

TOPICS

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currents that are after all at the bottom of the whole thing.

If you ask them about the history and politics of the present Nationalist Movement, most probably you will get your satisfaction. But should you want to know what the Chinese people are thinking about in this particular movement and why and with what effects, then only disappointment is your share. This would seem to account for most of the mistaken notions on their part even about Chinese politics.

Back a dozen years ago, when Yuan Shih Kai started his monarchist fiasco, all the American intellectuals on the spot predicted a most wonderful success for him: they thought that a democratic form of government was altogether too alien to the Chinese to be workable and that Yuan was just staging a "back to nature" process. And one of them even went so far as to present a memorandum to Yuan asking him to assume the imperial title.

Had they known that the Chinese ways of thinking were essentially democratic and that China really had never known any autocratic government as the West had known it, they could not have committed themselves so unflinchingly to a blunder which still remains to their disgrace. Unfortunately this notion, the notion that the Chinese are unfitted for democracy, still remains in the minds of the peoples of the world and this has a great deal to do with the present-day chaos and troubles in China.

New Attitude Essential

I do not think it necessary to name all the mistaken notions of the Western peoples about China, but I like to point out that should they not be eradicated root and branch, it is impossible to see peace in the Orient. The meaning and inspiration carried by the establishment of a Department of Chinese Studies at McGill lies precisely in the fact that it furnishes us a chance, a much-needed chance, to steep ourselves into a study of the Chinese culture, not the ancient classical culture (although a brief general survey is also necessary of that), but the modern and living culture, which has for the last thirty years swayed the Chinese and, in a way other related peoples, like so many pawns on a chess board.

In outlining the aims of the Department I have to borrow the ideas of our familiar friend Col. Bovey and they are four in number:— (1) to give our students here a close touch with the educative influence of Eastern studies and to world-wide cultural relations to a better account in the future; (2) To achieve a better understanding between the two countries bordering the Pacific and thus lay a stable corner-stone in the structure of world-peace; (3) To give the youth of Canada an adequate training so that they can make their living with and among the Chinese, if they so desire; and (4) To make good use of the rare sources of knowledge at our disposal like the Gest Chinese Research Library and the growing collection of books on China and so on.

NOTE: A new course has been inaugurated at McGill on Pacific Relations and this new course is under the charge of Prof. W. W. Goforth. I have had a happy discussion with him as to how to avoid overlapping and to secure co-operation and co-ordination between his course and the Department of Chinese Studies. The conclusions we have reached seem to be two, namely, (1) that he will deal with all the countries on the Pacific and with their inter-relationships, whereas my duty is to pick up one of these countries, namely, China, and deal with it intensively, and (2) that he will approach the subject from an economic and political point of view of international relations, whereas I shall do so from the standpoint of culture of thoughts, and of history.

In regard to the subject-matter of my own course, I intend to conduct a class in the nature of a seminar with a number of students really interested in the subject of Chinese Studies and also to give a series of lectures, probably once a week, which will be open to the public as well as to the students, and which, so far as the students of the course are concerned, will serve as a sort of linking-up and will also prepare them for an appreciative understanding of what they will be doing in the seminar. The lectures will be on the following tentative subjects:—(1) China in Ideas and Ideas, (2) The Foundation of Recent China, (3) The Reform Movement, (4) The Constitutional Movement, (5) The Revolution of 1911, (6) The Monarchist Movement, (7) The Restoration Movement (8) The New Culture Movement and (9) The Nationalist Movement. Inasmuch as these are rather long lectures it will probably take two periods to finish up one.

Both the Staff and Faculty members are giving the generous help to put the new course into shape but we have found it rather hard to get things started right the middle of the term and probably we shall find ourselves more at ease at the beginning of the next term. While my agreement with the University secures me nothing like security or permanence of tenure, my intense interest in the sub-

ject and my gratitude to McGill would seem to dictate that I should at least lay out a good foundation for the Department so that a better qualified man than myself would be able to take over the work without suffering from any initial torpor, whenever he comes. It is needless to say that the success of a failure of this long intellectual hop into the Orient depends in a very large measure upon the support or lack of support of the students, the graduates, and the friends of all classes of McGill. Let us hope for the best when we are about to embark upon the great adventure.

Finally, I must say that the above-outlined plan is a purely personal one, for the ratification of which I have to depend at present upon the decision of the Department of Economics and Political Science and the ultimate authority of the University. And I must also say that I reserve the right to change or withdraw any part or the whole of the above programme in case of necessity. It is, however, my intention to stick to it as long and as far as possible.

W.T.H.