowing down. China's two-way trade increased by 28 per cent in 1979 to 45,000 million yuan which, even allowing for price inflation, represents a substantial rise.

Recently in Beijing, friends in the Ministry of Foreign Trade explained that they expected foreign trade to rise by about 20 per cent in 1980. Their forecast has been proved accurate so far, with the figures for the first half of the year not only showing a 20.2 per cent increase over the same period of 1979 but achieving a positive balance in visible trade with exports at 12,930 and imports at 12,730 million yuan.

Commercial relations with China, especially for manufacturers of sophisticated and specialized equipment, are becoming something more than a mere buying and selling operation. They extend into many other forms of cooperation in technology, consultancy services, training of Chinese technicians, methods of financing, and, on the larger projects, the stationing of foreign specialists and, in some cases, their families, in China. For some countries, collaboration between sections of industry and their Chinese counterparts rather than an enterprise-to-enterprise relationship is seen as a coming prospect.

We can expect to see commercial, economic, technical and even social relationships of a new type opening up—more challenging, more exciting, richer and wider in scope and, of necessity, mutually rewarding as China moves ahead into the 1980's with her program of modernization.



Jiangyou, the Home of Li Bai

Rewi Alley

Jiangyou is situated on the north-south railway, beside the Fujiang River. One did not pass through it in War of Resistance years, as the main highway north then ran through Zitong and Jiange. So my visit here was a first for me. In its modern form, Jiangyou is a county of over 750,000 people, with an average grain production of 4.95 tons a hectare. There are several large-scale national and prefectural plants operating in the county, including an iron and steel one that employs 30-40,000 workers. Natural gas is found here and is used in the manufacture of fertilizer, for city buses in Mianyang, and for industrial workers' fuel needs in Jiangyou. In industry operated by the county, goods to the value of 60,000,000 yuan a year are turned out. It is one of the 18 counties of Mianyang prefecture.

Li Bai

Our first visit was to the site of the family home of Li Bai (Po). His father, Li Ke, was a trader at a time when the old Silk Road was China's main trade route west, and Li Bai was born in the town of Sui Ye near Lake Balkash in 701. His mother was probably Turkish. Sitting on camels or trotting beside them, the five-year-old boy came across modern Xinjiang and Gansu until the river system of Sichuan could be contacted, and got to what was to be the family home in Jiangyou.

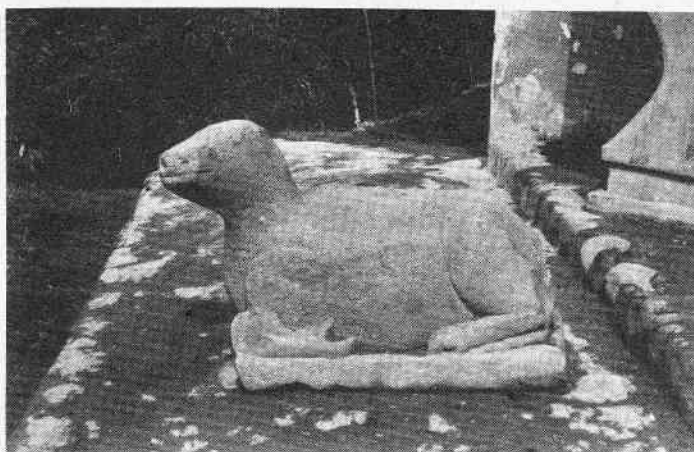
In the Song dynasty (960-1279), a temple was erected beside the old home, with three halls. Now a school has been set up there, and where the temple, then called the Taibai Dian, stood is a playground. It is the school of the Taibai brigade of the Qinglian commune. In the Qing dynasty (1644-1911), a very ornate *Paifang* was erected over the entrance, characters naming it Lung Xi Yuan. Outside it sits a stone model of an ox, excavated in the valley opposite when construction work was carried out near by recently.

How ancient it is cannot be ascertained. The county annals have two stories about Stone Ox Gully. The first is to the effect that when Li Bai left Jiangyou, his only sister was left alone. She had no strength to cultivate the fields and so prayed for help, at which Heaven sent an ox to help her. But when the local folk saw what they took to be a stray animal, they went to beat it, at which it immediately turned to stone. A more prosaic version is that in the valley opposite her house were some rocks which looked like oxen, thus giving the valley its name.



Gate to old home of Li Bai at Jiangyou.

The name of the locality then was 'Qinglian'. Li Bai later took it for his second name or *hao*. There seems to be nothing recorded of Li Bai until he reached the age of eight, when he was sent to be taught Chinese at the Buddhist temple on Kuang Shan, 15 km away from his home. At home he probably spoke a Turkic language with his mother and sister, and obviously had a good grounding in that language, for he was able to interpret for an embassy to the Tang court in Chang'an many



A stone ox dug up in a valley opposite Li Bai's home.

years afterwards. Now he was to spend the next ten years, those from 8 to 18 maybe, studying, and at times travelling to Chengdu, Mount Emei (Omei), and so on.

The monks in the temple called Zong He Da Ming, on Kuang Shan, did a very good job of teaching, and the boy was a great reader of every book he could get hold of. Sometimes he would take them up the scenic mountain called Doutuan, which is 22 km from the county city, to read. Here were some fantastic peaks and caves, which delighted the boy greatly.

When ten years of age, in the county office of Jiangming—then the name of today's Jiangyou—he was roundly scolded by the magistrate's wife, to whom he replied with a poem that is recorded in the county annals but not in any of the collections of his works that have been gathered in after years. Another poem recorded in the annals is one written when he had completed his studies and was leaving the monastery. It is called 'Farewell to Kuang Shan', and also has been missed by collectors.

Another one he wrote in his early years, however, was to become quite famous. It is on going to look for a Daoist (Taoist) priest, and not finding him. When he was 20, he went to Chengdu, and wrote the poem 'Climbing up the San Hua Lou'. Then when 23 he spent some time on Mount Emei, and wrote another poem on 'Climbing Emei', then, when he left, another called 'Song to the Mountain and the Moon at Emei'.

Around the age of 25, he left home, and went by boat down the Yangtze through the gorges to Hubei, all the time becoming more political in writing poems. When 27, and at Anlu near Xiangyang, he married a lass of the

Xu Family who was a granddaughter of an early Prime Minister in Tang, Xu Yushi. He lived in the house of the Xu family for ten years, and at the age of 30 went for the first time to Chang'an. At that time he gained his livelihood mainly by trading.

His next move was to Ren Cheng in Shandong, a place now called Jining. Leaving his family of wife and two children there, he travelled through various provinces. He made friends with an influential Daoist priest Wu Yun, who recommended him to the court. This was in 742, the first year of the Tian Bao period. The emperor received him and gave him the academic title of 'Guang Feng Han Lin', one that bestowed honour, but no emolument. But the court was no place for Li Bai. He kept the title for three years, but was soon travelling again, staying in various places in Henan and Anhui.

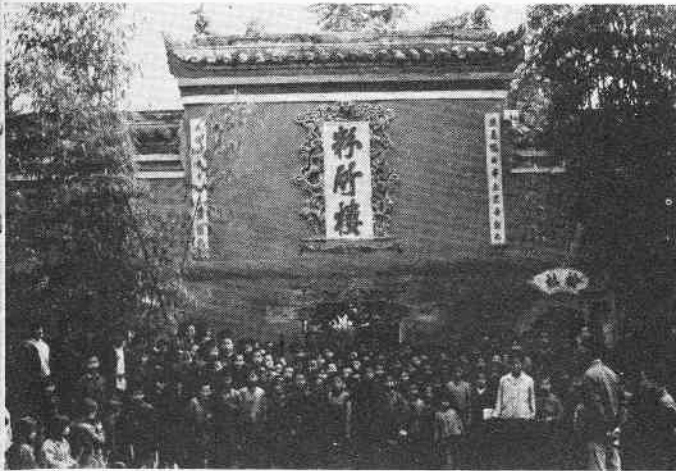
In 754 came the An Lushan Rebellion. The emperor went to Sichuan, and the crown prince set up resistance headquarters at Lingwu in Gansu. Li Bai was at that time at what is now Jiujiang, joining up with Prince Li Lin, who was commander of the anti-An Lushan forces in the south. This prince, however, had the idea of taking supreme power himself, so the new emperor took action against him, crushing him, with the result that Li Bai had to serve a term in jail, and then be exiled to Guizhou.

When news came of a general amnesty for those who had followed Li Lin, Li Bai returned to his travels. In these years his first wife had died and he had married again, having no children by his second marriage. Down the river in south Anhui, he went to stay with a relation who was the county magistrate of Dangtu, not far from the today's Anhui Iron and Steel Works at Ma'an Shan. There in 762, he died of sickness. He was 61 years of age.

The above outline was given us by the staff of the temporary memorial museum which has been set up in Jiangyou city, where everything connected with Li Bai is carefully recorded, and where there is a very extensive collection of his works, and of scrolls concerning him.

It was fun to go to the old home of Li Bai. One of the buildings there is much the same as it must have been in Li Bai's time, with openings in the roof for water to run down into little stone-lined wells below with oleander flowers against a white wall, and big cool rooms inside. It was Sunday, so that the school was closed, which did not stop the

schoolchildren coming around us to see what was happening. When we went from the Li Bai home over to that of his sister, the youngsters arrived in force. This compound also had a fine, coloured *paifang* fronting it, with the characters Fen Zhu Lou inscribed on it. Two families lived inside, each with its bio-gas installation, and the place was also used as a playground for the schoolchildren, being big enough for that.



Gate over the entrance to the home of Li Bai's sister at Jiangyou.

Memorial Hall

The temporary memorial hall occupies the second floor of a large building situated in the city. It is well kept up, and the staff are well up on their subject. The big new memorial halls and park are being constructed in a scenic area that was once a graveyard, trees planted after Liberation giving grace to it, and flower gardens abounding. The buildings are being built in the Tang dynasty style, and three will be ready to receive visitors by 1 October, 1980. The others will be completed two years later. All will be joined by covered corridors. There will be a look-out tower, from which both Kuang Shan and Doutuan Shan will be clearly visible, the dammed up river beside splashing over the dam top. There will be a Qinglian (or Lotus) Pond, and also a replica of the well where Li Bai used to wash his ink slab, while a road and a new entrance will be constructed.

In the temporary memorial hall, we saw many Ming (1368-1644) and Qing dynasty editions of Li Bai's works, and a replica of some of his handwriting. As in the Du Fu memorial park in Chengdu, we liked the Jiang Zhaohe painting of him the best. I would have liked to have seen some pictures of him in his early boyhood, climbing the mountains,

and getting around the countryside. If they were painted realistically, some old intellectuals, who like all their heroes in stiff court costume, would probably be scandalized, but I think the majority of people would appreciate them.

More on Li Bai's Early Days

Li Bai's father Li Ke had to leave Sui Ye because of a Turkic rising there. War and trade do not mix, so the family went across the deserts, and down into Qin'an in Gansu where Li Ke had been born. What kind of a family it was, we do not know, but in trading between Han and national minorities, the business was usually a family affair, various members going to different places. Probably in Qin'an it was decided that Jiangyou would be a good place for Li Ke to go, for salt could be easily bought there, and salt was very essential, especially in southern Shaanxi and eastern Gansu. At that time a people called Di lived on the site of the present Jiangyou city. They traded with Han on the opposite side of the Qi River, a tributary of the Fujiang, the traders' place of crossing being called the Man Po Du or the 'tribesmen's wives ferry'. The tribesmen would not come themselves, but only sent their wives to carry on the trade. At that time in Sichuan, and for long after, all of the many minorities were referred to by the common name of Man. *Po* is Chinese for 'wife' in ordinary usage. It is interesting that Li Ke made his home right amongst the Di on the Di side of the river. Maybe his sending Li Bai to be boy monk had something to do with his safety, for the Di did not bother monks, but the main thing was to get him an education that would enable him to go anywhere in China. The family counted themselves as being distant relations of the Tang emperors, who though with Turkic blood in their veins have been called the most Chinese of all dynasties, in their rule, and understanding.

The fate of Li Bai's sister was a sad one. Betrothed to a young man, he died before they were formally married, and she became a widow in perpetuity until she died, in his home. Her grave is still kept up.

As the dynasties went on, the Di people retreated to the hills and those who did not dropped tribal dress and language and just became Han. Like the Maoris of New Zealand, they wore a feather in their hair on one side of their head. Today in their highland home they are simply classed with the Tibetans of Apa, some of whose language they can speak,



A monk crossing from one top to another of Doutuan Mountain on a suspension bridge.

though in conversation amongst themselves they still use the ancient Di language. Li Bai, one year after graduation from his Kuang Shan temple, became a member on the county magistrate's staff. But he was not cut out to be a bureaucrat, and preferred the freedom of the highways and by-ways. As he soon became famous for his verse, the great and powerful would ask him to write something for them, and then make him a substantial present in exchange, so that he would have more periods or relative affluence than those when he was truly hard up, especially the years towards the end of his life. He made many friends wherever he went, amongst them the great poet Du Fu, who admired him tremendously. When he wrote nostalgically of home, it was Jiangyou he always meant. This was natural, of course, for the place where he had spent a happy boyhood remained strong on his mind. There are memorial halls to him in the home he left his wife and children in at Ren Cheng in Shandong, and too where he died at Dangtu in Anhui, but the one in

Jiangyou will certainly be the most fascinating and imposing one to visit, when it is completed.

