

Four Western Republican National Committeemen



D. W. MULVANE, Kansas.



ERNEST E. HART, Iowa—Photo by Riley.



J. M. GREENE, South Dakota—Photo by Barton.



R. B. SCHNEIDER, Nebraska—Photo by Trager.

China's Eminent Military Commanders

(By Isaac T. Headland, Professor of Mental and Moral Philosophy, University of Pekin.)

The Chinese for many centuries have had a proverb that "no good man will ever become a soldier," and this proverb is in harmony with the whole makeup of the Chinese people. Just before the Chinese-Japanese war there were great predictions as to what would happen. It was stated that the world would have to reorganize its forces if the Chinese army were to take the field, that the Chinese were among the best soldiers in the world, that they were the most astute leaders, and the bravest followers of any people on earth, besides a lot more of the same tenor. British war experts were quoted as saying that if China armed itself and drilled its soldiers properly it could swamp or trample down with numbers any nation that would come against it, simply because it could put so many millions of soldiers on the field. To back up their statements they pointed to the way Genghis and Kublai Khan and other Mongolians overran Europe seven or eight centuries ago.

Now, as a matter of fact, seven or eight centuries ago China was at its best and Europe was at its worst. The methods of modern warfare had not yet been evolved, and the people who were the best horsemen, could shoot best with the bow, throw the spear with greater force and accuracy, and at the same time besiege cities for the longest periods, were most likely to win, and, as all these were right in line with the accomplishments of the Mongolians, they were able to do what they did toward the subjugation of a large part of Asia—especially the less civilized portion—and at the same time frighten a large part of Europe.

The Chinese Army.

From the first we who have lived in China have had no confidence in the Chinese army. There are practically no "good men" in it. It is little less than a combination of thieves, rascals, beggars and hoodlums. They know nothing about discipline; they know nothing about the arts of war; they know nothing about international courtesy, the taking care of the sick and the wounded; they know nothing about either paying or dressing their soldiers in a way which is calculated to develop either patriotism or self-respect. And, as they are practically without a national emblem, they have no "Old Glory" which makes the chills run over you and fills your throat as you see it carried by the sons or daughters of old veterans who "died for the old flag." Nobody ever heard of a Chinese soldier who was ready to die for the flag. He may fight because he hates the enemy, or because there is the hope of plunder, but he knows nothing about the "love your enemy" principle in time of war, if, indeed, he does in time of peace.

When I say this about the Chinese soldier, let it be understood that it is with the greatest possible respect and admiration for the Chinese character and people. They are a literary and not a warlike people. They are not drivers of the sword, but of the quill—or, more properly, the brush. They are the originators of everything that has thus far come from Eastern Asia which has contributed to Oriental civilization. War brutalizes, but the Chinese productions have contributed to the development of the arts of peace.

The Chinese are therefore a peaceable people. Save in their great family squabbles, which can scarcely be termed civil wars, they have never conquered anybody. They have been repeatedly conquered—first by the Mongols, then by the Manchus—but, while they were thus conquered in battle, they at once settled themselves to swallow, absorb, masticate, digest—anything you please to call it—their conquerors, and in a hundred years there were not enough Mongols left to "shake a stick at." They

have been doing the same with the Manchus, until at present the Manchu is an emasculated, opium-besotted nobody, who is ready to be vomited back to his own mountains, woods and plains, where he can live on bears, fish and fowls. Among all the great statesmen of China you will look in vain for a great Manchu statesman. There have been those who were influential, but it was either because of their station or their relationships, and not because of their statesmanship. When you study the history of the empire you will find that its great statesmen, as well as its leaders in war are Chinese, though no Chinese generals can be looked upon as great save when compared with others of his own nationality.

How the Chinese Fight.

The following incident will indicate the character of these "great generals," as they appeared at the beginning of the Chinese-Japanese war: When a certain general was about to go over to drive the Japanese out of Korea, he was asked if he knew the geography of Korea. "Geography of Korea?" said he. "What do I care about the geography of Korea? I will just go over there and have two or three engagements with them and that will be the end of it. There is no use of my bothering myself about the geography of the country."

As a matter of fact, he "went over" and had the engagements, but the result was not what he had predicted. One of his soldiers who was laid up in hospital after his return explained what happened. He and the others in most of the hospitals were shot in the back and when the doctors asked how that happened the reply was about as follows:

"The Japanese," said the soldier, "came at us as though wild. We shot down those who were in front, but just as soon as a man fell in the front ranks some one from the next line would take his place. You can't fight people that way. When we shot down those who took the others' place some one else would come and fill up the ranks, and on they would come. You can't do anything with people of that kind. They did not know when they were whipped. Somebody had to run, and, as they would not, we did, and then they shot us in the back."

During this war there were two generals who were prominent, one whose name is spelled Yeh, but which the foreigners pronounce as though it were spelled Yea. He was in charge of the army at first, but, like a large majority of Chinese officials, there was a certain attraction about his hands which did not allow silver to

pass through them. Yeh became rich, but the soldiers did not get their pay, and so, after the great defeat at Ping Yang, he was removed to Pekin and placed in the board of punishment's large brick enclosure, where it was designed to remove his head from the rest of his anatomy; and another "great general," Nich (the foreigners pronounce his name as though it were spelled Nays), superseded him.

General Nich is a large, corpulent, good-natured looking man, with crow-foot wrinkles going from the corners of his eyes to

manifested the same genial disposition. He is located at Lu Tai, about seventy or eighty miles from Tien Tsin, and seems to have complete control of his soldiers, and had he been allowed to go on with his treatment of the Boxers a few weeks ago it would have saved the Chinese government a large amount of anxiety as well as a great deal of trouble and expense. General Nich has always manifested a kind disposition toward foreigners and, so far as I have ever heard, there has never been any trouble between his soldiers and the foreign residents in Tong Ku or Tang Shang, or, indeed, in any other part of the country east of Tien Tsin and Pekin.

