

CHINESE LITERATURE



10
1973

CONTENTS

STORIES

- A Young Pathbreaker — *Hsiao Kuan-hung* 3
Out to Learn — *Chou Yung-chuang* 16
The Girl in the Mountains — *Li Hui-hsin* 30
Ideals in Life — *Liu Yang* and *Hua Tung* 39
A New Teacher — *Cheng Hsuan* and *Yi Shib* 51

POEMS — *Li Ying*

- Rain 64
The Frontier at Night 66
Fording the Stream 68
Our Cook 71

SKETCHES

- The Old Station Master — *Chi Shui-yuan* 73
When Peaches Ripen — *Li Hao* 79
Whole-hearted — *Wu Ching-ming* 83

- Two Poems — *Chen Han-seng* 89

INTERVIEWS

- New Recruits — *Wu Ming* 91

CULTURAL EXCHANGE

- Exhibition of Japanese Handicrafts in Peking — *Lei Kwei-yuan* 96

CHRONICLE

99

PLATES

- Dawn Over the Great Wall (traditional Chinese painting)
— *Kuan Shan-yueh* 38-39
Horse Racing (traditional Chinese painting) — *Huang Chou* 50-51

Let's Go Together (coloured woodcut) — *Chen Yen-ning and Wang*

Wei-pao

70-71

Old Schoolmates (traditional Chinese painting) — *Tang Chi-hsiang*

78-79

Spring in a Mountain Village (coloured woodcut) — *Chang*

Ching-wen

90-91

Front Cover: Chatting After Work — *Chu Yeh-ching*

Stories

Hsiao Kuan-hung

A Young Pathbreaker

Another clap of thunder, then huge raindrops beat on the windows of the generator works, splashing them with flower-like patterns.

A discussion was going on in the meeting room on the important task of producing generators for a defence project. As usual, after his speech, the Party secretary glanced around questioningly. He finally fixed his sharp eyes on Old Cheng, the head of the coil workshop. That was because the key problem in fulfilling the assignment was whether or not they could finish the production of the coils ahead of time. The Party secretary wanted to know Cheng's view. But instead of saying "can do" as usual, Old Cheng maintained a thoughtful silence. For coil production had always had to wait till the stator was completed. They would trial-produce a coil and fix it in the stator, then modify this model and test it again, repeating this process until it was good enough. Under these circumstances, how could they guarantee to fulfil the task ahead of time?

While Old Cheng remained deep in thought the door was pushed open. In came a girl drenched to the skin, her bobbed hair sticking to her rosy cheeks. Brushing her wet hair back, she looked around the room rather awkwardly.

"Young Chiang," Old Cheng called softly. She went over and slipped into a seat beside him.

Young Chiang's full name was Chiang Hsiao-hua. Several days previously the Party branch secretary had sent her to be an assistant to Master Cheng because he was so busy. Formerly Cheng's apprentice, Young Chiang was now a technician. Old Cheng had had several apprentices, but of them all he preferred Young Chiang. He had been very strict with her. After three years of his training she had acquired some of her master's characteristics.

Old Cheng was pleased to be working shoulder to shoulder with this girl again. He consulted her on all problems, big or small. His eyes brightened now as he told her what the Party secretary had just said.

"I've an idea," she answered eagerly. "The old method of coil production ties our hands, Master Cheng. If we figure out the correct measurements of the coils by mathematics, then we can produce them in advance, without waiting for the stator to be made first. That way, we shall save a lot of time."

"By mathematics?" Cheng saw from Young Chiang's high spirits that she was all set to try out this innovation.

"It's not as easy as it sounds!" he said.

"If we don't dare to experiment we'll never discover the secret, master." Pulling her chair closer to his, she began explaining what she had learned in her spare-time study and by designing certain coils. She didn't think the calculation should be too difficult.

But Old Cheng had his own ideas. He had years of experience in coil production, yet had never known anyone design a coil by calculation. It was too risky. Furthermore this was an important project for national defence. They mustn't make even a slight mistake!

"Do you know what kind of job this is?" he interrupted her. "We must ensure the best quality and be responsible to the Party.... We can't afford to take any risks."

Young Chiang had no inkling of what was in his mind. With shining eyes she was gazing out of the window as if visualizing the success of the new method. "As long as we master the mathe-

tical law governing the production of this form of coil we can guarantee quality," she declared. "This method will not only save time; in future...."

Old Cheng flared up. "We can talk about the future later. The important thing now is to get the job done on time and ensure good quality. The old method is safe; we know how to handle it. If we spend the next couple of days making full preparations and go all out as soon as the stator is ready, we shall pull it off, don't worry!" He rolled up his sleeves ready to go into action.

Chiang stared at her old master in amazement. Then turning away from him she said: "I'll put my idea forward!"

"What's your idea, Young Chiang?" asked the Party secretary who had been listening to their argument.

Glancing at her master's stern face, she stood up. All eyes were on the girl. Tossing her hair back she said with determination, "I think using a mathematical calculation would be more scientific, ensuring quality and saving time as well. In this way we can speed up coil production."

"Now that's a good suggestion!" Jumping to his feet the secretary cried: "You've a bold imagination, Young Chiang. This will really be an innovation. I always think...."

"I don't agree!" cut in Old Cheng, who had lost patience.

Knowing his character, the secretary only smiled and continued: "We should be able to break the force of old habits and dare to blaze new trails." He paused to look at Young Chiang, who lowered her head modestly. Then raising his voice again, he went on, "We can make a great leap forward in production if we do this. Old Cheng and Young Chiang, you two go back to your workshop and talk this over with the workers and technicians. I'll come tomorrow to discuss it with you."

As soon as the meeting ended, Old Cheng hurried off to the workshop. "Master!" shouted Young Chiang, trying to catch up with him. But he went on without turning back.

Gazing at her master's receding back, she was filled with mixed feelings. She had expected opposition to her suggestion but not

from her own master. She hesitated, not sure whether she should stick to her idea or not.

When Young Chiang first went to the factory as a slip of a girl with two braids that swayed as she walked, although already a member of the Youth League she was called "the kid" by most of her fellow-workers. She hated this nickname which seemed to imply that they looked down on her.

Once several engineers went to the coil workshop to examine a model. Young Chiang listened as they pointed out its faults. Then frowning, she butted in: "Comrades, can't we calculate the curve of the coil? Our production is far below the needs of our country."

A bespectacled engineer glanced at her coolly. "There are no equations of this sort in any of the books, comrade young pioneer," he said. "It's not toys we're making. This is science." He burst out laughing.

Young Chiang raised her eyebrows at this snide way of talking, but persisted cheerfully: "Why don't we break new ground? We should dare to think and act." The engineer, red with embarrassment, walked away. It was the veteran workers standing around who laughed then. Young Chiang felt a little compunction. Still, she asked, "Why can't we work out an equation, master?"

"You're right, we workers should have guts and be ready to tackle any difficulties!" Looking at his apprentice, Old Cheng went on in a kindly way, "Young Chiang, we must have revolutionary daring and dogged perseverance too. That's the only way to storm the heights of science and technology."

It was true that no equation for the curve of a coil could be found in any book. How then could they work it out? This was a difficult problem for Young Chiang to tackle, as she had only just finished middle school.

But no difficulty could sap her determination. From then on, she always carried some books around with her and studied hard in the workers' spare-time university. She learned modestly from the old workers and technicians, who soon noticed that she was changing. Some said she had learned to use her head, others that

she was growing more and more like Old Cheng. On one thing they all agreed: the girl had guts. They stopped calling her "the kid".

Soon after this, Chairman Mao initiated the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. The plucky girl became a vanguard of the revolution. With her master and many other workers she opposed those who were taking the capitalist road. Later, Old Cheng was put in charge of production and Young Chiang was assigned to the design department. Her fellow-workers called her a "young pathbreaker".

Working in the design department meant heavier responsibilities for Young Chiang. She remembered her master's advice: We must not only consolidate workers' power but storm the heights of technology for the people. While designing coils she kept in mind the problem of how to calculate the curve, conscientiously collecting data on this. She spent her spare-time reading technical material and consulting veteran workers.

One night, Young Chiang went to the library but found it closed. She knocked at the door and who should open it but the bespectacled engineer. When she told him she wanted to borrow some technical books, he said disapprovingly, "Why bury yourself in books? We've been criticized for having only book knowledge without socialist consciousness. You shouldn't follow in our footsteps. I'm only here because the management has given me some materials to translate."

Young Chiang thought: You fly from one extreme to the other. Looking him steadily in the eyes she retorted: "We're against book knowledge without socialist consciousness, but we're all for mastering technique for the revolution. We workers have got to scale the heights of science!" So saying, she walked in. After that she studied in the library every night.

The speed-up in production sharpened the contradiction between the low output of coils and the growing demand for them. So Young Chiang was keener than ever to put forward her proposal. She had revised her notes and wanted to talk to Old Cheng, but since he was too busy she first consulted others about her new ideas. She had made a thorough investigation of the generator workshop before

the meeting, not realizing that her master strongly opposed her innovation.

During the cultural revolution Master Cheng and his apprentice were well-known activists. Nothing could stop them. But Young Chiang failed to understand her master now. Was he afraid of change? Still fettered by old ideas? For the sake of the revolution, which she was determined to carry on, she resolved to strike out boldly. Despite her great admiration for her master, this time she must stick to her guns and have it out with him.

Early the next morning, while the road to the plant was still quiet, Old Cheng hurried to his workshop. After last night's meeting he had had a discussion with the workers about their new assignment and made arrangements for this morning's work. He was now considering how to bring all positive factors into play and get production going with a swing.

Walking up to the east gate of the workshop, Old Cheng saw a group of workers under a pine tree. Going up to them, he noticed Young Chiang and several veteran workers drawing diagrams and eagerly discussing them. A grey-haired worker who saw Old Cheng greeted him: "Here, mate! Come and give us a hand." Young Chiang jumped to her feet, mopping the sweat from her forehead. "Master," she exclaimed cheerfully. "Old Yang and the others are raring to go. They're sure we can work out an equation for the curve."

"Quite right!" Old Yang laughed, scratching his grey head. "We've been on this job for years, but we've never really summed up our experience. What Young Chiang said last night was right. All the wealth in the world has been made by us labouring people. This curve can't stop us going ahead." The others chimed in enthusiastically. Only Old Cheng kept silent. He was afraid Young Chiang's innovation campaign would throw the shop into confusion.

The workers were puzzled by Old Cheng's worried look.

"Master," said Young Chiang eagerly stepping forward. "You have so much experience, if you'll give us a lead, however tough a nut this is, we'll crack it!"

Old Cheng stared at her woodenly. He felt weighed down by his responsibility, yet Young Chiang quite failed to appreciate this. "Work out an equation!" he bellowed. "What if we mess up the job?"

Young Chiang had never seen her master so angry. Her heart sank. She knew he never compromised on principles. But whether to insist on this innovation or not was a matter of principle too. Most of the veteran workers backed her up; only a few of them had opposed her suggestion. She said calmly but firmly, "Master, you used to tell us that no difficulty could conquer us as long as we depended on Mao Tsetung Thought."

Old Cheng was hot under the collar. He raised one hand as if about to speak, then suddenly turned and left.

"Master! Master!" she shouted, running after him.

Although Old Cheng had left in an angry mood, his mind was on the work. After assigning tasks for different groups, he kept going back to watch the skilled workers engaged in making the coils. They had been reinforced by workers and technicians from the generator workshop. The Party secretary was helping them too, sleeves rolled up. They were so busy that none of them noticed him. Old Cheng felt a pang. He was a well-known innovator in the plant, who had sweated over every innovation made there, always appearing at the most critical time. But today, like a soldier who had deserted his post, he was merely an onlooker. It was very depressing for an untiring fighter to watch others in the thick of a battle.

By supper time, he could contain himself no longer. Grabbing a young man by the arm, he asked, "How's Young Chiang's innovation going?"

"There are plenty of snags!"

"Ha!" Old Cheng stamped his foot.

Not stopping for supper he went to look for Young Chiang, hoping to persuade her to go back to the old method. He guessed she would be in the "red corner" on the second floor where they used to have their meetings during the cultural revolution.

When Old Cheng pushed the door open and stepped in, a blast of hot air assailed him. People had crowded around a ping-pong

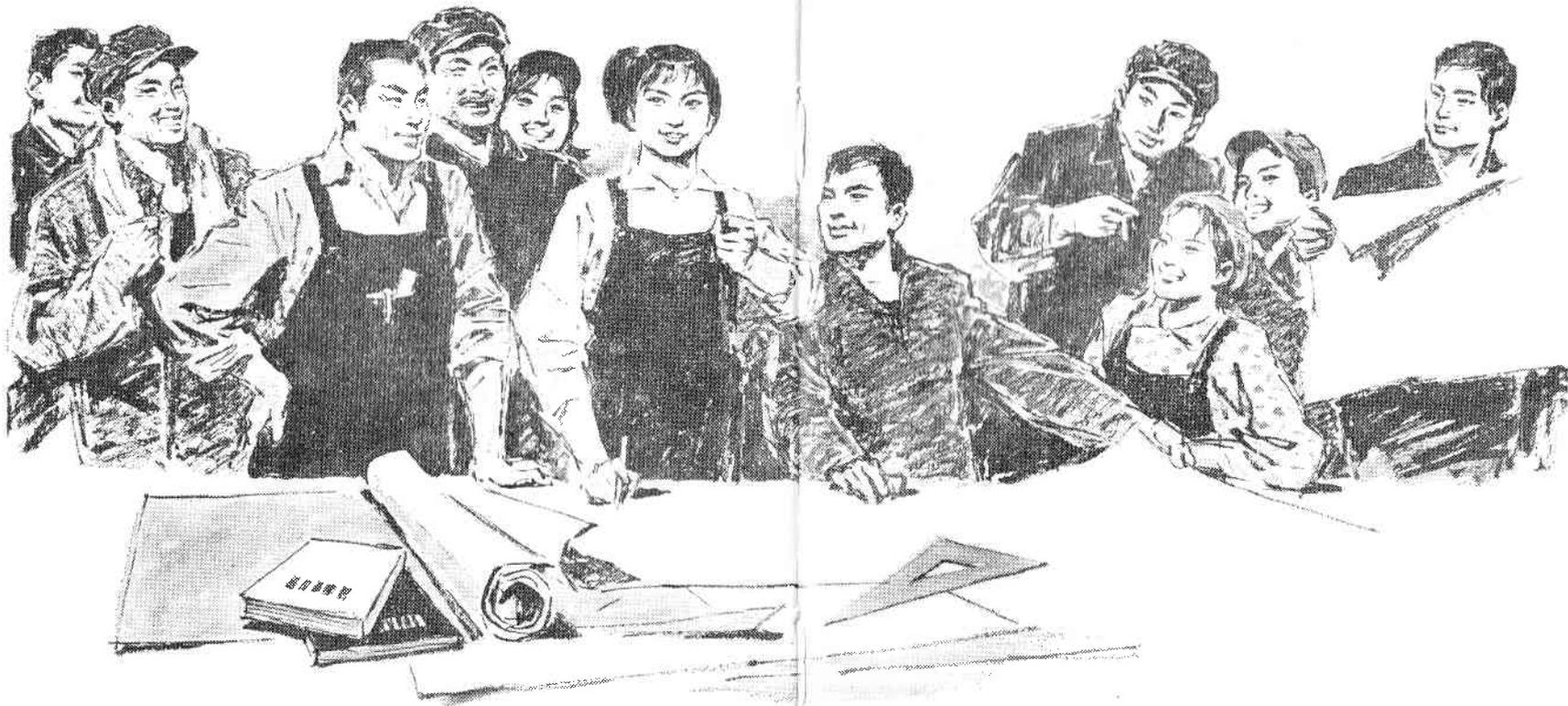


table in the centre of the room. Some young fellows were even standing on nearby desks. They were all engaged in a noisy, heated discussion. Old Cheng, on tip-toe, saw that Young Chiang and the Party secretary were in the centre. Scattered over the table were designs and sheets of calculations. With a pencil in her hand, Young Chiang was carefully listening to all suggestions and interposing comments of her own. Her confidence staggered him. He was only too familiar with scenes of this sort. How many difficulties they had overcome in this way! The sole difference was that Old Cheng had always been in the centre before, whereas now...

At that moment, silence fell. But still Old Cheng hesitated to speak out.

"What shall we do, Young Chiang, if this calculation misfires?" a gruff voice blurted out.

"The old method is safer," someone else said slowly.

Old Cheng wondered: How will she answer?

"If we fail, we'll try again," she replied. "Comrades, for days and nights we've been thinking how to make a better contribution to the revolution. We can take difficulties in our stride. We must never forget how Chairman Mao taught us how to surmount every difficulty to win victory in the cultural revolution..."

Old Cheng felt thoroughly shaken. The unforgettable days and nights of the cultural revolution flashed through his mind.

"Here on the industrial front," Young Chiang went on, "we need a revolutionary spirit. If we stick in the old rut and dare not try anything new, it means we're not carrying on the revolution."

"Right!" someone agreed. "But why has your master turned so conservative now?"

There was a short silence. The word "conservative" lingered in Old Cheng's ears. He flushed.

That word grated on Young Chiang's ears too. She knew that Master Cheng was not really conservative. Frowning a little she answered steadily: "Chairman Mao teaches us that thinking often lags behind reality. People don't accept new things all at once. Master Cheng used to be an advanced innovator, but for the moment he can't understand this new thing. The force of old habits is stubborn. It ties our hands and blinds us. We ought to break it with revolutionary action."

