

## HANNIBAL IN CHINA

By ALFRED HOFFMANN

*Ever since East met West, people on either side have endeavored to understand those of the other. Many of their interpretations were misinterpretations, for they usually made the mistake of generalizing the few things they knew about each other. In this process the West suffered the fate of having the form in which it chanced to be in the nineteenth century—its liberalistic political ideas, its technical civilization—being taken as its true and only nature. It is interesting to note, however, that there were always people in the East who recognized this interpretation as a fallacy. One of them was the Mr. Wang Nien-tien of this article.*

*Dr. Hoffmann is a scholar connected with the "Deutschland Institut" in Peking. An earlier contribution of his to this magazine was his translation of the Chinese short story "The Fire Wagon" in our issue of July 1942.—K.M.*

WHEN in 1911 the Chinese Empire and its old traditions collapsed, many of the enthusiastic revolutionaries believed at first to have found in the Republic a sort of political, juridical, and social Utopia. They demolished all social bonds that had developed during China's long history and thought they could build up a new empire solely by the adoption of European conceptions and forms. Indeed, some of them believed that, with the destruction of those age-old standards, they had rid themselves of *all* shackles and bonds; and they regarded the "people's rule" they had in mind as that form of government which warranted the greatest possible personal and political freedom of all. "Liberty," "equality," and "democracy" were the slogans of the early days.

But it was not long before the more prudent elements among the republican leaders recognized their great self-delusion. They discovered that they had misinterpreted Europe and that even under a "people's" government it is not possible for everyone to act according to his own ideas and without regard for justice and order. The resulting changes—even outwardly—in the face of the Chinese Republic are known to anyone who has observed the last thirty years of the official history of China. But it is not generally known how such movements affected and expressed themselves to the

simple people, the man in the street. Perhaps we can gather some information about this from an illustrated work published in the first years of the Republic by one Wang Nien-tien (王念典) from Ning-ho in Hopei Province. The name of the publishing company, "Publishing House for the Popularization of the Uniform Fusion of the Empire's Masses of People" (國本統一通俗講演社), is indicative of the problems of that time and of the attitude of the author.

In a short introduction the author states that, since the founding of the Republic, a devastating poison has seized the Chinese people, namely, a misconception of the true meaning of the words "equality" and "liberty." He writes: "How can one make use of 'equality' to call one's father brother, or speak to one's superior as to one's servant? Or how can one make use of 'liberty' to wrong one's fellow creatures by arbitrary actions? Nowhere in the whole world is there such 'equality' or such 'liberty'!"

With examples from Western history the author tries to show that this is not the true meaning of those terms in Europe, but that also in the West the moral and just attitude of the individual within the entity of the people is regarded as being most important. For this purpose he presents the best-known men of Western history with short biographies and descriptions of what they became famous

for. Each text is accompanied by a woodcut illustrating the account. The virtues of these men are divided into fifteen groups classified mostly according to Chinese ideas.

The leading virtue is that of filial piety. One of the examples given is that of Hannibal, who is shown at the age of nine, when his father made him swear eternal enmity to Rome before the assembled armies (FIG. I). The text tells in great detail how Hannibal's whole life, with all its hardship and vicissitudes up to its end by poison, was nothing but the obedient fulfillment of his father's sacred will.

Then follow examples of patriotic loyalty, among them Pericles, Wellington, and Pestalozzi. An example of reliability is followed by three examples of righteousness. One of these is given by Socrates, who stands in bonds before his "Greek" judges to defend his teachings (FIG. II). In the text it is emphasized that Socrates, in his extreme feeling of righteousness,

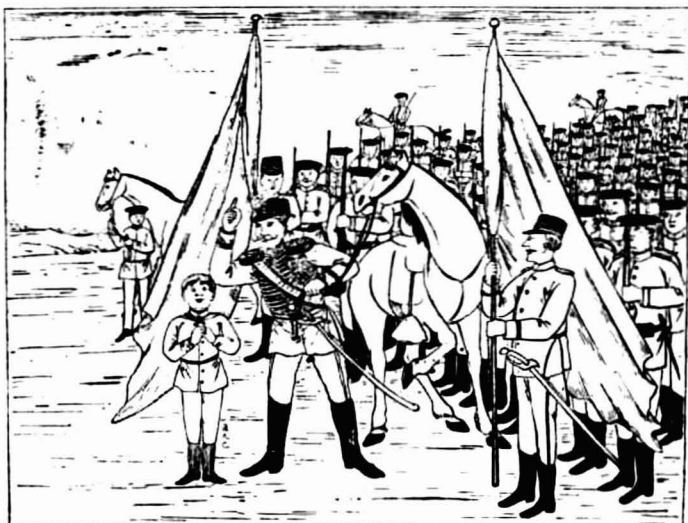


FIG. I. Young Hannibal swearing eternal enmity to Rome before his father Hamilcar

refused to save his life by fleeing, as his friends wanted him to do.

The following picture (FIG. III) shows Newton under the apple tree as an example of sincerity. The author has the following to say about Newton: "Who has not seen an apple falling to the ground? But how was it that only Newton deduced from it the law of gravity? . . . Only because he studied things with an earnest, sincere, and unprejudiced heart. In this he resembles our sage Tseng-tzu, a pupil of Confucius, who could also deduce from the simplest things the most complicated."



