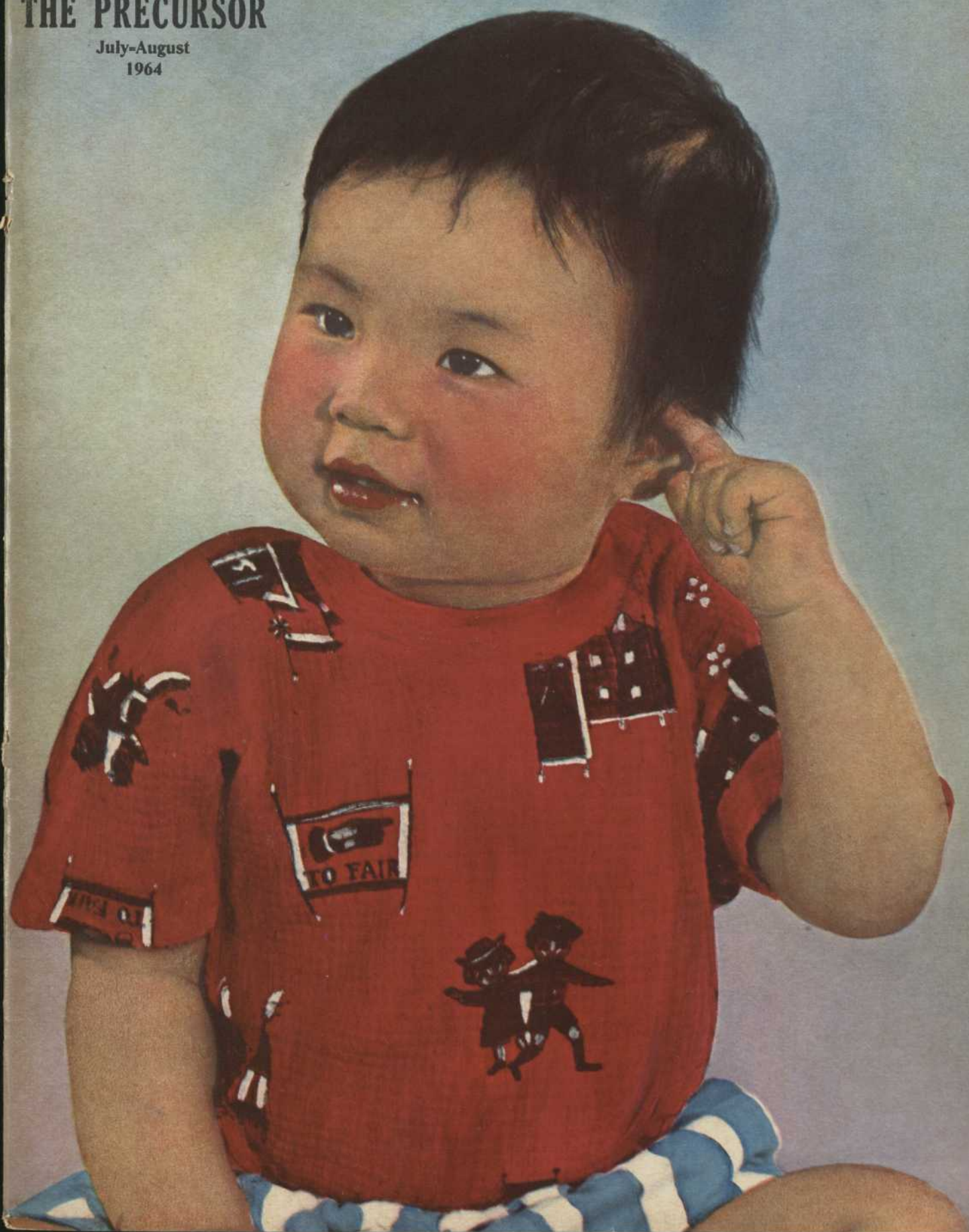


THE PRECURSOR

July-August
1964



*"A great country, a young country,
a Christian country: This is Canada.
We salute it, We admire it, and We
exhort it to recognize in the Gospel of
Christ the light and necessary power
to follow its human vocation and to
develop its spiritual mission in the pres-
ent as in the past."*

Pope Paul VI

Our Cover:

Hong Kong. Have I heard right?

Youthful knights of the altar.

THE PRECURSOR

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NIHIL OBSTAT: Father A. Cossette, P.M.E., March 8, 1964.

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NAZARETH HUMBLE AND SUBLIME SCHOOL

WHERE LESSONS OF SILENCE, LOVE, AND LABOUR ARE TAUGHT.

(Excerpt from homily delivered by Pope Paul VI at Nazareth, during his pilgrimage to the Holy Land.)

The letter

Nazareth is a school — the school of the gospel — where one begins to understand the life of Jesus. Here, one learns to look, to listen, to meditate, and to fathom the profound and mysterious pur-

port of this simple, humble, and wonderful manifestation of the Son of God. Here, one unconsciously even learns to imitate; here, one discovers the method of understanding Who Christ really

is; here, one feels the urge to observe the manner of His life among men; the places, the times, the customs, the language, the religious practices, all that Jesus made use of to reveal Himself to the world; here, everything speaks, everything is significant. Everything takes on a dual meaning, first, an exterior meaning drawn from evangelical scenes by the senses and by the immediate faculties of perception. Such a meaning may satisfy those who are content with studying and criticizing the philological and historical aspects of Scripture, what in biblical parlance is known as the letter. However important and necessary such a study may be, those who rest satisfied with it remain in obscurity. It may give rise to an illusion of knowledge in those who observe the exterior aspects of the gospel without possessing limpidity and humility of heart, right intentions, and a prayerful spirit.

...and the spirit

Secondly, the gospel discloses its interior significance i.e., the revelation of the truth and of the reality it at once displays and conceals to him alone who puts himself in harmony with light. Such a harmony flows from the rectitude of the mind, that is, of the thought and heart — a subjective and human condition each must strive to achieve — and at the same time from the imponderable and gratuitous illumination of grace. By reason of the mystery of mercy governing the destiny of mankind, grace is never lacking, at least at certain times and under certain forms, to men of good will. This is the "spirit".

Here, at this school, one understands the necessity of spiritual discipline if one wants to follow the teaching of the gospel and become a disciple

*Nazareth
market
place.*





The Pope prays on Mount Tabor.

of Christ. Oh, if We could only revert again to childhood and return to that humble and sublime school of Nazareth! Would that, close to Mary, We might begin over again to acquire the true science of life, the superior wisdom of divine truth.

But, We are here only in passing. We must forego the desire to pursue on this spot the never completed education in the comprehension of the Gospel. Before leaving, however, We wish to cull rapidly, as if by stealth, a few brief lessons from Nazareth.

Great model of all workers

Lesson of silence. We who are assailed by the uproar of our noisy, hypersensitized modern life

would do well to revive our appreciation of silence. Oh, silence of Nazareth! Teach us recollection, interiority, the disposition to respond to good inspirations and to the words of true masters; teach us the need and the value of preparation, of study, of meditation, of personal and interior life, of prayer which God alone sees.

Lesson of familial life. Nazareth teaches us about the family, its communion of love, its austere and simple beauty, its sacred and inviolable character. Let us learn from Nazareth how sweet and irreplaceable is the formation received within its circle, how primordial its role on the social plane.