Young Chiang had been talking with growing vehemence. After a pause, she continued: "We all know Master Cheng. He's full of revolutionary drive, the first in every fight. Even if he lags a step behind today, you can be sure he'll race ahead tomorrow. We must get him to join in our fight. We must work out the equation for the coil model, produce more coils of higher quality, and consolidate the gains of the cultural revolution."

These words went home to Old Cheng's heart. They filled him with warmth. He had always thought of Young Chiang as a child, but now it seemed she had suddenly grown up. He was deeply stirred, deeply ashamed of himself. During all these years on the job he had failed to see that their old method of producing coils made it impossible to speed up production. Young Chiang had spotted this. But how had he reacted to her proposal? Where was his revolutionary drive? They should look on their workshop as a battlefield. Production could only be boosted by respecting scientific laws and breaking the stultifying force of habit.

Old Cheng hurried to the workshop.

It was late at night. After a day's hard work, Old Cheng felt indescribably elated. He rushed to the "red corner" and, pushing the door open, walked into the room. But no one was there. Designs were still scattered over the ping-pong table, the benches were in disorder, and Young Chiang's coat lay over a chair.

Old Cheng was reading some of the calculations when he heard a familiar voice calling, "Master." Turning, he saw Young Chiang



bending forward to smooth her hair which was dripping wet. Apparently she had just doused her head in cold water.

"Master, I've been looking for you everywhere," she burst out before he could speak. "Are you still angry with me?"

Angry? His anger had long since disappeared. But with a show of annoyance he retorted: "You little devil, how are your calculations going?"

Aware that he had come round to their way of thinking, with flashing eyes she gave him a detailed report of the keenness with which everyone was working, and the various suggestions that had been made. Their calculations were nearly finished. A few crucial points only remained to be cleared up. They were working on these now.

Old Cheng was infected by her enthusiasm. He told her that he had consulted some veteran workers too. If measurements were made from four different angles the calculation would be more accurate.

He drew a diagram by way of illustration. Young Chiang jumped for joy, then clasped his hands, exclaiming, "I knew all along that you would help us, master."

Old Cheng smiled but immediately put on a serious look. He draped her coat over her shoulders, saying, "You mustn't catch cold. Let's go back. Leave this till tomorrow — those are orders!" With that he pushed her out of the "red corner" and saw her back to her hostel.

Young Chiang felt far too excited to sleep, but the walk back had chilled her. Back in her room, having slipped on a sweater, she raised her head to look at Chairman Mao's portrait. In his kindly eyes she read his high hopes for the younger generation. The quotation from the Chairman's works which she had copied out beneath the portrait now struck her with a fresh significance: **"China ought to make a greater contribution to humanity."**

Impelled by a force much greater than herself, she picked up her coat and ran out.

When she reached the "red corner" again she saw Old Cheng bent over the ping-pong table, a pencil in his horny hand, painstakingly working out some calculation. "Master!" she cried, running to him,

Some time later, Old Cheng and Young Chiang made a trip to the station to see the first batch of new generators dispatched. The success of the new method had made the production of coils shoot up. The project was fulfilled ahead of time. Although not a day had passed for years without their dispatching generators to various parts of the country, they were particularly thrilled that day. They had scrapped their out-of-date method of production and modernized their technique.

Following the freight train with his eyes, Old Cheng murmured, "Chairman Mao teaches us that young pathbreakers are a challenge to us oldsters. We shall lag behind if we don't study."

Young Chiang at his side responded with emotion, "But, master, we were trained by you."

*Illustrated by Chen Yen-ning
and Chen Yu-hsien*



Out to Learn

Back in 1958, the year of the Great Leap Forward, Yao Chih-ming, at present Party secretary of the cold-working shop was already a model worker. Stout and sturdy in his fifties, he wielded his hammer with such skill and power that a much younger man could only stare at him agog. It was during the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution that he became secretary of the workshop's Party branch, after which his mates pointed him out as a good example of the integration of old and new — old worker turned new cadre. Conscious of his heavy responsibility, Yao kept constantly in mind the instructions of our great leader Chairman Mao that **"We should be modest and prudent, guard against arrogance and rashness and serve the Chinese people heart and soul. . . ."**

In the campaign to repudiate revisionism and rectify the Party style, the workshop Party branch laid emphasis on clarifying the correct political line. Management was also improved and soon production soared. Though it was only early in October their quota for the year was already finished. The Party Committee for the whole plant asked Yao for a good summing up of their experience so that it could be applied in the other shops as well. For this purpose, Yao called a

Party branch committee meeting at which he told the others: "Since we all work on generators we know that the greater the capacity of a generator the greater the need for cooling. The same goes for our work. The greater our success, the greater our need to remain cool-headed, able to see the contradictions before us and the direction in which to advance. Otherwise we may mark time or even lose ground." Everyone approved Yao's revolutionary spirit, his lack of complacency and determination to keep forging ahead.

Yao was currently attending a short-term political study course sponsored by the district Party committee to repudiate revisionism and rectify Party style. This had helped him to see many problems in a new light.

A couple of days before this Old Wang, who was taking the same study course, had come into Yao's room with a newspaper.

"Your workshop's in the news again, Yao," he said, as he plunked himself down on a stool and started reading, the paper spread out on his knees.

"The cold-working shop of the Generator Works, spurred by the campaign to repudiate revisionism and rectify Party style, has not only overhauled its inspection system, thus ensuring a steady rise in both quality and quantity, but has introduced a new method of verifying measurements before cutting, so as to eliminate rejects. This was done by giving full play to the enthusiasm of the masses and has greatly improved the quality of their work. . . ."

The others in the room urged Yao to introduce his shop's experience. Yao walked up to Wang, his eyes on the paper as if deep in thought.

"Here, have a look at this first," said Wang, handing him the paper.

But Yao simply passed it back to him.

"When the papers print our experience it's an encouragement as well as a spur to our work. But look at the paragraph above: 'The leadership of the General Tools Factory aroused the masses to disclose contradictions and develop their productive potential. By cutting material in a more rational way they are able to economize on steel.' Compared with them we are lagging far behind. The tools factory often sends men to our cutting section to collect our scrap, which they use as raw material. Their thrift and drive, the way they utilize scrap

and exploit their potential to the full are a fine example for us — yet we've been blind to it. What does this show? It shows our pride and complacency."

Yao meant what he said, he was not just trying to be modest. Some of his mates looked down on small factories and there had been friction between his shop and the tools factory on several occasions. Although Yao had pointed out that this was wrong, the idea of learning from such a small factory had never occurred to him either. So as soon as the study course came to an end he cycled over to the tools factory, determined to pick up some tips there.

As soon as he entered the factory gates he noticed big-character posters all over the walls.

"The Generator Works has forged ahead. What must we do?"

"Explode the fallacy that our production's reached a peak and we've no more potentialities to exploit!"

"The management must overcome its complacency!"

Beside these posters was an article put up in the name of the Party branch — with the title: "How Right You Are!"

Yao was very stirred: conflicting thoughts raced through his head. Contradictions ought to be exposed by encouraging the workers to air their views in posters. That was how things should be done in a factory. Why was it that in his own workshop announcements of achievements often appeared but never posters like these? Yao quickened his steps as he headed for the office of the factory's Revolutionary Committee.

The sole occupant of the office was busy reading. He recognized Yao and stood up to shake hands. "So it's you, Old Yao. Take a seat. You're a busy man and don't pay courtesy calls. You must have urgent business on hand."

"I've come to learn from you. I didn't come before not because we were busy but because of a swelled head." Yao tapped his forehead.

"How can you say that, Yao?" protested the other. "Your plant is like a big brother to our small outfit. You're a go-ahead unit. We've a lot to learn from you. It's too bad you've come just at a time when our key men are out learning from other factories..."

"I see..." Light dawned on Yao. He sprang to his feet. "Well, I mustn't take up your time. I'll just have a look round your workshop." With that he walked out.

2

Yao came "home" at noon. Leaning his bike against the wall, he looked eagerly round the shop while chatting amiably with the workers there.

Red flames danced under the workers' hands; acetylene torch cutters sputtered fire; a clear blue arc hovered over the electric welder; machines roared, hammers clanged... this was where Yao felt most at home. Drawing a deep breath of satisfaction, he took off his coat and made for the cloak-room where he put on overalls and gloves. He then went to the cutting department, the department where he had worked originally and to which he often returned after being appointed Party secretary to work and sweat for a while with his old mates. Everyone said, "If you're looking for our secretary, don't go to his office, go to the cutters. You'll find him there hard at work."

When Yao reached the cutting department, his eyes fell on the checker Li Chun-hua squatting on a sheet of steel with her measuring tape. She was wearing a man's cap at a rakish angle. And the smudges on her plump rosy cheeks made them seem like red apples which had rolled in the mud.

Chun-hua was the only daughter of Li Cheng-kuei, a member of the shop's Party committee. High-spirited and open as the day, with a face reflecting her every passing mood, she had a very sharp tongue. Her father called her 'Tomboy. Since the improvement of the inspection system, their shop had stopped sending out sub-standard products, to the satisfaction of everyone except Chun-hua. "We may have stopped rejects from slipping out," said she, "but we still throw so many on to the scrap heap. It's a crying shame!" This was at the back of her mind when she initiated a check-up on the dimensions drawn as a guide for the cutters, to eliminate mistakes at this early stage.

Suddenly, Yao saw a shadow cross Chun-hua's face. Something must be wrong. He stepped up behind her to peer over her shoulder.

The girl unrolled her tape in his direction and, without even looking at him, ordered, "Hold that!" Yao quietly did as he was told.

Chun-hua leapt to one side, bent down for a closer look, then burst out angrily, "What's happened to you, Little Chang? We've just undertaken to save twenty tons of steel this month, yet you're still working so irresponsibly. Do you think you're entitled to do a sloppy job just because we make a check-up now before cutting?" She made a fresh mark on the steel with her slate-pencil.

"We've undertaken to save twenty tons of steel..." Yao was delighted. The masses always look ahead, keep pressing forward. As soon as one contradiction is resolved, they find new targets, never satisfied. We cadres must be on our toes, he thought, in order to keep up with them.

"Say, are you dumb or deaf? Why can't you admit your mistake and correct it?" she scolded, when her first volley of reproofs met with no response.

She was so comically serious that Yao allowed a chuckle to escape his lips. Chun-hua whirled round so quickly that her cap fell off, and a flush spread over her face. "Oh, it's you, Master Yao. I thought it was Little Chang." She grinned sheepishly.

Yao smiled, then picked up her cap and planted it squarely on her head. "Well, Chun-hua, what's cooking in that head of yours lately?" he asked beaming.

"I was just going to look for you, Master Yao. You see, I've been trying to figure out how to put every single inch of steel plate to good use."

"Why, we've hit upon the same idea!" cried Yao.

At the tools factory that morning, Yao had pitched in with the workers there and benefited from their experience of rational arrangement of designs to produce the maximum number of parts from each steel sheet. He had intended to discuss this with the experienced cutters here. He hadn't expected Chun-hua to bring up this question and was naturally overjoyed to know that she had been thinking along the same lines.

Chun-hua longed to know Yao's idea, but his evident delight reminded her of something.

She had gone to see her father the previous day. She found him in his office reading the newspaper with a broad smile.

"Dad, I've a proposal to make," she announced as she entered.

"Oh, another proposal? All right, shoot." Li put down the paper.

"Our people say we can cut down twenty tons on the steel plates used this month."

"What? How? Listen, Tomboy, this is no laughing matter. I don't want you to lower the quality of our products. We have a reputation to keep up..." Li waved the paper by way of emphasis.

"Is that all you can think about, dad — reputation?... All over the country, socialist construction is going full speed ahead. So much steel is needed everywhere, we mustn't forget to economize on material. The successes we've scored recently seem to have gone to your head. You just sit in your office holding forth on our experience, hardly ever going to the shop to work..."

Just then the telephone rang. Li picked it up, signing to his daughter to be quiet.

"Hullo... is that Yao? Li speaking."

"Listen, Old Li, our course's finished and I could be back tonight. But I'm thinking of visiting a few other plants, so don't expect me today..."

"That's a good idea, Yao. I've had my hands full these last few days, giving 'press conferences' every day to comrades from other plants. If you can stop them coming here you'll be helping out. Go right ahead." He hung up and turned to his daughter. "See how it is? What time have I to work in the shop? Since the papers gave us that write-up, people have been flocking here to learn from us. Now Yao's going out to introduce our experience..."

This way of talking so upset Chun-hua that she stalked out, her plaits swinging indignantly.

Remembering the incident now, Chun-hua asked Yao, "Why weren't you back earlier?"

"Oh, I've been out visiting other factories." Yao answered off-hand, staring hard at the steel sheet at his feet.

This answer confirmed what Chun-hua's father had said. She could hardly believe it. Was it possible that Yao too was growing complacent? To verify this, she asked, "What do you think of our work here, Master Yao?"

"Just fine!" he exclaimed, patting the girl on the back. Chun-hua was stunned. This wasn't like Master Yao. Before she could collect her thoughts, he drew her on to the steel sheet. "Look, if you put that part there, you can fit another in here," he explained, gesticulating as he talked. "That way you'll save both time and material, killing two birds with one stone. Won't that be fine?"

Now Chun-hua saw what he meant. Far from feeling smug, Yao had tackled the same problem that worried her. In her excitement she bounced up and whooped, "Wonderful, really wonderful!"

Just then two girls entered carrying a pail of paste and a roll of paper. "We've copied out the poster, Chun-hua. Here it is."

Yao unrolled the poster. Its bold title caught his eye: How to React to Success?

Drums roll, gongs crash, in pour congratulations;
Some leading cadres are drunk with happiness;
Expounding their experience right and left,
They walk on air, swell-headed with success.
Too smug to hear suggestions from the masses,
They fail to see how much there's still to do.
We hope the Party branch will think this over —
The revolution must be carried through!

The big-character poster is a weapon to debunk the enemy as well as a scalpel to dissect ourselves. Yao rejoiced at the way these youngsters were racing ahead, helping the leadership by sounding this warning. This was particularly to be valued.

Then a little bewilderment followed. What was meant by "Expounding their experience right and left"? Remembering his telephone conversation with Li the day before, he started thinking hard.

Was this a case of a simple misunderstanding? No. What looked like a casual happening showed the arrogance and complacency of some leading cadres. It also reflected the mistakes in his own working style.

People thronged the workshop office where Li Cheng-kuei was holding forth. Introducing his shop's experience from a thick stack of material, he had now come to the last few sheets.

"In a word," he concluded with unconcealed pleasure, "we gave full attention to the management of production, and our output has been shooting up as fast as a winged charger. Our quality is up to standard too. We've already overfulfilled the year's quota."

The room seethed with excitement and approving comments.

"Old Li," put in one of the visitors, standing up, "could you tell us what your Party committee has learned about ideological leadership and your plans for the future?"

The hum of conversation died down abruptly. Li, the centre of some dozen pairs of eyes, was at a loss. The fact was that since their experience had been published in the newspaper, Li had felt too happy for words. For several days now he had been on the go, too busy to give any thought to a question like this. He was in a quandary, quite stumped for an answer; but to admit this would make people think that the ideological level of his advanced unit was too low. If only Old Yao were here! With knitted brows he was cudgelling his brains when the door banged open and in came Yao Chih-ming. At last! Li beamed with relief.

But Yao was so eager to meet the comrades from the tools plant that he did not even stop to hail Li. Hurrying over to shake hands with the visitors, he exclaimed, "What luck, finding you all here! I just went to your plant to pick up some tips from you but didn't find you of course. We've got so much to learn from you!"

After all were seated, Yao told them what he had been up to that morning. People's faces lit up; only Li Cheng-kuei looked glum. He was thinking: So Old Yao went out to learn from them. Why didn't I ask on the phone what he was up to? He knew his daughter very well. How awkward it would be if she questioned Yao about this.

After a little while, Li handed a slip of paper to Yao. "Here's the question a comrade from the tools factory raised. It's for you to answer."

Yao glanced at the slip and after a moment's thought said, "All right. Come along, comrades, let's go to the workshop."

Assuming that Yao was about to give their guests an on-the-spot lecture, Li cheerfully followed them.

Yao stopped before a bulletin board. Li expected him to point out an announcement of new achievements or an honour roll. When he spotted a sheet of white paper with a verse on it in the middle of the board, he supposed it must be the new work of some "poet", for announcements of good news and honour rolls were usually written on red paper. As he came closer to the board, however, he saw that this was a poster to criticize him; what's more, the first signature that caught his eye was that of his tomboy daughter Li Chun-hua! His heart missed a beat and the characters blurred before his eyes. . . .

Yao beside him was calmly telling the visitors, "See, the workers have raised the question you want us to answer. This is the best answer I can give you."

Li was very vexed. He felt a sharp sting on his lips. His hand involuntarily went to his mouth and he realized that it was the cigarette stub burning out. He could not bear to stay there any longer. He said bitingly, "Old Yao, I've got some business to attend to. You can answer any other questions raised." This said, he strode away.