FIG. II. Socrates faces his judges

The man in the sentry box would hardly be recognizable as "Diogenes in the tub" without the accompanying text (FIG. IV). He is just about to ask Alexander the Great to move a little out of the sun. Alexander declared himself beaten by the simplicity of this wish, and "said with a sigh: 'I have conquered all countries, but against him I am powerless. Since today, I know that



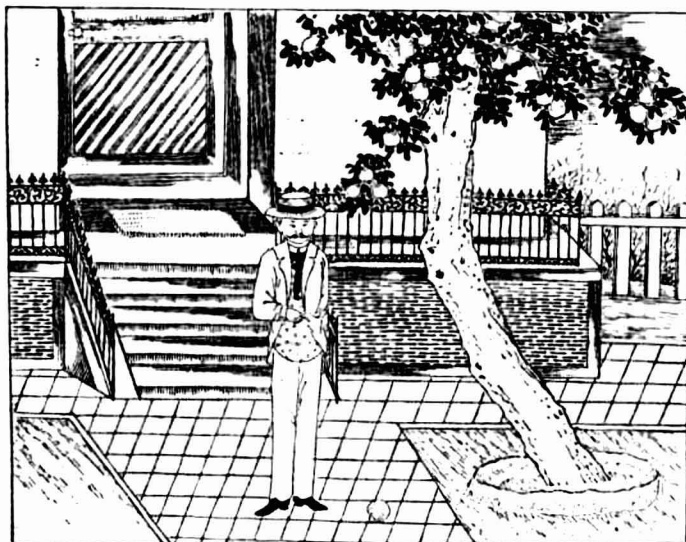


FIG. III. Newton discovers the law of gravity

scholars are worthy of honor.'” This according to the Chinese text, which mentions Yen Ch’o as a similar example from ancient Chinese history. The fact that a scholar might really live in a tub must have seemed incomprehensible to the illustrator. The Chinese text speaks of a “trough” (槽). But the artist set it upright and turned it into a sentry box. Diogenes is grouped among the examples of the virtue of noble selflessness, a virtue much admired by Chinese officials and scholars, who often withdrew as hermits into the quiet simplicity of the mountains.

FIG. V, the illustration of a man sweeping the street, shows none other than Epaminondas, a model of loyalty to the law. The author says: “Epaminondas, a Greek from Thebes, was known for his loyalty, courage, and ability. He invented a battle formation which brought him the fame of an incomparable military genius. But envious people accused him of irregular acts. He was to be condemned to death.

In view of his merits, however, the judges sentenced him to a lighter punishment, which consisted of sweeping the streets. Epaminondas, convinced that law and justice must not be abrogated for his sake, thereupon himself made the request of being allowed to sweep the streets. He did this without the slightest resentment. Epaminondas may thus be called a righteous-thinking man.” The anachronism of depicting Epaminondas in the middle of a Tientsin or Shanghai business street with American flags is very charming.

The whole work contains forty-three such woodcuts, each with a full page of accompanying text. Bismarck, Garibaldi, Watt, Wellington, Washington, Pericles, and Julius Caesar, as well as many other personalities, appear before us as they looked in the imagination of a simple Chinese some twenty to thirty years ago.

We may smile at these pictures today. But are not some of the Western illustra-



FIG. IV. Diogenes asks Alexander the Great to “move a little out of the sun”

tions of a generation or so ago, which could be found in books about China, probably just as absurd in the eyes of the Chinese? And is not behind these naïve pictures a real understanding of the moral basis of all human society?



FIG. V. Epaminondas sweeping the streets of Athens

## THE MAN AT THE MIKE

By RUTH WALL

*Before this war, most of the work on the radio was more or less anonymous. In America there were a few such names as Lowell Thomas and Raymond Gram Swing which were known to the public at large. But otherwise the man who broadcast the news was simply "the announcer," and quotations from radio reports were usually headed: "The announcer of the Schenectady station reported early this morning that . . ." or "As was announced by the BBC . . ."*

*It was only during the early days of this war that the news commentator became an institution throughout the world and that the anonymous voice of the speaker emerged from behind the scenes and became a name and a personality, challenging the public to approve or disapprove of it.*

*Our author—the name is a pseudonym—has for many years been actively connected with broadcasting in various parts of the world and is personally acquainted with many of today's leading "men at the mike."—K.M.*

**I**N the months before the war, the English public had been having a lively discussion in newspapers and magazines on the qualifications of the ideal radio speaker. In "letters to the editor" opinions surged back and forth as to whether a pronounced Oxford accent were best or a lighter tone, whether the dramatic diction of the American announcer were preferable or whether it were not more suitable for the BBC for the announcer always to show the imperturbable British calm and to read the news without emotion, or whether a

woman's voice should not be chosen like the one which so melodiously read the daily news over the Italian radio.

The answer to this discussion was given during the first month of the war.

LORD HAW HAW

William Joyce had gone to Germany shortly before the outbreak of the war and has since become a German (and this from conviction, as even his enemies had to admit). In Berlin there were at first some doubts regarding Mr. Joyce's ability