

One Hundred Percent Chinese

Christian, statesman and scholar, David Z. T. Yui, represents the type of leadership to which China must turn for stability and guidance and counsel if she would become governmentally strong.

[Important Contextual Historical Note: MP Philip. Whitwell Wilson was a co-founder of the British Pilgrims Society (1902), was the Pilgrims grooming handler of Vladimir Lenin starting in 1902 and the formation of Bolshevism, he was also an organizer of the First Imperial Press Conference, 1909 who

By P. Whitwell Wilson

Lord Rosebery (a Rothschild beneficiary) called "missionaries of Empire," after which were formed the Empire Press Union (Reuters/AP 2.0) MI6, MI5, and GC&CS now GCHQ; for decades Wilson was a New York Times editor. Via the YMCA he promoted Mao Zedong, and the United Nations.]



O the Western mind, the word China has always suggested a puzzle. It is from China that we have derived the problems of chess, and in the last year or two, the fishermen of China have fascinated us with the speculative intricacies of the game called mah jong. Here is a country where the intellect and the physique of the people are alike vigorous, alert and astonishing in adaptability. And yet China somehow has failed as yet to find her new self. Of all her secret societies, she is, as a nation, the most secret. Of all her enigmas, she is herself the hardest to solve.

What chiefly perplexes the detached spectator of China's evolution is the question why the race should be so strong when the government is so weak? The individual Chinese citizen is sure of himself. But the collective politics of China are in confusion. Never was there an Empire less aggressive than China. Yet her provinces are frequently at civil war. And at Peking, Chinese interests are sacrificed to external and international pressure. Why have Chinese Governments so often yielded to influences which they should have resisted? The answer is that China with all her ability and all her agelong philosophy, has too often been guided by men who have been open to various inducements and humiliating menaces.

It is the problem of awakening the citizenship of China that the Y. M. C. A. has been facing. The General Secretary of the Movement is not an American nor is he European. Dr. David Z. T. Yui is one hundred per cent Chinese. No man living has been animated by a more genuine patriotism than is he. And he is a statesman as well as a Christian. He meets the statesmen and bankers and industrialists of China on equal terms. In a land where erudition has always been



David Z. T. Yui

But, in his case, the limits of Chinese erudition have been broken down and his outlook is wide as the world.

Dr. Yui is himself an interesting study. His irony, his beaming smile, the twinkle in his eyes, his perfect English and his easy diplomacy suggest reserves of knowledge and emotion. He has the broad brow—the full head—which, according to Bacon, comes of much reading. He believes in books. What he admires in Sun Yat Sen, the President and leader of Southern China, is his omnivorous appetite for the latest that has been written. And among books, Dr. Yui includes the time honored archives of his own country. To him, Christianity does not involve the surrender of these stores of profound sagacity. On the contrary, it is in Christ that Dr. Yui would have them conserved.

For I asked him about printing. How was the use of the Chinese phonetic alphabet proceeding?

It cannot be said that Dr. Yui was enthusiastic. He wondered whether, in substituting phonetic symbols for the Chinese characters, the Bible Societies had not gone too far. He doubts whether the simpler alphabet of thirty-nine characters thus devised is really expressive of China's varied and often confusing idioms. He is zealous for the exact subtleties of his speech.

highly regarded, he is, too, a scholar. It was at St. John's University of Shanghai, China that he graduated, so becoming, as it were, an alumnus of the foreign mission. Thence, he proceeded, as so many orientals now proceed, to an American University, to Harvard, where he took his degree of M. A., specializing in education. And at St. John's University in China, there was conferred on him the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters. He thus belongs to that class of literate or learned men who have been, for thousands of years, the real rulers of China.

"But is there not a deplorable illiteracy in China?" I asked.

"There is," he said, "and possibly the Dynasties encouraged it because it concentrated power in their own hands. But our way of handling illiteracy has been to select from our language the thousand characters which are fundamental. We find that it takes four months to teach these thousand fundamental characters. We offer this course of instruction free, on condition that the student undertakes, at graduation, himself or herself, to give six evenings a week, for a similar course of four months, to teaching others. In this way, we are attacking illiteracy by private and voluntary effort. And we are preserving the traditions of our country."