Yao looked silently at his companion's receding back, recalling the past. Li had headed the workshop for more than ten years and the two of them, working together, had always hit it off well. During the cultural revolution, Li was elected a member of the Party branch committee. Experienced and hard-working, he had been Yao's right-hand man. But, Yao thought, since we stopped criticizing each other in a comradely way there's been a change in Old Li. That time we succeeded in making a huge generator and the leadership commended other workshops but not ours, Li was sulky for days. Though I took this up with him then I didn't go to the root of his problem. So I'm the one to blame. . . .

At this point Chun-hua came to fetch a tool. Yao stopped her, saying jokingly, "Chun-hua, you've scared your father away."

"Really?" Swinging her plaits as she turned her head, the girl looked at Yao with a big query in her eyes.

"Chun-hua," Yao went on, "disclosing a contradiction by going to the heart of it isn't enough. We must cure the patient by giving him the right treatment."

"Very good!" the girl replied mischievously. "I guarantee to fulfil my task."

Turning to his visitors Yao said, "Let me introduce you. This is Chun-hua, Old Li's daughter. She's the one who suggested the method of checking up on dimensioning, and the one who took the lead in writing this poster for the Party branch."

The visitors pressed round to shake Chun-hua's hand and urged her to pass on her experience to them. On her part, Chun-hua begged for some tips on how to save material while cutting.

4

At noon Li Cheng-kuei went home for lunch. Holding his rice bowl in his hand he was lost in thought, the big-character poster still flashing before his eyes. Although Chun-hua had worked in the plant for three years, she was still a silly slip of a girl in his eyes. Moreover, for a daughter to write a poster opposing her own father, not caring a bit about saving his face, that was too much. . . . On top of it all, Old Yao had gone out of his way to show this criticism to their visitors. What sort of way was that to answer questions! He had simply made Li look ridiculous.

As he brooded like this the sound of gay singing floated into the room. The next moment Chun-hua came briskly in, her two plaits swinging back and forth.

"Dad!" she cried fondly. "Is ma back yet?" This was her way of asking, "Still angry with me?"

Biting reproofs were on the tip of Li's tongue, but he choked them back at the sight of her loving smile.

The girl bolted her meal in no time, then rummaged through chests and drawers until she found a length of blue twill. She spread this out on the bed and began to draw a pattern on it.

Li thought this an odd time to start dress-making. When his daughter picked up scissors to cut through the middle of the material,



he snatched it away, flapped it, then turned it over before spreading it smoothly out on the bed again. As a matter of fact, he prided himself on his skill in cutting out clothes. He drew the pattern again and said, "It would waste material, the way you wanted to cut. You've enough material here for two pairs of slacks. Lay the legs here — that bit'll do for the pockets — and this triangle is just enough for the belt. . . ."

"No . . . that won't do. It'll affect the quality of the slacks, and spoil our old tailor's reputation too!" Shaking her head, Chun-hua mimicked her father's tone.

Li looked up to glare at Chun-hua, but like a gust of wind she ran out laughing, leaving her father dumbfounded.

5

That afternoon Li went back to his office. There was no one there. With a look of annoyance he slumped on a chair and began to leaf through the material on his desk. The door banged open as Yao came in wet with perspiration.

"What's the matter with you, Old Li?" Li's sulky expression aroused Yao's concern. "Don't you feel well? What's the trouble?"

"Depressed."

"Because Chun-hua and the others put up that poster? Why, man, hundreds of posters were put up about you in the cultural revolution and helped wake you up to your faults. How come one poster today has made you depressed? What's at the root of this?"

Yao's remarks took Li back to the cultural revolution. One unforgettable scene after another passed through his mind. At that time, all the big-character posters put up to criticize him by the revolutionary masses had kept him awake for nights, causing sharp mental conflicts in his mind. With the help of Yao and the revolutionary workers he finally came back to Chairman Mao's revolutionary line. At the meeting celebrating the founding of the workshop's Revolutionary Committee, he had said from the bottom of his heart, "I'll never forget the profound lesson I've learned in the cultural revolution." But today. . . . He hung his head moodily, deep in thought.

"You need more fresh air, I think," Yao continued. "If you shut

yourself up within the four walls of this small office all day long, you'll never solve your problem and may even fall into the old rut. Come on, let's see what's happening outside." He dragged Li out of the office.

Chun-hua, squatting over a steel sheet, was gesticulating with both hands as she talked to a man from the tools plant. When she saw Yao and her father, she sprang up to greet them.

"Have you thought over our proposal, dad?" she asked Li, tilting her head to one side. "The rational method of cutting is bound to save us twenty tons of steel. If you don't believe me, look at this. . . ."

Li looked down and saw that carefully drawn dimensions of various machine parts had been skilfully fitted together to fill the whole sheet. He could not but admire the ingenuity of the designer. "Whose idea was this?" he asked. "It's really smart."

"The comrades from the tools plant and Chun-hua thought it up," replied Yao.

"No, the comrades from the tools plant and Master Yao," Chun-hua amended. "And you too — dad!"

"This isn't something to joke about," scolded Li, assuming that his daughter was needling him.

"Remember, dad, when I was a child I asked you what you did in the cold-working shop? You told me the work there was like a tailor's using the acetylene torch in place of scissors, with welding and rolling in place of sewing and ironing, and painting in place of dyeing. . . . Later on, it occurred to me that if rational cutting makes dress material go further, why shouldn't the same apply to steel sheets? We have even more reason to economize on steel. With the help of the comrades from the tools plant and Master Yao, this idea has now materialized. Don't you deserve a share of the credit?"

Li felt like burrowing under the steel sheet to hide his burning face.

"Chun-hua's right," said Yao. "Looking backward makes us smug; looking forward shows we still have a long way to go. The rational method of cutting is nothing complicated, but if we're blinded by conceit we're like a welder wearing a face-guard — unable to see something staring him in the face."

Yao walked up to Li and laid a hand on his shoulder. "Old Li," he said earnestly, "the tools plant's smaller than ours, but they've a bigger sense of the need to continue the revolution, to keep pressing forward."

"The need to continue the revolution?" Li clapped a hand to his head as it dawned on him why he had been so blind to the strong points of others; why he was interested in making full use of his daughter's dress material but not of the factory's steel; why he had flared up at sight of the big-character poster. It was all because he had not been giving enough thought to continuing the revolution. His blood racing, he looked at Yao in his work-stained overalls and recalled how often Yao went without food and sleep to study the works of Marx, Lenin and Chairman Mao. Encouraged by his example, Li felt a new access of energy.

Chun-hua dashed up to him. "Report! I'm going to a meeting of the Youth League Committee, dad."

"What meeting?"

"To swap experience!" She shot him a quizzical glance.

"Well, we've still a long way to go." Li knitted his brows as if touched on a sore spot.

"Go by all means, Chun-hua," said Yao. "This is a good chance to learn from our brother workshops."

"What should I talk about?" she asked, suddenly diffident.

"Tell them what we've learned from the tools plant."

"You can start with me." Li shook his hefty fist. "'Dissect' me as an example!"

"Right!" Chun-hua snapped to attention, then turned and made off like a whirlwind, her short plaits swinging.

Illustrated by Tung Chen-sheng

The Girl in the Mountains



Li Hui-hsin

Setting off from Olive-dam Hospital along the bank of the Lantsang River, I soon reached the winding path leading up Mount Pulang, one of the highest mountains in the Hsishuangpanna District. On one side of the narrow track was a gaping chasm overgrown with trees and strange-shaped bushes, where clusters of purple fruit glistened in the sunshine. Looking down there made me dizzy. On the other side towered the mountain, a rich, vivid green.

I clambered higher and higher until white clouds were drifting under my feet. When I reached a forest of kapok trees the track forked, and the path I now took was almost perpendicular, with no steps cut in it, so that unless you pressed forward you would slip back. The local name for it was Breakneck Path. I kept going, however, spurred on by the task of training barefoot doctors which had been entrusted to me by our medical team. Even after six hours of climbing, I felt full of energy.

Suddenly I heard ear-splitting barking. The sound came nearer and nearer, and soon a black dog bounded into sight. While in the hospital I had been told of the fierceness of the dogs in the Pulang hamlets. Small but wiry and crafty, with bushy tails, these dogs look much like wolves. Now, barking furiously, his hackles up, this black brute came charging at me. I picked up a stone. . . .

"Aoliang, Aoliang!" Up panted a Pulang girl in a gay coloured dress, on her shoulder a bundle of banyan stems used by the local people as fodder for pigs. She looked in her early teens, short and

slender but strong. The dog at once stopped barking, wagged his bushy tail and then sat down.

The expression on the girl's sunburned face and in her sparkling eyes showed suspicion of me. So in halting Tai I asked her the way to Manpu Hamlet.

After scrutinizing me from top to toe, she beckoned me forward, saying: "Just come with me."

I followed her obediently. The girl was barefooted, but she climbed so fast I could hardly keep pace with her. I tagged along behind her, panting hard, and after an exhausting climb we reached the hamlet, nestling among white clouds. Before I could catch my breath a reed-flute sounded and two militiamen with guns slung over their shoulders came running up. This surprised me. I glanced down at myself and realized that I did indeed look a suspicious character: dishevelled, my clothes torn by branches, my galoshes covered with mud. . . . The two militiamen took me to the production brigade office. There I tried to explain who I was, but my poor command of the Tai language just made things worse. I showed them my first-aid kit by way of a credential, but that had no effect either. They seemed to regard it as some sort of camouflage.

They detained me until the evening, when their Party secretary returned from a meeting in the people's commune. He said apologetically: "*Moya* (doctor), you were in too much of a hurry. If you'd come with me there wouldn't have been this misunderstanding. I'm to blame too for not having phoned them that you were coming. You haven't had supper yet, have you? I've fixed up your billet. Someone will soon be coming to take you over." Then he hurried out to call a meeting of the brigade cadres.

A moment later gay laughter rang out outside, and I saw a group of girls approaching. One of them, with a turban round her hair and a colourful dress, seemed hesitant and was lagging behind the rest. When she came nearer I recognized the Pulang girl I had met on Breakneck Path. She looked sheepish because the others were teasing her for the rough reception she had given me. I studied them carefully. The eldest was not more than seventeen at the most, and each had a gun on her shoulder. They must be militia girls.

"*Moya*, are you hungry?" the gaily dressed girl asked. "Women comrades who come to the hamlet always stay with us. Would you like to come home with me?"

I nodded and picked up my kit. As I followed her out I asked her name.

"Nati," she told me.

Nati's house, a bamboo cabin built on stilts, was at the east end of the hamlet. The first thing that struck my eyes when I entered the courtyard was the dog tied to a kapok tree. He wagged his tail and licked Nati's hands when she called "Aoliang, Aoliang!" and went up to pat him.

There were only two members in the family, Nati and her mother. Her father had died two years earlier in a battle to defend the frontier. Her mother, deputy Party secretary of the production brigade and member of the commune's Party committee, had gone to the county town to attend a meeting. The house was roomy. After supper I sorted out my medical kit and drew up a plan of work. Nati, sitting beside me, was absorbed in polishing her gun. She said little, partly because of our language barrier and partly, I guessed, because of that initial misunderstanding.

Aching from my hard climb, I couldn't get to sleep. My bamboo bed creaked as I tossed and turned. In the middle of the night when I was just dozing off, the dog set up a furious barking. Nati jumped out of bed, snatched up her gun and ran out.

Soon hasty footsteps could be heard coming up the bamboo stairs, followed by urgent knocking on my door. "Peking *moya*! Peking *moya*!" someone cried.

I turned on the light.

A woman and a boy stood by the door. By means of gestures and a few words of Chinese they conveyed to me that one of their family was having a difficult labour. For a doctor, this was as good as marching orders. I made ready at once, shouldered my kit and set off.

Once outside I found it was raining, and in my hurry I had forgotten my flashlight. We had to grope our way by the dim light of the lantern the boy had brought. It was hard to go fast on that slippery moun-



tain path. Suddenly, a beam of light lit the ground before me. Nati, her gun on her shoulder, had caught up with us and was illuminating our way with her flashlight.

Mount Puling is chilly in the rainy season, but warmth filled my heart and surged through all my limbs.

The way seemed extraordinarily long as the path twisted and turned. Above the brawling of cascades we could hear the roar of wild beasts. When finally we reached the patient's house, the woman in labour was groaning. I hurried in.

The woman's uterine contraction had weakened. I administered acupuncture and an injection to speed up delivery. When the first rays of the morning sun broke through the clouds, the cry of an infant rang through the bamboo house, and a smile of joy lit up the mother's

tired face. This was her fourth delivery but her first baby to be born alive.

As neighbours flocked in to congratulate the mother I went out in search of Nati. The gun still on her shoulder, she was leaning against the door and waiting for me. She looked worn out. "Nati!" I exclaimed in concern.

"Peking *moya*, shall we go back?" she asked me, blinking.

"Yes." I drew a deep breath of the fresh morning air, took my leave of the patient's family and left.

"Can you find your own way back now, *moya*?" asked Nati presently. "I must go to school."

"But you haven't had any sleep, child!" I protested. She simply smiled and, with a wave of her hand, disappeared into the forest.

It was night again. Rain was still falling steadily. I lay in bed listening to the rhythmical patter of raindrops on the roof, till the sound lulled me to sleep

"Peking *moya*, someone wants you!"

I thought I was dreaming, then felt someone shaking me. The light was not switched on, but in the faint glimmer of dawn I recognized Nati's face. A man had come to ask me to visit a patient.

Nati offered to go with me, but not wanting to make her late for school I insisted on going by myself. When I neared the big kapok tree in front of the house I gave it a wide berth as usual, for fear that Aoliang might spring at me again. However, I needn't have worried. Nati was squatting beside the dog. "Down, Aoliang!" she cried, patting him on the neck. "Peking *moya* is going to see a patient."

Then with her gun on her shoulder the girl stood up, following me with her eyes from under the big kapok tree. I kept looking back too until the coloured turban round her head was lost to sight. Then I quickened my steps. But her clear voice reached my ears:

The River Lantsang throws up golden waves,
In our hearts we have thousands of songs;
Turning towards Peking we sing,
Each word meant for Chairman Mao.
Our songs are as long as the river,

Our words outnumber the waves,
The Pulang people think of Chairman Mao,
The red sun shining in our hearts for ever.

As the man who had come to fetch me led the way, he told me that the patient was an old peasant who kept watch over the brigade's pineapple plantation.

The pineapple plantation was half-way up the mountain, where the old peasant lived in a thatched hut. His hard life before Liberation had sapped his strength. I found he was suffering from eburnation — a hardening and thickening of the bones. I decided to climb Ahhan Peak from here the next day to gather some medicinal herbs which, soaked in wine, should help to cure him. I therefore asked a passer-by to tell Nati not to expect me back. People warned me that the path was steep and difficult, and that there were wild beasts on the peak. They advised me to go some other day when they could send a guide. But, for the old man's sake, I was unwilling to wait.

The next day when I reached the foot of the peak, a shrill barking suddenly broke the tranquil silence. My hand shot to the dagger at my waist. But before I had time to draw it, the dog had emerged from the mist and was upon me.

"Peking *moya*!" cried a familiar voice.

I turned to see little Nati, who at once called Aoliang to heel. Today she was wearing trousers instead of a frock and had plaited her hair as if in readiness for a long march.

"What are you doing here, Nati?" I demanded.

"I'm coming with you." She burst into a peal of laughter.

I was very touched. How could I refuse her offer?

That was really a hard climb. There was no trail up the mountain. For me, this was a stern test. But I was determined to press on to my goal.

We pushed forward through grass which grew higher than our heads, clambered up steep cliffs, skirted chasms, and waded through knee-deep marshes. Nimble as a bird and fearless as a tiger, Nati took every obstacle in her stride. When we entered a jungle Aoliang ran on ahead, barking back signals to us from time to time. Our feet sank so deep into leaf-mould that it was sometimes hard to pull them

out, and then we found our legs covered with squirming leeches which made them drip with blood.

Finally we reached the top of Ahhan Peak. Looking down, we saw below us a sea of white clouds engulfing the whole jungle.

Nati, searching tirelessly, succeeded in finding the medicinal herb I needed. Holding it aloft in both hands she leapt for joy, then dashed down the peak like an arrow shot from a bow, calling: "Peking *moya!* Peking, Peking! . . ." Her voice echoed through the valley.

Soon I had spent thirty-five days in Nati's house, and the happenings each day there impressed me immensely. People kept coming for treatment at all hours of the day and night, so that Nati's bamboo house became a temporary hospital and she herself served as a volunteer nurse for the patients. If they needed to take medicine she would boil water for them; if they were too weak to go back she would make them lie down and cover them with her own quilt. The extra work this made for her worried me, and sometimes I apologized for the confusion I had caused in her house. But she always countered:

"Peking *moya*, it's Chairman Mao who sent you to our Pulang hamlet. We're proud to have you staying in our house."

With the help of the production brigade, I started preparing a training course for barefoot doctors. Because of my shaky grasp of the Tai language, I thought if I had a monkey or dog to dissect it would help the trainees to understand my anatomy classes better. I told the Party secretary this. After a little reflection he said:

"That's a good idea. I'll bring it up at our next brigade committee meeting. If we can't get you a dog we'll try to catch a monkey for you."

However, I soon realized that dogs were highly valued in the Pulang hamlets. But in the busy season to ask commune members to catch a monkey for me would hold up their work; so I decided to draw some diagrams instead. This kept me very busy for several evenings. Then I hung up these diagrams in Nati's house and checked them against my textbook. She stopped work on the wooden sheath she was carving to watch me attentively while Aoliang, squatting beside her, licked her hands.