More on Jiangyou

A county leader filled us in with more information about modern Jiangyou. The county has 48,000 hectares of arable land which is worked by 48 communes, in its nine *qu* divisions. In 1976 the grain crop amounted to 200,000 tons; in 1978, 270,000 tons and in 1979, 330,000 tons. Rape-seed, essential for food oil, showed a 30% increase in 1979 over 1976. The grain ration per head is 315 kg, and the cash income per head 110 yuan. The largest family income in the county, one in which the family had several working members, was 3,000 yuan in 1979. Work-points averaged 90 *fen*, the highest being 2.80 yuan. Commercial retail sales amounted to 110,000,000 yuan in 1979. In the same year, 8,000 new jobs were found for unemployed graduates of middle schools. In 1980 the re-



Mountain peaks that Li Bai climbed—the Doutuan Shan Double Peaks. Note the figure crossing from one peak to another.

maining 4,000 will be so allocated. With conditions improving, the spirit of the people is rising. 50,000 tons of grain was sold to the state, 5,000 tons in excess of the quota. The production of medical herbs has increased, as has that of tea and fruit, especially oranges. In sidelines and in breeding poultry, some people make an additional 500 yuan a year.

Fish ponds are being developed. There are 14 railway stations in the county, most mainly used by local and goods trains. Some 40,000 square metres of modern housing has been built for workers and the county has 7 million yuan in hand to carry on its improvement plans for the rest of this year. In the matter of people's livelihood, meat has come off the ration. There are 300,000 pigs, and 32,000 bio gas pits, though due mainly to technical reasons only one third produce sufficient gas for home use all the year round.

The movement to set up small shops for retailing essentials at convenient places, an extension of the market system which we had seen in Chengdu and Mianyang, has come to Jiangyou. Many small, attractive-looking little shops were either being built or operated in locations convenient to the people. This will make shopping vastly easier for people, and avoid the intense overcrowding that the big state emporiums had begun to suffer from. The scenery on the highway from Mianyang to Jiangyou is most satisfying.

As with all other rural areas, there are a host of problems confronting the people, in education, health, forestry, and so on, but there is also growing a very tough and able generation that will help to solve many of them, and, too, all the new problems that each success brings.

Li Bai Poems Written in Jiangyou

The various editions of Li Bai poems have missed these few which are recorded, however, in the county annals and other works. The first was written when he was a child and his parents took him to climb a tower. Called 'Climbing a Tower' it can be translated as follows:

*The tower soars a hundred feet,
and it seems one could snatch the stars
when climbing to its top; but do
not shout aloud, lest you disturb
the gods in heaven.*

In the Song dynasty, a man named Yang Tianhui wrote a book entitled *Events in*



Tablet outside Li Bai's home built in 1961.

Chang Ming County not in Historical Records. Chang Ming was then the name of today's Jiangyou. He talked with local scholars about Li Bai, and events concerning him. It seems that during his boyhood, home from Kuang Shan for a while, he led an ox past the room where the county magistrate's wife lived, and for that she came out and scolded him. He replied with this poem:

Answering the Magistrate's Wife

*With powdered face, leaning over
the balustrade, speaking in a pretty
voice, easily heard from outside; if
you are not the Weaving Girl, then why
take so big an interest in the Cowboy?*

Yang Tianhui became magistrate of Chang Ming in the year 1099. The boy Li Bai referred to the old story of the Cowboy and the Weaving Girl meeting on opposite sides of the Milky Way. We have no record of the wife's answer!

When Li Bai was a youth of around 18, and had left Kuang Shan, he became an assistant in the county office for a while. One day when there was high water in the river, he went on an inspection tour with the magistrate to see. As they watched the swirling waters the corpse of a dead girl came floating down. The magistrate, looking, composed the following verse:

*Of which family is this girl of sixteen
now floating on the waters beside
river bank reeds; birds peek at her
painted eyebrows, and fish play
with her reddened lips.*

Then as he could not continue, Li Bai finished the poem for him with:



Statue of Li Bai at Jianguou.

*Dark hair scattered by the waves;
pallid, her once beautiful complexion;
why has she gone to meet the God
of the waters? Surely it must be
because of anger with her husband.*

The last two lines refer to the old story of an official, away for five years just after he was married, coming home and seeing a pretty woman picking mulberry leaves, offering her money for her favour, which she refused angrily. Then, coming into his home, he found that the pretty woman was his wife. She, on seeing he was her husband, went and drowned herself. The story was a criticism of officialdom, and the magistrate was so angry with Li Bai that the lad had to leave his employment.

In AD 718 when he left Kuang Shan, of which he had become very fond, he wrote this poem:

Farewell to Kuang Shan

*Early morning and green mountain peaks
make a real picture, some being high*

*others low; wisteria vines swaying in
the wind then brushing the balustrade;
so often have I gone up this hill path
my dog following, and in the evening
returned along with woodcutters, seeing
temple visitors watching the clouds
and listening to monkeys amongst forest
trees; in the near-by pond, monks washing
their begging bowls, the cranes there
flying away; blame me not for leaving
this quiet and beautiful place, for now
I would put the learning I have gained
to the service of our brilliant rule.*

Taihua Shan is a mountain connected with Kuang Shan, about 1,000 metres high. Li Bai wrote a poem on going there, which is to be found only in the county annals. It runs as follows:

Taihua Shan

*Stone steps lead up to the summit
of Taihua Mountain; just a few folk
live there enveloped in white cloud;
the priest's boy disciple plays his
flute under the moonlight, for the priest
has wandered off; the scenic rocks
look like tigers sitting there
ancient wisteria twists around
old trees like serpents; I have
heard that in the temple is a well
of jade, that leads clear to the sea
but I wonder where it is now, and
how could I go to Penglai from here
to see flowers a hundred feet high?*

The islands off the coast of Penglai in Shandong have many bits of folk lore attached to them, and the monks probably told the boy stories about them. The poem certainly has Li Bai's imaginative touch.

Then in Jianguou there is an old poem by an unknown poet about Li Bai which can be translated as follows:

*He composed poems, but as a youth
also practised the military arts;
always wishing to do something
useful; his talents however were
not appreciated, so he went to
wine for solace; really, his heart
was never drunk, just full of contempt
for courtiers and their like, very
soberly always hoping to do things
for his land and folk.*

The mountain of Doutuan Shan has been copied in miniature in many a garden, there being a very pleasant one done in that of the guesthouse at Mianyang. The name 'Doutuan'

was that of a Daoist hermit of the early Tang dynasty who lived his life out on the mountain.

Before leaving the area, I wrote the following lines:

*In the Jiangyou of Li Bai's boyhood
one with the eyes to see can catch
up with him everywhere; two youngsters
race to a canal, and dropping clothes
in one swift movement, wrestle together
in the water, laughing with delight;
further along the road comes one running
down hill, body white after winter clothing,
bare feet moving fast, shirt in one hand*

*waving it as he shouts to friends below;
then behind the stately memorial halls
now so rightly being erected to his
memory in a park of trees and gardens,
there is a wide stream, and there wading
through it came a modern Li Bai, aged
maybe ten, leading a bunch of others
like him, pants rolled hip high; the
boyhood years of Li Bai's life formed him
and left with him a deep love for his
old home that lasted all through
his years, encouraging and sustaining;
the hills, streams, trees and fields
of Jiangyou, lovely as they must have been
then certainly can still entrance today.*



Trekking with Tenzing

Richard Harrington

It was to be one of my most memorable encounters and experiences.

In the hot crowded airport of Bagdogra in north-eastern India, a lean tallish man stepped towards me, white teeth flashing a smile in a bronzed face. Dark glasses shielded alert brown eyes, a white peaked cap hid grizzled hair. A red shirt covered broad shoulders, breeches above patterned long stockings that ended in sturdy boots.

'I am Tenzing,' he said in a quiet voice.

This was the Sherpa who catapulted into instant fame in 1953, when he and Edmund Hillary jointly conquered Mt Everest (Qomolangma) for the first time. The 8,848-metre (29,030-ft) peak in the Himalayas, highest in the world, had never been climbed before despite many attempts. It was an achievement equated with first reaching the North or South Pole.

Tenzing Norgay, a Sherpa born in Nepal of Tibetan parents (his father was a cheesemaker) and Edmund Hillary, a beekeeper in New Zealand together accomplished the historic feat. Not alone, of course. The climb was master-minded by Sir John Hunt, and backed by thousands of Sherpas and porters. But Hillary (now Sir Edmund) and Tenzing got the glory, the medals, photographs, citations, diplomas and souvenirs. Both remain modest men.

Sir Edmund Hillary is heard of at times building schools and hospitals in Nepal. Tenzing Norgay, now 67, also leads a busy life in his beloved mountains. He founded the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute in Darjeeling, where he lives. It is on the border of Sikkim, until recently an independent kingdom squeezed between Nepal and Bhutan against Tibet. Tenzing continues climbing, skiing and trekking not only in the Himalayas but in many countries, including the Antarctic.

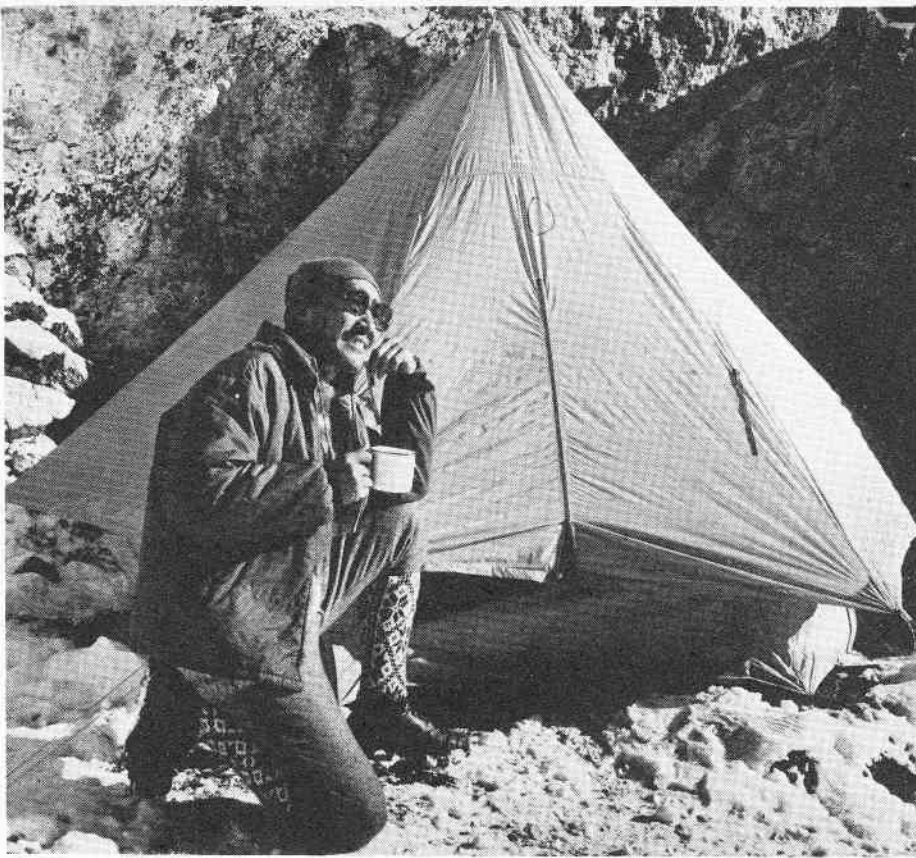
In Darjeeling, Tenzing and I were joined by a retired social worker from New York state, who had little to say. I never did learn what happened to a couple of other guests who had signed up with Lindblad Travel for high altitude trekking in western Sikkim. The area has only recently been opened to tourists, for the touchy Indian government regards it as 'sensitive', too close to Chinese territory.

Darjeeling at a 6,000-ft altitude has a delightful climate for growing. Its famous tea plantations spill in terraces over the foothills, cradled in snowpeaks. The town has grown greatly since the days of being a resort for over-hot British memsahibs.

Tenzing, as everybody calls him, checked out our gear. Satisfactory, though he insisted on lending me a poncho, but it rained only at night. The Nepalese porters would carry all the food and camping equipment in panniers and tea chests. We had to be self-sufficient in the lonely mountains. A cook, and 8 porters, a Sherpa apiece for the guests, completed our Party. They went on ahead, and we caught up with them by jeep. We were breaking in to the altitude gradually. Pasan the cook, Karma, my Sherpa and Nawang became real people, reliable, resourceful, tireless and tactful, all with open friendly faces.

Tenzing, though a 'senior citizen', proved as agile and energetic as a man of 40 to 45, obviously enjoying every moment of life. Quick to understand though unable to read or write more than his name, yet we found innumerable subjects to discuss in friendly comradeship. Tenzing in his accented English and limited vocabulary spoke of his encounters and experiences in the world beyond the mountains with neither longing nor disparagement. He was so self-effacing I sometimes found it hard to remember that he is not only a national hero, but has bathed in international fame and honours.

Even in Darjeeling, people single him out



Tenzing by his camp.

to greet him with hands folded respectfully. He chats easily with local Sherpas, Tibetans and Sikkimese, but politely refuses mob requests for autographs or to pose for photos.

Our trek, he told us, would cover 73 miles, but only 6-8 miles a day, suited to our strength. 'But,' he smiled, 'remember that Sikkimese miles are very long and arduous.'

We would not need to worry about mountain sickness, that nausea and headache from shortage of oxygen, because we would acclimatize slowly as we went along. But I noticed that the Sherpas carried two oxygen cylinders for the guests, just in case.

Anyone planning to trek at high altitude should be in good shape physically for it is strenuous. I had practised walking 10-15 miles in a local ravine park to harden up. It did help on steep trails.

The jeep left us close to Pemayangtze Tourist Lodge, a new hostelry with a superb view. But few guests. We met a dozen other Lindblad travellers, a motor party on its way to Gangtok, Sikkim's capital, enroute to Bhutan to the east. The party was led by Daku, Tenzing's charming wife, 41. She is

a mountaineer in her own right, a Sherpa from Tibet, mother of four.

Next morning the motor party rolled down the road, and we trekkers started uphill on foot. Tenzing supplied us with ski poles to use as alpenstocks. (He does a lot of downhill skiing and gives that the credit for his sound legs.)

We very quickly fell into the routine developed by our experienced company. At dawn, 'bed tea' sugared and milked and stirred before being presented at our bedrolls. By 6 a.m. a hearty breakfast of small Sikkimese eggs, toast and marmalade, and more tea. Then the Sherpas had struck camp, the porters tied the tents on to their loads and were off single file.