Lesson of work. Nazareth, house of the "Son of the carpenter", here We wish to comprehend

and to celebrate the severe and redemptive law of human labour, to reestablish a conscience of its nobility, to recall how it cannot be a law unto itself, but that its freedom and mobility evolve, over and above its economic importance, from the values which render its aim attainable. How We wish that here it were given us to hail the workers of the whole world and show them their great Model, their divine Brother, the Prophet of all their just causes, Christ, our Lord.

Our thought wanders from Nazareth to the mountains of Galilee which have echoed with the voice of our Master. Time, as well as strength, is lacking to proclaim at this hour the divine message destined to all the world.

However, We cannot but cast a glimpse at the neighbouring Mount of Beatitudes which constitutes the synthesis and the summit of evangelical preaching. Our ears are attuned to catch the echoes of the sermon which the mysterious atmosphere of this region seems to send back to Us.

It is the voice of Christ which promulgates the New Testament, the new law integrating and surpassing the old and leading man's behaviour to the summit of perfection. The great motivation of human activity is the obligation which appeals to its liberty; in the Old Testament, it was fear; in the practice of all times and in ours it is instinct, it is interest; for Christ whom the Father has given to the world through love, it is love. He Himself has showed us to obey through love. Such was His liberation.

For, as Saint Augustine has taught, "God gave less perfect commandments to the people who were to be yet maintained under fear and more perfect commandments, through His Son, to the people He had decided to liberate henceforth through love." In His gospel, Christ brought to the world the supreme goal and the supreme strength of action and thereby of liberty and progress — love. No goal can surpass it, none can either transcend or replace it.

His gospel is a code of life. It is in the word of Christ that the human person reaches its highest level, and that human society finds its most genuine and most potent cohesion.

We believe, oh Lord, in Thy word. We shall strive to follow it and to translate it into deeds.

New wisdom and new courage

Now, we hearken to the echo reverberating in our minds of twentieth century men. This is what this word seems to teach us:

Blessed shall we be if, poor in spirit, we know how to liberate ourselves from deceitful confidence in material riches, how to direct our desires above all to spiritual and religious good, how to show respect and love to the poor considering them as brethren, as living images of Christ.

Blessed shall we be if, trained in the gentleness of the strong, we know how to renounce the pernicious power of hate and revenge; if we are wise enough to prefer to fear inspired by weapons, the generosity of forgiveness, alliance in liberty, conquest through kindness and peace.

Blessed shall we be if we do not make of selfishness our rule of conduct, of pleasure our aim, but if, on the contrary, we know how to discover in temperance a source of energy, in pain, an instrument of redemption, in sacrifice the height of greatness.

Blessed shall we be if we prefer to be oppressed rather than to oppress, if we constantly hunger after justice.

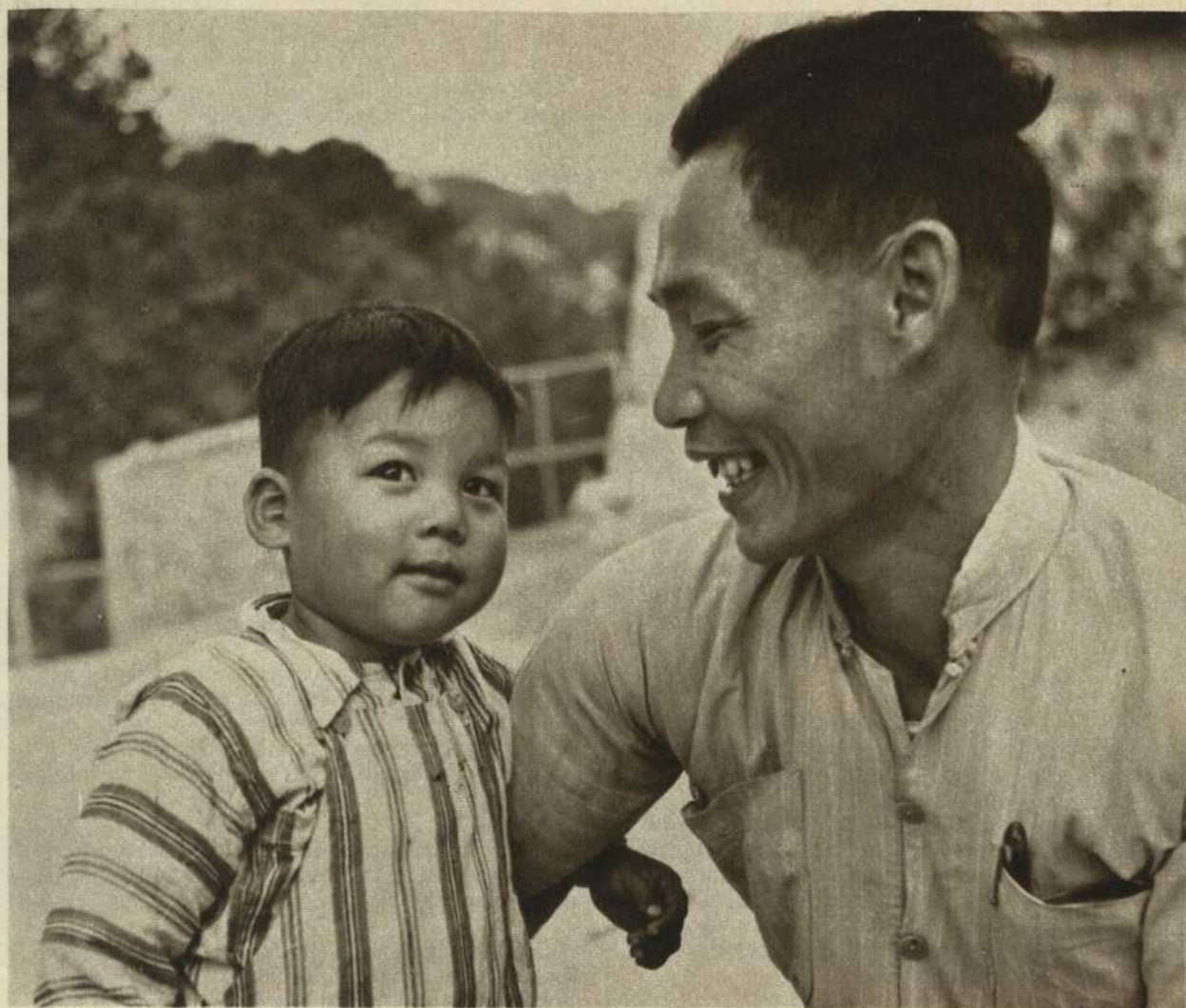
Blessed shall we be if for the sake of God's Kingdom, we know how to forgive and to struggle, how to serve and to act, how to suffer and to love.

We shall not then be forever confounded.

Such today seem to be the accents of His voice; of yore it was stronger, gentler, more persuasive; it was divine.

While we endeavour to listen to the echo of the Master's voice, we feel ourselves becoming His disciples and possessing new wisdom and new courage.

POPE PAUL VI



THE FAMILY IS THE CENTRE OF CHINESE LIFE

CHINESE WAY OF LIFE

By KAO YUNG-AN

What is the Chinese way of life? That question has been posed in one way or another for the last four thousand years. No answer yet given is entirely satisfactory and probably none ever will be. The subject matter of any culture

is immensely complex. China's is especially complicated because of the size of the country, the number of the people, and the duration of the civilization.