"Peking *moya!*" Nati called softly.

When I looked up she was leaning over Aoliang, one corner of her turban touching his neck as she lovingly stroked his black coat. The dog, wagging his tail, was giving soft, playful barks.

The girl's silence puzzled me.

Suddenly she raised her head and pushed Aoliang towards me. "Dissect him!"

From her eyes, bright with unshed tears, I could see how much those two words cost her. I was touched to the heart, for I knew how she loved Aoliang. No matter where she went — to work in the fields, to gather firewood in the mountains or to go to school — Aoliang always followed her. How could I take him away?

"These sketches I've drawn should help solve the problem," I told her. "Besides, the Party secretary says they're going to catch a monkey for me."

Early next morning I went to the derelict temple where the training class was to be held. It was built of logs and on one wall hung a blackboard. Before the commune members started off to the fields the trainees had arrived, fourteen in all, including Nati, who brought up the rear with Aoliang at her heels. When she entered the classroom she tied him to a pillar by the blackboard.

I understood what this meant. She had made up her mind after full consideration. And I had stayed with Nati long enough to know that once her mind was made up nobody could change it. Still, I had no intention of accepting her offer.

When the other youngsters saw the dog they burst out laughing. "What did you bring Aoliang for, Nati?" teased a pretty girl in red. "Is he going to be a barefoot doctor too?"

For a moment Nati did not answer. Then eyeing them steadily she replied in a firm tone: "I've brought him to be dissected!"

The others stared at her in astounded silence. Suddenly the girl in red ran up to me. "Peking *moya*, I've a monkey, a lame one," she cried. "A cousin gave it to me. You can dissect that."

My heart leapt up at this opportune solution. However, to make certain that it would meet with no objection I asked: "Does your mother agree?"

"She's sure to agree," the girl answered emphatically. "She's been wanting to get rid of that monkey for some time."

Three months later the training class came to a successful end. On the day when I left the hamlet Nati and Aoliang saw me off, accompanying me a long way. As a parting gift Nati gave me a beautiful dagger made for her by her father shortly before his death. The wooden sheath which she had carved herself always reminds me that this Pulang girl not only has iron feet to speed over the heights and powerful arms to harness mountains and rivers, but skilful hands capable of exquisite craftsmanship too.

Since then, whether scaling mountains, fording streams or cutting my way through dense forests, I take the dagger with me wherever I go. It inspires and spurs me on to press forward, never faltering, to my goal.

Illustrated by Hao Chan

Dawn Over the Great Wall (traditional Chinese painting)
by Kuan Shan-yueh ►

長城內外
一掃而空
萬里江山
盡在掌握
此景此情
此意此心
此情此景
此意此心
此情此景
此意此心



Ideals in Life

The rosy light of dawn pouring through the window lit up Commissar Chang's face as he bent over his desk to finish writing a memorandum to the Party committee. Finally he stood up and stretched, then opened the window to take deep breaths of the cool morning air. As he did this he heard a girl's clear voice singing a familiar song:

Wild lilies bloom, red as flame;

Chairman Mao leads us to liberate our land. . . .

In the two months since Old Chang's arrival at this sanatorium he had heard this song many times, and it never failed to remind him of his own youth. Smiling now, he glanced at the memorandum he had just written, a proposal for strengthening the Youth League work by educating young people with revolutionary ideals.

Wounds received in many battles had undermined Chang's health, but all his comrades admired his fortitude. When he was unwell and people urged him to rest, he would say with a laugh: "Men who've been under fire are bound to carry a few mementoes of it.

Why take them so seriously?" Recently he had taken a unit out on field manoeuvres, and his stomach ulcers had played up again. Although the Party committee had prevailed on him to come to this sanatorium, his mind was still on his work and he refused to stay idle. The morning after his arrival, from an open window on the third floor he had heard a girl singing this folk-song from northern Shensi which had been popular during the War of Resistance and the War of Liberation. The song voiced the people's love for our great leader Chairman Mao and the revolutionary fervour of every soldier. For Chang it had a special significance, because it had inspired him throughout the war years as a clarion call to action, giving him the strength to battle on to liberate all China. When he heard it after the establishment of our People's Republic, it brought those years of hard struggle back to his mind and fired him with fresh enthusiasm. He was particularly struck this time by the clear, beautiful voice of the young singer. Her style of singing, too, seemed strangely familiar, conjuring up the picture of a girl soldier in the grey uniform of the Red Army. Although so many years had passed, this picture had lost nothing of its former vividness and power to stir him.

His eyes on the distant clouds, Chang cast his mind back to the north Shensi plateau where red lilies bloomed, to those unforgettable war years. . . .

In the summer of 1936, a lad of only fifteen, to escape from the landlord's armed gangs he had fled thirty miles through the mountains where wild lilies were in full bloom, to join the Red Army. Since he was so young, they made him a medical orderly in a rear hospital. The head of his squad, seventeen-year-old Li Ming, also belonged to this district. Her father had done underground work for the Party, and after the Central Red Army reached northern Shensi, the two of them joined up. *Wild Lilies Bloom Red as Flame* was a popular folk-song in those parts where in early summer the hills for miles around were covered by red lilies. Of course, the girl loved this folk-song and the wild lilies not because they belonged to her home, but because they appealed to her youthful imagination and inspired her with revolutionary ideals. People who heard her

sing could never forget the purity of her fresh, somewhat childlike treble and the way she put her whole heart into her singing. When she went out with the guerrilla forces, she would sing for the troops or take part in shows put on for the villagers. She sang this song for the wounded in hospital too. It was a source of inspiration, a call to battle, for her guerrilla comrades and the local peasants.

Li Ming had made an indelible impression on Chang not so much because of her singing, however, as because it was she who had sponsored him to join the Communist Youth League. She had often helped him to straighten out his thinking.

"Time to take your medicine, commissar!"

Chang turned and saw that Hsiao-fang had come in. As he took the medicine from her he asked: "Who was that singing just now?"

"Chou Yun-yun, of course. Who else? She's set on being an actress." The outspoken young nurse pursed her lips disapprovingly. "She's been several months in the army, yet she still dreams all the time of going on the stage."

"You sound rather critical."

"Well, she works quite hard, but she's not satisfied with her job."

"Is she a Youth Leaguer?"

"No. She's applied to join, but unless she gives up that impractical 'ideal' of hers she won't make it."

"I'm." After thinking this over Chang said with a smile, "Hsiao-fang, as the Youth League's section head, you ought to give her more help."

Hsiao-fang raised her eyebrows. "You've only just come here, commissar. How did you know I'm a section head?" she asked.

"I made a point of finding out, because I want to join in your activities."

"Really? That's wonderful."

That afternoon when Yun-yun and Hsiao-fang were busily preparing swabs, Chang joined them in the dispensary. At first Yun-yun was rather shy, but she relaxed when she saw how approachable the old commissar was.

As Chang gave them a hand, he studied the girl. Yun-yun appeared rather bashful, with a look of naivety in her big eyes. A wisp

of hair fluttered under the peak of her army cap and two plaits hung down her back. She looked engagingly young. Although her voice had reminded him of Li Ming, the two girls were quite different in other ways. Li Ming had been rather thin and dressed shabbily in an old army uniform a size too large for her; while Yun-yun was glowing with health and well turned out in a brand-new uniform. Whereas Li Ming had been more mature and experienced, Yun-yun still seemed very green. How lucky she is, Chang reflected, to have been born in new China!

"How old are you, Yun-yun?" he asked her.

"Seventeen," she answered, keeping her eyes on her work.

"I hear you've applied to join the Youth League, right?"

"Yes . . . but I'm not good enough yet," was the bashful answer.

Studying her expression Chang said: "Yes, it's a big thing in a youngster's life, joining the Youth League. I still remember how I joined myself thirty-seven years ago."

"Thirty-seven years ago!" Both girls looked up.

"Old as I am," he told them with a smile, "I still retain very fond memories of those days."

Yun-yun was about to say something when the sound of music outside distracted her. There was an ensemble next door to the sanatorium which could be heard rehearsing every day. In fact, from the window of the dispensary they could not only hear the music clearly but see the musicians and dancers practising.

As soon as Yun-yun heard music she found it hard to sit still. Stealing a glance at the commissar, she quietly moved her stool closer to the window and began to listen raptly. Automatically picking up a toothpick with her right hand and a piece of cotton wool with her left, she carelessly made a swab and tossed it on to the table. Her movements became slower and slower, sometimes even stopping completely, so intent was she on the music.

"Yun-yun!" called Hsiao-fang sharply. Yun-yun gave a start and blinked as the other nurse pushed the swabs she had made towards her, saying: "Look! What sloppy work."

There were three piles of swabs on the table: two neat lots made by Hsiao-fang and the commissar, and an untidy heap made by Yun-

yun. Her first efforts were up to standard, but those made later were all shapes and sizes and had been tossed down at random. Chang sorted them out and stacked them together, then asked with a smile:

"Was your mind on something else, Yun-yun?"

Before Yun-yun could answer, Hsiao-fang snorted. "She's no mind for her work — she's too busy listening to music." With a reproachful look at Yun-yun she scolded: "All you can think about is your 'ideal'."

Yun-yun bit her lip, then protested: "We all have ideals, don't we?"

Chang smiled at both girls in turn, then eyeing the swabs on the table said thoughtfully: "Of course, we must all have an ideal in life. Otherwise how can we work for the revolution?"

A few days later, Yun-yun went one morning with a bucket and mop to clean the lavatory. When she opened the door she was surprised to find the old commissar there scrubbing the tiled floor so hard that his face was beaded with sweat. Touched by this sight, she grabbed the brush from him. "Let me do that, commissar. . . . This is my job."

"All right." Chang got up and took the mop. "Let's do the cleaning together."

"No, you're a patient. You mustn't tire yourself out."

"Nonsense. Exercise is good for me." As Chang started mopping the floor he added gently: "This lavatory hasn't been cleaned for several days, has it?"

Yun-yun had no answer to that.

Chang squatted down to wipe some dust from a crack. "Your ideal in life is not to be a nurse but an actress. Right?" he asked.

Encouraged by his kindly expression, she murmured: "Yes."

"Sure. We all have our own ideals," said the commissar with a twinkle in his eyes. "But whose ideal is it to clean lavatories? If nobody has this ideal, who will do the job?"

Yun-yun blinked and shook her head in silence.

After they had finished, Chang washed his hands and proposed: "When you've put the things away, come to my room."

When Yun-yun went to the old commissar's room, he had his glasses on and was reading a letter. At sight of her he said: "Here.

Read this letter. It's from my daughter who's working in the northeast. She's been worrying over the same problem as you." He passed her the letter and pointed to one passage. "Read this."

Yun-yun looked at Chang, then lowered her eyes to read.

"... You know, dad, my ideal was to be a tractor-driver, ploughing up great tracts of land. I never dreamed I'd be tramping round in top-boots, lugging an electric saw to fell timber in snowy forests. But after two years here I realize that those old day-dreams of mine couldn't count as a genuine ideal in life. I'm in love now with my job. And I feel proud to be able to do my bit for socialist construction by lumbering..."

"Do you agree with her, Yun-yun?" asked Chang.

"Do you mean, commissar," she asked diffidently, "that one needn't have any special ideal in life?"

"No, that's not it." Chang smiled. "The crux of the matter is: What is your ideal? When I first joined the army I was a medical orderly like you. I didn't like it either. I wanted to carry a gun and go into battle. I felt the way you do now. And, like you, I applied to join the Youth League. Later, educated by the Party and helped by the Youth League, I came to understand that there are thousands of different ways of working for the revolution: acting, nursing, cleaning lavatories, leading troops... they're all jobs that have to be done. What would happen if we all chose the job we like best? There must be a division of labour. Working for the revolution means accepting the task assigned us. We must put the needs of the revolution before our own personal preference. Isn't that right?"

Yun-yun had not thought about it in this way before. She did not know what to answer. After a silence, Chang stood up and said kindly: "Go and make a better study of Chairman Mao's works. I'm sure you'll come to understand what ideal a Youth Leaguer should have in life."

After Yun-yun left, Chang thought about his old friend Li Ming and how he himself had joined the Youth League. For years he had attached great importance to the Youth League's work, and now that he was here as a convalescent he meant to help the Youth League branch in the sanatorium. Yun-yun's problem set him thinking of

the other youngsters like her, Hsiao-fang and his own daughter. They were the future hope of the revolution, as fresh and glowing with life as wild lilies. Would they keep their fire? Retain their red-hot fervour? All these youngsters had their ideals; but were these the noble ideals the older generation expected of them? After attending several Youth League meetings here, Chang was convinced that Yun-yun's generation would not let their predecessors down but would work better still for the revolution.

"Yun-yun's changed!" Two months later Hsiao-fang was passing on this joyful news right and left.

And Yun-yun had indeed changed. During these two months she had not only become very active in political study, but had also learned to be a competent nurse. Quietly but conscientiously, she undertook chores like taking meals to patients, pouring them drinks and cleaning the lavatories. The branch committee of the Youth League had discussed her case and told her to make a formal application, with Hsiao-fang as her sponsor.

Chang had the impression, however, that the girl had lost some of her former gaiety. It was a long time since they had heard her singing. When patients asked her to sing them a song, she would say: "No, I'm through with singing. I must concentrate on my own job and do it well."

Yun-yun was writing out her application to join the Youth League when word came down that she was to be transferred to be an actress in a propaganda team. She flatly refused to go. "I don't want to be transferred," she declared. "I've given up all thought of going on the stage. I intend to devote my life to nursing and make a good job of this task given me by the Party."

"I think you ought to go, Yun-yun," urged Hsiao-fang. "You're fond of singing and have a beautiful voice. You're cut out for the stage."

Yun-yun answered earnestly: "You've been helping me all this time like an elder sister, Hsiao-fang. You ought to know how I feel. Hankering after being an actress made me neglect my own work. But now that I've had so much good advice from the Party and the Youth League, from Commissar Chang, from you and my other com-



rades, I realize that a revolutionary must always put the revolution first. It cost me a mental struggle, but I've finally overcome my ambition to be an actress which clashed with the interests of the revolution. I now have one ambition only: to work hard and be a good nurse. I'm sure Commissar Chang will back me up on this."

"No, he won't!" Chang had slipped in unnoticed and listened to the two girls' conversation. Gently yet firmly he said: "A revolutionary's ideal in life is not a question of what profession he chooses. You may want to go on the stage or to be a nurse, but once you've reached this goal have you no higher ideal? Of course it's excellent the way you've settled down now to make a good job of nursing, but this shouldn't be your ideal in life. When the Party needs you for some other task, you should accept it bravely. Actually your problem is: What should be a Youth Leaguer's ideal in life?"

Yun-yun started thinking this over. And Hsiao-fang felt that the commissar had clarified her own views on the subject.

"Come, Yun-yun," said Chang, patting the girl's shoulder. "Come to my room with Hsiao-fang, and bring that application you've written with you."

Chang took a notebook from his drawer and from it drew a sheet of paper, yellow with age. Yun-yun and Hsiao-fang, bending over it, read the mimeographed words: Application to Join the Youth League. This heading had a border of wild lilies, and the paper was marked with bloodstains.

Chang told them: "The other day, when Yun-yun was given her application form to fill up, I remembered the application I wrote thirty-seven years ago."

"Why is it stained with blood?" both girls asked.

"That's the blood of Li Ming, the girl who sponsored me. She was just your age at the time." Chang turned to Yun-yun. "Her favourite song was *Wild Lilies Bloom Red as Flame*. She was only two years older than me, but understood the revolution much better. She was in charge of organization in our Youth League branch." After a short pause he added with emphasis: "She was the one who taught me by her example the true revolutionary ideal when I first joined the revolution."

The two girls listened intently in utter silence. The commissar's tale took them to a time of war and battle, a kind of life they had never known.

"When I first joined the Red Army, I didn't want to be a medical orderly either," Chang continued. "All my family had been killed by the enemy. I was the only one who escaped, so I wanted to take up a gun, to have my revenge. When they taught me in the army to read and write, and I learned the word 'ideal', I thought: My ideal in life is to be a soldier and fight. Time after time I begged to be sent to the front, but the leadership wouldn't agree. The head of our squad was Li Ming, and she told me: Your post is here. I felt very frustrated. Especially when wounded comrades came back from the front.

"But Li Ming threw herself heart and soul into nursing. She helped with operations, nursed patients devotedly, and had to supervise us newcomers too. Still she never complained of being overworked. And when she had a moment to spare, she would sing for us.

"Her example made me do my best to help her. Gradually my attitude to work improved. Then the Youth League branch helped me to join the league.

"Li Ming had just helped me write my application when we were sent to the front. Our post was in a small valley at the foot of a hill, behind which the battle was raging. We could hear the gunfire clearly and enemy shells landed near us. I itched to join in the action.

"As the battle continued, a casualty was brought to our first-aid station. Badly wounded in the chest, he had lost consciousness. As Li Ming cleaned his wound he winced, and her hand jerked back as if she had received an electric shock. Then with tears in her eyes she gently dressed his wound. After the dressing, the man slowly opened his eyes. His face was drawn with pain, yet he made not a sound.

"Her eyes on the wounded man's face, Li Ming drew me over and said: 'To celebrate our coming victory, comrades, let's sing.'