Karma, my personal Sherpa, went ahead of me, but never out of shouting distance in case I ran into trouble. Similarly Nawang ranged himself between the two guests, and Tenzing formed the rearguard. Pasan, the cook, often went ahead to have food or tea ready when we hove into sight.

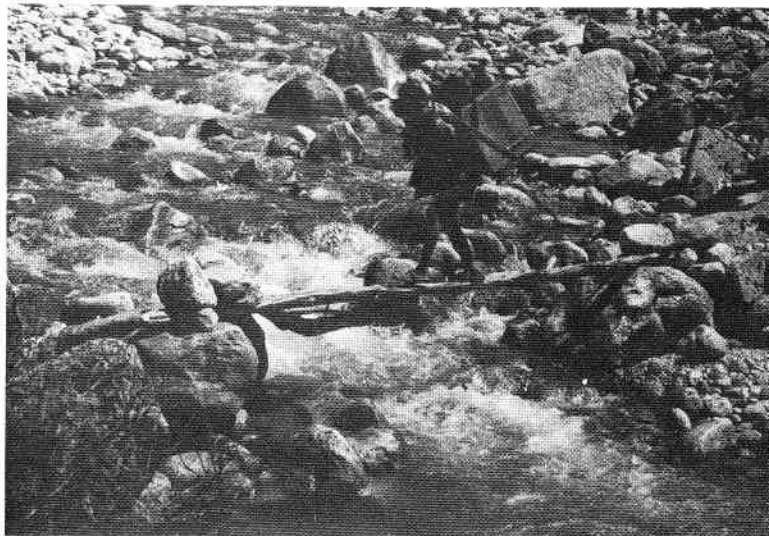
We guests followed at our own pace, which suited my short stature, and gave me op-



A first view of the Himalayan ranges, giant cedars in foreground.



Kavang, a Sherpa guide.



Porters cross a mountain stream on a log.



Crossing Dzongri Pass, 4,270 m.





Chortens at Tashiding Monastery.



A close-up of Tenzing, 67, in his beloved mountains.



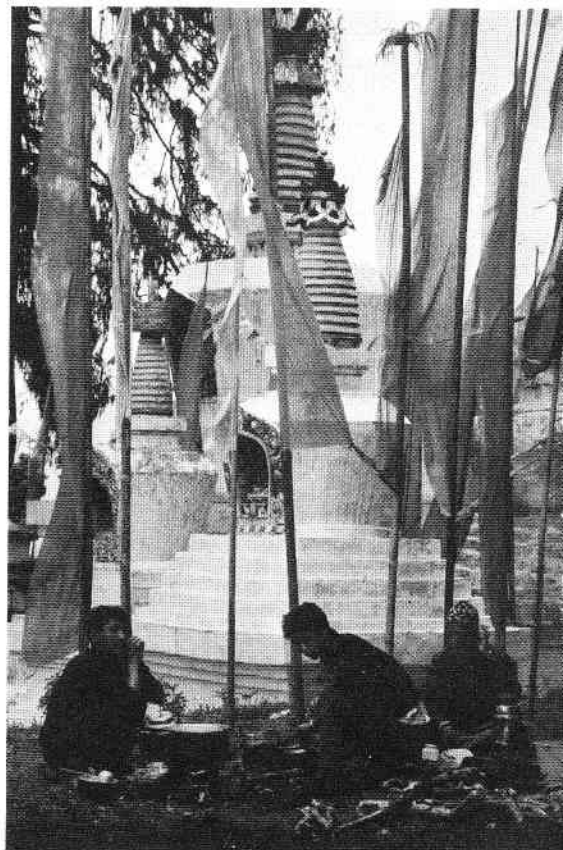
Sherpas prepare an evening meal.



Prayer flags and Sanskrit inscriptions at Tashiding Monastery.



A novice Buddhist monk at Tashiding Monastery.



Sherpa guides prepare food among prayer flags on the grounds of Tashiding Monastery.

portunity to stand and stare, to absorb the landscape, to relish the circumstances. After 3-4 hours of hiking and gazing, it was always a pleasant surprise to see smoke rising ahead and lunch spread on plates. Our longest march was 8 hours, 8 miles perhaps. But soon the tents would be up, our sleeping bags (laid on) opened, and, of course, afternoon tea ready.

Tenzing has a vast knowledge of his environment, knows his plants if not their Latin names. He showed us how to identify button mushrooms, which he picked for dinner, fiddlehead ferns, wild spinach, even nettles which Pasan made into excellent cream soup.

Pasan deftly proved his skill over hot embers (at times the porters carried firewood from lower wooded slopes), pots and pans propped up on stones. Sitting on 3-legged stools, we watched every move with interest. Soon we were munching on fried chicken (carried live in a hamper), buttered fiddleheads, thin peppery pancakes called *puri* and small thick blistered sweet pancakes called *parata*.

We wolfed down everything happily, but marvelled at how lightly Tenzing ate—a small meal once a day seemed astonishingly little intake considering his output of energy.

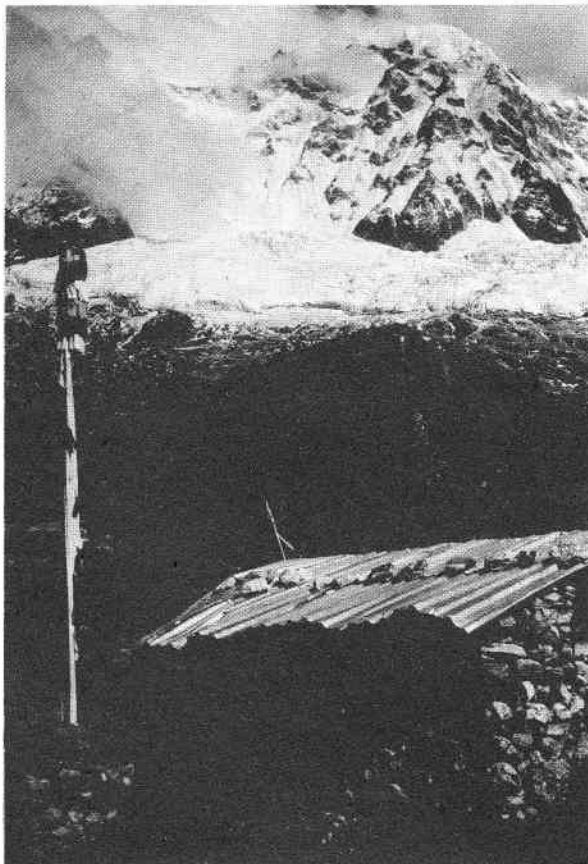
Soon after eating, we guests were glad to crawl into our sleeping bags, for ten hours of undisturbed sleep. The nights were perfectly silent except for thunder at times.

We walked through stately forests of Himalayan cedar and oak, their trunks bedecked with orchids. Many magnolia trees were in white blossom. Rhododendrons were in bloom—red, purple, pink and white—full-size trees at this altitude, like the azaleas. The April days, were sunny and cloudless, it was sheer delight to be trekking, to be alive. Of course, my thigh muscles protested, my breath came in gasps, but I could rest anytime. I carried only a day-pack and my cameras.

Nights were sometimes rainy, and one night the puddles around our tents were frozen. My long underwear kept me snug in my sleeping bag. Two nights we slept in forestry lodges, but by common consent preferred our blue tents.

I shall never forget my first view of the stark ice-cold Himalayan ranges soaring into a sky so deeply blue as to seem black. The

higher we climbed, the happier Tenzing became. His eyes lighted up, and his smile broke out joyously. (His startlingly white teeth have only once been to a dentist, an American, who found a tiny cavity. Tenzing does not own a toothbrush, simply rubs salt on his gums.)



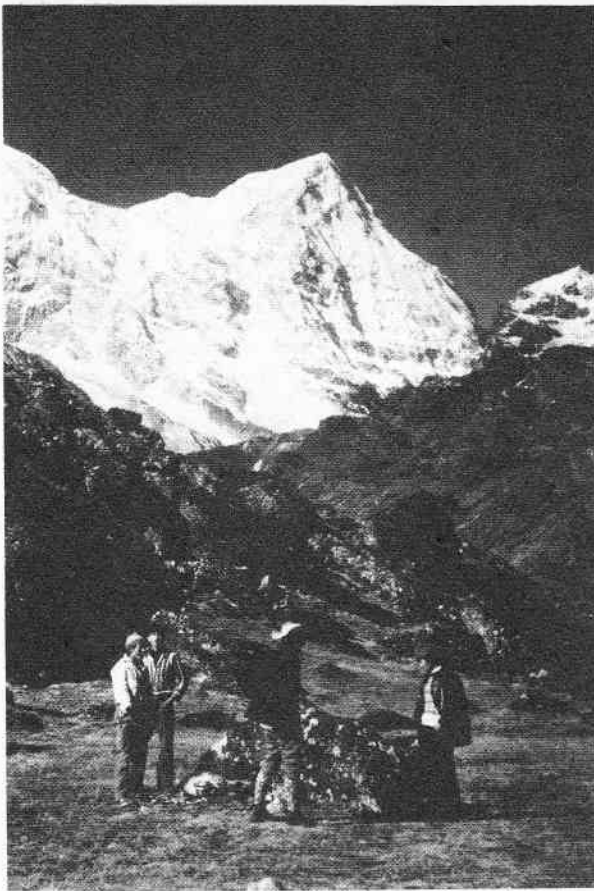
At Chowrikang, 4,880 m, a prayer flag flutters in the wind.

Ahead lay Chowrikang, the toughest uphill stretch to 15,000 feet.

Tenzing said cheerfully while we guests panted for our second wind, 'Only two hours more! See that col? That's Chowrikang, the Base Camp of our Mountaineering Institute.'

But it was all rock, a scarcely defined trail. I found myself setting little goals. That rock a hundred feet away—I can make that. . . Thus I kept leading myself on, puffing, foot by foot upwards! The porters passed me, taking shortcuts, while I plodded along the easier gradient. I saw them with their bulky loads silhouetted against the skyline, far ahead.

Step by weary step between rests, it took



Making tea on an alpine meadow.

me more than two hours to reach Base Camp, Chowrikang, on a small plateau. The setting was impressive. The camp was not. Only three or four stone huts, roofed with corrugated iron, and inhabited by two Tibetan caretakers and their frisky Lhasa Abso dogs. These friendly little creatures loved to be scratched.

As if a vast curtain had been drawn, cold wet clouds came up the col behind us, blotting out the mountain giants. Thunder rumbled through the hushed night, and by morning, an inch of snow lay over everything. It soon melted under a clear sky that revealed the majestic peaks around us.

Snowfields at the top spread down into hanging glaciers, cirques cupped ice and snow to unbelievable depths. Tenzing looked around with approval. He had climbed all these mountains not once but several times. They were now targets for the students of the Mountaineering Institute, the normal users of the Base Camp. Ruthang, Kabru and Kabru Dome, 22-23,000 feet and Mt Pandim.

Tenzing pointed to Mt Fray, 19,800 feet high. 'Daku climbed that peak when she was

five months pregnant,' he said with gentle pride.

We breakfasted in this glorious setting, sheltered from the wind by a big rock incised with Tibetan prayer characters: *Omni padme hum.*

'An easy day today,' Tenzing announced. 'Come up the hill with me,' he invited. 'I will carry your films and lenses. Only ten minutes.'

It took considerably longer than that to reach the prayer flags whipping on the ridge, 600 feet above camp, but it was worth the effort. An indescribable scene of white mountains. I was so excited I began to hop around, but at once felt a wave of dizziness.

'Do everything slowly,' Tenzing advised, and laughed in sheer joy.



Tenzing talks with a Buddhist abbot at Tashiding Monastery.

We turned back reluctantly down to Base Camp and down the col.

I spoke of having glimpsed Mt Kachenjunga from the hotel in Darjeeling, and how that mountain, at 28,208 feet, world's third highest, captured my imagination.



A Tibetan woman says her prayer with a prayer wheel in one hand and a rosary in the other.

'We will see it tomorrow,' Tenzing promised. 'We will see sunrise light it up.'

By noon, we were down on a lovely flat spot, sheltered from the afternoon up-valley wind by a crest, and with an uncluttered view of the Himalayas. As usual, clouds began to build and obscure the mountains. By nightfall, rain would come with thunder and lightning. But by then, we would be snug in our blue tents, and tomorrow would be marvellously cloudless again.

'Tomorrow bed tea at 4:30,' Tenzing said. 'We will climb the ridge to watch the sun rise on Kachenjunga.'

In early dawn, I struggled uphill behind Tenzing, a thousand feet, it felt, to the razorback ridge, where prayer flags fluttered

on tall bamboo poles, spreading their blessings broadcast.

We sat in the lee of a *chorten* (Buddhist shrine), Tenzing like an entrepreneur, I like a first-nighter at a theatre, hunkers down, waiting for the curtain to rise. The massive mountain loomed forbiddingly in the dusk. Third highest of the world's peaks, at 28,028 feet, it seemed nearer than 20-odd miles distant. Then suddenly, as if by pre-arrangement, the snowfields of the highest crests caught the first rays of a new day.

We watched in awe at the miracle of sudden light, the rebirth after the darkness of night. It had been worth the early rising, the uphill struggle. Suddenly we turned to one another and silently shook hands, before returning to a hearty breakfast.

It was not all downhill from Base Camp. Another spur of the mountains forced a climb up to 16,000 feet in order to cross Dzongri-la Pass. But by now, our legs and lungs were in good condition and we felt little discomfort. On the way, we met a group of women students from the Mountaineering Institute, all former students of Tenzing's on their way to Base Camp for advanced work on glaciers.

The next day brought us down into the lovely big-timber forests.