More than a quarter of a century ago, Lin Yutang wrote in the

prologue to *My Country and My People*: "... China has a sound instinct for life, a strange, supernatural, extraordinary vitality. She has led a life of the instinct; she has adjusted herself to economic, political, and social en-

vironments that might have spelled disaster to a less robust racial constitution; she has received her share of nature's bounty, has clung to her flowers and birds and hills and dales for her inspiration and moral support which alone have kept her heart whole and pure and prevented the race from civic social degeneration.... But she has also lived through hard times, through natural calamities and human misrule. With a grim humour and somewhat coarse nerves, she has weathered them all, and somehow she has always righted herself."

The genius of the Chinese way of life is not to be found in instruments of government, but in the family grouping and the day-to-day business of carving out a satisfactory existence, often under conditions of extreme difficulty.

On the surface, it might appear that the China of past centuries had surrendered to the West. In Taipei or the cities of Southeast Asia, the prosperous Chinese wears a dark business suit and rides in a sedan. He is a sophisticate and

easily adapts himself to New York or Paris. The less affluent also have had their conditioning in the form of movies and popular literature. They are not unaware of rock and roll, or even the twist. Yet when the film runs out or the chapter of the Westernized novel ends, the overwhelming Chinese influences are still there, and they dominate Chinese life as they always have.

The family is not unique to China. It exists everywhere. Yet in any consideration of Chinese life, the family is almost always the starting point. This is not so much because the Chinese family has attained strength greater than any other, as because of its all-inclusiveness. Chinese life has been family-centered and it still is. Outside the grouping, the world is inclined to be cold and hostile, and certainly not to be trusted. Friendships may be formed as Confucius indicated, and they are then as strong as the family bonds. They become, as a matter of fact, a part of the family system.



*Chinese life
has been
family-centered.*





*Merrymakers at
the Moon Festival*



*Bride carried
to husband's house.
Arranged marriages have not
gone out of style.*

Democratic tendency

Because of the family's dominant role, it sometimes has been observed that the Chinese have no social consciousness. This is not true now, if ever it was. China always has had various types of organizations for various purposes. However, such memberships and undertakings are peripheral to the main business of living, which is done in the family grouping where one's place is known and where security is available to all.

Foreign observers often think of the Chinese family as patriarchal. It is less so, certainly, than the old German family or even the Japanese family, which has drawn so heavily on the Chinese example. To call the Chinese family of today democratic would be no exaggeration. Not only the elders but the young people have their way. In a Quaker meeting way, decision is often by consensus rather than dictation.

Woman's role is much stronger than ordinarily supposed. Even in the era of foot-binding, the Chinese wife was probably supreme within her household. In the modern Chinese family, woman is a more active partner than in other Asian family systems. Often, she is supreme in financial matters. Decisions of education are primarily in her hands.

In former times, marriage was almost always arranged. Romantic love is as much a part of Chinese civilization as of European, but its place was outside of marriage. The purpose of husband and wife was to have sons and daughters — preferably the former — and to perpetuate the family. If they happened to like each other as well, that would be all to the good, but it wasn't necessary.

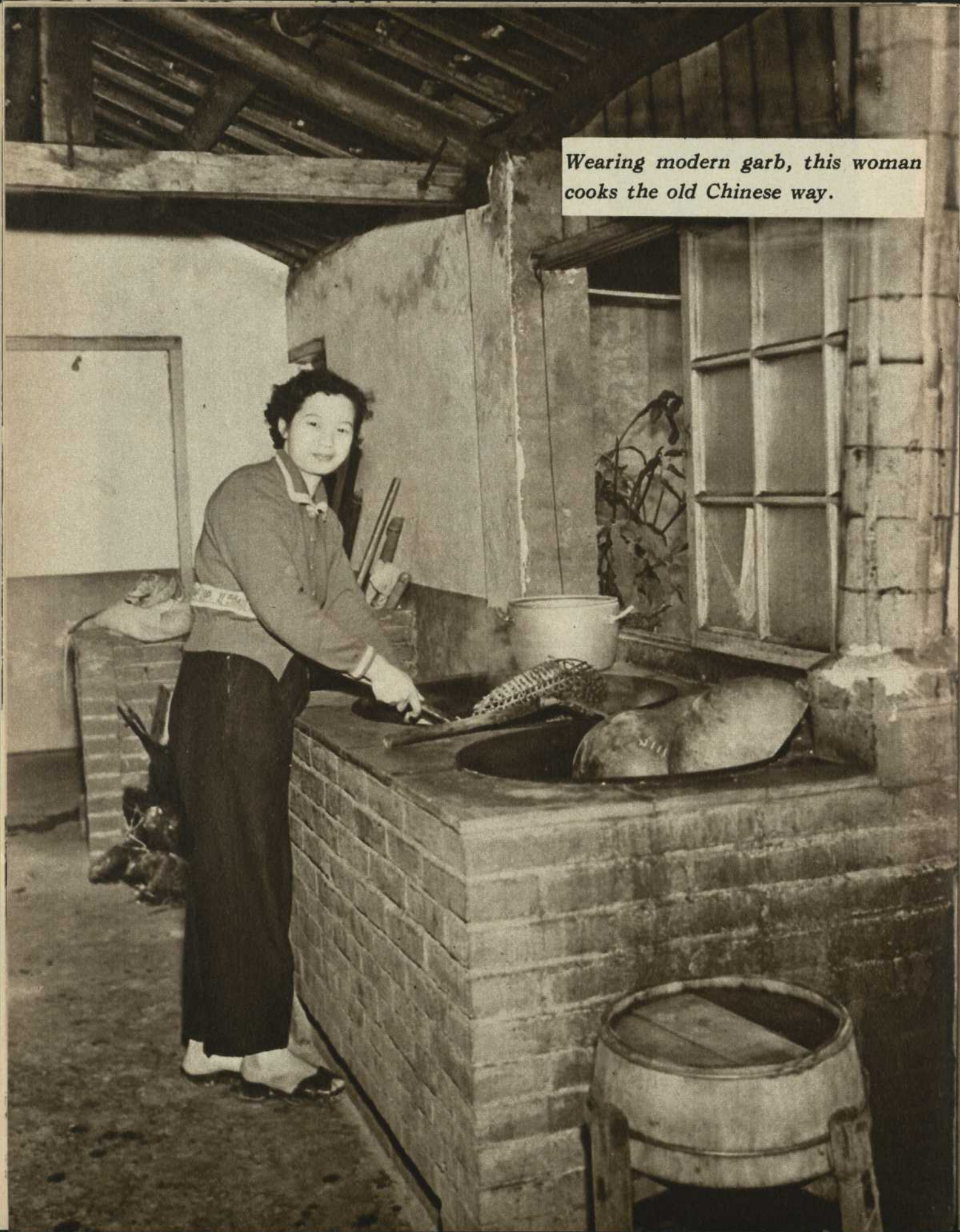
Has the arranged marriage gone out of style in the Chinese way of life? Not by any means. Such sociological studies as have been

