

Then came 1926, the year which marked the third turning point in General Chiang's life. In July of that year he was appointed Commander of the National Revolutionary Force to launch the Northern Expedition. In rapid succession, he took Hunan, Hupeh, Kiangsi, Chekiang and Fukien, and by the end of 1928, the whole country was united under the Kuomintang rule.

Such then is the story of General Chiang's phenomenal rise to fame and power. Now, let us pass in review some of his prominent achievements, since the establishment of the National Government at Nanking. To begin with, we must credit General Chiang with having sponsored the New Life Movement, which has in a few years won wide popularity. To quote the general's words: "The aim of the New Life Movement is the social regeneration of China. It is to this end that the people's thoughts are now being directed to the ancient virtues of the nation for guidance, namely etiquette, justice, integrity and conscientiousness."

In the second place, we must also praise General Chiang for having initiated the People's Economic Recon-

struction Movement. General Chiang realized that unless the fundamental problem of the people's livelihood is satisfactorily solved, it would be impossible for this country to stand on her feet and to resist foreign aggression. This movement was launched only a short while ago, yet we are gratified to note that it is already bearing fruit. The communication facilities in this country have been greatly improved, the financial situation has become stabilized, while the people are already enjoying a good measure of economic well-being and security. And it is indeed no exaggeration to say that for all these General Chiang is to be thanked.

Thirdly, we must thank General Chiang also for his successful campaign against the communists. The statesman-like manner in which he brought about the solution of the Liang-Kwang problem, again, is worthy of our praise and admiration. And on the occasion of his birthday, let us wish him the greatest happiness and also hope that he may continue to give his service to the country for many years to come.

Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek: An Appreciation

By EDWARD Y. K. KWONG (鄭耀坤)

IT is very difficult to view a contemporary personage with correct perspective. The whirlpool of self-interest, party difference, or political dissension often-times carries one involuntarily to the pedestal or to take an opposite stand of the personage in question and makes it impossible for one to view his achievements or failures with the detachment and fairness to which he is entitled. This being the case, the value of one's observation on contemporaries is often discounted as due to one motive or another. However, this should not be interpreted to mean that it is impossible to make correct observations; nor should it discourage anyone from saying something worthwhile about one's contemporary for the benefit of people in distant countries or for posterity. It is in this spirit that the following columns are written. As I claim no special acquaintance with the generalissimo, it is hoped that my observations can have the detachment and fairness desired. This lack of intimate personal acquaintance should not be looked upon as a disadvantage; but, for a subject of the present nature, it is quite a desirability, for then one would be more likely to be free of partiality in one way or another that might prejudice the value of any observation. Besides, the life history of the generalissimo in the last fourteen years or so is the history of the country. His actions are no private property but an open book. The present attempt is to give these public actions a correct appraisal, and it is hoped that this dealing with facts of public knowledge will further increase the value of these observations, for then the readers may rest assured that this is no story of a hothead who likes to look at his subjects through one kind of colored glass or another.

To form a correct appraisal of the value of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek's service to the country, one has

to understand the period that he inherits and to imagine what it would be like without him. When he joined Dr. Sun Yat-sen in 1923 at Canton to be the principal of the Whampoa Cadet School, very few indeed could have visualized that in less than five years China was to be united under one government. Those were the last days of military feudalism; and, as is true with many other forms of evils, the last days of feudalism in China were especially pernicious and unbearable. The whole country was divided among half a dozen or so military chieftains who incorporated into their own hands the territory and revenue of several provinces through war or intrigue. In their best mood, lip-service or nominal allegiance was rendered to the defunct Peking government; otherwise even such a pretense was ignored. These warlords and their lieutenants then exploited the territory under their control for what it was worth; and one of the gentry forced the people in his province to pay taxes 40 years in advance! This in addition to the incessant warfare and continual harrassment by the troops! There was no hope that this condition would end itself by the absorption of some of the militarists into one powerful camp, because it was like a sort of gangliac growth that festers on the very poison it itself generates. It may multiply in number and virulence and finally pull the victim down together with it, but it would never heal by itself. Such was actually the situation, when under the few super-warlords, there thrived dozens of other army chiefs whose allegiance to them ranged from complete obedience to nominal liege. These lesser satellites made their own wars or involved their overlords in one. Hence the bewildering frequency of civil warfare and the rapid change of tenure of office. At such a juncture, Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek emerged: at first obscurely

as the principal of a military academy; then as the commander-in-chief of the Northern Punitive Expedition and concurrently commander of the First Army in 1926; then in the course of less than two years the whole country was put under the Kuomintang rule; and in the course of less than ten years, military feudalism as he found it was a thing of the past. The work is as yet by no means complete; but given sufficient time, there is reason to expect that the last vestige of military domination will be completely obliterated. His phenomenal rise, his spectacular march at the head of the Northern Punitive Expedition Army, and his supreme generalship in the campaigns against various insurgents in the course of the last eight years are a saga of the first order of which the present generation should rightly be proud and which our descendants will, when it is free to mention names without fear of incurring ill-will, have occasion to compare to Caesar's crossing of the Rubicon and Napoleon's passage of the Alps.

