

Latinization and Mass Education

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THERE are three different kinds of opinion about the problem of Chinese characters. The first opinion is to retain the Han squares. Those who entertain this opinion are mainly old both in age and in thought. They do not know that the world is going around, and they wish China to turn to the ancient time. They think that everything new is bad. In order to exhibit their "profoundness" in knowledge, they not only wish to retain the "Han squares," but also often write with the words of the old form. They write 漢, instead of 法, 蔘, instead of 花, 蘇 instead of 和, 龜, instead of 秋, etc. This kind of people are pure individualists. They consider the "Han squares" as their private property. Having known how to write and read themselves, they do not care for other people. They think that if they know many old forms of Chinese characters while others do not, they will be proud of it and other people will respect them. How selfish they are!

The second opinion is to use the abbreviated form of "Han squares." Among the "Han squares," a considerable portion can be written in a much simpler way. These words can again be classified into two kinds. One kind is obtained from the words of the old form, while the other kind is derived from the common habit of writing. The examples of the former are 厂(庵), 秋千(鞦韆), 仿佛(髣髴), etc., while the examples of the latter are 雄(難), 对(對), 为(爲), 归(歸), etc. The people who hold this opinion also propose to simplify the dictionary. They thought that a great part of the words in the Kan Shi Dictionary are seldom used. So some of them tried to simplify the dictionary. But words most commonly used cannot be obtained by simple inspection. A word common to one may be strange to others. So they gathered many letters, telephone messages, notes, and other things which served them to select the commonly used words. They found that the most commonly used phrase is 下午. In this way, they got about 3000 words. They thought that these 3000 words are quite sufficient for use. Moreover, half of the 3000 words can be written in a simple way. Though this opinion is better than the above one, it is not a fundamental one. The "Han squares" have their unavoidable defects and inconvenience. To simplify the dictionary or to utilize the abbreviated form of words is just like to build a house with rotten pieces of timber.

The third opinion is to Latinize the "Han squares." The people who hold this opinion are very clever. They have found the most suitable method to decrease the percentage of illiteracy in China. This kind of writing is also the most valuable instrument to bring about the mass education. The Latinized words are called "Sinwenz." "Sinwenz" is not English or Latin. It is simply Chinese. We simply adopt the Latin alphabet. The spelling of "Sinwenz" is different from that of any other language. It has its independability and convenience. We may say that the spelling of "Sinwenz" is like that of English; but nevertheless, it is different from that of English. Though "Sinwenz" is still in the embryonic stage, its possibility for

adaptation is beyond any doubt. If we want to decrease and then sweep illiteracy, we must utilize "Sinwenz."

The question arises: How can we spread the utilization of "Sinwenz"? The answer is: We carry it out by force. That is to say this movement must be promoted by the Government. When Turkey had finished the national revolution, her language was Latinized by force and after a short period of time, all the people in Turkey are accustomed to the new language. Some may say: "In time of war, we cannot pay any attention to this problem." But I think that the utilization of "Sinwenz" is very important especially in the time of war. If we want to educate the people, we must adopt the most effective and convenient way and this can only be achieved by the introduction of "Sinwenz." The people who say that we cannot do so are conservative. They are afraid of the widespreading of "Sinwenz," for the "Han squares," their property, might not stand quite firmly. Some of them even say, "If we use 'Sinwenz,' all the Chinese people will become foreigners, and in a certain time, we shall be assimilated by the other Powers, as we have assimilated the Mongolians and Manchurians." What a senseless opinion this is! I have mentioned again and again that "Sinwenz" is a Chinese language, not any other foreign one. If the foreigners only know English, they still cannot know "Sinwenz," unless they learn it from us. How can they assimilate us then?

Other people say, "'Sinwenz' is promoted by the Communists and it must have something to do with communism." This is also a very short-sighted opinion. We confess that "Sinwenz" is promoted by the most modern-minded youths, especially by the communists, but we must know that communism is one thing while "Sinwenz" is another thing of a quite different nature. We may say "Sinwenz" is a weapon but this weapon itself is not independent. It can be used by the communists as well as any other "ists." It is just like a gun which can shoot a good man as well as a bad man. It completely depends upon the people who use it. If we say that communists utilize the "Sinwenz" for propaganda works, it simply shows that "Sinwenz" is better than "Han squares." One day, I talked with a friend of mine about "Sinwenz." At first, he said that "Sinwenz" is not a dependable language and has many defects. Then he said that "Sinwenz" is a weapon used for Propaganda by the communists, and that whether communism is suitable for China or not is still a question. I listened to him attentively and then replied firmly, "Whenever any party wants to spread its principle widely, it must choose the most effective and convenient way, if 'Sinwenz' has any defects as you have said, why the communists do not use 'Han squares' to spread their principle?" After saying this, I looked at his face. He bent down his head and seemed convinced.

Whenever there is a force, there is a reaction. I think that there are only two kinds of people in the whole world. One kind of people are individualists and the other

CHINA CARRIES ON

INDUSTRIAL COOPERATIVES TO SUPPLY 1,500,000 BLANKETS TO ARMY

Upon the eve of completing 400,000 blankets for the army, the Chinese Industrial Cooperatives has received a second order from the Ministry of War to make another 1,500,000 blankets in the next 12 months ending January 31, 1941.

Eight societies, four in the northwest and four in the Szechuen-Sikang area, have been asked by the Chungking headquarters to specialize in this work. Each society will manufacture 15,600 blankets a month. The war ministry will pay \$10 for each blanket.