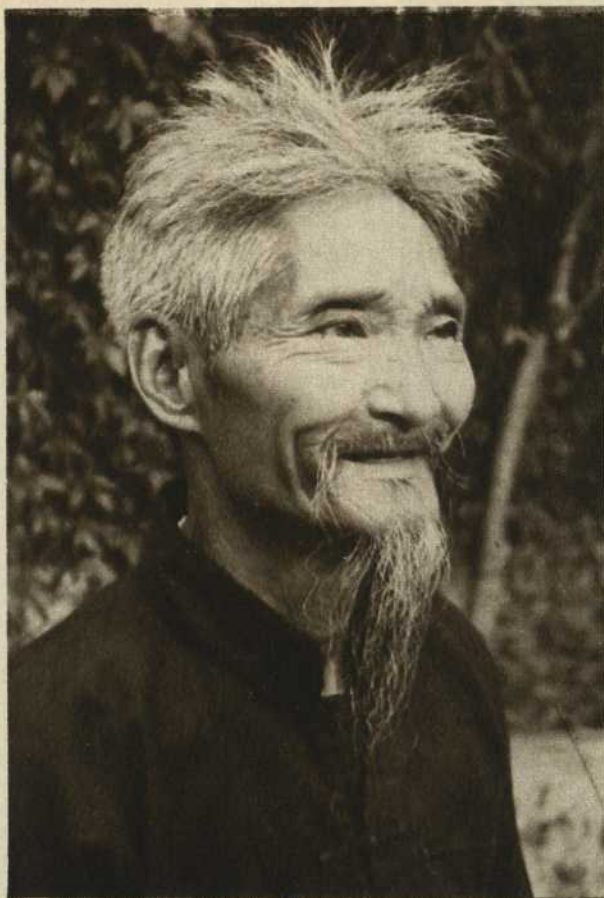
made indicate that many marriages continue to be arranged, although on a basis differing slightly from that of the past. Partners usually have a chance to indicate mutual acceptability; they may even have dates before marriage. But if they found each other without help, parental approval is almost always a prerequisite to the exchange of vows.

In Taiwan, parental opposition to romantic marriages continues to be the principal cause of double suicides. Violence also is not unusual in cases of unrequited love. The change lies in the new opportunity to meet those of the opposite sex and even become friends. Couples may be seen hand in hand or arm in arm. In olden times this could rarely be, and there was somewhat less nonsense about story book love.

From the time of Confucius, filial piety has been a cornerstone of the family. It remains so, but with a bit more grumbling than

*Wearing modern garb, this woman
cooks the old Chinese way.*





*Rules of respect
towards elders
are seldom violated.*

formerly. Economic circumstances often dictate the occupancy of the household by two, three, or even four generations. Formerly, this was normal and a part of the family system. Modern young couples do not always like it. In the end, generations become much alike, but the younger always views the older as reactionary, and the older thinks of the younger as radical. Mixing of the two sometimes has unhappy results in China, regardless of the insistence on respect for forbears.

Ancestor worship

Nevertheless, young Chinese rarely challenge their elders in the way of the West. It would not be seemly neither would it be a proper part of the order of things. Privately, there is a great deal of muttering about the unreasonable

old man and the cross old lady. Publicly, or even within the family circle, the rules of respect are not often violated.

Small children are frequently spoiled. When school starts, the disciplined hand becomes heavier, largely because it must. The Chinese are required to pass examinations to progress beyond the six years of primary school. This is almost a dominant phenomenon in family life today. To make the grade, pupils hit the books and hit them hard. Not to pass is to disgrace the family and the competition is, therefore, severe. Only about half can succeed.

The break with the past is with ancestor worship rather than with any mounting lack of respect for father and mother. Ancestors are still respected. Bows are made before the tablets in conservative families, but mostly such ritual is

reserved for special occasions. Modern Chinese think upon their ancestors only a little more than does a Westerner in his occasional visits to the family cemetery plot. The portraits frown less than once they did.

At the heart of traditional Confucianism is also the command to respect others in the hierarchy of the family, the community, or the state. This has endured less well than simple filial piety. Especially between brothers and sisters of younger ages, the directives of the sage fall on deaf ears. Probably it was ever so. However, respect for those in authority continues. The Chinese are not nominally a nation of revolutionaries. At the same time, their bows of politeness are not obsequious. Few Chinese become tongue-tied when talking to a superior.

Because of the family's con-



tinuing importance and stature, most of the business of living is done within its circle. Entertainments are of a family character — gatherings of the clan to eat and talk, to observe festive occasions, to take in a movie. Soon, the effects of television on the family will have to be studied.

The Chinese have not lost their enthusiasm for food. With the world's most extensive cuisine, it is doubtful that they will.

What has long concentration on

the family done to such other attributes of a way of life as art, the theatre, literature, and even scholarship?

Students of the Chinese way of life have made the point that because so many have had so little, the Chinese have learned to get more out of their possessions and enjoyments.

But, having a little and being able to enjoy it together, the Chinese may not be making the cultural contributions of which they

are obviously capable. Paintings are imitations of the past or attempts to follow the European style. Few have dared to combine the two, or to strike out in some new direction. Amateur painters once were more numerous, although there still are quite a few. Young artists throng Taipei's New Park, trying to master the exacting art of how to be realistic and imaginative in the same few lines of a tree or a bush.

Familiar stories

The theatre remains popular with the older generation, but does not impress the young. Quite probably, this is because the Chinese theatre is Peiping opera and little more, if acrobats and storytellers are to be left out.

Chinese opera is stylized. Every movement has its meaning, and every movement is to be performed in precisely the same way — as someone observed, "the more samer, the better". Also for the older, the rollicking old tales of lords and ladies, warriors and clowns, are familiar and hugely pleasing.

The younger generation does not respond in the same way. Mostly, it is bored with Chinese opera, much as Japanese young people turn their backs on *kabuki* and *noh*. These have largely died out although in Taiwan recent attempts have been made to revive them. It is possible that the Chinese opera form — which uniquely combines acting, singing, dancing, and acrobats — may yet be modernized with stories of present meaning and with a modification of the falsetto singing to make it more agreeable to all ears, including those of the Chinese. Tendencies in this direction can be detected among some of Taiwan's opera companies.

Literature also is changing, in fact has been in a state of flux for the last forty years. China was among the first countries to de-