GUIDED by Dr. Yui, the Y. M. C. A. in China thus stands for China's own language, as used from time immemorial. Innovations have been suggested which are calculated to simplify reading and writing. But of these innovations, Dr. Yui is cautiously sceptical. He wants the Chinese still to retain a thorough, as distinct from a shallow, mentality.

The point at issue is much more vital than the question whether it is more convenient to write 39 or even 26 letters across a page or to write some thousands of characters from top to bottom thereof. The Chinese characters are to Dr. Yui the symbols of Chinese culture. And as a Christian he values that culture. He believes that, in the books of China, there lies concealed a storehouse of the wisdom which the western world needs. If he is Christian, it does not mean merely that he wishes to change China for the better. It also means that he wishes to preserve China from changing for the worse.

Hence his manner of approaching Japan. He is profoundly convinced that China and Japan must learn to live peacefully as neighbors. One of the Y. M. C. A.'s in Shanghai is entirely Japanese. But he attaches great importance to the fact that, up to the present, Japan has not withdrawn her twenty-one demands upon China. Despite the Washington Conference and all it achieved, Dr. Yui thinks that Japan, by holding to the twenty-one demands, at any rate formally, lays herself under suspicion. According to his observation, however, China's boy-

cott of Japan has weakened and is not now the serious factor that once it was.

He would be a bold man who, in talking with Dr. Yui, were to suggest that Japan had advanced her civilization beyond the Chinese. One may indicate his rejoinder by an allusion to history. It will be remembered that the United States, in surrendering her share of the boxer indemnity, devoted its proceeds to education in China. To the Japanese, as years passed, that has seemed to be a splendid stroke of American diplomacy.

"And so," says Dr. Yui, "Japan decided recently that she also must devote her share of indemnity to the promotion of culture in China"—at which remark his eyes—as the saying goes—danced with amusement.

"To my Japanese friends," he went on blandly, "I put the question—why not spend some of this money in Japan? Years ago, the elder statesmen of Japan were, as a matter of course, educated in Chinese learning, which, indeed, is the basis of Japanese civilization. Nowadays, there has been a tendency in Japan to drift away from these foundations. And what has been the result? Japan finds herself between two worlds, to neither of which she belongs. She has lost touch with the old world of China. And she has yet to come into touch with the new Europe."

It is a view which—whether we accept it or not—reveals the analytical quality of Dr. Yui's mind. He admits Japan's success as imitator. He is not so convinced of her initiative.

"What," I asked, "does China think of Christianity?"

"The Chinese," he said with emphasis, "are a practical people. What they ask about a religion is—Does it work? Christianity has indeed come to us, but how? To begin with, there are 130 missions, all separate and all trying to convert the Chinese. Why is that? Then we look at your wars and we ask, Is this Christianity? Christian nations come to Peking and interfere with our Government—and again we ask, why? They smash our treasures of art or steal them. And once more, we want to know whether or not this is Christianity."

I SUGGESTED that China also had her "Christian Generals"—for instance, Feng—and knowing that Dr. Yui is a man of humor whose quiet satire recalls the Chinese enjoyment of the grotesque, I hit back. What about footbinding in China and long finger nails?

Dr. Yui laughed outright. "Fashions that pass away," said he, shrugging his shoulders, "All countries have fashions. Even in Atlantic City"—and he looked around that resort where we were staying—"there are fashions—high heels for instance. Are they justified by anatomy? Footbinding! Was there not a time when western ladies used to bind their waists?"

I asked him about the opium trade.

"That," said he, "is bad."

"Is the trade carried in by the Chinese themselves or by foreign importers?"

"By both. And each helps the other's business. Because some foreigner—say an Indian—smuggles opium into the country, therefore some Chinese person thinks that it is all right if he plants a few poppies. And when the poppies are thus planted, the foreigner comes along again and says, 'Why do you object to us importing opium? You grow it yourselves! One abuse thus reacts upon the other. It is a vicious circle.'"