"I was in no mood for singing. I turned away. But Li Ming's clear voice rang out: 'Wild lilies bloom red as flame. . . .' I glanced

at her. Her eyes were brimming with tears, but her face was radiant. That day we carried several casualties back to the rear, but that comrade with the serious chest wound died — died with a smile on his lips after hearing the singing.

"Li Ming's tears fell on the dead comrade's face. At that I snatched up his gun and started racing uphill. My one idea was to avenge our comrades. Li Ming ran after me and called sternly: 'Stop! Come back!'

"I must join in the fight,' I said.

"She pointed to the valley. 'Your post is there.'

"Wiping my eyes I protested, 'I never wanted to be a nurse. I want to fight.'

"With trembling lips Li Ming said: 'Comrade Chang Tung-ming, the ideal of a Youth Leaguer should be. . . .' Before she could finish, a shell came whistling over. She pushed me down just a second before it exploded. When I got up, Li Ming was lying in a pool of blood. She was dangerously wounded in the breast.

"After the battle Li Ming was sent to the rear hospital. As she lay on the stretcher, she took from her pocket my application form. 'Here, take this,' she said. 'Give it to the branch. . . . As your sponsor, I've written there what I hope of you. . . . Remember, all our work is to realize our noble ideal. . . .'

"She was admitted to the Party in hospital, and I joined the Youth League at the same time. I asked for another application form and made a fresh copy for the organization, so that I could keep this form stained with her blood."

Looking earnestly at the two girls Chang continued: "Thirty-seven years have passed, but I've never forgotten what Li Ming taught me. She's done various jobs: singing, nursing, working as a cadre. . . but what is her ideal in life?" He pointed to the application form on which Li Ming had written: "I hope Comrade Chang Tung-ming will set himself a high ideal: to fight all his life for the cause of communism."

Raising his voice the old commissar concluded: "This was Li Ming's ideal, the ideal of a Youth Leaguer. Every Communist, every member of our Communist Youth League, should have this ideal in

life. We must advance step by step, steadily, never faltering, towards that glorious goal, starting from our own post of work, with the task the Party gave us.”

When Chang had finished, Yun-yun wiped her eyes. Then she spread her application form on the table and wrote on it: “I shall fight all my life for the cause of communism.”

This done, the two girls left. Chang’s contact with their Youth League branch during these two months had given him an idea. He decided to send a memorandum to the Party committee suggesting ways to improve the ideological education of the youngsters and Youth Leaguers in the army, to help them clarify their ideal in life.

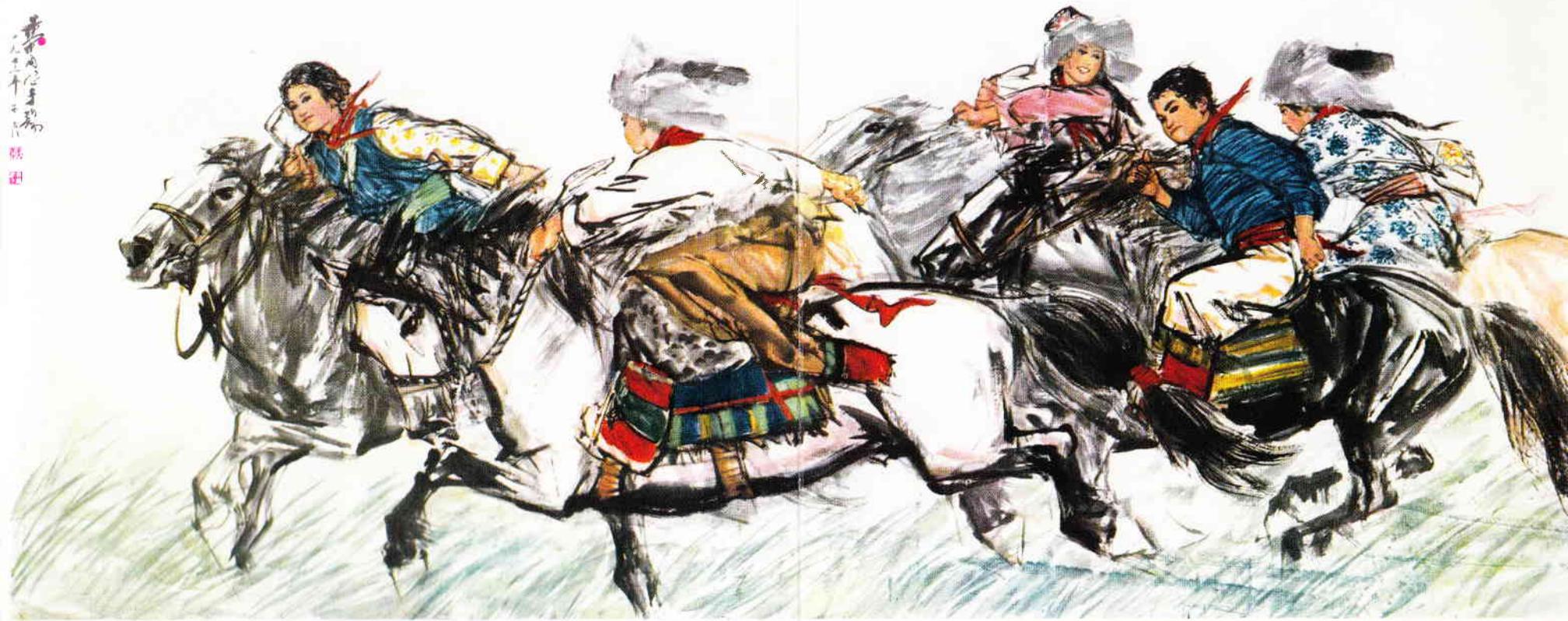
The sun rose outside the window. The breeze wafted the fresh scent of flowers into the room as the commissar picked up his finished memorandum and started off to the office.

Illustrated by Chen Yu-bsien



Horse Racing (traditional Chinese painting) by Huang Chou ▶

蒙古風情
張大千
畫



A New Teacher

When the azaleas are in full bloom, the hillsides turn red as flame and the warm breeze is laden with perfume.

Outside the headquarters of the Miao company of a PLA production and construction corps at the foot of Nanpu Ridge, not a soul was to be seen. The nearby stream, usually astir with voices at noon, was especially still this day. Uncle Stone, back from a visit to some relatives, was speeding towards company headquarters with a haunch of venison on his shoulder and a big bamboo flask of wine in his hand. He had just heard the news: "Chairman Mao is sending someone to run a school for us Miao people!" Now he found the headquarters packed with villagers, even the windows were darkened by many little heads peeping in from outside.

Squeezing his way into the room, Uncle Stone cried, "Where's the brother who has come to run a school for us?"

A roar of laughter greeted his question.

The authors are reporters and cultural workers in a PLA production and construction corps.

Having elbowed his way to the front, Uncle Stone found himself face to face with a girl. He was stunned.

With a sinking heart he growled to the political instructor: "Are you out of your mind, sending us this chit of a girl?"

"There's more to this girl than meets the eye," replied the political instructor in a low voice with a grin.

Aunt Apu, overhearing them, glared at Uncle Stone. "A steelyard is small but it carries a weight of a thousand catties," she told him. "This girl is a Youth Leaguer. She volunteered to come here. She's got pluck enough to reach down stars from the sky. What if she is a bit young?"

The girl, Cedar, had come to the production and construction corps two years ago from a middle school in Kwangchow. Not having caught what they were saying, she just smiled at Uncle Stone.

He thought, "Well, the lass may be smart, but running a school isn't easy. She's no more cut out for teaching than a hunter is for fine embroidery. . . ." He forgot all about the gifts he had brought with him till Aunt Apu took the bamboo flask from his hand. "Look," she cried. "We haven't started building yet but Uncle Stone has brought wine for the new school's house warming. Let's all have a drop to celebrate. You can smell the bouquet of this wine three miles away. . . ." Cheers drowned the rest of her speech.

That same afternoon they set to work building the school, felling bamboos, stripping canes, making hay for the thatch. In a few days the sunny, solid school-house was ready. Then desks, benches and a blackboard were made. On the sides of the platform they even carved and painted clusters of flaming red azaleas.

When Cedar walked in, straw and sawdust sticking to her hair, she could not resist stroking the carefully carved flowers with her perspiring hand. Warmth crept into her heart as the small excited faces of her pupils flashed before her mind's eye. She remembered what the political commissar had told her on the eve of her departure.

Before the cultural revolution, he said, a teacher had come to Nanpu Ridge to start a school. However, the hard working and living conditions had frightened him away in less than a month. The only traces of his brief sojourn there were a few pieces of chalk left in

one corner. After the construction corps was started there, they had wanted to set up a school for the Miao children. But they could find no suitable teacher. When Cedar learned of this she had asked for the assignment.

In the school-house Uncle Stone was repairing benches. "Even iron tigers couldn't stand up to these wild bullocks of ours," he grumbled to himself. "School hasn't started yet, but already they've damaged the furniture. They're bound to get completely out of hand."

The bamboo door creaked and in came Cedar. "So this is where you are, uncle," she exclaimed. "I've been looking for you everywhere."

Cedar wanted to persuade him to enroll his son and daughter. Twenty-eight of the thirty school-age children had enrolled, the sole exceptions being Uncle Stone's son Spring and his daughter Fragrance. The latter had become paralyzed after a serious illness three years ago, and Cedar had got permission from the Party branch to teach the little girl at home. But the boy ought to come to school. When Uncle Stone heard what she wanted, he said slowly, "We mountaineers are blunt, simple folk. You mustn't take offence if I speak my mind." He paused for a second, then asked with concern, "You're so young, Cedar, how can you run a school all by yourself?"

"By myself I couldn't prop up a single beam. But I've you people and the Party to help me."

"I don't want to dishearten you. But the children up here are as wild as monkeys. They're not easy to handle." Uncle Stone heaved a sigh. "My son, for instance, is nicknamed 'Wild Monkey' . . ."

"Uncle," said Cedar gently. "Don't the Miao people have a saying: The mountain eagle's wings are strong as iron because they're steeled in storms? No living creature can run and fly as soon as it is born."

The man chuckled inwardly. A chick just out of its shell starts chirping but it doesn't know a thing, he thought. It's not so simple to run a school. Our last teacher was a man, a tall hefty fellow, but

he couldn't stand the hardships here and lit out. A slip of a girl like you from a big city, do you think you can take it?

As Uncle Stone kept these reflections to himself while hammering at a bench, Cedar spoke up again. "School will begin tomorrow. Let Spring be enrolled. After school, I'll go to your house to teach Fragrance to read and write."

"Don't bite off more than you can chew!" With one hard stroke he drove a two-inch nail into the wooden bench, and went on concentrating on his work.

After a while he breathed deeply. "I'm not such a blockhead, Cedar, that I'm against starting a school. No, I'm all for it. But you are so young and inexperienced, I don't want you to bite off more than you can chew." He had tried to speak as gently as possible. When there was no response for quite some time, he looked up and saw the girl had gone. Blaming himself for having hurt her feelings, he hurried towards Cedar's room, his hammer tucked under his arm.

Outside Cedar's room he heard the voice of the company's political instructor: "He is all for the idea of running a school, having suffered so much himself from illiteracy before the Liberation. But he doesn't think a young girl can do the job, he lacks confidence in you. Since his daughter is paralyzed. . . ." Uncle Stone slipped away when he knew they were talking about him.

The following day Nanpu Ridge was seething. Children carrying brand-new satchels were chirpy as sparrows. Little girls wearing their most colourful scarves clustered around Cedar as they headed for school. And old folk come to witness this great occasion found themselves seats at the far end of the room. By the time Uncle Stone arrived the school-house was full. Squatting down in a corner he rejoiced at the thought that at last the children had a school to go to. But his doubts returned at the sight of the young girl teacher.

A burst of clapping interrupted his thoughts. Cedar, standing before the platform, was smoothing back an unruly lock of hair as she glanced round the crowded room. Silence fell. From Aunt Apu's hand the girl took a tattered bark-dress. Her clear voice charged with emotion was a little tremulous. "Generation after genera-

tion, all that the elders here could hand down to the children was the old ballad:

Trees cover our hills fold on fold,
Yet our folk go hungry and cold;
Brooks gurgling past each tree
Brim with our misery."

Uncle Stone had never expected that the young teacher would start her first school lesson by talking about the bitter past of their forefathers. His hands trembled. Everybody listened attentively. The atmosphere became solemn. Several old people at the back lowered their heads and sobbed. Even some of the children, so lively a moment ago, were wiping their brimming eyes.

Uncle Stone gazed through his own tears at Cedar's ingenuous, youthful face, surprised by the girl's ability to move her listeners so deeply. Profoundly stirred himself, it dawned on him how badly he had misjudged her.

Cedar was now writing on the blackboard the characters: Long live Chairman Mao! Uncle Stone, following the children's example, sat up straight and repeated after her these words which she read out in a voice as clear as a bell.

Back home that evening, Uncle Stone's eyes misted over again as he gazed at Chairman Mao's portrait on the wall. Suddenly he slapped his thigh and turned to go out. Just then Cedar came in.

"I was just going to look for you, Cedar."

"For me?"

"Yes. Yesterday I . . . well, I flare up too easily."

Cedar guessed what he meant. "Don't talk like that, uncle," she said with a smile. "Now you've enrolled Spring, that's fine." She glanced round the room. "I've come to give Fragrance a lesson."

"A lesson?" Uncle Stone's eyes bulged. After a while he muttered, "I appreciate your kindness, Cedar. But the child's half paralyzed. . . ."

"Don't worry, uncle. Our school won't let Fragrance lag behind."

He wanted to protest, "That's not what I meant." But there was a lump in his throat. He could only watch as she went into the inner room.

After Cedar had left, Uncle Stone went in to his little daughter who was intent on copying out the characters she had just learned. She lifted her round face to him and cried, "You will let me go to school, won't you, dad? Sister Cedar says I shall be able to walk again!"

"To walk again? You..." Abruptly her father strode out.

Since then Cedar had gone to her regiment's medical corps several times to ask her comrades there to buy her some needles and handbooks on acupuncture. The Miao company here had no medical personnel, and it was difficult for the Miao people deep in the mountains to go out for medical treatment. So Cedar had resolved to cure Fragrance herself. Every weekend she went to the regiment's medical corps. During the week, besides teaching and visiting her pupils' families she seized every opportunity to collect medicinal herbs in the mountains, and to practise massage and needling. Soon she had learned enough to start treating Fragrance.

A month or so later, like parched grass revived by sweet dew, Fragrance had become more lively. She sang and talked more than before. One day she took a red badge from her pocket and asked her father to pin it on her jacket.

"Now, I'm a Little Red Soldier!" she said with pride.

A faint smile appeared on Uncle Stone's lined face. But then he touched the little girl's wasted legs and shook his head with a sigh.

The summer holidays passed. Soon it was late autumn.

During the holidays, apart from working in the fields, Cedar had spent most of her time at Uncle Stone's house. Recently she had taken to calling there even more often.

One mid-day it was raining cats and dogs. Uncle Stone sat by the gate smoking. Fragrance, with a pencil and notebook in hand, was waiting for Cedar to come and give her a lesson. The father threw a sidelong glance at his daughter. "Don't wait," he said. "How can your Sister Cedar come in such a downpour?"

"She'll come," the little girl insisted.

Early that morning Cedar had gone to her regiment for a meeting. It was over five miles each way. The driving rain must have made

it more difficult for her to cross the hills. Could she manage to come back?

The rain was coming down in torrents now. Nanpu Ridge was entirely blotted out by white mist with only the peaks faintly visible in the distance. A gust of wind blew raindrops against Uncle Stone's face, but he was oblivious, thinking back over scenes he had witnessed recently.

One afternoon, Fragrance had pounded her legs with her fists crying, "I want to stand up! I want to stand up!..." She started sobbing. Just then Cedar came in. "In tears again?" she asked.

"I didn't mean to cry. I just can't help it..." Still sobbing, Fragrance rubbed her eyes. "I shall never get well..."

"Don't cry," said Cedar, putting an arm round the child. "Chairman Mao's Little Red Soldiers don't cry." She bent down to massage the little girl's legs. Fragrance saw beads of sweat start out on her forehead and gently wiped them away for her...

Several days afterwards, Uncle Stone was returning home one evening with a boar he had killed over his shoulder when he noticed a light in the school. He went to have a look. Cedar was inserting a needle into her own leg. She shook her head and pulled out the needle, then inserted it again, deeper and deeper. Suddenly she winced, her brows contracted. But pulling herself together and biting her lip, she gave the needle a twist. The strained expression on her face increased and big drops of sweat rolled down her forehead. Still she went on experimenting.

Uncle Stone put down his game and hurried in. "Don't hurt yourself like that, child..." he cried.

Cedar saw that the rims of Uncle Stone's eyes were red. She said decidedly, "I'm going to get Fragrance back on her feet again."

What a girl! As Uncle Stone gazed at the hazy rain his face burned.

"Sister Cedar!"

Startled by his daughter's cry, Uncle Stone dropped his pipe. He saw Cedar, dripping with rain, standing under the eaves. As she tossed her head to shake off the water she chuckled, "What a downpour! I could hardly get back." Uncle Stone noticed that her child-

like face, darkened by the mountain wind, had lost its plumpness. But her big eyes were still as bright and her voice as clear as ever. As he bent down to pick up his pipe, his eyes smarted. Rubbing them with the back of his hand, he dashed out into the rain.