*Chinese opera
is stylized.
Every movement
has its meaning.*

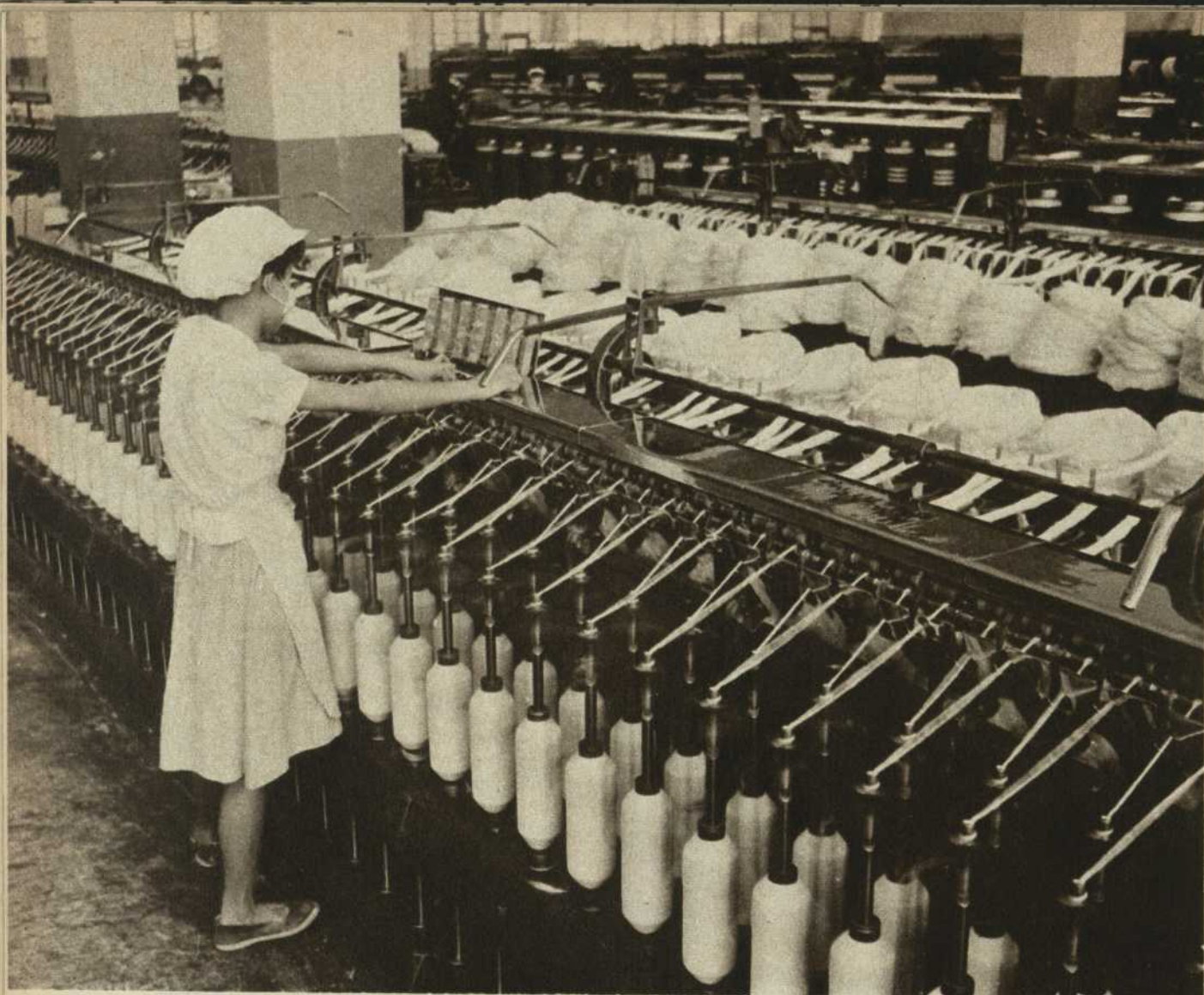


velop the novel, just as it originated so many other things. In the case of literature, the family may have been a stumbling block. Once the generalized family story was told, there seemed to be nothing left to say. People became tired of the doings of the great. Anyway, these were presented more attractively and colourfully in Chinese opera.

The recent developments have been concerned with poetry, the short story, and the essay. As a philosophical people, the Chinese not only like to read essays; they also like to write them. They are more relaxed than their Western counterparts. Their charm lies not only in the writing, but in the content, which ordinarily is concerned with everyday things.

Respect for scholars

Scholarship continues to be, even in an era of large armies and able, highly educated commanders, the most respected of Chinese professions or occupations. This may be a consequence of Confucianism and even folklore, but it is still true. Respect, however, does not necessarily imply rich



Spinning machines in Taipei.

rewards. The business or industrial leader has his Cadillac, and the scholar may have to teach at two or three universities to make both ends meet.

Some regret that China has "lost" many of its best scholars to other countries, especially the United States. The loss is a relative matter. Because these Chinese scholars have gone abroad, and because they have done good work, the respect for Chinese scholarship has increased. This is especially true of those specializing in the biological and physical sciences. Not long ago, it was

presumed that Chinese scholarship could achieve greatness only in the arts and letters, because the Chinese had no fund of scientific experience. That has been proved false. Both in Chinese communities and in the United States, Chinese scientists are doing well.

At home, Chinese scholarship seems to suffer from some universal afflictions: the moving of grains of sand from one place to another, a proclivity for becoming bureaucrats, lack of imagination and daring in the field of thought, repetition of old, worn-out ideas, and

so on. The ferment that Hu Shih and others were stirring up forty years ago has died down.

Philosophy of living

Measurement of national intelligence is impossible. It is foolish to say that the Chinese are smarter than the Japanese, or that either has more brain power than the Americans. Quite obviously, however, the Chinese are not among the duller peoples of this earth. Their intelligence ranks with the best, as will be attested by students who have competed against them

in universities all over the world. Slowly but surely, it would seem, this intelligence is developing a body of Chinese thought that may yet bring a renaissance in philosophy as well as original contributions to more modern disciplines.

China probably has produced more philosophers than any other nation, including Germany. Not all were good; not all were original. But from their ponderings there probably came more original ideas about living than from the philosophers of any other country. The Europeans waxed metaphysical; the Chinese concerned themselves with how to get through this life with a minimum of pain and at least a little pleasure.

This suggests the necessity of looking at the role of religion in the Chinese way of life. At first glance, the influence of religion might seem slight, compared with the impact of Christianity in the West. There is this difference: in Europe and the Americas, the case for religion is overstated. Everyone is presumed a Christian

and the influence of the Church is great, but many do not participate in a religious sense and many who do are only going through the motions. In China, the ethics of Confucianism actually constitute a religion, although not in the metaphysical sense, and even now probably exert a larger day-to-day influence than the teachings of Christ.

Chinese are nominally Buddhists, and Buddhism is a relaxed faith that offers some comfort without onerous obligation. In terms of ritual, so deeply engrained in Confucianism, the Chinese are probably as religious as any people in the world. This is largely kept in the home, however, and not worn on the sleeve. Even as Christians, the Chinese are not so ostentatious about their religion as the peoples of the West.

Gifts and giving

For most peoples of the world, the goal of life is to live well and to find some rewards on this earth. Perhaps the next life will be better,

perhaps not. Even among those who profess confidence in immortality there are cynics. Part of the genius of the Chinese family is to be found in its ability to produce rewards here and now on both a collective and individual basis.

The family is not always happy, yet it always holds out a known place, and that is more than any deviation from the system can offer. Often there is a genuine happiness and good cheer — jokes and laughter and many of the small but very good things of life.

Hu Shih put it this way: The most outstanding characteristic of Eastern civilization is to know contentment, whereas that of Western civilization is not to know contentment. Contented Easterners are satisfied with their simple life and, therefore, do not seek to increase their material enjoyment. They are satisfied with ignorance and with 'not understanding and not knowing' and, therefore, have devoted no attention to the discovery of truth and the invention of techniques and machinery. They are satisfied with their present lot and environment and, therefore, do not want to conquer nature but merely be at home with nature and at peace with their lot. They do not want to change systems, but rather to mind their own business. They do not want a revolution, but rather to remain obedient subjects. The civilization under which people are restricted and controlled by a material environment from which they cannot escape, and under which they cannot utilize human thought and



Scientists are highly respected in China.

intellectual power to change environment and improve conditions, is the civilization of a lazy and nonprogressive people. It is truly a materialistic civilization. Such civilization can only obstruct but cannot satisfy the spiritual demands of mankind."

Hu Shih might have been talking about the family system rather than Eastern culture as a whole. Many of the points would be the same. Yet in his effort to sting others into action, he is also unfair. Civilizations were created to serve their people. What is the final arbiter of value? The satisfaction of a Hu Shih with his endlessly questing mind, or the satisfaction and reasonable content of a family circle of nonentities who, nevertheless, in their very unimportance, give continuity and survival to the race and the nation?

He was wrong, too, in presuming that the goal of Western civilization is to reject contentment. It may be true that Western culture succeeded greatly because contentment frequently was unobtainable — but the goal always has been happiness. Some say that in front of their television sets, the people of the West are now tuning in Nirvana, and that the world soon will belong to those underprivileged who cannot afford TV.