The value of the generalissimo's work will be the more appreciated, when the circumstance under which he operated is taken into consideration. The Canton government, despite the legality of its claims, was the weakest of the regional groups then existing; and the only reason that it could maintain its independence was due to the more or less impenetrable mountain barrier to the north of the province and the historical fact that since the establishment of the republic in 1911, no northern army had ever succeeded in coming within striking distance of the provincial borders of Kwangtung. An army trying to attack Kwangtung by land from the north would find that the weather in the southern part of Hunan becomes more and more oppressive and the interminable ranges of mountain unpassable for one who is not accustomed to mountain climbing. A handful of guerrillas stationed at strategic mountain tops could complete the devastating work of the climate and hardship. Yuan Shih-kai once sent his well-trained army to attempt the impossible and came to grief. Wu Pei-fu, at the height of his power, led the flower of his troops to make another try, only to see them murdered wholesale in Southern Hunan. After that, northern warlords knew better how to let Kwangtung alone. But the Canton government was in none too secure a position, for it existed on the undependable and treacherous grace of General Chen Chiung-ming and several other generals hailing from Kwangsi and Yunnan. They never lost any chance to carry on underhand intrigues with the northern warlords or the military satraps of their own provinces. Confusion became most confounded when after the death of Dr. Sun Yat-sen on March 12, 1925, his own followers disagreed over the question of succession of power. As many of these personalities are still living, I will spare their feelings by refraining from mentioning names. Suffice it to say that there was no love lost between them. A few days after the death of Dr. Sun, Tang Chi-yao, governor of Yunnan, who formerly rendered lip-service allegiance to the deceased leader, claimed to be his rightful successor. Generalissimo (then General) Chiang

Kai-shek was entrusted with the task of suppressing the combined forces of Yunnan and Kwangsi and showed the remarkable distinction and generalship that characterized all his campaigns in later years. After a series of campaigns against the insurgents in the Liang-Kwang area, the following year saw him at the head of the Northern Punitive Force consisting of four divisions, one of which was under his direct command. The entire force consisted of slightly more than 30,000 troops; while the number of soldiers under different Northern generals were about 400,000. Yet this did not stop him from winning a series of brilliant victories and from marching rapidly through Hunan, then Hupeh, then down the Yangtse Valley. All this in less than a year's time. At this juncture the government for which he fought and which had since moved to Hankow, became openly communistic, and a separate government was established in Nanking through the effort of the generalissimo. After the purge of the communists in the Hankow regime and when the Nanking and Hankow elements were jealous of his power for reasons we need not discuss here, Generalissimo Chiang did not wish to let his presence interfere with the reunion of the Kuomintang, and so he promptly retired to his native city Fenghua and later made a trip to Japan. When he came back to rejoin the government at Nanking, he completed the work of the Northern Punitive Expedition by personally taking the army up to Peiping (then Peking) and later brought Chang Hsueh-liang to the fold of the national government.

Foreign writers are apt to give a good deal of credit for the success of the Northern Punitive Expedition to Borodin and Galen, two Russian advisers of the Canton government. There is no question but that the presence of these gentlemen in the organization of the propaganda service was very valuable. It is also fair to admit that without propaganda, military victories would not have been as easy. It is also probable that in the early stages of the expedition these Russian advisers did make some valuable contributions to the planning of the campaigns; but the conditions at the front changed with such a bewildering rapidity that the Russians who stayed behind could never have expected to catch up with them. Besides, even after the departure of the Russians and after the army had been purged of the last vestige of the Russian influence, the forces under the generalissimo were as victorious as ever.