Soon after, we descended to the lovely big-timber forests, to the brittle magnolias and scarlet azaleas, to banana plantings and orange groves, to public campgrounds. We found a secluded campsite at Tashiding Monastery, one of the oldest in Sikkim, where Tenzing's reputation gave him entree. It was a privilege to set our tents within the garden walls, where a cuckoo called persistently from a venerable cedar.

Only Tenzing's eminence made us welcome, for a memorial funeral service was going on. Priests and novices in monks' saffron robes chanted, blew six-foot horns, struck drums and marched in procession clockwise past hundreds of stone plaques deeply incised with Buddhist prayers in Tibetan script.

Tenzing was warmly welcomed, and perhaps some money changed hands for the upkeep of the old buildings. Relaxed on the steps of a *chorten*, surrounded by hundreds of prayer flags limp in this sheltered place, Tenzing told me of other valleys rising to the

very flanks of Kachenjunga, which he hoped I would explore with him on another trek.

I have never felt more complimented.

The noisy service continued through the night, the long trumpets blasting like a foghorn. But they were purposeful noises, and I even enjoyed waking briefly to smile and fall asleep again. Tomorrow we would meet the jeep at the road, find ourselves back in Darjeeling, back into the heat and crowds of the plains, with memories of a group of

Sherpas, one pre-eminent son of Tibetan cheese-maker, boy yakh herder, a man now venerated the world over, received by statesmen, royalty, the Pope, the Dalai Lama. . . yet the same modest man as in the beginning. Back in Darjeeling, Dahu invited us to a Tibetan dinner, and Tenzing showed us a roomful of medals, citations, souvenirs and the like. They did not impress him greatly. They were trivialities compared with the man himself, and less than nothing compared with his enduring mountains.

RARE CHINA CYPRESS FOUND IN FUJIAN

A virgin forest of China cypress (*glyptostrobus pensilis*), a rare tree species, has been discovered in Pingnan county in Fujian province, East China.

This discovery interests scientists in the formation, development and community structure of the forest. China cypresses spread over the northern hemisphere in the latter part of the Mesozoic Era and the Cenozoic Era. Yet only a small number of the trees survived the latter part of the Ice Age of the Quaternary Era.

The forest has 80 trees, 66 being 20 metres high with an average diameter of 50 centimetres. The biggest one is 25 metres high with a diameter of 70 centimetres. There are also many young cypresses growing.

Found in a 180-metre-long and 40-metre-wide valley at an elevation of 1,200 metres, the forest is believed to be 450 years old. The trees have grown from seeds that happened to fall in this marshy area. The forest has been listed as a protected item.

Fossils of China cypresses have been found by scientists in many areas. However, an occasional tree can still be spotted in the natural forests in southern China including Jiangxi, Fujian, Sichuan, Guangdong, Guangxi, Yunnan and Taiwan.

Xinhua, Fuzhou, 16 August

Youth for Modernization

Brigid Keogh

The word 'modernization' is often heard in China today, so often that it risks becoming a catch word devoid of meaning. It is usually connected with ambitious industrial projects, military up-dating and technological know-how, all of which are dependent on cooperation with highly developed foreign nations. In this great drive for material progress, however, perhaps one aspect draws less attention, that is, the training of minds that is taking place in China's prestigious University of Beijing.

I have been teaching in the Western Language and Literature Department of Beijing University for the past two years. I went there in 1978 after the modernization program had been launched and when the first group of students had been admitted by examination. I have witnessed during these two years a quiet, steady and intelligent training of the youth of China which in the long run is perhaps one of the more important, albeit less spectacular, aspects of modernization, for it is fashioning from within the agents of growth of the new China. It is forming young men and women who will not have to look elsewhere for help, but who will have within themselves the power to mould 'the shape of things to come'.

What has impressed me the most in the Western Language and Literature Department has been the manner in which the needs and the potentialities of the new students have been grasped and teaching methods and curricula adapted accordingly. The students who came to the university in 1977 were enthusiastic but naive; they thought that China would be modernized overnight; they knew all the right answers but none of the right questions. They had a good working knowledge of English. The depart-

ment grasped the situation and the students were given courses in Literature through which they were exposed to other cultures. Their first reaction was negative and overly pragmatic. They wanted to help their country to modernize—poetry would not make the wheels of the machines turn faster. As time passed, the period of naiveté passed also, answers turned into questions and enthusiasm became more mature. A healthy critical judgment was being formed, encouraged by the leaders of the university.

These students had not known much concerning Western culture and mores; the study of Contemporary American Short Stories made them aware of what their own country possessed, what it lacked, as well as what they wanted and did not want in their own lives. They began to see that modernization did not mean Westernization and that building a great socialist country was a matter of internal growth and development and not a matter of imitation. Remarks such as 'that is alien to Chinese thinking', or 'China has not those problems' were often heard in the classroom. They became more aware of their own goals by a critical assessment of the goals—or the lack of them—in other cultures. By the study of the identity crisis so evident in Western contemporary literature, they became more aware of their own Chinese identity. Their critical judgment had a positive as well as a negative dimension.

For me, it was an exciting two years. I experienced and profited from cooperation and understanding on the part of the professors and teachers who all encouraged the learning process going on in the students. At that time the university itself was going through a period of readjustment after the stormy decade through which it had passed and I was able to see a sure and steady realignment of goals and a gratifying rise in the academic level. I remember a conversation I had with a post-graduate student. He was

Brigid Keogh has been teaching languages in the East for a great number of years. During the past two years she taught English in Beijing University.

concentrating on literary criticism rather than creative writing, and I wondered why, considering the fact that he was very gifted in the latter field. His answer impressed me. He said that Chinese literary criticism needed to be modernized before creative writing could flourish and he felt that he could help his country more in this way. Here was a very gifted young man who was seeking fundamental modernization instead of looking for his own success. I thought to myself that although other aspects of the modernization program might be more spectacular, something very solid and lasting was being accomplished in the lecture halls and library of Beijing University where the minds of the youth of the nation were being formed.

These 'minds' certainly do not reveal any stereotyped way of thinking. A few quotations taken at random from student essays speak for themselves:

... I don't want fame and I don't want to shine... Pompous terms strike me as dubious. What I love is only the knowledge of truth, and to that end, 'to strive, to seek, to find and not to yield'... Maybe I inherited this spirit from the Cultural Revolution. I was growing up in the heat of that period. I saw all sorts of authorities pulled down and trampled under foot... I believe firmly that everybody acted his own part in this movement and everybody learned his own lesson... But I was too young to have my own part to act then, so my lesson is stamped with the collective mark of the whole population...

and again:

... We are an inquiring, skeptical generation. We believe too little and question too much. We are not barred from our curious inquiry by the gloomy shadow of the question of self-preservation...

And another:

... I do not want to speak for or against the Cultural Revolution. But obviously it created a generation of young men, diligent and brave with their own ideas. They have belief but not cults. They are young but steady. They do not often judge things, but they are capable of doing so. This has been at the cost of misery and pain. It has been bought at the price of human lives...

and again:

... It is inevitable that many of our leaders will die, but the desire of the

young people for modernization will not die. Nothing can change this, nothing!...

and his view of modernization:

... Last night I heard one of our students say that Hongkong was a paradise. I do not want to blame him but he raises a question. What does modernization mean? Does it mean only advanced technology and a high living standard? No. Look at what is happening in the United States—TV sets, air-conditioners and cars are accompanied by pollution, crime and mental disorder. Money is god. Men have become like machines... Just to think that our Chinese culture might be replaced by Western culture makes me feel terrible. I don't reject Western culture, even forks and salad, but I'm strongly against importing long hair, flared trousers, Rock'n Roll and mental illness. If modernization means the destruction of the Chinese culture, I prefer to live simply. To my relief, our leaders have realized this. They have promised a 'Chinese way to modernization.'

and, in an argument with a fellow student and friend:

... 'I don't want to argue with you,' my friend said impatiently, 'go and ask others.' Then he added, 'I'm sure you will get five different answers from five different people.' 'But I don't need to ask others,' I said. 'My opinion has been proved true by you. If in the past I had asked five people the same question, I would probably have got the same answer, but now five different ones. That's why I'm hopeful.'

These are some of the youth of China—alert, inquiring, hopeful, sure. I realize that university students represent only a small segment of the youth of the nation, but it is a significant segment.

In conclusion it may be of interest to read what an undergraduate of Beijing University who has been sent to the United States to study says about his summer work:

... Now I am in Camp Rising Sun as 'the first rising son from China' (according to the Camp Director). My work is to live with the kids, to direct them morally, and to instruct them academically'...

The same student writes in another context:

... Harm is done by bureaucracy and the remains of feudalism, but please do not

despair of China. Some day we can change it—through education. . . .

Who could 'despair' when the universities

are training students like these and when already the West is seeking moral guidance for its youth from a 'rising son of the People's Republic of China?'

CALL FOR ELIMINATING FEUDAL IDEAS

The *People's Daily* of 18 July identifies feudal ideas as one of the obstacles to China's modernization and calls for the elimination of the remaining vestiges of feudalism in society in general and in the Chinese Communist Party in particular.

The paper, in a special commentator's article, says the Chinese Communist Party was built upon the principles of Marxism and has always struggled against feudalism, but 'the party has also been corroded by feudal ideas.'

It says: 'The chief signs of this, in our society and within our Party, are among others the cult of personality, the patriarchal practices of some leading members, cadres' privileges in politics and their private lives, life-long tenure, bureaucratic style of work and closed-door policies in the economic fields.

'All these, in the final analysis, belong to the feudalistic ideas of an autocratic monarchy, concepts of privilege and social stratification and a patriarchal clan system.'

The paper says that China was in the grip of feudalism for 2,000 to 3,000 years and of semi-feudalism and semi-colonialism for more than 100 years. 'It is impossible to eliminate this in a short time,' the article says.

'At the same time, we lack concrete and realistic analysis of our society. We stress the bourgeoisie as the main target of our revolution and neglect the struggle against the influence of feudal ideas.'

The *People's Daily* says that to be aware of the influence of feudalism is not to relax vigilance against the corrosive philosophy of the bourgeoisie. It says: 'We are opposed to bourgeois ideas, namely its profit-before-everything outlook, its decadent way of life and ideological style. At the same time, this does not stop us from studying and making use of scientific knowledge and the advanced technology and management in capitalist countries to modernize our country.'

Nor does opposition to feudalism exclude a critical assimilation of the cultural heritage from feudal times, the article notes.

Xinhua, Beijing, 18 July

Pity Pitcairn

Molly G. Elliott

These days, the South Pacific seethes with independence movements, even the tiniest islands emerging as self-governing states proudly aware of their identity and culture; yet, through all the flag-hoisting and forthright statements, Pitcairn Island, 2,080 km east of Tahiti, has stayed largely out of sight and out of mind.

It even escaped World War II, when many islands became bases or battlegrounds and even the Pitcairners' Norfolk Island cousins joined the Australian forces.

Air travel has relegated Pitcairn to the furthest frontiers of civilization. Even 20 years ago, the islands could count on a ship about every 10 days or so on the New Zealand-England run via Panama. The Shaw Savill, Blue Star and Port lines' ships, in particular, invariably paused there for an hour or so, off-loading stores while some of the islanders came aboard to sell fruit and carvings to passengers and crew.

But the passenger trade has almost ceased while the mighty container ships, carrying three times the cargo of conventional freighters, have also decreased the number of visitors.

I first saw Pitcairn 29 years ago when travelling to Southampton aboard Shaw Savill's veteran *Mataroa*, with her tall, skinny funnel and elegantly raked masts.

Under a sky as solid as a hammerbeam roof, we arrived off Pitcairn in mid-morning, having first sighted it an hour or so before as it showed over the horizon, infinitely lonely and accidental looking, just as it must have appeared to the *Bounty* mutineers in 1790.

Even given that the *Bounty* saga has sprouted considerable embroidery, it has never been low on narrative content.

In 1787, with Lt William Bligh in command, the ship left England for the Society Islands (Tahiti) to gather breadfruit for planting as a food source in the West Indies. She

reckoned on an 18 months' voyage. She reached Tahiti, spent six months carrying out her mission and left in 1789.

Despite Bligh's savage reputation, a considerable body of opinion regards him as an excellent captain who ran a well-disciplined ship. Whatever the rights and wrongs of it, once the *Bounty* left Tahiti, Fletcher Christian, the master's mate, led a mutiny, setting Bligh and 18 men adrift in an open boat. Certainly, the majority of the crew supported Bligh, but the boat would not hold them all. Therefore, several had to remain aboard with the mutineers.

If nothing else, subsequent events established Bligh as an incomparable seaman. By dead reckoning, he brought his fragile craft to Timor, from where he and his crew were taken to Batavia (Jakarta) and thence to England with their incredible story.

Meantime, the *Bounty* returned first to Tubuai, one of the Society group. The mutineers hoped to settle there but the island had no animals, so back to Tahiti to obtain pigs and goats. On their return to Tubuai, the natives did not receive them cordially, so back to Tahiti again, to off-load 16 mutineers with their share of arms and other items.

A punitive expedition from England found 14 of them. Brought back to England, they faced trial and three were hanged at Spithead.

With eight mutineers, six Tahitian men, 10 Tahitian women and a 15-year-old girl, the *Bounty* weighed anchor and headed south-east. Christian had heard of the discovery in 1767 of an island by the British sloop *Swallow*, whose commander, Captain Carteret, had named it Pitcairn after the man who first sighted it. In 1790, The *Bounty* reached this rocky dot, about 8 km in circumference and 3 km wide.

Despite the perilous rocks surrounding the island and the seas that constantly batter it, the *Bounty* crew managed to get ashore.

Although the island appeared uninhabited, they found evidence of human occupation: bones, rough rock carvings, stone images and hatchets. This bleak place seemed to offer the seclusion they required. The sighting of passing ships seemed as problematic as those of the yeti. Nevertheless, to cover their tracks they salvaged a small cannon and some muskets and burnt the ship in a tiny cove, a mere slot in the cliffs still called Bounty Bay below Ship-landing Point; yet, despite its inhospitable coastline, the island relaxes into hidden valleys.