Whatever the fate of the Chinese way of life, it almost certainly will rise or fall, survive or perish, with the family system at its core. There is no escape. The inferences to be drawn from Hu Shih to the contrary, there is no special reason to seek escape. The Chinese way of life has its failings. Today it is in a state of flux. Yet relying upon the inexhaustible strength of the family, it has lived through the vicissitudes of the centuries. In Hu Shih's own pragmatic faith, it works!

At this moment, on the vast mainland of China, more than 100 million families are fighting a battle against the most implacable enemy they have ever known. Because of what the Communists

wanted to do, they thought it would be necessary to destroy the family. They were right, but already they have failed. Because of the strength of the family, the communes have been rejected.

If the Communists cannot extirpate the family system from the Chinese way of life, then it must be indestructible. For a free China's future, the task will be to learn to live within the family without being stultified by it, to use its power for progress rather than for maintenance of the status quo.

Lin Yutang called the Chinese "past masters in the art of living" and went on to say that China was in the autumn of its national life. That may be so, and if it is, the family will be there by the fireside,

offering comfort and a sense of belonging. But the winds of change that sweep the mainland may have a new spring in store for China, once they have blown away the evil effluvium of the Communists.

It is certain that Chinese culture will endure and that the family system will remain at its heart. Whatever the future of Chinese philosophy and its interpretation of the Chinese way, the people of China — survival value magnificently unimpaired — will see that life goes on. If the family has anything to say, it will be a reasonably good life, designed to satisfy those who live it, and without regard to the plaudits or the grumblings of the philosophers and sociologists.

Excerpt from *Still China's Way of Life*,
Free China Review, Oct. 1962.





' IT'S THE MASS THAT MATTERS

THE LEGEND OF FATHER FORGET

Monsignor Louis Forget has left in Vancouver, B.C., the reputation of a saint whose charity was boundless. All his former parishioners among whom were the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception of Mount Saint Joseph Hospital mourn over the passing of a kind friend and of a generous benefactor. "The Precursor" makes it a duty to reprint the homage rendered him in the "B.C. Catholic" by the well-known journalist Mr. Jæ Cunningham.

"Now don't go writing any of that namby-pamby stuff about him. He was a real man."

The caller was one of the first pupils of St. Patrick's parish school. She spoke of the man who built the school, Monsignor Louis Forget who was buried Saturday. And she didn't want any flowery meaningless tribute to a priest who built his own memorial in the memory of his parishioners.

This is not a formal story of the career of a priest. It comes from his parishioners, recollections of a man with holiness, a sense of humor, and a shrewdness both material and spiritual.

He was a man who made legends and the legends are true.

He was also a man who made converts. He personally brought some two thousand of them into the Catholic Church during his years as a priest.

And from his parish came more vocations to the religious life than any other parish in the Vancouver Archdiocese.

HE DIDN'T just push youngsters into the religious life either. "He guided many of us into the right careers in the world," a parishioner recalls. "Somehow he could reach your soul without you knowing it."

Incidentally, he's responsible for the Prayer for Vocations said in churches today.

His favorite saying was "It's the Mass that matters."

ST. PATRICK'S was never what you'd call a rich parish. And in the hungry thirties a lot of people were desperate.

"Nobody ever went away from that old man without some kind of aid," she said. "No one came away from Father without charity being done."



*Mount
Saint Joseph
Hospital
where
Monsignor
Forget
passed away.*

He didn't wait for people to come to the rectory for help. Each morning when the youngsters in the school knelt to pray, Father Forget conducted a quiet inspection of the soles of their shoes.

And he just about doubled as an extra personnel manager for the old B.C. Electric, finding jobs for people who asked him for help.

ANTICLERICALISM in France at the beginning of the century was responsible for his ordination in Canada in 1908. He once said he was exiled from teaching catechism.

When World War I broke out the French government sent a telegram to the young Father Forget telling him he had the rank of a captain of cavalry and should return to France for immediate mobilization.

He wired back: "If I were dangerous as a seminarian, how much more dangerous would I be in time of war."

In 1917 he came to Vancouver and the same year was appointed pastor of St. Patrick's.

Four years later he travelled across North America on a speaking tour, raising the money to build a parish school.

The Sisters of St. Joseph opened the school in September, 1922.

The high school followed, a large part of the cost believed to have come from his own family funds.

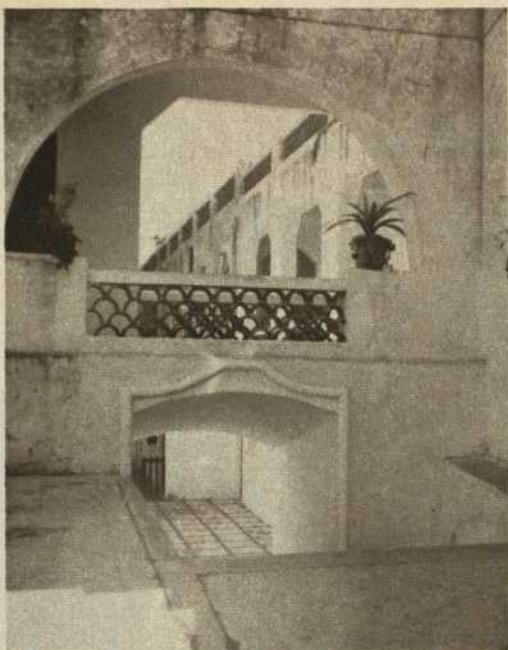
THERE'S ALSO a story to the tabernacle in St. Patrick's church. It's a gift from the relatives of night club entertainer, Texas Guinan, who died in Vancouver. A nurse noted the semi-conscious entertainer seeming to make the motions of saying the rosary with her fingers. She called Father Forget who administered the last rites.

The tabernacle was sent as a gift of gratitude by the family.

MONSIGNOR FORGET used to refer to his white hair as "going grey in God's service."

All his life he fought against ill health and some ten years ago he moved into Mount St. Joseph's Hospital, whose existence is owed to his foresight in acquiring the land.

There death found him a week ago, Wednesday, January 22.



At Cuernavaca, future missionaries to Latin America learn to consider the duty of adaptation more as a pledge of gratuitous love than as a tool for heightened professional efficiency.

CUERNAVACA CENTRE OF INTERCULTURAL FORMATION

by DOM PLACIDE PERNOT, O.S.B.

Site of Centre

The Centre was established in the heart of Mexico, in the pleasant little town of Cuernavaca, a resort for millionnaires and aristocratic circles. Its wooded hills are dotted by palaces and haciendas set in white-walled gardens filled with tropical flowers.

The Founder

While vice-rector of the University of Puerto Rico, Monsignor Ivan D. Illich, European by birth, American citizen by choice, courageously opposed ecclesiastical interference in the country's political affairs. Obligated to retire to his own New York Archdiocese, he found himself providentially free to bring to fruition a project he had long had in view, the creation of a Centre of formation to prepare lay and clerical volunteers for work in Latin America.

In June 1961, the first course was inaugurated at Cuernavaca, under the sponsorship of New York's Fordham University.

The Staff

In collaboration with Monsignor Illich, an international staff of ten priests, religious, and lay teachers, from the technician of Spanish phonetics



In discussion seminars students examine spiritual, intellectual, and practical problems.



Cuernavaca also lends itself to international gatherings. Here, a group of major superiors meet to discuss terms of apostolate in Latin America.

to the spiritual director, dispense adequate instruction to trainees.