All his military operations showed good staff work, careful planning, speed in mobilization and in execution of an objective, and a daringness to carry the plans through. One of the qualities that his subordinates admire most is his personal bravery. In every campaign, when the battle was at its severest, he was usually found at the front lines regardless of personal danger. When one of the northern generals thought of rebellion against the government and when the internal and international situation was such that the government could spare no effort to attend to him, the generalissimo wired him that he would pay him a personal call. He (the generalissimo)

thereupon took the train and left the capital without knowledge of any of his friends. When the generalissimo and his only attendant, his secretary, showed up the next morning, his host was literally dumbfounded. The unexpected guest had little difficulty in clearing up the misunderstanding. It may interest the readers to know that later on when the general in question had occasion to pay his respect to the head of the government, he brought with him an enormous entourage of which one hundred and fifty were bodyguards. The incident shows not only the daring quality of the generalissimo but also his faith in humanity all round—in himself as well as in others—a very good quality for an administrator.

Spectacular as his military achievements are, posterity will probably remember him best by the amount of constructive work and the new life that he has injected into the government and the country through the New Life Movement or some other means. More than anybody else, the generalissimo realized the necessity of beating swords into ploughshares after the military operations were over. Nothing can show this statesman-like quality of his more than the reforms he instituted in Kiangsi. After a series of intermittent civil wars that had overtaken the province and after the ravages of the communists from 1930-33, Kiangsi presented a sorry sight when recaptured by the government forces. But he at once started measures to rehabilitate the farmers by lightening their tax burdens, by financing their purchase of land, seeds and cows, by the operating of co-operatives, by the strict maintenance of peace and order, and by the rapid building of highways and railroads to facilitate the marketing of their products. In a very short time, Kiangsi was transformed from a war-torn and desolate place to a model province. The reforms in Kiangsi are of course applied elsewhere. It is through his influence that thousands of miles of highways and railways are being built rapidly in various parts of the country. Visitors to Hangchow and Nanking are generally surprised by the rapidity with which these cities are being improved along modern lines. No little of this is due to the influence of the generalissimo. Through the influence of his wife (*née* Mayling Soong) Generalissimo Chiang has become a believer in Christianity; and as Christianity in this country is generally conducted in the spirit of a puritan and a reformer, his attitude towards things in general is likewise that of a puritan and reformer. In the early days of the Nanking government when the western calendar began to be enforced, the government officials were enjoined not to celebrate the lunar New Year but to attend office as usual. The generalissimo, who was then president, made a tour of inspection around the different offices on that day. It so happened that the police commissioner was found absent from his office without sufficient cause, and he was dismissed without much ceremony. Time there was when people thought of entering into the government service only in terms of the spoil that could be made out of it. Now, thanks to the effort of the generalissimo, corruption and bribery are very scarce. To be sure, the government is yet by no

means perfect, as how many governments in the world can be? It is, however, a revelation to see how corruption is no longer condoned and winked at as it formerly was, but made unhealthy for the perpetrator: he is liable to land in jail or lose his head for it.

Despite his brilliant successes and meteoric rise, he remains today one of the most approachable men in the national government. As commander-in-chief of the army and navy and as president of the Executive Yuan, he is no man of leisure. But he manages to appear in many public functions and address his cadets in the Central Military Academy—sometimes three hours at a time—in the same manner as he did in Whampoa days. He also makes it a point to see a number of strangers every week. He assumes no airs; he is not one of those of whom Cassius would say:

Why, man, he doth bestride the narrow world
Like a Colossus; and we petty men
Walk under his huge legs, and peep about
To find ourselves dishonorable graves.

He is simple and democratic. He is the connecting link between the old and the new orders of things. He understands the old institutions just as he appreciates the new. Otherwise, he would have no chance against the intriguing of the politicians of the old school. Tan Yen-kai, the late president of the Executive Yuan, and a seasoned product of the old school, spoke of him as the cleverest in the political game and said that he could outsmart the smartest of the politicians. Yet withal he is a sincere man. The Japanese ambassador, Mr. S. Kawagoe, who came to China with a number of serious demands and who under ordinary circumstances would probably be too much occupied to engage in personal compliments, could not help remarking to press correspondents, after the first interview with the generalissimo, that the latter was sincere.

As time goes on, the good work of the generalissimo as well as his good intentions will be generally understood. His unselfish sacrifices for the welfare of the country are now beginning to be appreciated by the country as is evidenced by the spontaneous enthusiasm over the celebration of his fiftieth birthday and the large number of aeroplanes presented for the occasion by his countrymen. On October 31, the day of his birth, some 55 aeroplanes were presented to him and the government as token of the appreciation of the country: and 45 more are forthcoming. This probably will serve to recall to our mind the groundless suspicions and canards created by political malcontents during the past years of civil strife. With regard to this point, it is significant to note that no matter how vehement his political opponents might have denounced him—and such occasions were many because of his upholding of the authority of the national government thereby frustrating their selfish ambitions—he has never replied in kind. Most of the times, he did not even seek to refute the charges. One can only do this through the sincere conviction of one's being right, or it must be due to a magnanimous gene-

rosity. Very likely it is due to both, because practically all his former political enemies, even of the bitterest description, have sooner or later come to shake hands with him and work harmoniously under the same government of which he is the head.