The island had considerable vegetation but little soil in which roots could take a firm hold. The mutineers' goats ran wild, ruining the trees. Consequently, rain washed much soil away. For two years, however, the settlement progressed quite well with the newcomers at first living in tents and caves. But gradually disputes broke out, most of them over the women, some of whom grew so desperate that they constructed a raft and attempted to return to Tahiti, but not far beyond the breakers, they turned back.

Troubles compounded until the Tahitian men turned on the mutineers, killing five, including Fletcher Christian. A spectacular death is a great help toward a romantic reputation, but remarkably few know anything about Christian after his landing on Pitcairn and a life that fizzled out sordidly. Truth, unfortunately, is flatter than fiction.

Accidents and murder disposed of three of the remaining mutineers. Only John Adams remained. The community, however, had grown. The mutineers and Tahitians had sired 23 children. From the *Bounty*, Adams had saved a Bible and a prayer book. With these, he taught the children to read.

For years, he guided the little community. Then, in 1808, the American ship *Topaz*, on a sealing voyage, arrived off the island which it had thought uninhabited. Islanders and crew shared an equal astonishment.

Visitors to Pitcairn remained as rare as snow on the equator until 1814, when two British warships, *Briton* and *Tagus*, halted when returning from the Marquesas to Valparaiso.

Five years later, the East India Company's ship *Hercules*, left on the island carpenter's tools and an iron boiler for rendering down seawater to obtain salt.

By 1823, when the English whaler *Cyrus* arrived, John Adams had grown old. He told

the captain that he needed someone to help with the children's education. John Buffett, a rover with no family ties, volunteered. So did his mate, John Evens. They brought in new blood when both married local girls. Inter-marriage had already made everyone on Pitcairn kin.

A cabinet-maker by trade, Buffett first used mero wood which grew plentifully on the island. Nowadays, the Pitcairners must get it from Henderson Island, 270 km east. Flat, uninhabited, covered with low vegetation, Henderson swarms with rats. The islanders make a couple of excursion there annually. From mero, Buffett fashioned work-boxes, writing desks and chests of drawers, passing his skills on to other Pitcairners.

In 1825, Pitcairn's population numbered 26 adults and 35 children, making up a deeply religious community, but, while they welcomed the rare visitors, the fear that, some day, a ship would call to seize John Adams carved away at their guts even though the world had long forgotten the mutiny.

Having heard of the island, George Hun Nobbs arrived from Valparaiso in 1828. He married Fletcher Christian's daughter. When Adams died the following year, Nobbs became the patriarch.

By now, the community had outgrown the island's limited water supply. When word of their plight reached England, the British government arranged a grant of land for them in Tahiti. In 1831, the entire Pitcairn population moved there.

They had hardly landed when a fever struck them; many died. Within three weeks, they longed to return to Pitcairn. When they burnt the *Bounty*, the mutineers had saved her copper which their descendants took with them to Tahiti. With it, they bought a schooner and sailed home.

Despite their rigid religious views, the islanders enjoyed a drink. Two mutineers, McCoy and Quintal, had made a still and brewed liquor of a kind that must have seared them to the solar plexus. It also caused many fights. It still brewed a breed of moonshine in 1823 when Joshua Hill arrived.

This autocrat immediately took over leadership, set up a council of elders and treated the islanders brutally. So inflammable did the situation become that Nobbs, Evans and Buffett left, the former two for Gambier Island, Buffett for Tahiti. All, however, eventually returned to a divided community which Hill

left following an inquiry which a passing ship's captain held in response to the Pitcairners' appeal.

Although the British government occasionally intervened to help the islanders, not till HMS *Fly* visited Pitcairn in 1838 did the Union Jack fly formally over the tiny colony, which had no written laws but which kept a register that recorded outstanding events like the arrival of the first missionary vessel. The London Missionary Society sent this out with the most precious of cargoes, books.

In 1853, the islanders saw their first steamship, the *Virago*.

That year, they also accepted that they must once again move, this time to Norfolk Island, but not till three years later did the *Morayshire* transport all 194 of them.

Though small, Norfolk, whose role as a penal colony had recently ended, was much larger and more fertile than Pitcairn. Its stone buildings also lent it an air of civilization.

Here, the Pitcairners established the same form of land tenure and community disciplines under which they had always lived and which obtain today. After a ship has left, the goods it has brought are shared out in the centre of the village.

But many Pitcairners grew homesick for their island. In 1858, a group returned home; another party followed in 1863. The rest remained on Norfolk where the old Pitcairn names survive: Quintal, Young, Adams, Christian, Nobbs, McCoy, Buffett.

But now, Pitcairn had much more contact with the world—which doesn't actually say a lot. From passing whalers, they obtained many supplies—rope, cloth, soap—in exchange for chickens, pigs, potatoes, yams and fruit.

In 1867, Pitcairn became a regular stop on the New Zealand-North America run when the mail steamers *Rakaia* and *Kaikoura*, called.

You would imagine that with such a vast area of ocean in which to manoeuvre no ship could get itself wrecked on Pitcairn, but the *Cornwallis* piled up there in 1875 while the *Khandeish* struck on Oeno, 80 km north, the following year. In both instances, the Pitcairners performed valuable rescue work, maintaining the survivors until the next caller took them off the island.

In 1893, survivors from yet another wreck brought with them influenza against which

the islanders had no immunity and from which many died.

By then, most ships passing Pitcairn bore gifts. In 1880, Queen Victoria sent two magnificent whale boats. Ever since, these have provided the pattern for Pitcairn's boats.

In 1886, an American missionary, John I. Tay, arrived aboard a British man-o'-war. An ardent Seventh Day Adventist, he converted the islanders to that sect.

And so here we were in 1951, maintaining a shipping tradition. Our ship came up slowly, barely under way. As we drew near, we could pick out details. The island looked barren, yet with evidence of cultivation round the settlement. Rusty iron roofs showed up among the palms, oranges and banyans. Green roofs distinguished two larger houses.

Five radio masts stabbed the sky on the island's peak, 336 metres above sea-level. They help alleviate the appalling loneliness of that miniscule speck on that limitless watery desert.

From Bounty Bay, three long, sturdy boats put out, each under a large triangular sail. Built of timber shipped up from New Zealand or from odds and ends of donated dunnage, they were replicas of the island's first whale boats. When not in use, the boats are hauled up into shelters with thatched roofs made of palm leaves by Bounty Bay.

Once alongside the *Mataroa*, the people swarmed up the ship's ladders amid bursts of unlaced laughter. Tall, dark, biscuit-skinned, they have perfect teeth, and charming old-world manners. No one wore shoes. Even though, like most New Zealanders, I go barefooted round the home in summer, I had never seen feet like these—gnarled, the toes splayed and almost prehensile.

They brought aboard palm-leaf kits filled with bananas, oranges, pawpaws, pineapples and carvings of flying fish and tortoises and boxes in the shape of an open Bible. Unlike souvenir traders on other Pacific islands, they did not solicit custom with a beggar's cajoling whine. Nor do they permit haggling.

As we had arrived on Saturday, the islanders refused to trade on this, their Sabbath. We could take what we wanted and make a donation. One woman distributed Seventh Day Adventist literature.

Meantime, the ship unloaded stores, mail and dunnage. The day before, a whip-round

among passengers and crew had yielded books, magazines, newspapers and a few clothing oddments.

I talked to one cinder-haired old man dressed in jeans, a torn army jacket and a white pique hat which he held pressed to his chest. His knouty hands like giant crayfish showed that he worked extremely hard. His son, he said, had gone to New Zealand 12 years ago and lived in Wellington. This island has no shops so that the people must order supplies months ahead. Having no cows, they obtain butter from passing ships, he said.

The ship's siren boomed an all-ashore signal. The islanders tumbled down the ladders, those extraordinary toes gripping strongly. They rowed away to a safe distance and then, their boats rising and dipping on the slow, grey Pacific swells, they sang, in perfect, unaccompanied harmony, the old hymn, 'Shall We Gather At The River?'

I had seldom heard such moving singing. Absolutely silent, passengers and seamen clustered along the rail, many with brimming eyes. Then the ship swung away, the women waving as the men bent stoutly to the oars, judging to a whisker the channel between the rocks into Bounty Bay.

In half an hour, the island had almost disappeared below the far, grey horizon.

Several months later in London, I thought of all this on a winter's day in the church yard of St Mary Lambeth, when I brushed thin snow off a hefty stone slab covering a sarcophagus and read the name, William Bligh. Not far away, his former home bears one of the Greater London Council's blue and white plaques which distinguish houses where history's notables have lived.

Sometimes, history does repeat itself. A few years later, on the same ship bound in the same direction, I crept out of my bunk at 3.45 a.m., pulled on some clothes, and slipped up the stairs to the promenade deck. In the pre-dawn dark, a primrose moon splashed a brilliant wash across the sea. Pitcairn bulked black against the huge southern stars like drops of dew on a spider's web.

Slowly we edged up to Ship-landing Point. On the starboard bow, a light flashed, as local and temporary as a firefly's gleam. Out shot a powered boat, towing two others. Progress!

The sky looked like a dark tent with the flap up, as dawn rose pale cobalt behind

the island with one star pulsing like a heart above its peak.

Smartly round into the ship's lee swept the boats, men and women carrying their kits of fruit and souvenirs. But they had grown smarter since my last visit. Some lowered ropes and hauled their wares up the ship's side.

The carvings sold well. The carvers had shown considerable artistry in making the most of the yellow knots in the dark brown wood. They priced their work at about \$NZ1. Most carvings bear the maker's name. My tortoise does not, but one of my table companions turned over his fish and found 'Virgil Christian' carved into the wood.

While Pitcairners and passengers milled in the for'ard welldeck, the sun hoisted itself over the horizon, but a grey rain squall swallowed it whole.

Under the leadership of their head man, another Christian, some Pitcairners made their way to the boat deck. This was the ship's final voyage before going to the breakers. Over the years, she had made many calls. To show their appreciation, the Pitcairners presented the captain with one of their Bible boxes, their leader a little nervous, rubbing one foot against the other as he made his speech.

Visibly moved, the captain, a rotund Englishman in spotless white shorts, shirt, socks, shoes and cap, replied... and once again, the islanders sang the old hymn.

The ship blew, the people scrambled down the ladder. A good seven months pregnant, one woman fell the last few feet into the bobbing boat but, while the passengers gasped, she seemed quite composed and took her place on a thwart.

We also off-loaded the island's new teacher. New Zealanders fill this post on a two-year contract. Usually, their wives accompany them. It helps if they have some nursing experience. Otherwise, the islanders must reply on the nearest ship in an emergency. Luckily, the radio has reduced their isolation although this is still sufficient to discourage the cranks and cravens who have descended on other lonely outposts. Not long before, a man and a chimpanzee had gone to live on Henderson Island—but had frantically hailed a passing freighter within a week or so.

As we got under way, the sun broke clear of the rain clouds and flooded the scene,

bringing out the incredible lapis blue that I have seen in no other ocean but the Pacific. It also enhanced the red tinge in Pitcairn's cliffs and intensified the green of the vegetation.

I wondered how much longer the little community would survive. Already, some young people had a dullness about the eyes, a mental slowness revealing the consequences of in-breeding over several generations. As the old folk die, the young look toward New Zealand and Australia for work and Pitcairn's population continues falling.

While other Pacific islands appear frequently in the news, Pitcairn does not except as a filler, like one in 1973 noting that the British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs had approved the appointment of Mr F.E.M. Warner as the new Commissioner for Pitcairn.

Then attached to the British High Commissioner's office in Auckland, he had direct responsibility to the Governor of Pitcairn, the British High Commissioner in New Zealand. His job included organizing a trip to the island for Prince Philip, a momentous event in Pitcairn's history.

As shipping has lessened and the island has no site suitable for a landing strip, it has had little opportunity to clap eyes on its governor; yet, in 1973, Mr D. A. Scott, then British High Commissioner in New Zealand, made a four-day visit to the island, another tremendous event. He felt that the 'harbour' would benefit from improvement (but how?) and hoped to build the community from 83 to about 150 (again, how?).

Meantime, as a result of French nuclear tests at Mururoa atoll, officials showed some concern for the little island. Would radioactive fall-out descend on it? In 1973, two technicians went to Pitcairn to monitor fall-out. Even though 853 km separate it from Mururoa, fall-out clouds had come dangerously close. In fact, Britain had plans to evacuate the people in a Royal Navy ship standing by. Isolation no longer equated with safety.

That isolation became apparent in 1973 when the *Port St Lawrence* loaded nine tons of fuel, enough to ensure that Pitcairn would suffer no shortage for several months. This showed how the island had progressed. It needed that fuel to power generators, two tractors, several motor cycles, a four-wheel

drive vehicle and the boats shifting cargo from ships.

This S.O.S. had come from the island's radio operator, Tom Christian, who had contacted the Seventh Day Adventist radio station in California. Messages usually go in morse from Pitcairn to Fiji and are then relayed to the British High Commission in New Zealand.

But Pitcairn was lapping up that fuel. Within a month, Texaco also agreed to ship 16 barrels of kerosene and 28 of petrol from London.

During a shortage, as their ancestors had done, the islanders burned oil nuts and tried to devise a wind-powered electricity generator.

But progress or not, by mid-1974, Pitcairn's population had dropped to 71. A year later, the United Nations learned that the population had diminished to 61, the lowest for a century. The island now had a shortage of able-bodied men to handle the boats and incoming supplies.

In 1975, Pitcairn saw its first container ship, the giant *Remuera*, 42,007 tons, which brought medical supplies for a sick woman.

That year, the current teacher, Peter O'Shea, made headlines. He had taken up his contract in 1974. The Pitcairners' staunch adherence to their faith bars them from drinking. The still had long since ceased to operate. This fell hard on the New Zealander who, like most of his countrymen, enjoyed a beer. To import liquor, he had to obtain a permit from the British government before he could order his beer in bulk.