The Candidates

At present 35 men and women, most of them from the United States and Canada, nurses, teachers, agronomists, syndicalists, missionaries, follow the Centre's programme.

Aim of Centre of Intercultural Formation or C.I.F.

It is the strong conviction of the C.I.F. staff that a personal *stability and maturity, analogous to that required of a candidate for the priesthood or religious vows*, should be the rule for a "lay missionary" or any layman volunteering for "unsheltered" overseas service. Because of the demands of C.I.F. training, such maturity is the *minimum required* for admittance into the program.

It is good to have at the outset a clear concept of the realistic character of C.I.F., a work which takes up the challenge of the present and of the future without attempting to revive the past. C.I.F.

is not a school for archeologists. It does not aim at studying pre-Columbian civilization or the deeds of *conquistadores* except in the measure they may be related to present-day evolution in Latin America.

The aim of C.I.F. is to take a person who exercises a skill and to prepare him to use that same skill among people of a different culture. C.I.F. cannot take upon itself to provide technicians to under-developed countries, but *it assumes the task of developing in those who have mastered skills, the human and Christian qualities which will facilitate their incorporation into a foreign culture.* It gives them some insight into ways of communicating effectively with the people they wish to serve. Up to now, each volunteer trained himself on the field according to his powers of adaptation, imbibing local culture thanks to a quasi accidental osmosis. To remedy such an institutional deficiency, C.I.F. offers a specific intensive formation with regard to intercultural communications.

The program is designed for persons who, at the cost of serious personal sacrifice, want to contribute

an extended period of their lives to assist the population of a developing country in the growth of their native institutions.

The program is primarily offered to persons who are motivated to this gift by their love of Christ, by their desire to follow His example and to be like those who have less; to persons who want to come to an understanding that it is even more important to share the lives and material poverty of the people to whom they are sent than to share with them the material wealth of their country of origin.

C.I.F. has in view a nonclerical Christian missionary prospect. In the long run, the only message worth spreading universally is the gospel message. Spreading this message means not merely to teach the doctrine as does the missionary priest, but also to translate all the potentialities of the Redemption into all the elements of various cultures, a task which belongs to seculars.

From the point of view of the C.I.F. there is no difference between priest, religious, or layman. All must endeavour to possess the qualities of detachment, disponibility, and discrimination required by their particular vocation.

As principal means to this end, C.I.F. organizes twice a year courses of intensive formation which last four months each.

The courses

The great bulk of time in these courses is devoted to the study of the Spanish language (or Portuguese, at Petropolis, where a similar centre exists for Brazil). Language is the chief means of communication with a foreign people. The learning of



Spanish in Cuernavaca absorbs five hours of the day in drill alone, students being assigned to groups according to ability and progress. Moreover, considerable homework is expected. By the end of four months, a person with medium good language learning ability and with ordinary effort should be able to communicate effectively in all the ordinary circumstances of his day. The main goal of the C.I.F. programme is the cultivation of a willingness to adapt to a totally different culture. These practical courses are completed by lectures on general linguistics to help students understand how a foreign language being an original creation, should therefore, normally lead to new modes of thought, first step in the penetration of a foreign culture.

Besides learning the actual aspects of the language, the C.I.F. students follow two series of courses destined to introduce them into the cultural reality through which the language takes on true meaning. They are first taught the *principles of social sciences* — sociology, cultural anthropology, economics — in order to be able to judge rightly the institutions as well as the economic and social structures they will encounter and to weigh their importance and possible utilization for the harmonious development of society. To this theoretical teaching are added lectures on Latin America, its human geography, history, literature, folklore, economic and political organization. In discussion seminars, students examine the spiritual, intellectual, and practical problems having a specific importance in their profession, problems such as the community organization of rapidly expanding urban areas, the transformation of the concept of a parish, the methodology of catechetics, the methods for the studying and the utilization of folklore in teaching, etc.

From a more concrete point of view, the implantation of the Centre in the heart of Mexico allows the students to put into immediate practice what they have learned, either in the life of the Centre itself: use of Mexican food, simplicity of the standard of living, participation in common chores, or more particularly in field trips or week-ends spent in Mexican families or groups similar to those among which they will later have to work.

At Cuernavaca, these scientific and intellectual activities, however indispensable and absorbing they may be, are not considered as important as the spiritual formation which must inspire them in a profound manner. An intense life of prayer is directed towards obtaining from the Lord the grace to follow Him in His Incarnation by willingness to

The Centre is built in old colonial style.



*Pyramid of the Sun,
majestic structure
of ancient
Toltec civilization.*

become part of a culture very different from that in which the students were born. Indeed, the course should lead them to consider adaptation as an external testimony of their gratuitous love rather than as a tool for heightened professional efficiency. The study of language and social science ought to be seen above all as opportunity to give greater freedom and depth to prayer and love of neighbour, to serve the Church in the apostolate. Emphasis is laid on detachment and spiritual poverty considered as the mystical imitation of Christ in His Incarnation.

Recruitment

The Centre is open to volunteers destined to work at the development of Latin America, but the organizers reserve unto themselves the right to accept or refuse candidates as they see fit. Primarily, they look to the *spirit* animating prospective students and to the motive for their engagement rather than to their intellectual or technical capacities. This is not meant to say that good will and deep piety alone suffice to justify an engagement to work in Latin America and admission to the Centre; specific technical competence is equally indispensable. Entrance examinations at the Centre insist on maturity and stability in candidates. "Lay volunteers", declares Monsignor Illich "belong to the best and to the worst types of people for this kind of work. They are either very mature persons willing to pay the price of sacrifice because their love of God is genuine, or unadapted persons and illuminees who take themselves for prophets." During the first course, one third of the volunteers

had to be advised by the directors that they were not suited for the second half of the four month's course. More careful *screening* and a better understanding of the training at C.I.F. might have prevented this. A few of those who had to be eliminated had been imprudently advised to seek admission in order "to study their religious vocation" or "to help them solve personal problems arising from inadaptation in their present milieu". A more positive and apostolic commitment is required. In order to avoid such errors, C.I.F. has made it a rule to accept *only candidates sponsored and presented by a lay or clerical organization* of which they are members and to exclude self-appointed apostles.

What about the results obtained? It is as yet too early to tell as this sort of enterprise cannot be compared to a factory where the scale of production is immediately measurable. As far as the Church is concerned, one may safely say that C.I.F. answers an urgent modern need. It is regrettable that similar Centres for Asia and Africa are still non-existent.

At any rate, C.I.F. is a generous and intelligent answer to the appeal launched in favour of Latin America by His Holiness Pope John XXIII on the feast of the Annunciation 1960: "The present hour requires from all a programme of definite action. Tomorrow may be too late to cope with the invasion of destructive forces endeavouring throughout the world to hamper the march onward of the Church... Trust in the Lord who will reward a hundredfold every effort made for Him and inspired by a superior vision of the exigencies of Holy Mother Church".

(Image of Thoumliline) Reproduction of *Interservice*, April 1963.



INFLUENCE of CATHOLIC SCHOOLS in JAPAN

*Important ground-breaking
apostolate*

by Reverend N. LUHMER, S. J.

To understand and evaluate the nature of the apostolic mission of the Catholic schools, its methods, limits, and results, one has to take into consideration two elements: the present situation and apostolate of the Church in Japan, and the educational situation and psychology of the Japanese people. The latter, that is, the educational situation and psychology, opens up vast possibilities while at the same time it puts certain limitations both of quite a different nature from what we see elsewhere. It would be a mistake to measure the value and the apostolic influence of a Catholic school in Japan merely by the number of baptisms.