Presently Aunt Apu came over. She handed Cedar a blue Miao dress with an embroidered border. She said Uncle Stone wanted the teacher to change her wet clothes.

Spring in the Miao mountains is brilliant with fresh green leaves. Silvery brooks sing merrily as they gush down to the valleys.

This was Cedar's first Spring Festival in the mountains. Every household had made sweet cakes of glutinous rice and brewed fragrant tea. They all wanted to entertain her. "Where is Cedar? It's our turn to have her as our guest today."

Since early in the morning Uncle Stone had been searching harder for the girl than anybody else. But she was nowhere to be seen. When he heard that the school was breaking up for the winter holidays, he had made some delicious cakes out of ten big coconuts for Cedar to take home. But she would not go back to the city.

"The Spring Festival is due. Your parents will miss you if you don't go back," he said. "Isn't this Miao village my home?" Cedar had retorted. "I've plenty of uncles and aunts here to care for me." Seeing that her mind was made up, he started to make preparations to give her a good time during the festival.

Not until noon did Uncle Stone learn that the teacher had gone to the hills early that morning with a bamboo basket. Collecting herbs for Fragrance again? Uncle Stone grabbed his gun and started up the mountains.

He had guessed right. Cedar was looking for herbs. Not finding the kind she needed for treating Fragrance, she went deeper and deeper into the hills, crossing dense patches of sword-grass and groves of trees. Sometimes bending down to search left and right, she doggedly pressed forward.

In a grove of bamboos, Cedar suddenly realized that she had lost her bearings. She sat down on a boulder and reflected, "It shouldn't be too difficult to find my way home if I were to turn back now.

But that would mean I've made this trip in vain." Just then she caught the murmur of running water. She jumped up in joy. For the Miao people had told her that the thirty-six brooks on this ridge were interlinked, so she could follow this brook down to the valley. Guided by the sound of the water she made her way through the thick undergrowth. As the slope dipped abruptly the splash of water rang louder. The ground here was carpeted with wild flowers and herbs. Cedar broke into a run. She slipped and fell into the stream, cutting her knee on a stone. But as she clutched at some brambles to clamber out, in spite of her pain she gave a cry of excitement. For there, among the brambles, was the herb she was looking for.

It was already sunset when Uncle Stone found Cedar at last. She was dripping with perspiration, her hands and face streaked with blood. In alarm he cried, "What happened? Are you hurt?"

"No!" She swung her arms and legs to reassure him.

"Where's your shoe?" he asked, seeing that her right foot was bare and the ground over which she had walked was spotted with blood.

"I don't know." Only now did Cedar wake up to the loss of her shoe and begin to feel a pain in her right foot. Uncle Stone crouched down and said, "Here, let me carry you."

"No," she protested, chuckling. "I'm not hurt. I can walk by myself."

April brought blossom time. Azaleas glowed like balls of fire on the slopes. The whole of Nanpu Ridge was a sea of red.

One afternoon after school, Cedar headed for Uncle Stone's house to help Fragrance exercise her legs according to a method she had learned from an old doctor in the medical corps. Besides giving Fragrance massage, acupuncture and herbal medicine, she was now encouraging the child to make the attempt to stand up. It made her unspeakably happy to see that the little girl's legs had grown stouter and stronger. Just in front of the door she stopped. Inside Fragrance was singing:

Azaleas bloom red as flame,
A good teacher to our Miao mountains has come;



Devoted to the people heart and soul,
She makes our Nanpu Ridge her own dear home.

Cedar laughed in spite of herself. She entered the house and asked, "Did you make that song, Fragrance?"

"No, dad taught it me." The child laughed gleefully.

Cedar blushed. "Well, don't sing it again." Then she held out her arms. "Come on. Try taking a step."

Just then Uncle Stone came in, accompanied by the political instructor. The latter threw Cedar a smile while Uncle Stone looked grim. The fact was that the Party committee of Cedar's regiment had decided to send her home with a delegation of other young people from the city to report on their work. She was to go to the regiment the next day. On his way home from cutting firewood Uncle Stone had met the political instructor who was bringing this news. "Cedar belongs here with us. You mustn't take her away," said Uncle Stone indignantly. The political instructor explained, "Nobody is taking her away." But Uncle Stone did not believe him. He felt frantic.

Noticing her father's expression, Fragrance asked, "What's the matter, dad?"

"Your Sister Cedar is going away," he replied sorrowfully.

Fragrance sat up at once, her eyes filled with tears.

Cedar did not know what this meant. She looked at the political instructor for enlightenment.

He informed her of the regiment's decision, then added, "Uncle Stone is afraid that we're taking you away."

Cedar thought for a moment. "What about Fragrance?"

"The old doctor of the medical corps will take charge of her. He'll be coming here tomorrow," replied the political instructor. Glancing at his watch he continued, "Let's go to company headquarters now. There are things to discuss."

"All right." Turning to Fragrance Cedar said gently, "Tomorrow the old doctor will come to look after you."

But the little girl seemed not to hear. Her father's announcement and the political instructor's arrival to summon Cedar to the company made her think her teacher was leaving them for good. Fixing her

gaze on the door through which Cedar had just passed, she thought, "I won't let her go! I won't!" Her blood racing, she called, "Sister Cedar!" The next second she had struggled to her feet!

Uncle Stone, his head lowered sullenly, looked up at his daughter's cry. He dashed to support her, yelling, "Cedar! Political instructor! She's stood up...."

At first Cedar could not believe her ears. Then she rushed back and caught hold of Fragrance's hand. "Dear Fragrance, you've done it, you've stood up!" Brushing away her tears of joy, she urged, "Come on, try to take a few steps." Fragrance nodded. Holding out her hands, she took a few halting steps. The political instructor encouraged her, "Stick it out, Fragrance. Try a few steps more."

Her face flushed, with a great effort Fragrance shuffled forward. Cedar could contain herself no longer. Pressing her cheek wet with tears against the little girl's, she embraced her. "You've made it! You've stood up!"

Wiping her eyes, Fragrance begged, "Don't leave us, Sister Cedar."

"Silly child, I'm not leaving you," said Cedar, letting go of the little girl. "Didn't I hear you sing that I have made Nanpu Ridge my home?"

"Really and truly?"

"It's quite true," put in the political instructor, stroking the little girl's hair. "Cedar is going with some of her old schoolmates to report on their work here to their folk at home. She'll be back in a month or so."

Hearing this, the little girl and her father nodded, then looked at each other, smiling.

The next morning, the azaleas all over the hillsides were a glorious sight under the early sun.

Dressed in a bright red short-sleeved blouse and a pair of new army trousers, Cedar walked briskly out from company headquarters. A crowd of old folk and children surrounded her, urging her again and again to be sure and come back soon.

Uncle Stone carrying Fragrance on his back walked behind Cedar. He stealthily wiped his eyes before striding forward. "Cedar, I didn't enroll Fragrance last year. This year she'll be the first to enroll."

The sun was high by the time they reached the top of the opposite ridge. There Cedar took her leave of the villagers and waved goodbye. Soon her rosy cheeks and red blouse could hardly be distinguished from the azaleas in full bloom all over the hills.

Illustrated by Chou Hsiu-ching



Rain

All over the mountain
The scent of wild grass,
Slopes of fresh vivid green
And the gurgle of brooks. . . .

All day the skies have seeped
Light, steady rain,
Pattering down on my sentry post,
Pattering down on the rocks.

In fancy I see golden beaches,
See plantain leaves wreathed in mist,
And hear horses galloping
Over the northern steppe.

Li Ying

For far and wide
Are villages I have stayed in,
Paths I have trodden,
Comrades-in-arms and dear ones.

Are they thinking of me now?
Does this silver, insistent rain
Bring word from them?

Well I know their deep concern,
For each raindrop carries word,
Softly, insistentlly
Drumming into my ears
The words: Be vigilant!



The Frontier at Night

So still the frontier at night,
Peaks loom higher, the moon seems smaller;
The moon sleeps on the mountain's shoulder,
And the mountain sleeps on the shoulder of a sentry.

By the village the camp-fire dies out,
The last embers in the cottage hearth turn to ashes;
In the misty valley
Nightingales are singing.

But by the precipice a bayonet gleams
Where the patrolman parts the grass with his gun;
Seven hundred million people look to him
To guard against marauders.

Seeds smile in the earth,
Children chuckle in their sleep,
And in our great land a new day dawns in peace
As dew drips like pearls from the grass.



Fording the Stream

Green the willows, dense the rushes;
The sun sets, smoke drifts up from cottages;
Taking firewood back to base
We ford the stream
Where village women are washing our uniforms.

Does the gurgling stream remember
How thirty years ago
An old woman washing clothes here for guerrillas
Was killed by the enemy?

When our men heard of her death,
Even the wounded burned to take revenge;
They whetted their swords
On the boulders by the stream,

Prepared dynamite charges
And polished their guns till cockcrow;
Then filling their canteens
With water from the stream,
Their hearts aflame with hatred they set out.

Countless villagers joined our troops
To go to the front,
Marching through clouds and mist,
Through the thunder of guns in dark mountains . . .
Trees souged in the wind at night,
The rock where she had washed clothes
Was bare in the moonlight,
But news of fresh victories poured in
Like the ever-flowing water of the stream.

Now thirty years have slipped away,
Thirty years of wind and rain,
The mountains and the stream are green again,
Willows planted on the hills cast a cool shade
And rushes grow dense by the stream;
For thirty years tides ebbed and flowed,
Days and months vanished without a trace,
But the rock where she washed clothes remains
Like her loyal heart
Still throbbing in these mountains.

The mountains are not yet old,
And now a new generation has arisen,
Their songs a never-ending stream,
Their red flags flying over all our land.

As we return with firewood to the ford
Our blood races like the tide;
Some men crunch roots of reed,
Others pluck sprays of willow to blow tunes;
We, the younger generation,
Were reared in the smoke of battle,
While the women by the stream
Are daughters, all, of that heroic mother.



Let's Go Together (coloured woodcut) ►
by Chen Yen-ning and Wang Wei-pao



Our Cook

Lighter of foot than mountain stags,
An earlier riser than the mountain eagle,
Softly he opens the door and, looking up,
Sees peaks shrouded in swirling mist.

Taking matches from his pocket,
Softly he strikes a light;
The lamp shows his nimble shadow
Lighting the stove,
Cooking rice and fragrant dishes.

Mountains enfold our little sentry post,
Smoke from our kitchen floats above the mountains;
Busy indoors and out, our cook
Heeds neither clouds nor mist. . . .

His vegetable plot outside the window
Has turned the boulders green,

And in the sty behind our post
His pigs are fattening;
His face is always wreathed in smiles,
All day we hear him sing.

Two fine accompaniments he has:
Indoors, his guitar; outside
Cascading springs. . . .
Buoyed up by revolutionary songs,
Toting heavy loads
He flies as if on wings.

The night patrol will soon be back,
He speeds to fetch them water,
In his brimming buckets glinting a new dawn —
Red sun and emerald mountains.



Sketches

Chi Shui-yuan

The Old Station Master

On the vast desert a PLA production and construction corps built a reservoir: a new lake brimming with water, bringing fish and birds to this sandy waste. The fame of this Big Leap Reservoir spread far and wide.

Wang Tieh-kung, the station master in charge of the reservoir, was an old soldier who had been wounded many times during the War of Liberation and was now a model worker in socialist construction. Though over fifty, he had lost none of his former fighting spirit. He worked day and night, guarding the reservoir like the apple of his own eye. A PLA farm near by supplied Wang's hundred odd workers with all the grain, oil and vegetables they needed. The members of this army farm had great respect for the old station master, and he showed them every consideration too.

One day in early spring, Liu Chang-an, deputy head of the army farm's high-yield section, was walking along the reservoir's big dam when Wang hailed him from the sluice-gate.

"Here! Come and take a look."

Liu climbed up to where Wang was standing.

Pointing towards the mountains, Wang said: "Look up there. Isn't there less snow than usual?"

Not knowing what to make of this, Liu remained silent.

Frowning, the old station master said: "It seems to me that the snow on the Tianshan Mountains isn't very deep this year. In the past, at this time of year, those mountains wore a snow coat; now they're only wearing a hat. Take a good look."

Liu saw that instead of covering the mountain, snow lay only on the heights. "You're right." He nodded. "There's much less snow than usual."

With a worried look Wang said slowly: "A small snowfall in winter means a poor wheat harvest, comrade. The less snow there is on the mountains the less water there will be in our reservoir. You may not have enough to irrigate your crops."

This sounded ominous. Liu looked at the fields planted with winter wheat where later they planned to sow "Golden Queen" maize. Then he thought: No matter how little snow there is on the mountains, the fields near the reservoir can hardly go short of water. First come first served. Since their fields lay so close, there shouldn't be any problem. Besides, they supplied the station with grain and vegetables, and the station master's son Hsiao-wu worked on their farm. Of course Wang would let them have water.

Soon after this, most of the station staff started marching out with spades and picks every day, going out at dawn and not returning till late. At first the men on Liu's farm thought they were planting crops or vegetables too; later, however, they learned that Wang's men were digging ditches and searching for springs to increase the water supply.

Wang said: "Building reservoirs is like building granaries. The more water we store up, the more grain we shall reap. This is our contribution towards a bigger harvest."

Late at night a flickering light floated over the dam as the old station master patrolled with his lantern.

Although there was less snow that year, thanks to Wang's foresight and hard work the reservoir was kept full. The PLA men got their two thousand *mu* of high-yield maize sown in good time and the shoots

came up well. Liu often told the station master: "Our fields are doing all right this year. Provided you, the dragon king, supply us with enough water, you'll have plenty of grain this autumn."

Little did he foresee that for nearly two months that summer there would be no rain and all the streams would dry up. Canals emptied, the fish in them dying on the dry bottom. The sun was like fire; the pebbles on the ground were scorching to the touch. Then all the peasants in the neighbouring commune and the men on the PLA farms had their eyes on the reservoir. People flocked to the dam as if going to a country fair and kept asking when the sluice-gate would be opened to irrigate their fields. This drought had made everyone frantic. The reservoir was now their only hope.

The old station master urged them to be patient. "This is all the water we have," he explained. "We can't open the sluice-gate yet. According to the weather forecast there will be no rain for at least another fortnight. We must keep the water for emergencies."

Another fortnight passed. There was still not a cloud in the sky, where by day the sun was a ball of fire and at night stars glittered brightly. Worse still, a hot, dry wind sprang up, and the crops began to wilt.

More and more people kept coming to the station office. Even Liu, formerly so assured, put in an appearance. Raising anxious voices, men protested to Wang:

"If you still don't let the water through, the crops will be ruined."

"If you won't open the sluice-gate, dragon king, we'll open it ourselves."

The old station master kept cool, retorting jokingly: "If you call me the dragon king, you'll have to obey my orders. . . ."

At this moment the telephone in the office rang. Picking up the receiver Wang listened for a moment, then boomed cordially: "I haven't seen you for a long time. . . . How goes it? . . . So you want me to open the sluice-gate and send you water? Sure, that's just what we're planning to do. You get top priority."

Putting down the phone he ordered: "Little Chen, open the sluice-gate. Leave it open for twenty-four hours starting from now."

The men in the room heard this with pleased surprise. Why had Wang agreed with such alacrity?

One young fellow asked bluntly: "Who was that? Why did you promise him water? Isn't this favouritism?"

Still smiling, the station master answered slowly: "That was Abdul Islam, Party secretary of Tienshan Commune. We have to put the commune first and do our best to satisfy it. Chairman Mao has told us to serve the people whole-heartedly and to give special help to the national minorities. So our higher-ups have decided to give priority to Tienshan Commune."

They were silent for a moment, feeling that this argument was unanswerable. Then someone asked: "When shall we get water for our PLA farms?"

Wang produced a list from his pocket and announced: "Our principle is: a fair deal for everyone. We must get our priorities right and act unselfishly. That means putting the commune before our PLA farms and catering for fields far away before those close by. After the commune has enough water, we'll irrigate the PLA farms. You're growing 004 wheat on Number 16 Farm, and that can stand a few more days of drought. On Number 51 Farm you have plenty of man-power; so you can give the fields an extra hoeing which is as good as a light shower. . . ."

Liu, hearing this, became more and more disheartened. He thought: We're right next to the reservoir, closer than any of the other farms. If Old Wang works on the principle of watering distant fields first, there'll be no water left for us. He decided to wait till the others had gone, then try to talk Wang round.

When only the two of them were left in the office, Wang asked: "What are you waiting for, Old Liu? Aren't you busy just now?"

"I'm willing to wait here all night — or until you let us have water!" Liu cracked back.

"What are you growing in your fields?" Wang asked.

"Maize, of course. It's there under your eyes."

"What strain?"

"You know perfectly well: Golden Queen."

"What are its special qualities?"

"As if you didn't know that! It forms long cobs and plenty of them, so its yield is high. It grows well on alkaline soil, and it can stand. . . ." His voice suddenly trailed off.

Wang finished the sentence for him. "It can stand drought, right? So it won't hurt if you don't water it for a few more days."

"But look here, station master! Even if a few more days of drought won't ruin it, we're counting on it for a high yield this year. After all, we're next-door neighbours. Surely you should have special consideration for us? It's only for this two thousand *mu* of land; we won't use up much water. If you'll just give us a little while you're sending water to the commune. . . ."