Teaching does not occupy all the schoolmaster's time. O'Shea also acted as traffic officer for, by now, the island had 35 motor bikes, though where they could go on such a pinpoint of rock, God alone knows.

He also acted as the governor's representative and adviser to the island council. The sale of stamps earns revenue for the island, so the teacher audits both the post office and island accounts, besides editing a monthly newspaper with a circulation of 700 scattered all over the world. He also is a member of the entertainment committee, which hires films. *Mutiny on the Bounty* showed five times in three months to capacity houses.

The next teacher, Tom Whiu, arrived in 1977, with a wife and three children. A Maori, his Polynesian background created an

extra bond with the Pitcairners. The school roll then stood at nine.

Formerly a nurse, his wife made a valuable addition to the population, doubling as medical officer. Up till then, the pastor's wife had acted as medical officer but ill health had forced her to leave the island.

Pitcairn's teaching program follows the New Zealand Education Department's syllabus. The children ranged in age from five to 13 although the school caters for pupils up to 15, when they either start work on the island or go to New Zealand for further schooling. More girls than boys leave Pitcairn, further reducing the breeding stock and intensifying the dangers of in-breeding.

Although the children speak English at school and adults speak it to visitors, the islanders have their own dialect with roots in Tahitian, 18th-century English and elements of their ancestors' English dialects.

The school has received offers of money from all over the world but most of all it needs books and magazines.

Last year, a German anthropology student, Brigit Groth, landed on Pitcairn to study the island and its people. What she expected to find, God knows. In 1977, her professor at Cologne University had visited Pitcairn aboard a cruise liner and had met one of Fletcher Christian's descendants. His tale of the island so enthralled his student that she drummed up a sponsor and went to London to conduct

research and the long-term effects of cultural contact with people like visiting yachtsmen. She had no idea how long her study would take. At that time, the Pitcairn population stood at 65.

Despite its isolation, Pitcairn is still part of the effervescent South Pacific. This year, the retiring British High Commissioner in New Zealand, Sir Harold Smedley, on his way home to England, represented the island at the South Pacific Arts Festival in Papua New Guinea.

I thought of all this recently when in Whangarei in northern New Zealand. A couple of years ago, an English film company planned yet another movie about the *Bounty*. In preparation, they ordered a local boatbuilding company to construct an exact replica of the ship. Price, \$2 million. This they did. Meantime, the film company cancelled its plans—and did not pay for the ship. With a writ nailed to her mast, she lies alongside the wharf in Whangarei's Town Basin. As beautiful a sample of the boatbuilder's craft as you could see anywhere, she has become a tourist attraction, earning the city some useful revenue.

These days, the world seldom acknowledges Pitcairn's existence. I recently met a reference librarian who had never heard of it. Soon, it may fade into history. Before the perils of radio-active fall-out and in-breeding, its people show every sign of becoming the world's most endangered species after the blue whale.



Bo Fang Returns to Town

Ji Guanwu

In the city of Zongzhou, the rehabilitation of the former municipal party secretary, Bo Ziqing, and his wife created not a little stir.

Bo Ziqing and his wife Xu Qin, who was director of the city's federation of women, had been persecuted on the trumped-up charge that they had been traitors and as a result both died more than ten years ago. Following the collapse of the Gang of Four, all like cases in Zongzhou had been cleared but one—that of the Bo's. The reason, if one looked for it, was that those surrogates of Lin Biao and the Gang of Four who had framed up the now dead couple were determined to put Bo Ziqing and his wife to shame forever, and for that purpose they had faked a large amount of evidence. It wasn't that the municipal party committee had not been doing its best. The complexity of this case had been so overwhelming that by the time all the evidence had been checked and refuted, two years had passed and in Zongzhou the attention of the municipal administration had shifted to the task of reviving the economy. It was not until the completion of all the preparations for memorial service and the final laying of the Bo's ashes that it suddenly occurred to someone the Bo's had a daughter, but her whereabouts were as yet unknown.

Actually, this was nothing to get excited about at all. The country had been in a tumult for ten years and people had come and gone like on a merry-go-round. A batch of persons was promoted one day and denounced the next, a person conscientiously discharging his duties in the morning might be sent off to the countryside in the afternoon for a spell of physical labour. There had been no formal take-overs. No records had been kept. Not a single person could be traced and be held responsible for anything. Nobody would get excited over a few missing persons. But the question was that in this case the presence of the daughter was indispensable if the memorial service was to take place at all.

The municipal party standing committee found itself difficult to go on with a meeting held to finalize the preparations for the memorial service. Municipal party secretary Yang Xu had to declare it adjourned and asked the head of the organization department to take immediate steps to locate the girl. Pursuing this instruction all the way, the latter sent out his men everywhere until they came upon the man who was in charge of sending young people to the countryside in the Cultural Revolution. His surname was Yin and was now with the provincial party committee, and from him they learned that the missing girl with the name of Bo Fang was now working at Yellow Gully State Farm about 300 km from Zongzhou.

The word got around like a big joke. Big-character posters soon went up on the walls of Zongzhou in the wake of the first gust of spring breeze of 1979.

Having had to live with big-character posters during the past ten years, the people naturally knew exactly what to expect from them and, also, one might say, a few ways of dealing with them. But those clever with this tool knew how to strike when the iron was hot and—how, with sensational titles such as 'The Forgotten One', always succeeded in creating emotional ripples in people's hearts. A big-character poster entitled 'Orphan of Yellow Gully' evoked the pathetic image of a poor, forsaken girl bathed in tears who for ten years had been condemned to hard labour far beyond the endurance of her fragile little body. The sad story was spread to all corners of Zongzhou by those who read the big-character posters with an indignant sigh, with tears in their eyes or with an inexpressible anger. Anybody who cherished a memory for the old party secretary and his wife had a kind word for the poor daughter, everybody was willing to lend her a helping hand and all was looking forward to shedding some tears of sympathy at the sight of this

poor, unfortunate soul.

Big-character posters all claiming to have emanated from the hearts of the people appeared on the walls of the office of the municipal party committee, in the main street, at the railway station and at the harbour.

'Municipal party committee should bring back the orphaned daughter of Bo Ziqing and Xu Qin at once!'

So the distressed municipal party committee, for fear of disrupting the hard-won stability and unity, for fear of disrupting the plans for economic construction, and for fear of making even one wrong move, decided to bring Bo Fang back immediately. Of course its members also loved the old party secretary and his wife. It was decided that Bo Fang would receive financial help, that her fiancé would also be transferred to town (as according to reports, she did have a fiancé) and that both would be provided with job options. It was believed that such solicitude would put her in a better frame of mind and the matter could then be expected to cool off.

A special notice was issued by the municipal party committee, cadres were assigned to the task, and a car was rushed to Yellow Gully Farm. The plan, originally, was to bring Bo Fang back as soon as possible, but for one reason or another, she did not arrive until noon time on the very day the memorial service was scheduled.

As was to be expected, big-character posters hailing the 'victory' and saluting Bo Fang went up before she arrived. But to the great disappointment of those who saw her, she did not look at all like the Bo Fang one would imagine. Nor was she cut out for the role one would expect her to play. It was a surprise to all that she should make her appearance in Zongzhou looking like a country lass coming to visit her relatives. She was clad in a padded jacket made of printed cotton fabric and plain blue cloth slacks and wore a broad, confident smile wherever she went. She was bursting with health and vitality whether she stood still or swung her limbs in a free-wheeling way.

The consensus was that she could have behaved a little better. At least she could have looked grieved and helpless, even if only for the sake of meeting the demand of the circumstances.

What was more, after the memorial service

in the afternoon was over and the ashes were laid in place, Bo Fang proved completely incapable of crying! There was no denying that she was grief-stricken, which was evident from her tear-filled eyes from the moment she was confronted with the portraits of the deceased. There was such a lot over which she could have cried all she liked and nobody would have raised an eyebrow. But as it was she just didn't know how. She didn't even call out 'Father' or 'Mother' in a show of sorrow. Only those silent tears! The ceremony couldn't have proceeded more peacefully and was over in an hour.

Although it was questionable whether the authors of the big-character posters would be sufficiently motivated to come out with more shocking headlines, all indications pointed to a decline of the Bo Fang fever and once again the memory of Bo Fang was heading for oblivion. However, there was one person in Zongzhou whose interest in Bo Fang was of a special kind. After all, it had been more than ten years since Bo Fang had been away in the countryside and her return had not come by easily. For this person a chance to see Bo Fang again was a matter of the utmost urgency.

*

The little boy is mimicking a dog barking. The little girl, holding a doll tight in her arms, pleads, 'Doggie, don't bark, baby wants to go to sleep.' The little boy gives doggie a slap. 'Daddy is spanking Doggie,' he says, 'baby go to sleep.' This is the sort of make-believe pre-school children's play which, in a way, is like tender seedlings of love planted in the young hearts. Of course, most children forget them as soon as they go to school. It is only under certain conditions that these love seedlings will continue to grow until they flower. It does happen in real life that make-believe games of early childhood come true and such love seedlings are eventually brought to fruition with two childhood lovers actually becoming husband and wife.

This was what almost happened to Bo Fang and the boy who played father and mother with her.

Years ago Bo Fang's parents shared a house with the mayor of Zongzhou, Yin Huacheng. Bo Fang and her parents, a family of three, lived on the first floor. The Yin's, also a family of three, though the third was a little boy, had the ground floor. There was a little room halfway by the staircase which

neither family used for any special purpose and it was here that the children, who were of the same age, played their make-believe games.

When they were old enough to go to school, the children did their homework in this little room. But as they got older a change took place in their relationship. Instead of going to and coming back from school hand in hand, they now began to keep each other off at a distance as they walked along. They still did their homework together but the early intimacy of sitting so close to each other that sometimes their hair and cheeks touched gradually gave way to sitting very properly and in all seriousness, until one day they realized that they might as well study each at his or her own home. But these outward changes did not affect the quiet growth of the love seedlings in the young hearts. This not only the children themselves knew, their parents knew too, knowing that if things went on this way, the two families would surely some day be joined into one. This was the way things always looked before Bo Fang went to the countryside.

It was after her parents were arrested that Bo Fang was 'swept' out of her home and was obliged to live in a school to receive criticisms along with a group of boys and girls dubbed 'curs' begot by 'criminal' cadres. In those difficult days Yin Yun did all he possibly could to help Bo Fang. At great risks of running into trouble, he did what he could to make life a little easier for Bo Fang and to soothe her grief. With his shoulder, he helped fend off the fist blows aimed at Bo Fang.

It was twilight when Bo Fang and Yin Yun met one day for their last time. Bo Fang, as was the rule, had been struggled against for a whole day and Yin Yun, as a rule, had come to comfort her. On this occasion, Bo Fang and Yin Yun told each other many things from the bottom of their hearts. She told him that she did not give a damn to all the accusations levelled at her parents. She just could not, for the life of her, believe that they were traitors. She believed that they were noble-minded people and she could not, on any account, bring herself to break with them. She was beaten, but she was going to keep on saying: 'I am the daughter of Bo Ziqing and Xu Qin,' and it was thus associating herself with her parents that she felt honoured, proud and was afraid of nothing. She also told Yin Yun that she could stand any hardship with the strength her parents had given her. She

believed that nobody else in the world had ever suffered like her parents, and that her ordeal was mild in comparison with theirs, especially now that she was already 16. Yin Yun, for his part, tried to tell her that she shouldn't worry too much, and that his parents would treat her like their own daughter should things go from bad to worse. In any case, he certainly would stand by her. Then at Bo Fang's request he agreed to make an effort to try and find out where her parents had been taken to and promised that he would come again at once if there was news. There was not a word of love in all that was said, although it was apparent that the two hearts were linked together. Only when taking leave did he hold Bo Fang's hand ever so tightly, and for some time she made no effort to retract. That was the most solemn occasion that they had ever been through; the seedlings of love were coming up strong, or so it seemed!

The unexpected happened the next day when, without even a chance to say good-bye to Yin Yun, Bo Fang was forced to leave Zongzhou and taken to Yellow Gully Farm.

For more than ten years she had not received a word from Yin Yun. In the early days of their separation, she did write two letters to him: one to inform him of her address, the other to ask him to find out what he could about her parents after she learned of their death. Both turned out to be kites having had their strings snapped. Months and years passed. Time went by like a flowing stream which changed the face of the rock lying in its course. But human feelings are sometimes harder than even rocks and the image of Yin Yun in Bo Fang's mind remained as it always had been in spite of the relentless pounding and washing of time. To Bo Fang, the past was like a movie about those make-believe games of their early childhood, about that last handshake, which could be projected time and again before her mind's eye. She even imagined that such flights of fancy were mutual, that Yin Yun must be doing the same whenever she thought of him.

And true, two days before she returned to Zongzhou, a letter arrived from Yin Yun to tell her that he had been waiting for her all this time.

Bo Fang saw him as soon as she arrived in Zongzhou at noon. Yin Yun had become a reporter. The paper which he worked for was publishing a series of articles in memory of her parents and he anxiously asked her for a

contribution.

There wasn't a great deal of time for them to talk to each other at that first encounter. The active, smart youngman had left a rather good impression on Bo Fang and it looked as though those love seedlings planted in their hearts long ago were coming up well and as likely as not would flower and come to fruition, if... only fate had not stepped in and chosen another youngman for Bo Fang with whom she had developed a new strain of rice, code-named 'Health No. 4' in the years she spent on the farm.

*

The youngman with whom Bo Fang collaborated to develop 'Health No. 4' was Sheng Yu, a middle-school student who had volunteered to settle in the countryside.

They met on the first day Bo Fang arrived at the farm. But Sheng was an unsociable type who never spoke to girls unless he had to, and being a little proud herself, Bo Fang was also loath to associate with boys. This being so, for some time not a word was passed between them although both were charged with the same duty of irrigating rice paddies and met often enough on the narrow paths separating the plots. One would simply bend his or her head, step aside to let the other pass and that was all. A year later, both were elected to join training courses. Sheng Yu joining a group of boys studying plant nursery and Bo Fang a group of girls studying plant protection. Still, they had neither spoken a word nor felt any particular need to speak to each other.

