of the book, but actually contradicts it and thus makes a mockery of the whole exercise. The authors consistently argue that group interaction is the dynamic of politics and their whole argument about the mechanics of removing Lin Piao and Ch'en Po-ta depends on this. Similarly, they argue that a collective leadership will succeed Mao because of the current balance of power situation, where all the significant political groups are determined that no single grouping should assume hegemony. However, if a collective leadership will follow Mao for this reason, then surely there is no need to ask who will succeed Mao, for the conclusion must surely be that collective leadership already exists. If, as the authors in fact maintain, Mao has not already been succeeded by such a collective leadership, then their assumptions about the nature of political power and political relationships defy comprehension, Mao's position is totally enigmatic and one is justified in asking what can be learnt from such a discussion of interpersonal relationships. In a sense, reading this book provides an answer to this last question. *Heirs Apparent* is useful because it attempts to add body to the shadowy characters of the Chinese leadership, but it fails as a serious commentary because it does not consider that there is much more to Chinese politics than Ch'en Yi's sex life and Chiang Ch'ing's pregnancies.

DAVID S. G. GOODMAN

Red Guard: From Schoolboy to "Little General" in Mao's China. By KEN LING. [London: MacDonald, 1972. 413 pp. £3·25.]

Written under a pseudonym, Ken Ling's book is a highly personalized account of the role of a leading Red Guard in Fukien Province during the Cultural Revolution. Using a racy narrative style it attempts to go beyond a recital of events to convey the thoughts and feelings of the central character and his associates. In some ways, it can be seen as a counterpart to William Hinton's *Hundred Day War*. Whereas the latter deals with events at one institution relating them to more general political and ideological conflicts, Ling covers a wider provincial and national arena but concentrates on his own motives and reactions. Since the chief weakness of Hinton's otherwise fine account is his inability to come to grips with the character of the student leader, Kuai Ta-fu, Ling's approach might well have provided us with enough insights to close the gap and understand what it was in the minds of the student rebels that led them to act as they did. Unfortunately, while Mr Ling tells a gripping tale with much of the colour that is found in the Red Guard tabloids, his retrospective cynicism does not convince one that his is a complete or real picture of what fired Kuai and others like him. Perhaps one reason for this is that the book was not written by Ling himself but "developed from more than 500,000 Chinese characters submitted by Ken Ling and more than 300 hours of formal interviewing by the core members of a research team . . . who have worked together closely for several years." One wonders whether the cumulative effect of the adjec-

tives and anecdotes selected from this mass of material is precisely what Ling intended. The overall impression given is of a country where all is cynicism and selfishness. Ideology and morality are seen to matter little, least of all to the Red Guards. According to Mr Ling, rank, bullying, and violence are widely used to achieve self-seeking ends. The army, for example, is described as more interested in a good life and seducing girls in the local factory than in any of Mao's military principles. Although this might be Ling's own impressions and instances of such behaviour may well have been found during the Cultural Revolution, it is difficult to believe that China is built on such weak foundations.

The outlines of his account have a familiar ring and undoubtedly add to our knowledge of the factional struggle in Fukien, an area from which little Red Guard material has come. A student at Amoy Eighth Middle School in 1966, Ken Ling's concern to do the right thing for his career led him to take part in the severe criticism of his teachers. By a mixture of luck and ambition he eventually became a leading rebel in the whole province, being among the first to attack Yeh Fei, former Provincial Party Secretary. After revolutionary liaison in Peking, he returned to help seize power and became general director of production in Amoy with control of all industrial work in the area. He then took part in the decline into factionalism and violence. Finally after the death of his love, Mei-mei, the Red Guards were suppressed and Ken Ling defected to an offshore nationalist island. Despite the constant undertone of remorse and introspection, one cannot help feeling that had Ken Ling's group had just a little more success, he would not have felt the need to run away.

Although the accuracy of detail may be questioned (my rail trips through Anhwei and other provinces at the same time as Ling's were not troubled by hordes of beggars and bandits, the Red Guard chaos was enough), an interesting sidelight is Ling's own urban and provincial bias. Northerners are coarse, uneducated and poverty-stricken. Peasants live in unbelievable squalor and destitution. Somehow his prejudices come out of the same mould of exaggeration and overstatement that was used in most Red Guard statements. Perhaps in view of Mr Ling's ambition and opportunism, China is well rid of him.

ANDREW WATSON

Li Po yü Tu Fu. (*Li Po and Tu Fu*). By KUO MO-JO. [Peking: Jen-min wen-hsüeh ch'u-pan she, 1971. 279 pp. £0·56.]

Under the well-established Party doctrine of "politics in command," every book published in Mainland China has a political purpose. Kuo Mo-jo's *Li Po and Tu Fu*, the first academic work to be published in China after the Cultural Revolution, has a specially significant political meaning. For years Tu Fu has been honoured by the Party as the People's Poet. Kuo Mo-jo himself has praised him more than once. In his opening