A disposition similar to that of General Nich is that of Yuan Shih-kai. My first meeting with General Yuan was in Corea during the Chinese-Japanese war. General Yuan was the Chinese representative at the Korean capital at that time, and I happened to be there for a summer vacation. When the war broke out between the governments the vessels were all taken off the line between Tien Tsin and Chemulpo and we were stranded in Corea. But an offer came from the captain of a British cruiser to carry all foreigners over to Che Foo, and General Yuan was included among this number. He is like General Nich in his good nature, and like him in his general understanding of the power of western governments. When ex-Governor Yu Hsien was recalled General Yuan was appointed to take his place. He appointed his brother to take charge of his troops, and at once he began to put down the Boxer movement, but no sooner had this begun than the brother was recalled by the empress dowager. This, of course, was proof positive that the dowager was in sympathy with the Boxers. Notwithstanding this, General Yuan steadily gained control of things and is spoken of very highly by those who are in those disturbed regions. Some of the leading missionaries write that "it is evident that the military officials are doing all they can to put the movement down, but in this they are not very heartily seconded by the civil authorities."

An Anti-Foreign General.

The most anti-foreign general, and one who presents a direct contrast to the two just described, is Tung Fuh-shang. This general won his reputation in Kansu, the northwestern province, a few years ago in his battles with the Mohammedans then in revolt. All his life he has been shut off from intercourse with foreign governments and knows absolutely nothing about their power, the nature of their arms and the character of their fighting ability. Because his army was able to put down the Mohammedan rebellion, which was practically a war between two rabble, he supposes that all this trouble with "foreign devils" is because of Christianity, and so he is not only anti-foreign, but especially anti-Christian. His rabble incites fear among the natives, whether Christian or non-Christian, wherever he goes. Only a year

or two ago, when it was known that he was about to come down about the region of Pekin there was a general quaking among the country people, and the most awful stories were told about the cruelty of his men and their disposition to loot, to rob and to outrage the women of the sections through which they passed. The difference between his rabble and the armies of Nich and Yuan is an indication of the salutary influence their contact with foreign soldiers and the representation foreign governments has had upon them.

It was formerly the custom in times of war for the Chinese to put to death any general who was defeated in battle. Not only was he beheaded, but all the members of his family suffered the same fate, so that history is full of incidents in which the general, when defeated, took his own life rather than return and subject all his friends to such a sad fate. It was also the custom in times of war to loot, rob and outrage at the will of the soldiers, so that during the Chinese-Japanese war many of the better class of women had their poison all ready to take in case the Japanese came into the city, and many of them called upon my wife to inquire as to the customs of foreign soldiers at such times. In which case we were able to assure them that there was no reason to be afraid of the Japanese, that they had nothing to fear unless it was from the rabble or from Chinese soldiers.

There is one other general who has recently become prominent. This is Prince Tuan, who has charge of the imperial Manchu troops at Pekin. He is the father of the heir apparent and the son of the fifth prince, as he has always been called. He is said to be one of the most warlike of all the imperial princes, if not the most warlike, but the stand he has taken with the conservative party, which, of course, was forced upon him by the fact that his son was chosen by the Empress Dowager as the successor of Kuang Hsin, has placed him in a very unfavorable light before the world. It is said that the large majority of his troops joined the Boxers in the neighborhood of Pekin, and it was this fact that made the Boxer movement so strong and so successful in that neighborhood. There is no doubt that he was, like the Empress Dowager, in sympathy with them, and it was probably through his influence that General Nich was rebuked when his soldiers killed 500 of the Boxers between Tien Tsin and Pekin. His army sets the Manchu soldiers in a very bad light before the world.

There are two other men who rank higher among China's military leaders than any or all the others put together. And yet they are not generals. They are Li Hung Chang, whom everybody knows, and Chang Chih-Tung, who is almost unknown in this country. I simply mention their names, as I have not space to even indicate what they have done. It is somewhat singular that these two men should have the names they have. They are the Smith and Brown, or the Brown and Jones of China, as indicated by the following Chinese proverb: In the Chinese primer for girls we have this couplet: Have you ever learned the reason why your ears should punctured be? 'Tis that you may never listen to the talk of Chang and Li.

Now, as a matter of fact, if the Chinese had listened to the advice of Chang Chih-Tung and Li Hung Chang, China would be far on the road to progress at the present time. Li Hung Chang, as is well known, is the viceroy of the two Kwangs, and Chang Chih-Tung is the viceroy of Hupoh and Hunan. It is the latter who is telegraphing to urge the powers not to send troops to China.

Barbarous - Unbarbarous

Detroit Journal: See the Cultivated Briton! Is the Cultivated Briton going to bed with his boots on?

The Cultivated Briton is going to bed with his boots on!

For the Cultivated Briton has been extremely busy all day celebrating the victory of his refined civilization over the Uncouth Boer, who actually, it is said, retired at night without undressing!



TYPE OF HIGH CHINESE OFFICIAL.

ward his ears. He is a good laugh. When sitting he reminds one of good St. Nicholas, of whom it is said that a certain portion of his anatomy "shook when he laughed like a bowlful of jelly."

General Nich called on me on one occasion at the summer resort at Lu Tai Lo, about 200 miles east of Pekin, on the seashore, bringing with him one of the other generals and a number of his soldiers. They were extremely polite and the old general proved to be the best kind of company. I have met him on other occasions when he



SKYLIGHT FRATERNITY, WAYNE, Neb.