After they returned from the training course, it was the close relation between planting nursery and plant protection that broke the long silence between them, but even then, as if by some kinds of mutual understanding of the economy of words, the things said were always compressed into the simplest possible terms. If, say, it was for pest control that Bo Fang sought out Sheng Yu, all she would say might be: 'Day after tomorrow third-generation snout moth larva will peak,' and that was all. She didn't have to wait for an answer so long as she judged that Sheng Yu's eyes had shown signs of notice. On the other hand, if it was Sheng Yu who felt that a reminder was needed to warn Bo Fang that the crops had entered a stage most prone to insect pests, he would say nothing more than 'Those "Yellow Cassia" are booting', and a simple 'yes?' from Bo

Fang would be as good an answer as any. This continued for three or four years. Only on very rare occasions were the exchanges a little more elaborate.

It was an autumn evening as Bo Fang was passing a stream overgrown with water plants when a big sparkling frog leaped from under her foot into the water. She had always thought of frogs as 'volunteers' on her pest-control service, and on this occasion decided to catch one to find out what 'booty' it had captured. So she squatted down by the bank and in no time spotted the frog lifting its head out from among the water weeds with its bulging eyes staring at her. She didn't carry anything that she could use to catch it with and was still at a loss to know what to do when Sheng Yu came along.

'Sheng Yu,' she cried, 'come quick!'

Sheng Yu hastened a few paces and went to squat down beside her.

'See it?' she said, pointing to the frog. 'Give me a hand. Let's catch it. I'll go down this way and you that way.'

Sheng Yu didn't make a move. It was evident that he was thinking of a better way. Bo Fang remained in her squatting position and waited.

When Sheng Yu stood up, Bo Fang noticed that he already had his short-sleeved shirt in his hand. Bending forward, he leaped like the frog into the stream. With the shirt in both hands, he scooped up the weeds and then climbed up the bank, dripping with water and muck. The expression on his face told Bo Fang that the frog was wrapped up in the shirt.

That was the first time Bo Fang ever saw how agile the youngman was. She was so delighted that she stretched out a hand to help him climb up. They opened the shirt with great excitement and there enmeshed in a tangle of weeds was the frog. Pulling it out by its leg, Bo Fang turned around to wash it in the stream. Sheng Yu was still washing his shirt in the muddy water when she came back. Smirched by mud and slime, the shirt, which could have passed for a white one, was now a brownish green. There was a hole in it too and Bo Fang wasn't sure whether it wasn't torn when he used it to catch the frog. Anyway, she felt terribly sorry for him and was at a loss what might be the best thing for her to say or do.

Noticing that Bo Fang's eyes were fixed on

his shirt, Sheng Yu quickly rolled it up and stood up to leave.

'Oh, your shirt. ' Bo Fang pointed at the shirt in his hand.

Slowly, Sheng Yu put the shirt behind his back.

'Oh, that shirt. . . . Could you lend it to me? I have nothing to wrap up the frog with.' In a flash Bo Fang had thought up an excuse. Dangling the struggling creature in front of her, she said to him, 'As it is, it could easily slip away.'

Hardly had Sheng Yu moved his hand to the front when Bo Fang snatched the shirt with a sudden jerk, leaving the blushing, topless Sheng Yu nothing to do but turn round quickly and walk away in his soaked shorts.

Upon her return Bo Fang lost no time in giving the shirt a good wash even before she began to dissect the frog and she mended it the next morning after it got dry. Making sure that Sheng Yu was out in the fields that afternoon, she returned the shirt to his dormitory.

The incident brought a change in their relationship. From then on, when Bo Fang brought information such as 'Rice borers will peak tomorrow,' it would elicit an obvious interest and a question such as 'Found out how many crumbled leaves?' If her answer was, 'Thirty,' Sheng Yu might add, 'It's time we did something about this.' Or on another occasion Sheng Yu might venture the information that 'Jingkang No. 30 is showing spikes', and Bo Fang likewise would show concern. She might say, 'Hope they are alright this year.' And the response would be something like 'Oh, there are between 120-130 grain to a spike' and this would be in turn rejoined by Bo Fang with something like 'Don't worry, these ears will be so loaded with grain that none will ever be able to stand up straight.' This kind of exchanges went on for another two years before something else happened which led to a more important change in their relationship.

It occurred at noon on a stifling hot day when Bo Fang was taking the moisture reading in the rice paddy. Perhaps it was because of the suffocating temperature, or because she was just tired out, she fainted. Luckily, Sheng Yu, who happened to be passing by, discovered her in time and took her to the clinic. After Bo Fang came to, she learned

from the doctor and the nurse that it was Sheng Yu who had brought her there on his back. Strangely, that incident set their relations back. Their dialogues were reduced to fewer words than even before the frog episode. Again, both would look the other way whenever they chanced to meet and both would blush and feel their hearts beating faster.

This strange state of affairs continued for about a year and it was again at noontime on a stuffy day and at the same place where Bo Fang fainted that she suddenly stood up in the rice paddy when Sheng Yu happened to pass by. As usual, he blushed and was about to turn and be on his way when he heard the girl shout at him:

'Come over here, Sheng Yu!'

At this he stopped blushing and slipped into the rice paddy to where Bo Fang was standing.

'Look,' she said, 'this whole area has culm blight. Only this plant is not infected, not a trace of blight, not a trace of fungi.'

She handed a magnifying glass to Sheng Yu who proceeded to examine the plant up and down. At last, the dead serious expression on his face melted into a smile. She had never seen him smile to her before and now she was shy. Pressing her lips together, she tried to look away again.

Having jotted down the plant's special features in their notebooks, they went to the bank of a little irrigation channel to sit down for a while with their feet in the water. There they decided on what they should do next with this extraordinary find as the gurgling stream washed off the mud on their feet.

They proposed to the farm management that the affected plot be kept intact. From then on the two of them would meet at the plot every morning and at noon time to make observations and record any developments. Whenever there was a sudden change of weather, they would rush to the plot no matter where they were. This continued right up to harvest time when they witnessed that the only healthy plant standing proudly on the whole plot was exactly the one which had attracted their attention, all the others had prematurely wilted and died before they ever ripened.

With encouragement and support from the management, they continued to cooperate in their study and scientific experiments with

this plant which had shown such extraordinary resistance to disease. After four years of grappling with plant genetics, selection and elimination, they finally produced a high-yielding and highly disease-resistant strain which they dubbed Health No. 4.

Actually, neither of them could say for certain at what juncture the thaw in their stiff and awkward relationship set in during the years in which they had worked for their common goal. They came to talk about anything and everything whenever they were together, whether it be about science, current affairs, politics, past experience or their hopes and aspirations. Nor could they remember when it was that they actually grew to be very fond of each other. There was no denying that they had long since sensed the spark of love in each other's heart. Those sparks could have glowed brighter if it had not been for the invisible shadow of Yin Yun which hovered over them.

Bo Fang had told Sheng Yu not only about her parents when they talked about each other's past, but also about Yin Yun and his parents, and at moments when the message of love seemed too strong to be repressed it was always Bo Fang who would heave a sigh and confess that she believed Yin Yun was waiting for her.

After last year's harvest, a meeting was to be held at the farm to commend those who made outstanding contributions. Bo Fang and Sheng Yu were discussing their joint speech on Health No. 4 when they came to the question of its parent plant and Sheng Yu blurted out:

'You know, of course, people are cracking jokes about us.'

'Jokes? What do you mean?'

'People are saying that we, the two of us, raised Health No. 4.'

'Isn't that true?'

'They are saying that I am the paternal plant and you are the maternal plant.'

This gave Bo Fang a start, and she blushed. Again, she pressed her lips and looked away.

She had done this before, turning her head away with a smile, to which Sheng Yu had rarely paid any special attention. But it was different this time, for on this occasion it left him wondering whether Bo Fang wasn't wishing him to pluck up the courage to kiss her.

The arms which had by then held Bo Fang in an embrace tightened around her.

He had never been so rash as to touch Bo Fang before and had always discreetly stepped aside whenever Bo Fang unintentionally came too close to him. Now Sheng Yu was himself surprised by the force with which he squeezed Bo Fang, and she, totally unprepared for that sudden show of passion, let out an 'Ouch!' And at that Sheng Yu loosened his hold. They stared at each other in embarrassment and for a moment heard nothing except their own hearts beat. They were still staring at each speechlessly when Sheng Yu mustered all his courage to plea:

'Why shouldn't we love each other?'

The words were like an arrow which pierced through her heart; she was so flustered that she didn't even dare move her lips. Of course she too had cherished dreams of love. She had wished that she could close her eyes and receive the caresses of this man who had long since won her heart. But Yin Yun's shadow still inhibited her. She didn't dare utter a word or even blink her eyes. Reading her thoughts, Sheng Yu was annoyed.

'Why do you have to spin a cocoon around yourself?'

'Yes, why. . . .' she was almost whispering.

'It's time you made up your mind.'

'Yes, I shall make up my mind soon.' She said this partly for not wishing to disappoint Sheng Yu. Of course she also realized that things mustn't go on like this any longer. She must decide quickly.

Her return to Zongzhou this time could well be a good opportunity for her to make up her mind, although as yet she had no idea what that decision might be. She thought of the years she had spent together with Sheng Yu on the farm, those years of undeclared love in the course of which they were able to do some fruitful work and successfully develop Health No. 4. Of course she was aware of the many wonderful horizons outside the farm. What if Yin Yun did turn out be an ideal youth marching in the forefront of the times? And what if fate should intervene and dictate a change of her heart? Would she be able then to banish Sheng Yu completely from her thoughts? Yin Yun's letter threw her into utter confusion, and their first meeting even left her with fears which she couldn't quite define.

Back at the hostel after the memorial meeting Bo Fang immediately set about to write the article which Yin Yun suggested to her. She had no time even for a little rest. Having finished the article almost in one breath, she felt as if she had seen with her tear-filled eyes the upright ghosts of her loving parents smiling, rising and disappearing into the infinite sky...

At this point Yin Yun arrived.

After Bo Fang's banishment to the countryside, Yin Yun joined a rebel group heart and soul. Fearing that he might get into serious trouble in the outbreaks of violence which were steadily getting worse, his father put him in the army on the condition that he remained in Zongzhou. Demobbed three years later, he joined the criminal investigation squad of the police, again in compliance with his father's wish.

The toppling of the Gang of Four brought a change to the status of intellectuals. Motivated by his own confidence in his proficiency with the pen, he managed to pull himself out of the police and got himself a reporter's job with the local newspaper. After all, he did write some pretty good big-character posters in those days of 'mass criticism'. Although by that time his father had been transferred to the provincial capital, he still had good connections in Zongzhou.

Like Bo Fang who had never forgotten him throughout the past ten years, he had always had a place in his heart for her too. It was true that during the past two or three years, thanks to his parents' solicitude, though not altogether without his own initiative, he had explored the possibility of marrying this or that girl. But nothing had come off, one girl having proved beyond his reach, or another simply not good enough for him. This revived his yearnings for Bo Fang.

After all, it wasn't his fault that they hadn't been able to maintain any contact during the past ten years. He told his father all that Bo Fang had told him on that fateful evening after their last handshake and was roundly rebuked. His father took firm actions and had all his connections with Bo Fang cut off. But of course, under the circumstances, it wasn't all his father's fault either. How could they have spent those ten years in security otherwise? But now, the cloud hanging over Bo Fang's parents having cleared, it was natural that he should restore his relations with her,

a prospect for which he now had the full-hearted support of his father.

Furthermore, the prospect also offered the key to at least two of his other problems. One was the fact that he had had the family's house all to himself ever since his parents' transfer to the provincial capital. Although because of his father's status, no one in the Communist Party's municipal committee was suggesting that he should move out, grumbings in the housing department and among the rank and file were getting steadily louder. The second was the fact that he was now very sorry that he ever became a reporter. It had never occurred to him that the job required certain professional proficiency. His stories seldom saw print and the few that did were always tucked away on an inside page. This, he felt, was no way to make a name. He would have tried to switch to something else if it had not been for a resolution recently adopted by the municipal committee forbidding the children of responsible cadres to shift from one job to another at will. This had made it exceedingly difficult for his father to intercede on his behalf. But all his problems, housing, job, or anything else, would be solved amicably only if he married Bo Fang. Because of her special position, nobody would dare even to demur at this particular juncture. Hence, his letter to Bo Fang just before her return to town.

He made an attempt to sound out Bo Fang about his letter at their first reunion. Bo Fang nodded with a smile which he took as meaning more than merely an acknowledgement that she had received the letter but a positive response to what was said in it. But now, since Bo Fang's article was ready, it was obvious to him that he should lay everything aside to read that article.

'You were fast,' Yin Yun said after he finished reading the article.

Seeing that Yin Yun was about to comment on it, Bo Fang reached for a sheet of paper and placed a pencil on it.

'There will be nothing worth taking down. Let's just discuss it,' Yin said.

She smiled again and waited, intensely attentive.

'I think you should stress the persecution your family suffered at the hands of the Gang of Four. You do have a bit on your father and your mother, but what about yourself? After all, to be banished to the countryside

was the greatest of all persecution. The farm was only a place where they persecuted you. You don't have to apologize for those people.'

She wanted to put in a remark as soon as Yin Yun came to a pause, but he left her only time to force a smile, and continued:

'Modernization is OK, but I think you have written too much about it. A pledge at the end to "dedicating our youth. . .", etc, would be plenty, but, again, not too much, otherwise it would become meaningless. Frankly, I doubt if it would do any good even if we dedicated our old age. People talk big about modernization nowadays. That's none of my business, I just drift along. Of course you should say a few big things at the end of the article, or else they won't publish it.'