All over Free China, the cooperative movement is gaining wider support from the masses. Last August there were 1298 societies. There has been no phenomenal increase of new societies but all the existing cooperatives have been strengthened during the period.

One of the principles laid down at a general conference last summer, that speed should give way to strength in making the movement nationwide, is being followed. At present the C.I.C. has a membership of 20,000 workers.

Negotiations are under way between the C.I.C. authorities and the Bank of China for a loan of \$10,000,000 to \$20,000,000 for establishing more societies and extending credit to *bona fide* units. The C.I.C. which started with \$5,000,000 from the government, is allowed \$80,000 monthly by the Executive Yuan.

This is double the amount received formerly from the National Relief Commission. Sometime ago, due to their relationship to national production and reconstruction, the C.I.C. and the Agricultural Improvement Commission were ordered by the Supreme National Defense Council to be placed directly under the

humanitarians. The latter try their best to increase the welfare of the people, while the former try their best to decrease the welfare of the people. Unfortunately, these two kinds of people exist in the same place and at the same time. Those people who want to promote "Sinwenz," wish the people in China to read and write, while those who are against the use of "Sinwenz," wish all the people in China to become blind and deaf and obey their orders unconditionally.

When the Sino-Japanese war broke out, "Sinwenz" has been more widely spread but most of the people still do not believe in it. They do not realize that "Sinwenz" is very important to mass education in time of war. I believe that in future, "Sinwenz" will be used by all the Chinese people but the

Executive Yuan instead of under the National Relief Commission.

Numerically, the Szechuen-Sikang district tops the other four districts of the C.I.C., having 40 percent of the societies. The northwest district comes second with 30 percent of the total and the southwest district third with 19 percent. The Southeast and the Yunnan districts take fourth and fifth place with ten and one percent, respectively, the report concludes.

\$6,090,000 DONATED TO AID CHINESE ARMY

From September 22, 1939, to January 31, the Chinese Women's War Relief Association had received contributions in various currencies amounting to approximately \$6,035,000.

The announcement was made by Madame Chiang Kai-shek, as chairman of the Association, in the Central Daily News, official organ of the Government.

Total receipts for the period mentioned were as follows:—Chinese \$4,647,000 £7,987; H.K.\$59,000; U.S. \$10,000; Rupees 1,000 and Dutch guilders 74,000.

The Association made 500,000 shoes, 341,000 padded overcoats, and 29,000 padded jackets for Chinese soldiers at the front.

After expressing appreciation for the contributions, Madame Chiang Kai-shek assured the public that every cent raised would go to soldiers' clothing. At the same time, she appealed for funds to supply soldiers with spring and summer clothing.

TUNG OIL MART CENTRALIZED

Beginning January 15, 1940, the marketing and exporting of tung oil have been centralized under the Foo Shing Trading Corporation, an auxiliary organ of the Ministry of Finance working in

opposition to the movement will also be strong. However, the opposite side cannot stop the prevalence of "Sinwenz." It is like a flood. Though there are many hills and mountains in the way, it will overcome them in the end. Perhaps some day there will be someone's head cut off, for utilization of "Sinwenz," but I firmly believe that at that very time, there must be someone hiding in the black corners and teaching the farmers and workmen with "Sinwenz" secretly, and there will be a great number of such farmers and workmen finding such black corners themselves.

The over-optimists declared that there are only two hundred million Chinese illiterates now, but I can hardly believe such words. Among the five hundred million Chinese people, there

close collaboration with the Foreign Trade Commission. The control of the export of Tung oil by the corporation will assure American importers a higher quality product and faster delivery.

Capitalized at \$80,000,000, of which \$40,000,000 will be working capital, the corporation will not only look after the export of the tung oil but also try to improve and to increase the production on a nationwide scale. Tea, mineral products, wood oil and bristles are the four chief export articles from wartime China.

During 1939, more than 40,000 tons wood oil were exported, mostly to the United States. Statistics show that the annual production of tung oil in China is about 70,000 tons, and the chief production centers are under complete Chinese control.

The coordination of China's transportation system through the recent amalgamation is expected to bring tung oil export to unprecedented highs in the future. The 1939 figures of American purchase of Chinese tung oil are expected to be around U.S. \$15,000,000.

NEW COTTON MILLS

Additional to its assistance to the various cotton mills in Free China, the Ministry of Economic Affairs is going to establish 88 moderately-sized spinning mills in the interior provinces. Although the combined capacity of the 88 mills will amount to only 42,000 bales of cotton yarn a year, the supply will go far toward meeting the nation's needs.

During normal years, China's 3,000,000 spindles annually produced more than 2,000,000 bales of cotton yarn, of which two-fifths were produced by foreign mills. More than 2,300,000 spindles were lost as a result of the war.

Today Free China is rebuilding its cotton industry both by encouraging more production in the mills evacuated from occupied or war areas and by reviving the traditional handicrafts of spinning and weaving.

Szechuen at present has 140,000 spindles, Shensi has 70,000 and Yunnan has

are 85 per cent farmers and workmen and 90 per cent of the farmers and workmen cannot read and write. So the least percentage of illiteracy in China is over 75 per cent. Are we so cruel as to let such a great number of illiterates exist in China without rendering them any help? But how can we teach them to read and write? I think wise people know how to answer this question. We hope that the elders will help us in the promotion of "Sinwenz." If they do not, it does not matter, for they belong to the past generation. The only hope we have is that the youths of China will arouse and shoulder their responsibilities. They are young in age so they must be new in thought. Let all the youths in China unite together and try their best to eradicate illiteracy in China.