"No, we must stick to principles even for half a *mu*," Wang put in firmly. That silenced Liu, who left.

On his return to his company, Liu promptly sent for Wang's son. "Comrade Hsiao-wu," he said. "I've an urgent task for you."

"Just tell me what it is," the lad answered cheerfully.

"Our maize isn't doing as well as it should. As the saying goes: However good the crop looks, without water the ears won't ripen. We need water right now, but there isn't any for us."

"We're bang next to the reservoir: surely we can get water?"

"That's what I thought. But your old man says he must stick to his principles: supply the commune first, then our PLA farms; supply distant fields first, then the ones close by. Since he's your dad, I want you to persuade him to give us some water first. He'll listen to you."

Wide-eyed, Hsiao-wu said bluntly: "I can't do that. Haven't we undertaken to put other people before ourselves, Old Liu? What my dad's doing is right."

That evening the political instructor called on Liu, taking with him a copy of *The Communist Manifesto*. "We must study this work seriously, Comrade Liu," he said.

The next day at a study meeting Liu made a self-criticism. "First come first served was my idea," he declared. "That way of thinking is wrong. After examining myself in the light of Marx's teachings, I can see that I was putting selfish interests first. Now I've made up my mind to scrap my old individualist outlook."

A few days later the station master came to see him. "I've got water for you, Old Liu," he announced. "Send your men out quickly to irrigate your fields."

"If you stick to your principles," said Liu, "where is water to come from?"

"When we let water through to the commune, a good deal of it ran out and accumulated in hollows. I got hold of some pumps to get back that runaway water. There's more than enough for your two thousand *mu*."

"Wonderful!" Liu jumped for joy. "You take everything into account, station master."

So in spite of the severe drought, because there was water in the reservoir and because the old station master stuck to his principles while making careful plans to cater for all, the commune reaped a bumper harvest and the PLA farms got high yields too, the maize grown by Liu's company yielding more than a thousand catties per *mu* — a new record.

Old Schoolmates (traditional Chinese painting) by Tang Chi-hsiang ►



When Peaches Ripen

As soon as my two children came back from the nursery and saw peaches in the fruit bowl, they helped themselves to one each. While enjoying the fruit my little girl drew me to her and tilting her head asked: "Papa, do people in our old home grow peaches too?" Her question immediately led my thoughts to the peach groves back in my native village.

My native village is in a peach-growing area, but before Liberation none of the fruit trees there belonged to the poor, who had no land of their own.

When I was my little girl's age, I was the pet of our neighbours, an old childless couple who treated me as their own son. One day while I was pestering my father to buy me some peaches Uncle Chang picked me up, pressing his bearded cheek against mine, and said, "Swarthy, wait until we poor people have land. Then I'll plant some good peach trees and you'll have plenty of fruit to eat."

One early spring after the thaw I went up the hills with Aunt Chang to dig up some herbs for food. Happening to discover a peach sap-

ling as tall as a chopstick, we carefully dug it out and took it back to plant behind our huts.

There is an old saying:

Date trees fetch cash within the year,
But peach trees take three years to bear;
Four years you'll wait for apricots,
And five years for the pear.

Sure enough, in the spring of the third year that peach tree began flowering. Shimmering pink blossoms hung all over its small boughs, so that from a distance it looked like a burning torch.

But our luck didn't last. Before long Scabby the landlord discovered that peach tree. He sneered at Uncle Chang: "Doing nicely this last year or so, aren't you, Old Chang? Now your belly's full of rice, you've a fancy for some fruit, eh?"

"Master," said Uncle Chang, trying to suppress his anger, "the kids planted this sapling for fun."

"Are you blind?" growled Scabby, a scowl on his ugly face. "There's no place for your peach tree on my land!" Saying this, he swung his hoe and chopped the tree down, then stalked off.

"Just you wait, you devil! Your day of reckoning will come," cursed Uncle Chang, glaring angrily after the landlord.

From the root of the tree beads of amber sap were oozing. The old man dipped one finger in this.

"Swarthy," he said to me sadly, "that's good sap."

As peach trees have immense vitality, not long afterwards a new tender shoot sprang from the root. That autumn it was as thick as a man's thumb, and by the following year it was covered with sprigs. Uncle Chang screwed up his eyes to have a careful look at the tree and predicted cheerfully, "It'll bear fruit next year."

My happiness at hearing this was mixed with anxiety. Uncle Chang squatted down thoughtfully. After several puffs at his pipe he stood up and transplanted the tree into a large cracked jar, which he placed on the wall of his pigsty.

The next autumn when the fruit-bearing season came, the tree yielded over a dozen small wizened peaches. Uncle Chang picked one

and tasted it. "Swarthy, it's sour," he told me in distress. "Life is hard for the poor. Even the trees we plant bear bitter fruit."

After Liberation the poor in our village got land of their own and houses. Every family began to plant peach trees in its yard. The villagers urged Uncle Chang to burn that bitter peach tree, but he hung on to it.

In 1958 a people's commune was set up. This called for a celebration in our village. Hardly had the fanfare of cymbals and drums subsided when the villagers carried their hoes up the mountains to plant trees. In less than three years the bare mountains were covered with peach trees, grove after grove, as far as eye could see.

That year when I went home on leave it was the flowering season. I lifted my eyes to the mountains and saw a mass of green foliage and pink blossoms — it was pretty as a picture.

At the door of the brigade's office I met Uncle Chang, who was now in charge of the orchards. "Swarthy, you've come back too early," he told me regretfully. "You can only see the blossoms this time but won't be able to taste our home-grown fruit."

Last year I went home again when the peaches were ripening. The golden-red fruit permeated the air with intoxicating fragrance. I was approaching the village from North Valley and decided to pick my way up its well-paved stone steps. As I neared the top, grey-haired Uncle Chang came out of his shanty to meet me. Gripping my shoulders with his powerful hands, he shook me hard by way of welcome.

"Swarthy!" he cried. "We've another big crop of peaches this year!"

It was several years since I had last seen the old man. But he was still going strong, full of spirit and vigour. After exchanging greetings I looked at his shanty. Buried among the trees, it was built on four thick red-pine trunks the height of a man. The roof was thatched and the door flanked by a couplet written in red on birch bark:

Take the mountains as home to make revolution
Take the woods as companions for life.

Above the door was the inscription: "Old in years but red at heart."

When I asked Uncle Chang who had written these for him, he answered with a smile, "Who do you suppose? Those youngsters in the Youth Shock Team, of course!" Simple as this answer was, I sensed his love for the collective and his devotion to the revolution.

When I asked how many trees the brigade now had, the old man tapped his pipe and quipped, "We've just made a 'census'. Eight thousand and one hundred." The peaches I saw around me were all so fat and juicy that the loaded branches were bending under their weight.

Then Uncle Chang pointed with his pipe at two roaring tractors and a chugging pump down in the fields behind the brigade's office, saying: "We bought those with the money we made by selling fruit." After a pause he added, "Our neighbouring brigade grows apple trees. Their apples travel well but our peaches are too tender to travel far. So our commune has decided on canning them. When that's done, our peaches too will be able to go far and wide to any town or country market."

I was rejoicing over my village's prosperity and fine prospects when Uncle Chang took my arm. "Come on, Swarthy," he said. "I'll treat you to some peaches." I followed him to the back of the shanty and was astonished to find the bitter peach tree still growing in the cracked jar. Like a wiry old man, its trunk a sooty black, it stood there gnarled but sturdy.

Pointing first at the sparse bitter peaches and then at the large luscious ones all around, Uncle Chang asked me, "Swarthy, which kind would you like?"

"Well, uncle, today I want to taste both."

The old man's wrinkled face lit up. He broke into hearty laughter.

Now the peaches are ripening again, and my village is expecting another bounteous crop. My thoughts turn to Uncle Chang's experiences in peach-growing before and after Liberation. Today my own children are living a life as sweet as the honey-peach. It is up to me to let them know the kind of life the poor led in the old days, a life more bitter by far than the bitter peach.

Whole-hearted

Since they started the mass movement to learn from Tachai, Tung-chin Brigade's Team No. 2 had increased their grain yield year by year. One important contributing factor had been the collection and application of more manure. During this year's manure-collecting campaign three interesting incidents had occurred mainly concerning two commune members whose nicknames were "Whole-hearted" and "Two minds".

Who was "Whole-hearted"? Uncle Hsiang-yang, a poor peasant. And how did he come by this nickname? Well, it was given him in 1953, when some poor peasants got together to form a co-op. Uncle Hsiang-yang knew that they didn't have enough draught animals and farm tools so he sold his two fine pigs and took the money to the cadre handling the work of organization. "This is a token of my whole-hearted support for the co-op," said he. The cadre was very touched by this and remarked, "I can see you're whole-heartedly for the collective." So that was the origin of his name. Following Uncle Hsiang-yang's example, many people contributed money. The same year they bought a strong ox which Uncle Hsiang-yang trained for the plough.

And who was "Two Minds"? It was Aunt Fu-chen. When Uncle Hsiang-yang joined the co-op, he urged her to do the same. But afraid of losing out she wanted to keep five *mu* of land for herself while putting the remaining ten *mu* into the co-op. "When taking the collective road one should be single-minded," Uncle Hsiang-yang told her. But Aunt Fu-chen declared behind his back, "It's always wisest to keep one's own interests in mind." That's why others called her "Two Minds".

One evening during the summer harvest, crossing the threshing ground where beans had just been threshed and taken away, Uncle Hsiang-yang noticed the piles of dirt, leaves and stems left there. That'll make fine fertilizer, he thought to himself. So he called his grandson Little Kang to pick out the few beans left in each pile and take them to the brigade's barn, while he himself carried home the bean stalks and chaff to use as fertilizer when the brigade planted carrots in the autumn. Aunt Fu-chen, who saw Uncle Hsiang-yang doing this, went out to ask Little Kang, "What is your grandad doing?" The little boy told her, "My grandad says these bean stalks will make good fertilizer when we plant carrots in the autumn." This struck her as a good idea. Why shouldn't she collect some too and dump it into her pigsty? With more and better fertilizer she'd get more work-points. So she took the last two heaps of stalks and dirt from the threshing ground to her own yard.

Uncle Hsiang-yang, knowing how important manure was to ensure a higher yield, had been busy trying to collect as much as possible. One day as he was feeding the pigs he noticed that the weeds around the pigsty were particularly lush and green, probably because of the seepage from the sty. Well, that should be collected too. With a spade he dug a pit outside the sty into which excess liquid would drain. This was also noticed by "Two Minds" who intended to make use of her own sty's seepage to fertilize her vegetable plot. So she made her husband Fu-tsai dig a similar pit beside their own pigsty too.

After digging the pit, Uncle Hsiang-yang called a family meeting to arrange the division of labour. His wife was to keep the dirt floor of the pigsty covered with freshly-cut grass which when it rotted

would make good fertilizer. His grandson was to cut grass and collect other garbage on his way home from school and to throw this, dirt and all, into the pit outside the sty. The old man wanted to teach the little boy to love labour and care for the collective. However, Aunt Fu-chen, always mindful of her own interest, interpreted this according to her own lights.

One day, three commune members were sent to carry the manure from Aunt Fu-chen's sty to the fields. When they saw the muck they raised their eyebrows. Why? Because so much mud had been mixed in that it would be hard to decide on the work-points for it. To give high points would not be fair to the collective. On the other hand they knew how Aunt Fu-chen would haggle. Just then a sturdy, ruddy-faced man came walking briskly towards them. You could tell at a glance that here was a skilled farm-hand. Who was it? Uncle Hsiang-yang, our old friend "Whole-hearted". The three commune members discussed the problem with him. He advised them to carry the manure to the fields but not to spread it. He wanted to have a talk with Aunt Fu-chen first.

When Aunt Fu-chen was told there was mud in the manure from her sty, she refused to admit it because it would mean less work-points for her. So she argued, "Well, it was all taken out of the pigsty anyway. There usually is some mud in manure."

"But the mud in this manure is evenly mixed, not like the bit the pigs root up. It seems to me there's something wrong here," said Uncle Hsiang-yang.

"Something wrong?" she protested. "What a thing to say! Don't go making insinuations. If there's really mud and I get fewer points, that's all right. But if you say there's something wrong, you must prove it."

Uncle Hsiang-yang suggested they should go to the fields and compare the manure from her sty with that from others. She readily agreed, knowing that the manure was usually spread as soon as it was taken to the fields. She did not know that Uncle Hsiang-yang had arranged things in advance. When they reached the fields anybody could see the difference between the heaps of muck from her sty and the manure already spread out which was fine, rich and well-rotted.

By comparison, hers was indeed mostly mud. Aunt Fu-chen's face flushed red.

"To go the collective way, Fu-chen, we must be whole-hearted and not in two minds," said Uncle Hsiang-yang. "It's because you put your own interests first and wanted more work-points that you mixed all that mud in the manure. Yet even that's not so bad as your muddled way of thinking." The other people present aired their opinions too. Aunt Fu-chen knew she was in the wrong but wouldn't admit it. She thought: "You've shown me up today. We'll see later on if you aren't half-hearted yourself sometimes, Mr. Whole-hearted!"

Several days later she felt her chance had come when the manure from Uncle Hsiang-yang's pigsty was taken to the fields. Fu-tsai was asked to plough those fields and his wife to spread the manure there. Aunt Fu-chen was glad because this land lay next to their own private plot and her husband would be able to use the brigade's ox to plough that too. As for herself, she was just itching to see how much mud was mixed in the manure from Uncle Hsiang-yang's sty.

At noon that day Uncle Hsiang-yang was sunning rice-seedlings on the threshing ground when Young Chang, the brigade accountant, came to find him.

"We've taken 24 crates of manure from the pit outside your pigsty," said Young Chang. "We reckon these should rate half the standard work-points. What do you say?"

"I don't think they rate any work-points at all," was the answer.

"The manure from Uncle Hsiang-yang's sty is first-rate, it should be given full points..." remarked another commune member. He was interrupted by someone else who cried, "If Uncle Hsiang-yang gets full points, then so should I. There's mud in the manure from his sty too." This was Aunt Fu-chen. While dunging the fields she had discovered quite a bit of mud in the crates of manure and she wanted to find out how many work-points they were given.

"Don't talk like that, Aunt Fu-chen," said the team leader. "Uncle Hsiang-yang works whole-heartedly for our collective."

"Whole-hearted, is he? He dug a pit and put in grass and mud to make more fertilizer. You call that being whole-hearted about our collective?"

"You spread that manure in the fields yourself, Aunt Fu-chen," chipped in Young Chang indignantly. "What's wrong with the quality of the 56 crates from his sty?"

"The last 24 crates weren't so good."

"How many work-points do you think they deserve?"

"Not more than 60 per cent of the standard rate."

"He won't take even one per cent," Young Chang yelled.

Aunt Fu-chen was staggered but she was not going to take this lying down. "Since he's whole-heartedly for the public interest, why did he take those bean stalks for his own vegetable plot?" she demanded. At this, the others burst out laughing. "Uncle Hsiang-yang stored those for use when the brigade plants carrots," they told her. "You shouldn't misjudge a person."

So she was in the wrong again. Just then a loud cry reached them from the rice field: "Help! The ox has broken the halter..." Uncle Hsiang-yang ran to the field at once. Aunt Fu-chen, suspecting what the trouble might be, rushed after him with the others.

In the field which he had been ploughing Fu-tsai was clinging for dear life to the tail of the ox and shouting at the top of his voice, "Help! Stop the ox!" Others wondered what had happened but not "Two Minds". It was she who had advised her husband to plough their own plot at noon. Growing impatient because the ox was so slow, Fu-tsai had whipped the animal incessantly. This goaded the old ox to fury and raising its head it strained at its halter. Although Fu-tsai attempted to force it to lower its head the ox only swung it from side to side till it finally broke the rope attached to its nose-ring. Fu-tsai, holding the plough, could do nothing but grab the ox's tail and shout for help. Uncle Hsiang-yang, regardless of danger, rushed towards the ox and tried to grasp its nose-ring. He couldn't do this at first because the ox dodged and held its head still higher. But then Fu-tsai abandoned the plough and, when Uncle Hsiang-yang finally caught hold of the nose-ring, Fu-tsai managed to tie the halter to it again.

Uncle Hsiang-yang examined the ox wondering why this creature usually so docile had been in such a fury. When he saw the marks of lashes on its flanks, he flared up. "This ox has worked well for us

ever since we founded our co-op. Why whip it like that?" he fumed. "Is your heart made of stone, Fu-tsai?" Touched by Uncle Hsiang-yang's real concern for the brigade's collective property, Fu-tsai owned up to his own selfish scheme. His wife, standing beside them, lowered her head in shame.

Uncle Hsiang-yang turned to her and expostulated, "When we take the socialist road we must be whole-hearted. Otherwise we'll harm the collective as well as ourselves." Aunt Fu-chen had often heard this said before but it was only today that the words sank in. Catching hold of her husband's arm she marched him off. Everybody watched them go, wondering what they would be up to next.

After a while they saw Fu-tsai returning with two crates of pig dung. These were what Fu-chen had reserved for the eggplants on her own plot. At the same time she brought over a bag of beans which she handed to Uncle Hsiang-yang. "I picked these up out of the bean stalks I took from the threshing ground," she said. "They belong to the collective." Everyone was pleased to see Aunt Fu-chen's changed attitude towards the collective. Smiling they said, "We must all learn from Uncle Hsiang-yang, and take the socialist road whole-heartedly."