Bo Fang shifted her position uneasily, her lips pressed tight and her eyes showing doubts.

'You talk about the farm's modernization as if it were still your concern. What's it got to do with you now!' Saying this he handed the manuscript back to Bo Fang and took out a newspaper from his briefcase.

'Here's an exposé of Gang of Four persecutions for you, complete with a pledge to support the Four Modernizations at the end. Why don't you change your article according to this? That's all you have to do. If that's too much trouble, just copy it and make changes where you have to. They will publish it, don't worry. That's all there's to it.'

Bo Fang put the manuscript on the paper she had just laid out and gently pressed the wrinkled sheets. She had lost all interest in pursuing the conversation any further.

'Now, let's talk about personal things.' Throwing the newspaper to Bo Fang, Yin Yun said, 'I don't suppose you've settled on a job in town yet.'

'Well. . .' she said, not committing herself, without bothering about the newspaper. With her head bending low, she softly moved her hand over the manuscript.

'Can't you see that you've got the worst of it?'

'Have I?'

'You should have come back earlier, made your stand perfectly clear and refused to attend the memorial service until all your demands were met. That would have put them in a fix. Remember, you are the only child and you have suffered for more than ten years

on a farm. You can get away with anything if you made a big enough fuss.'

'Make a fuss?'

'Sure! It's not too late even now, with the special position you are in. Of course, you'd have to hurry. But I'll help you. Now, tell me, which organization do you want to join?'

'Which organization?'

'How about the Foreign Trade Bureau? Children of big cadres used to join either the army or the police. But they don't interest us any more.'

'Don't interest. . .?'

'The Foreign Trade Bureau, that's the place I'd like to go myself. Let's both go there. What do you say?'

At this moment a waiter came to tell Bo Fang that Secretary Yang would come to see her in her room after supper.

'Marvelous!' cried Yin Yun. 'Here is your chance. All you have to do is tell Secretary Yang what you want and a "yes" from him will solve all our problems. I'll ring up my father and get him to give Secretary Yang a call when he is having supper. Sorry, I must get going now. I'll see you after supper!' Turning round again at the door, he added, 'Oh yes, about the house, we haven't talked about that yet. But remember, that house which our families shared before, it should come to us. Get Secretary Yang's OK on that, too. Now, I really must go.'

Bo Fang heaved a deep sigh of relief after Yin Yun finally disappeared through the door. A sigh which not only banished this man from all her thoughts but also dispelled that shadow that had dogged her all these years. She remembered that it was only yesterday when she showed Yin Yun's letter to Sheng Yu, and his response was: 'Alright, you go and have a talk with him. I think after you do that you will soon forget him.' She couldn't help feeling at the time that Sheng Yu was a bit presumptuous. But now she realized that it was she herself who had been simple-minded on the question of love. The past ten years had been like an empty dream.

That evening Secretary Yang came with several members of the standing committee of the municipal party committee. They were keenly interested in Bo Fang's experience on the farm and asked all sorts of questions relating to her work, studies, the way she felt about

things and life in general on the farm. In her patient answers the name of Sheng Yu inevitably came up time and again. This left no doubt in the minds of secretary and his colleagues about her innermost feelings.

The upshot was that Yin Yun never showed up again. He learned soon afterwards that Bo Fang never intended to leave the farm in the first place, which dashed all his hopes.

As for Bo Fang's article, Secretary Yang, who thought very highly of it, believed that it should bring about another Bo Fang fever in Zongzhou.

There was nothing left for her to do in town. Cherishing the most fond feelings for the farm and Sheng Yu, Bo Fang left Zongzhou early next morning.

Translated by Gerald Chen

BANK LOANS TO INDIVIDUAL BUSINESSES

Beijing now supports individual service businesses by providing them with loans and allowing them to take on apprentices.

This follows the decision of the municipal people's government to encourage retired workers and young people awaiting jobs to open their own businesses in order to meet social needs and supplement state-owned services.

Up to now, only two individual businesses have received bank loans. There are now over 900 household businesses in the city in about 48 trades. They include barber shops, laundries, cleaning and dyeing, tailoring, knitting and repair shops.

Wang Jilong, a 53-year-old skilled knitter, began a sweater-knitting service in the early 1950's. During the Cultural Revolution he was forced to change his trade to shoe-repairing. Recently he was encouraged to re-open his sweater business.

He got 500 yuan from a local bank and purchased a knitting machine. With the help of his family members, he grosses about 250 yuan a month. After paying business tax, he earns a monthly income of 130 to 140 yuan. He will pay back the bank loan by the end of this year.

'My customers can order the style of sweater they want,' Wang Jilong said, 'and I try my best to do good work.'

(Zhang Shuzhen, a 50-year-old woman tailoress, received the other of the first two loans, according to a Reuter report from Beijing. She has taken on two young women as apprentices.)

Xinhua, Beijing, 13 August

Panda Killer Jailed

One person has been sentenced to a year and a half in prison and another fined 60 yuan for killing a giant panda in a nature reserve in Shaanxi province, Northwest China.

Gou Fengrong, who received the prison term, and his accomplice, Ye Jianqing, who was fined, confessed the crime at a public hearing in the people's court of Yangxian county on 1 July. They are members of the Huayang people's commune.

The Huayang people's commune is one of the regions where pandas live in large numbers, and is within the Yueba nature reserve set up last year for protection of the animal. There are 10 such reserves in China.

Xinhua, Xi'an, 9 July

New Way to Treat Diabetes

Scientists have transplanted insulin-producing cells from one species of animal to another, a development that may lead to a new way of treating human diabetes, it was announced on 8 July.

Researchers at Washington University Medical School in St Louis, Missouri, said the transfer of hormone-secreting cell clusters called islets from rats to mice was accomplished without the recipients rejecting the donor cells.

Ten diabetic mice received transplanted cells which continued to function in the recipients' bodies. In 7 of the 10, the cells produced insulin and maintained normal blood sugar levels for at least 116 days, the researchers said.

However, the scientists stressed, any preliminary application of the techniques to treating human diabetes is at least three to five years away.

AP, Washington, 9 July

The Greatest Sportsman of the Century

Brazilian soccer star Pele has been voted the greatest sportsman of the century in an international poll of leading newspapers run by France's daily sports newspaper *l'Equipe*. Twenty newspapers gave Pele a total of 178 points, nine ahead of American athlete Jesse Owens, who took four gold medals at 1936 Olympics. Third with 99 points was Belgian cyclist Eddy Merckx, five times winner of the Tour de France.

Pele, who dominated soccer from the 1958 World Cup until his retirement as a player for the New York Cosmos in 1977, was voted first by six of the newspapers which represented 19 nations in five continents. Only the United States, represented by the *New York Times* and the *Los Angeles Times*, had two votes.

UPI, Paris, 13 July

Marriages on Parents' Choice

Despite the increased number of 'marriage on the couple's own choice', facts showed that marriage on parents' choice was still dominant at Ngaglik, Central Java, the Jakarta daily newspaper *Kompas* reported on 14 July.

The paper said the outcome of a research by the population study department of the Gajah Mada University in Yogyakarta, Central Java, revealed that 43.3 per cent were marriages on parents' choice, 28.4 per cent on the couples' own choice, while the rest was caused by other factors.

AFP, Jakarta, 14 July

Planting a Nose

To treat a noseless person, an Indian doctor for the first time ever planted a dead man's nose on the forehead of his patient so it would grow there, a news report said on 20 July.

After the nose grew on the patient's forehead for about three weeks, it was transferred to the noseless portion of the patient's face.

'The nose was remodelled by removing excess subcutaneous tissue and thus a well-shaped nose was given to the patient,' said the English language Indian newspaper *Daily Express*.

'If you see a nose growing on the forehead of a patient, who has had his original nose chopped off, you may be sure that he is a patient of Dr P. S. Saharia, the specialist at Safdarjang Hospital' in the Indian capital, it said.

UPI, New Delhi, 20 July

19 Storms a Year

A Filipino sees about 1,500 tropical cyclones in a lifetime, 180 of which disastrous, the Philippine Weather Agency said. The average annual typhoon damage is estimated at 200 million pesos (US\$26,666,666).

With about 19 storms of varying intensity each year, the people of this island grouping at the edge of the Pacific Ocean take strong gusty winds, continuous roof repairs and fallen trees a matter of course.

AFP, Manila, 21 July

Italians Become Taller

The average height of an Italian has grown from 162 to 172 centimetres, according to figures published by the Italian Central Institute of Statistics quoted by *la Stampa*.

Today, strangely short Italians are seldom seen in the country. Only one per cent of the total population are under 155 centimetres, compared with 10 per cent a century ago.

Xinhua, Rome, 23 July

L. American Population Will Double by 2000

Latin America's birth rate is growing so fast that by the year 2000 its population will double, Mexico City will be the largest city in the world and Brazil will be almost as populous as the United States.

Those are among warnings included in the administration's Global 2000 Study—a projection released last week of what the world will be like in the next century.

Some projected figures from Global 2000:

—By the year 2000, the present population of Latin America (about 325 million) will just about double to 637 million.

—The largest city in the world in the year 2000, by current projections, will be Mexico City, already a classic case of what happens when urban growth is allowed to run uncontrolled. But current traffic jams and polluted air will seem pleasant by what is predicted for the year 2000, when Mexico City will have 31.6 million people, or about three times the present population.

UPI, Washington, 26 July

Global Bike Marathon

Canadian young couple cyclists Michael Manzo and Berthe Laforge, returned on 28 July to Halifax, eastern Canada, from a two and a half years' round-the-world bike marathon that started on 11 October, 1977, at the Olympic stadium in Montreal. They travelled 49,000 kilometres and worked their passage on a half dozen vessels.

Xinhua, Ottawa, 29 July

Huge Meteoric Stone

A huge meteoric stone weighing 33,400 kilograms was recently unearthed in Argentina's northern province of Chaco.

The soil strata of the Campo del Cielo zone in the province where the meteoric stone was discovered is a sedimentary one composed of dried clay. Investigations made by Argentine and US experts of the region's soil strata show that the meteorite shower fell between 2080 and 1910 BC.

Xinhua, Buenos Aires, 30 July

5 Million Abortions Last Year

Five million abortions were performed last year in China and some isolated instances were involuntary, says a state family planning official.

Wang Liancheng, Deputy Secretary General of the China Family Planning Association, also said in an interview on 29 July that between six and seven million sterilizations on both sexes were performed in 1979, although he added that these statistics were incomplete.

About 17 million babies were born last year in China, a nation of about 1 billion people, he said, and the natural population growth last year was 11.7 per thousand, compared with 23.4 per thousand in 1971.

AP, Beijing, 31 July

Fat Saves His Life

A 460-pound (208 kg) man, blasted by eight bullets from a state trooper's service revolver during a wild shoot out, was in stable condition on 1 August and expected to survive.

Police spokesman John MacLean said Lawrence Bell, 24, was so fat that none of the bullets fired from trooper Martin K. Stephens' revolver apparently 'did any vital damage.'

'They all just went around in the fat,' he said.

The shooting broke out after the trooper was hit in the ankle when he stopped a car and tried to arrest its driver, MacLean said.

Bell was still conscious when police took him to the hospital late on the night of 31 July. Dr Nicholas Nassar, surgeon who operated on Bell at St John's Hospital, said Bell was lucky to be alive, and that his excessive weight may have saved him from death.

AP, Lowell, Massachusetts, 2 August

Life-giving Voice

Margaret Ives, in a coma for five days after a car accident, regained full consciousness on 5 August after doctors played tapes of her nine-month-old son Steven.

Doctors at her London hospital said that playing patients familiar noises and voices has often proved successful in bringing them out of a coma.

A hospital spokesman said that 26-year-old Mrs Ives, whose husband was shot dead last year by Spanish police two months before the baby was born, was eating normally but had no idea how long she had been unconscious.

AFP, London, 6 August

First Swimmer to Cross Korean Straits

South Korea's Cho O Ryun, two-time Asia Games swimming champion, battled 13 hours on choppy seas on 11 August to become the first swimmer to cross the 50-kilometre Korean Straits.

Japanese maritime officials said the 27-year-old college student landed safely at the western tip of Tsushima Island, off the southernmost Japanese island of Kyushu, at 1:20 p.m. (0420 GMT).

UPI, Tokyo, 11 August

Baby Panda Dies

The world's first panda born naturally in captivity died in Mexico City on 18 August, Mexico City zoo officials said.

The eight-day-old panda apparently was accidentally suffocated by its mother.

The cub, named Xing Li (Chinese for triumph) was born in Mexico City on 10 August to Ying Ying and Pe Pe, presented by Chinese officials to former Mexican President Luis Echeverria when he visited Beijing in 1975.

Zoo officials said Ying Ying must have fallen asleep while nursing the cub and accidentally crushed it.

Reuter, Mexico City, 18 August

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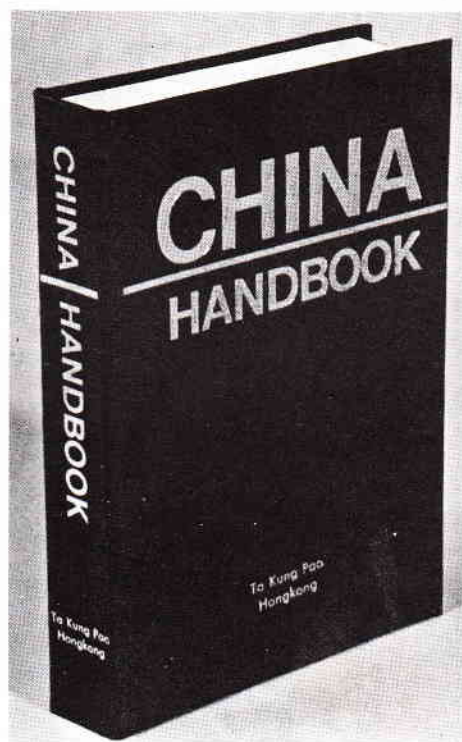
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