In the opinion of Dr. Yui, many of China's social evils are aggravated by what diplomats call "extra-territoriality." In the large cities, there are reservations, controlled by foreign powers. Within these favored localities, the writ of the Chinese Republic does not run. It is a privilege, defended on the ground that foreigners, domiciled in China, must have protection. But what is the result? The reservations are veritable cities of refuge for the smugglers, criminals, brothel-keepers or other offenders, all of whom know that if they once reach the extra-territorial area, they are safe from pursuit and practically safe from prosecution. It is the reservations that have become the hotbeds of the opium traffic. And under her treaties, China protests that she is powerless. In these illicit transactions must be included a lucrative import of arms and munitions.

Dr. Yui knows, of course, that there is another side to this question. A country, with a population so numerous and so virile as the Chinese, has in a sense itself to blame if it fails to inspire respect for its laws, both at home and abroad. The fact that China entrusts the collection of her maritime customs to an international civil service, over which a Briton presides, is evidence that she has yet to develop in her citizens the civil conscience. To this day, Chinese are not as a rule employed to collect the customs.

I T is to the students, as a class, that the Young Men's Christian Association devotes its attention. In the progress of the Republic, the students have already played an important, or at least, a vocal part. I invited Dr. Yui to give an estimate of what significance should be attached to the student demonstrations, of which, from time to time, we hear so much.

"The students," said he, "have no business or family responsibilities. And they can thus speak their minds freely. If public opinion is on their side, they get their way. But if public opinion is against them, they fail. It is a question, not of the students as such but of the support which they can secure."

"Do you anticipate," I asked, "that there will ever be a return of the Manchus to reign in Peking?"

"No," said Dr. Yui decisively. "The

entire nation is for the Republic. The only question is how the Republic is to be established. Some people want the Government at Peking to be strongly centralized and backed by military force. Others desire that there should be a considerable measure of autonomy in the provinces. The issue is what, in this country, would be called, state rights."

"Still," I said, "the tuchuns—are they not, in effect, military dictators?"

"The tuchuns are, as you know, the governors of the provinces. And they are actually appointed by the government at Peking."

It was evident that—immersed as he is in the maelstrom of Chinese reorganization—Dr. Yui fosters in himself what President Wilson called "the neutral mind." He is for China. He is not for any party in China. And he assured me that, as a result of this attitude, the Y. M. C. A. is everywhere welcome. There are no leaders and no authorities who refuse contact with what has become an ameliorating and unifying influence.

The Y. M. C. A. has 80,000 members.

"To these members," said Dr. Yui, "we do not say, 'See what you will get out of the Y. M. C. A.' We tell them rather, 'See what the Y. M. C. A. insists that you give to others.' We want our men to be not the favorites of faith but a force. Our members are the shock troops of the new era in China."

"I can well believe," so I remarked, "that the influence of the Y. M. C. A. over individuals is all that you say. But how far has the movement captured the imagination of China as a whole?"

"There are two features in the Association that impress the Chinese mind. First, it is seen what is meant by a sound organization. And it is organization that China needs. It is in co-operation that as a nation we are weak."

"And, secondly," he went on, "China is impressed by the fact that, in a Y. M. C. A. an attempt is made to educate and to train the whole man—his body and his mind and his spiritual facilities. The Chinese philosophy is full of this ideal—seeing life whole. The Chinese thus appreciate so all round an application of the Christian faith."

"Sun-Yat-Sen—how far has he succeeded?"

"I have known Sun Yat Sen for many years. Beyond controversy, he will ever rank as the father of the Chinese Revolution. And although he has served for so long a time as the head of a great party in China, he remains today in the most honorable sense of the words, a poor man. And, in his later period, his life has been an example for us all. The essential fact about him is that he is China's prophet. He sees far ahead of what others see. Looking solely to ultimate ends, he makes what some of his friends think are mistakes in the immediate present."

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