One thing only remains to be said, and that is about his foreign policy. The foreign policy is made by the entire government. He should not be blamed for it in one way or another. But still as the most powerful man in the government, he is responsible for it in more ways than one. The foremost question confronting the Chinese nation at present is the policy *vis-a-vis* Japan. Until recently there has been a more or less unfounded suspicion over his attitude toward Japan. He was severely taken to task by irresponsible elements because he would not declare war on Japan, when the Japanese question became very acute, as it had occasion to be more than once in the course of the last few years. Now, I think the nation as a whole has been convinced of the correctness of his position, and even the loudest claimant for war has not been so noisy lately. As I understand it, he is not afraid of war but he does not ask for it, and in fact tries to avoid it if possible. He does not do this because of personal but because of weightier considerations. His conduct in the course of the last ten years or so, and as has been noted above, has proved beyond any shadow of doubt that he is not concerned over his personal safety. Had he cherished any selfish purpose, he could have become the most popular hero overnight by declaring war. The resources of the entire country as well as those of tens of thousand of Chinese residents abroad would be at his disposal. Yet he does not choose such a spectacular course to fame by risking the entire future of the country. The best argument in favor of war is that until a war is fought, no one can tell what the outcome will be. As Patrick Henry has put it: "The battle . . . is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave." In other words, had a war been always in favor of the strong, then the Spanish Armada would not have been destroyed, William of Orange would have had no chance against Philip II, the Thirteen Colonies would have been vanquished, Napoleon Bonaparte would not have had to beat a retreat from Moscow,

to mention only a few evidences from history. With four hundred million people, with an army of well-nigh two million strong well experienced in local warfare which the disturbances in the last 25 years have kept always on the *qui vive*, the advocates of war tell us, our cause is not absolutely hopeless. But the strongest argument against any reckless precipitation in war is that China cannot afford to lose. If war ever comes, we will have to win or at least fight to a stalemate. But no matter what the outcome of the war is, a good part of the territory and many of the cities will suffer irreparable damages, as the war has to be fought in our territory. Such a war will set the forward movement of the nation back at least 50 years; while it would affect Japan probably to the extent of only ten or twenty years because of the development of her industrial system and the organization of her government. Therefore, the odds seem for the moment against us. In fact ever since 1895, the year of the Sino-Japanese War, there has been a kind of Hundred Years' War going on between the two countries with victories to Japan so far. The reverses that we have suffered so far and which our compatriots have found to be so galling are nothing as compared to what we shall endure if we make a wrong move at the wrong moment. This being the case, we should not talk lightly of war and may accept it only when it is inevitable. I believe this is the policy of the government.

The work that the generalissimo has done for the country is so momentous that one fails to imagine what the country would be without him. Had it not been for him, the country might have gone on for another 50 years without hope of seeing itself united under one government as it now is. If Dr. Sun Yat-sen, as father of the Revolution, is the Washington of China, as he is usually said to be, then Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, as one that brings order and union to a war-torn and divided country, should be regarded as the Lincoln of China. If the accomplishments of the generalissimo had belonged to a man of a different age, we would have worshipped him as the greatest of the heroes. What is it then that prevents us from worshipping someone that lives in our midst and is actively working for our own interest?

The Spirit of China

By MISS LIN YIN-FENG (林引鳳)

ON the occasion of General Chiang Kai-shek's birthday, one may perhaps express the love and hopes of the Chinese overseas for their mother country and the man who stands pre-eminently as its leader and hero. Overseas Chinese are indeed its most loyal and devoted citizens. No matter how long they may live and work abroad, they remain staunch to the homeland. Often the objects of ridicule since the days of her ancient glory are past, they long fervently for the motherland to take her place amongst the great nations of the world.

The majority long and plan to come back, if only for a visit. Most of the older generation labor diligently

through long, hard years, saving enough money to come home—even if it is only to die.

For, to them, China is always 'home.' No other country can take her place in their affections. Friendship cannot bind ties strong enough to hold them against the overwhelming desire to return. Making good friends, building up steady businesses and reputations for honesty is still not enough. Perhaps they may come to love another country, but it is not as they love China.

Over four thousand years of uninterrupted history—an insistent call swelling through the ages—holds them fast. Sometimes it is in school, or maybe from parents