Chen Han-seng

Two Poems

The Commune's Shock-Troops

The crescent moon in autumn sky shines bright,
No sound of sickles in the silent night;
Yet when dawn breaks, the bean fields stretching green
For fifty *mu* lie harvested and clean.

Peach Blossom on the Western
Outskirts of Peking

Ten thousand smiling boughs enchant the eye,
Clouds flushed with rose against a clear blue sky;
Year after year braving the frost and cold,
Old trees in spring fresh loveliness unfold.



Spring in a Mountain Village (coloured
woodcut) by Chang Ching-wen ▶

Wu Ming

New Recruits

— *Spare-Time Writers in the Shanghai Generator Works*

Driving southwest across a highway between lush green fields about an hour or so out of Shanghai we arrived at Minhang. Just a small shabby town in 1949 when the People's Republic of China was founded, Minhang has now become an industrial district housing Shanghai's growing electro-mechanical industry. *A Young Pathbreaker*, a collection of short stories recently published by the Shanghai People's Publishing House, was written by workers of the Shanghai Generator Works here. The two stories "A Young Pathbreaker" and "Out to Learn" published in this issue come from this collection.

Although I arrived in the sultry heat of summer, I found the roads leading to the industrial district cool and shady. Tall *wutung* trees, their luxuriant foliage spreading over our heads, hid the blazing rays of the sun and screened most of the factory buildings from view.

Inside the compound of the generator works our eyes were immediately caught by the rows of wall newspapers and blackboard news outside each building. They carry reports on the production figures of the works as a whole and progress of work in the various shops as well as recreational and sports news. There are also articles writ-

ten by the workers on their new understanding after serious study of Marxism-Leninism, their repudiation of revisionist ideas and commendation of advanced workers as well as poems, sketches and other writings. These provide reading material for the workers and express their aspirations and hopes.

The generator works is a fairly large one making all kinds of giant generators. China's first steam turbo-generator with inner water-cooled stator and rotor was trial-produced here. The working class creates wealth for the nation. The passion and fervour with which it dedicates itself to socialist construction inspire all around, spurring them on to portray this fiery life of labour and to sculpture heroic images of the working class. This is an urge shared by management and masses alike.

"We want to bring up a generation of workers' writers," said Hu Pao-hua, the man responsible for the May First Workers' College at the generator works. "This is why we started a literature course in our workers' college."

The ranks of amateur writers and artists here are fairly large. They include an art troupe, one of the best among Shanghai's many amateur art troupes, which regularly puts on song and dance items composed by the workers themselves and reflecting their lives. The Writing Group of the trade union is also active, frequently contributing essays, reportage and other writings to Shanghai papers and magazines. In every workshop there are budding amateur writers who edit and write the wall newspapers and blackboard news we had seen. Amateur cultural activities here are going with a swing, as is production. It was on this mass foundation that the workers' college in 1972 started a literature course.

The initial enrolment was twenty, both men and women. Most of them were in their twenties, all of them loved literature and art and were not only good at their own jobs but devoted to the Chinese Communist Party and the working people to whom they owe everything. Confident and proud of the working-class cause of socialist revolution and socialist construction, these students are in close contact with the masses and know every facet of factory life, being regular visitors in the homes of veteran workers and close friends of

the youngsters who live in the hostels. Most of them have been through middle school, have a healthy thirst for knowledge and can often be found reading avidly in the works' library. They are also regular contributors to the blackboard news or wall newspapers, which carry items by them lauding exemplary deeds and people.

These students have been given eighteen months to study. Half of this time they spend in their own workshop to ensure that they keep their feet firmly planted in the soil of manual labour and retain the working people's sterling qualities.

Their political study includes systematic reading of the works of Marx, Lenin and Mao Tsetung. For general knowledge, books on philosophy and history are recommended. But the main part of the curriculum is literary theory and creative writing. These are taught in two stages, the first comprising study of theory and basic knowledge. Chairman Mao's writings on literature and art and selected works of Lu Hsun make up the text, and teachers from the department of Chinese in Fudan University come to lecture. The second stage is that of creative writing. Visits to various places are arranged to enlarge these young workers' knowledge of life and enable them to go deeper into social phenomena before they start writing. Experienced editors and reporters from local newspapers and publishing houses also come to help them. As a result, their first dozen or so short stories, together with several written by the trade union's writing group, have been compiled into the collection *A Young Pathbreaker*, a book which is arousing much attention.

The seventeen short stories in this collection present, from different angles, the revolutionary spirit of the working class, its vision, vigour and creativeness and reflect the immense changes in production brought about by the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. They praise the determination of young workers to scrap conservatism, break through obstacles and overcome conceit and complacency to blaze new trails in technical innovations. They also pay tribute to the warm love and help given by old hands to newcomers in the workshop. Although some of the stories just touch upon one or two facets of life, while others lack profound ideological content and a polished artistic form, they make refreshing reading in that they pre-

sent new heroic images of old and young workers, tackle new themes and throb with vitality.

Naturally the young workers found writing far from easy. When I asked them about their experience, I heard many tales of woe. They told me that depicting life in writing required a mastery of technique and artistic generalization which was beyond them. This meant frustration when they first put pen to paper. "I learned a little about literature in the course," a young woman told me. "But it's quite a different matter when you're trying to write yourself."

However, these young writers regard it as their revolutionary task to portray the new heroes of the working class. They revise their scripts again and again, as painstakingly and conscientiously as they produce each part of the generators. And they read each new draft aloud to the veteran workers who can be depended on to give them help and criticism. The experience of Hsiao Kuan-hung, author of "A Young Pathbreaker", and Chou Yung-chuang, author of "Out to Learn", may be taken as typical.

Hsiao Kuan-hung is twenty-two. In 1967 he came to the plant straight from middle school to be a lathe worker. He and some other youngsters started a Green Pines Study Group and studied Chairman Mao's works, political writings and other subjects in their spare time. They soon became skilled turners and activists in study, recreation and propaganda. All of them were vigorous young pathbreakers. Hsiao wrote a story about their activities and called it *Green Pines*. It turned out a flop because he was unable to generalize from life and his characters were flat and unconvincing. He did not lose heart though. Learning from his failure, he eventually wrote the title-story in the collection, "A Young Pathbreaker". He is one of the most active members of the literature course.

Chou Yung-chuang also came to the plant in 1967. He is only twenty-one and belongs to the cold-working shop. At school he was keen on mathematics and science but not on literature; however, he started writing for the blackboard news because he thought it important to push political study. When a Shanghai paper published an essay he wrote in 1971, his interest and confidence in writing increased. But none of his manuscripts after that was accepted. Hav-

ing enrolled in the course, he quickly completed a story entitled "Ideals". Cheerfully, he showed it to his mates and asked what they thought of it. Everyone, from the old hands in the shop to the teachers of his course, shook his head. "Doesn't sound like one of us," they said. Chou was really discouraged. His classmates helped him to see that the root cause of his failure was the big gap between his own feelings and those of the masses of workers. The old hands in the shop told him not to lose heart. The secretary of the Communist Youth League explained that writing was a mission entrusted to him by the working class; he must not think of personal honour or disgrace but must press on fearless of difficulties. All this renewed his courage and confidence. When he arrived at a better understanding of life and writing, he also found himself in harmony with his fellow workers. Things he had considered as routine in the works now took on a new meaning; things he had thought too ordinary for words now struck him as immensely stirring. That was how he hit on the theme of "Out to Learn" and gathered his material in the workshop.

Appreciative and discriminating reviews both in the Shanghai and the Peking press greeted the publication of this collection. However, Hu Pao-hua was very modest when we congratulated him.

"The Party and the people are encouraging us," he said. "There's a great deal of spare-time writing being done now in our Shanghai factories. Our stories are just a few drops in this ocean of new writing. We must redouble our efforts to do better." Hu, a worker in his forties, is himself a spare-time writer with more than ten years' experience. He is the author of a number of short stories about workers, one of which is included in this collection.

Since most of the stories in this collection are the maiden work of young workers, they are comparatively childish. But there is nothing terrible about this. As Lu Hsun said, "There is nothing disgraceful in childishness; for childishness and maturity in writing are like childhood and manhood among human beings. A writer need not be ashamed of making a childish start, because unless he is trampled underfoot he will grow to maturity. What is incurable is decadence and corruption." We have reason to expect more and better writings from the authors of this first collection.

Lei Kuei-yuan

Exhibition of Japanese Handicrafts in Peking

Not long ago, Chinese art lovers enjoyed an exhibition of genre paintings by the outstanding nineteenth-century artist Hokusai. More recently another exhibition of Japanese art — traditional handicrafts made in present-day Japan — was brought to Peking by the Japan Association for International Art Exhibition and the Japan-China Cultural Exchange Association.

This exhibition like the previous one has won wide acclaim in China. The exhibits show the wisdom of the industrious and courageous working people of Japan. The fine fruit of a long tradition of skilful craftsmanship, their beauty stands comparison with that of Hokusai's paintings.

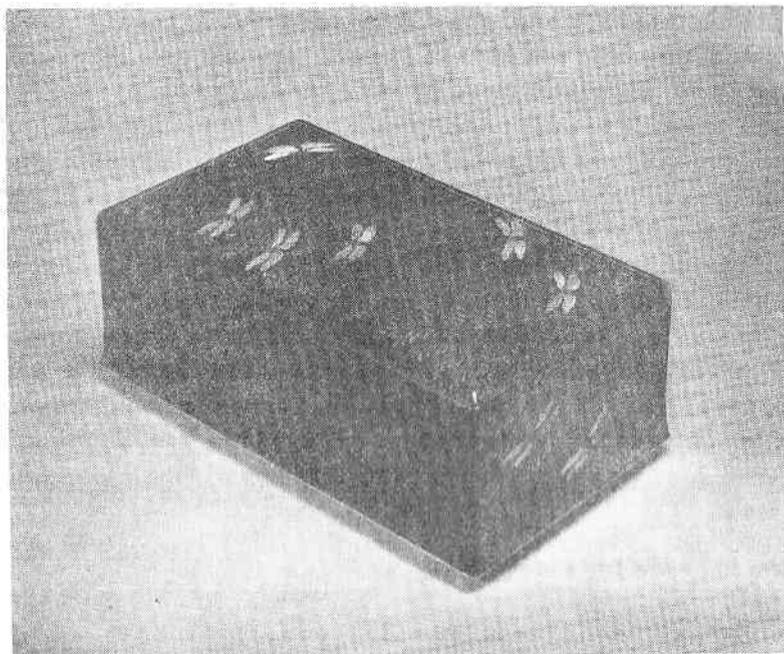
For two millennia the Chinese and Japanese peoples have had friendly relations and cultural exchanges. Japanese handicrafts, in both style and technique, display certain similarities with the work of Chinese craftsmen; but they have their distinctive national features too.

Visitors to the exhibition had the sensation that they were meeting old friends whom they had not seen for many years, so strange and yet so familiar seemed these exquisite works of art.

The variety of exhibits was great but every single item, designed and produced with meticulous skill, had been carefully selected to give us a representative sample of present-day handicrafts in Japan. All reached a very high standard of artistry, showing a superb mastery of technique, a fine sense of form, attractive designs and evocative use of colour. The tastes of the artists were clearly revealed in these works. The simple, uncluttered forms had a natural distinction while, in designs based on nature, the artists distilled the best essence from real life and treated this with artistic exaggeration. There was nothing trivial or vulgar. The colours were natural and vivid, conveying a fine sense of rhythm reminiscent of the best oriental music.

Jar with a blue pomegranate design





Jewel box with red dragon-flies on a black base

Many works in this exhibition made an unforgettable impression on me. For example, the tea bowl with red and green designs done in the Sung style by Munemaro Ishiguro showed an exquisite sense of form and skilful brushwork. The covered temmoku jar with "oil-spot" designs and a distinctive glaze by Tadashi Sasaki possessed an unsophisticated charm. Yuzo Kondo's jar with a blue pomegranate design showed a formal composition and vigorous brushwork. Gonroku Matsuda's jewel-box with red dragon-flies on a black base displayed an original technique and a strongly rhythmic, decorative design. Jusen Okude's lacquer flower-bowl suggested the flowing outline of a lotus in bloom. The dyed hand-woven fabrics had a unique elegance; the metalware combined both new and traditional features. It was abundantly evident that the makers of all these lovely ceramics, fabrics, lacquer or metal objects had thoroughly mastered traditional techniques without being fettered by earlier conventions. This is something we should learn from these Japanese craftsmen.

Exhibition of Paintings and Photographs in Peking

An exhibition of paintings and photographs sponsored by the Peking Municipality opened on July 12 at the Peking Art Gallery.

On display were more than 330 paintings and 130 photographs selected from the many thousands produced by the people of Peking.

Pride of place was given to paintings in the traditional style which had succeeded in creating something fresh and original on the basis of this old art form.

Two thirds of the exhibits were the work of amateur artists. Vivid, explicit and dynamic, although covering a wide range of styles, all had a strong revolutionary content. The proportion of works by professional artists was greater than in the exhibition last year.

Uighur Version of "The Red Lantern"

The revolutionary Peking opera *The Red Lantern* has recently been adapted by the Sinkiang Ballet and Opera Theatre and produced in the traditional Uighur opera form popular among the people of the Sinkiang Uighur Autonomous Region.

The various nationalities in Sinkiang love singing and dancing and have a rich literary and artistic tradition. During the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution modern Peking operas were staged in this region but the local people found them hard to understand owing to the difference in language. To enable all to enjoy modern revolutionary operas, the Sinkiang artists translated *The Red Lantern* into Uighur and produced it in the form of a local opera. They adapted

certain melodies from the twelve traditional Uighur *mukkam*, doing their best to retain the distinctive features of their national music while enabling their traditional art form to convey a new revolutionary content.

Since May 1972 the Uighur opera *The Red Lantern* has been performed over 700 times in Urumchi, Ili and Tahcheng to audiences numbering more than 90,000. Many of the local people have now learned to sing passages from the opera.

Exhibition of Jose Venturelli's Paintings

An exhibition of works by the Chilean painter Jose Venturelli opened recently at the Nationalities Palace of Culture in Peking.



Peasants from the South
(acrylic painting)

On display are more than 50 works including acrylic paintings, works of graphic art and sketches done in recent years by this noted painter, who is well-known throughout Latin America. These fine works of art reflect the life and struggle of the people of Chile and other parts of Latin America and portray local customs and beautiful landscapes there.

Foreign Literary Works Published in Peking

Recently a number of foreign literary works were published in Chinese by the Peking People's Literature Publishing House.

Among these are a new translation of Gorky's novel *Mother* and the first of his autobiographical trilogy *Childhood*; Fadeyev's *The Nineteen* translated by Lu Hsun who also wrote a postscript for it; and Japanese revolutionary writer Kobayashi Takiji's *Numa Jiri Mura* which has been translated for the first time in China. Translations of the other two of Gorky's trilogy *In the World* and *My Universities*, Serafimovich's novel *The Iron Flood* and Kobayashi Takiji's short novels *Kani Lou Sen* and *Hu Zai Ji Nushi* will be published soon.

After the publication of several collections of contemporary foreign literature such as *Short Stories of South Vietnam*, *Short Stories of Laos*, *Selected Reportage from Cambodia* and *Albanian Short Stories*, another recent publication is *Stories of Vietnam* which reflects the Vietnamese people's struggle against U.S. aggression and for national salvation and socialist construction. Literary works from Korea are to be published shortly.

Ancient Bronze Burial Drums Discovered in Kwangsi

Four bronze "drums" used as repositories for the dead have been discovered in an early Western Han (206 B.C.-A.D.24) tomb in Hsiling County, Kwangsi. These bronze drums are believed to have been used as musical instruments by minority nationalities in southwest China more than two thousand years ago.

The four bronze drums were found one inside another. On the

head and side are designs of flying egrets, sailing boats, running deer and plumed human figures. The head of one of the smaller drums bears traces of fine fabrics, small bells and beads threaded in a pattern. On its brim are peacock plumes.

Among the other 400 burial accessories unearched are a bronze horse and rider inlaid with gold, kneeling figurines and bells of different sizes. All reflect the distinctive artistic features of the national minorities in that district together with a clear influence from the northern Han culture. The bronze horseman inlaid with gold, for example, closely resembles the clay statuette of the Western Han Dynasty unearched in Hsienyang County, Shensi. It is stately in form and well moulded. The horse is holding its head high and neighing. Its tail, a separate piece, is stuck into a square hole on its rump. On its bridge-shaped saddle sits a warrior arrayed for battle holding the reins with both hands. The four kneeling men, wearing hats, long robes and shoes, are somewhat similar to the bronze figurines of the Western Han Dynasty discovered in the tomb of the Prince of Chungshan in Mancheng County, Hopei.

This is the first time bronze drums used as repositories for the dead have been excavated in Kwangsi. The find testifies to the highly developed foundry techniques at that time and the artistic skill of the craftsmen. These cultural relics provide us with valuable material for a further study of the ancient arts and crafts of the national minorities in southwest China.

Published by Foreign Languages Press
Yu Chou Hung, Peking (37), China
Printed in the People's Republic of China



Trading Centre in Yao Mountain (woodcut) by Lin Tsai-hua and Wang Wei-pao



中国文学

英文月刊 1973 年第 10 期

本刊代号 2-916