

higher vocational schools, mostly turning out experts in law and in commerce. The ministry will do well to give full recognition to this status of theirs, and when this is done, to see to it that their graduates do deserve and find a place in society upon graduation. In any case, the policy of wholesale closing up is quite out of place. The evening schools may have usurped the name and prestige which properly belong to venerable universities, but then what we really need to enforce is distinction, not extinction.

### A German Friendly Gesture

A SOLID proof of the friendship that the Germans have for this country is the contribution recently made by German cultural organizations of more than 2,000 volumes toward the reconstruction of the Oriental Library in Shanghai. This library, as it may be remembered, was destroyed during the Japanese bombardment of the Commercial Press at the beginning of the undeclared war in Shanghai. Its 600,000 volumes, including many invaluable and rare editions, were completely lost in the fire caused by incendiary bombs thrown from Japanese military planes. Since the Shanghai truce, however, the officials of the Commercial Press have started a movement to reconstruct the Oriental Library. A committee was organized for the purpose of soliciting contributions both in China and abroad, and as far as we know, the German contribution is the first to come from a foreign country. For it, we cannot but thank the Emergency League of German Scientists as well as the Association of Friends of the China Institute at Frankfurt, organizations financially responsible for making this collection possible. The collection is now being shipped to Shanghai and will reach here about the end of March. It consists of standard works dealing with the recent achievements made by Germany in the field of science and of literature. At a time when the Chinese are turning their attention to the west, we feel sure that this collection of books, embodying as it does the best in German culture, will undoubtedly prove to be of immense interest to the Chinese reading public.

### Good Earth Film Banned

ACCORDING to a China Press "Special" message from Nanking on January 29, the national government has refused the Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer company the right to film *The Good Earth*, a well-known book by Mrs. Buck. The refusal to authorize the filming of *The Good Earth*, it is reported, is based on the ground that the book contains allusions prejudicial to the dignity of the Chinese race. Now this is indeed a very delicate question, this dignity of a race. What is the dignity of the Chinese race, then? Or that of the European race? If dignity means nobleness of manner, loftiness and grace, or that quality of being worthy or honorable, then many pictures which we see today should not be filmed at all; for they are indeed prejudicial to the dignity of the Western race. But if dignity refers to the dignity of living, of the poor and the rich alike, of the Eastern or the Western people,

then what can be prejudicial to dignity if it be not prejudicial to life in general? *The Good Earth* is the story of a farmer who through hard labor and keen economy acquired large pieces of land and who eventually became very well to do. The struggles of his life and all the little sundries of his household affairs are told in minute details, supposedly to be characteristic of Chinese life. It is rather unwise for the government to refuse the filming rights of this book. Let it be recalled here that the M-G-M people came to China some time ago purportedly to film *The Good Earth in China* so as to secure authenticity of people and place. Now if the government would help the film company in its difficulties and to leave out that which is "prejudicial to the dignity of the Chinese race," the film version can be made very beneficial to the understanding of the Chinese people. In fact, it may remedy whatever defects there may be in the book itself—if the authorities think there are such defects prejudicial to the Chinese race. As it is, the M-G-M may go home and find enough Chinatown people to portray it. Then, and then only, will the film be "prejudicial to the dignity of the Chinese race." We are, therefore, glad to learn that our government has denied the authenticity of the report.

### The Soviet Congress

STALIN'S reports to the 17th Congress of the Communist Party, especially the second part which deals with the domestic situation in Russia, certainly constitutes a challenge to the Kuomintang. There are certain similarities between the Kuomintang in our country and the Soviet. First, both parties believe in socialism, for Dr. Sun Yet-sen's principle of people's livelihood is, as admitted by Dr. Sun himself, socialism. Secondly, both parties have great reverence for their respective deceased party leaders—Dr. Sun and Lenin—and both believe in their teaching and policies. And finally, both parties are dictators in their respective countries, or at least those in opposition can offer no effective resistance to the parties and their governments. If Dr. Sun's socialism is in a much milder form than that of Lenin's, he also bequeathed his party a concrete program for rebuilding the country, which Lenin did not. If we further compare the support given the Nanking regime when it was first founded and that given the communist party at Lenin's death, we must admit that Kuomintang had all the advantages over the communist party. For then the whole Chinese nation stood solidly behind the nationalist regime, but in Russia, although the revolution was accomplished, there remained the intelligentsia, the professional men, and the *kulaks*, who either unwillingly tolerated the communist regime or actively opposed it as far as they dared. With all the similarities and the advantages on the side of the Kuomintang, what are the results of its party dictatorship? In Russia, both Lenin and Stalin dominated over the Russian government by virtue of their office as the secretary to the communist party, not as the president of the U.S.S.R. or as the generalissimo of the Red Army. But how many of our Chinese readers know the name of the