All agree that in Japan the progress of Christianity is slow, at

least insofar as progress can be grasped in figures. The propagation of the faith has not yet reached the stage of rich harvesting, but is still in the stage of breaking the ground and making the soil more receptive and fertile for the seed of the gospel. A tremendous amount of ground-work has to be done to make the people ready for the message of Christ. However important direct efforts to bring as many souls as possible to the faith may be, at the present time it is just as necessary if not more so to carry as many of our Christian ideas to the greatest possible number of people, namely, sound conceptions about men, the family, moral and social attitudes, etc. Thereby, little by little, a sounder and more positive attitude towards

everything that Christianity stands for will be created: the people will be better helped to strengthen themselves against the pernicious influence of materialism and indifferentism, worse enemies of the faith than the old religions. This is all the more imperative if we want the Japanese people to become a powerful bulwark against the pressing onslaught of world communism. This, too, is a matter of the greatest importance for the Church, not only in Japan, but in the whole of Asia.

To bring these ideas to the people does not mean just to propagate theoretical knowledge; it means to implant these ideas in the hearts and the practical life of as many people as possible, especially of

*Scientists-in-the-making,
Saint Francis Xavier Secondary
School, Wakamatsu.*



people in influential positions and of the future leaders in different spheres of life.

This is where the Catholic schools are able to fulfill a most important mission. It is largely due to the good work of the Catholic schools that the Church, after more than two and a half centuries of suppression followed by a ghetto existence since the reopening of the mission in the 19th century, has gradually succeeded in breaking down prejudices.

These prejudices were accumulated through several hundred

years of persecution and are deeply rooted in the mind of the Japanese people.

The Church and the ideas she stands for have come to be taken seriously; she is finding more and more respect, as a spiritual and moral power, in leading circles as well as in society in general. Her influence certainly goes beyond the still negligible proportion of Catholics among the nearly 100 million inhabitants of the Japanese isles. This change of atmosphere was brought about mainly by the prestige and the educational work of Catholic schools.

It is an established fact, especially clear in the case of schools of longer standing, that through the work of the schools, Catholic influence has been carried into families and influential circles to which the Church otherwise would hardly have had access. This had been achieved, for instance, through the girls graduated from Catholic schools in their own families and the families into which they married; and through the boy graduates in their positions and in their families. It is gratifying to see that the graduates in general are highly trusted on account of the character-training they receive-



*Proud of enrolling at Saint Francis
Xavier Secondary School, Wakamatsu.*



ed. As trained students help to swell the numbers of graduates of Catholic schools, the apostolic influence should be even greater.

Moreover, many conversions have also been effected through the schools, whether the students received baptism during their school years or, as in many cases, after graduation. A survey of the parishes within the sphere of influence of Catholic schools gives clear proof of this fact. It also shows that many parents and whole families have found their way to the Church through their connection with the schools.

It is estimated that about 70% of the catechumens are to be attributed to the direct or indirect influence of the Catholic schools. Kindergartens, too, play an important role. Though hardly any baptisms of children of kindergarten age can be expected, many of the catechumens that later come to the Church found their first contact with the Church and their interest in the faith through the influence of the kindergartens.

*Brother Raymond, F.E.C.,
plays a game of Japanese bingo
with boys of a Sendai orphanage,
Japan.*



*Rakusei College,
Kyoto, Japan,
conducted by
Canadian Clerics
of Saint Viator.*



This far-reaching apostolic influence of the Catholic schools the Bishops have repeatedly recognized by saying that the missionary work in an education-minded country like Japan would be impossible without good schools. This is the reason why the Bishops and priests wish to have more schools established.

Aims and methods of this apostolate.

The *Directorium Commune* of the Japanese Church mentions as double aim of Catholic schools — propagation of the faith among non-Catholic students and Christian education of Catholic children. All Catholic schools do everything they can to give their Catholic students a solid Christian education. With the few Catholics in Japan (0.3% of the whole population), the number of Catholic students is naturally very small.

The overwhelming majority of the students being non-Catholics,

corresponding weight must be laid upon the aim mentioned first in the *Directorium*.

However, the propagation of the faith among the non-Catholic students must not be narrowly interpreted as meaning direct and coercive proselytizing. It must be understood in the sense explained above. Hardly any of the children entering Catholic schools are sent by their parents in order that they may become Christians. They come for other reasons, at best with the secondary intention of getting some religious influence. This intention, however, is frequently mingled with fear and uneasiness on the side of the parents that their children might be put under undue pressure to become Christians. Such is especially the case with parents of girls who are afraid that receiving baptism might prove an obstacle for a convenient marriage for their daughters. It is, therefore, imperative to proceed with farsighted prudence and patience. Apostolic

“pressure” results in provoking in many students and parents antipathy and ill feeling, thus impeding indirect apostolic influence as well.

If the nature of the apostolate of schools in Japan is not sufficiently understood, it may easily happen that zealous missionaries and also superiors and mission-minded people in their respective home countries will be tempted to insist too much on direct apostolic results and to judge too much by the number of baptisms. Even the missionaries (priests, brothers, nuns) working in the schools, especially the beginners, may fall a prey to this temptation. All, of course, wish to increase the number of baptisms, but the efforts must be made in such a way as not to obstruct the indirect apostolate which will bear fruit in the second or third generation, as the facts show.

The methods and the extent of this influence may be summarized in the following points:



*Laboratory, Saint Francis Xavier
Secondary School, Wakamatsu,
Japan.*

***a. With regard to the
students***

In the first place, it is the atmosphere and good guidance in everyday school life that are of greatest importance. The more family-like the atmosphere of the school is and the closer the students come into living contact with priests, religious, and good Catholic teachers, the more far-reaching and profound the influence will be. In general, Catholic schools are all known for their outstanding family spirit.

Great influence is exercised through a special course in ethics or moral behaviour, whether it be given as "religion" or simply as "ethics". Such a course helps

much to instill into young hearts sound moral principles and to form the power of moral judgment. It serves to evoke in many the desire to study religion more profoundly, and thus prepares the way for baptism. Even before the course in ethics was made obligatory in the high schools, a series of textbooks had been compiled by one of the Catholic schools and are now widely used. These books contain a moral course founded not explicitly on revealed Christian dogma, but rather on the Christian conception of the natural law. Though much has still to be done to improve this course, the value of such an approach has been proved by the results, and also by the fact that in quite a number of parishes the books are being used

as an introduction to the study of the faith, that is to the catechism.

This moral instruction is accompanied by practical training in everyday school life. In this way, the students receive something definitely Christian or Catholic, a sound moral outlook on life and lasting moral habits and attitudes. It is, at the same time, a helpful preparation for leadership and, as has been mentioned before, a positive preparation for the faith. Many students realize only after graduation that they are "different" from others, and are sincerely grateful for what they have received.

This influence is not limited to the students while they are in

school, but continues also after graduation, as their attachment to the school and their connection with it last throughout life.

b. With regard to the parents

The educational work for the students, especially on the grade and high school level, gives the school a welcome chance to extend its influence into the family. Parents of children of this age are most interested in the teaching and practices of the school, and thus rather open to indoctrination and guidance.

This influence is indirectly exercised by the students themselves. Their "moral improvement", the visible effects of the education of the Catholic schools, very often induces the family to reconsider and even change their family life in accordance with the suggestions or requirements of the school.

It is exercised directly through parents' group meetings, visits to the homes, consultations, etc. The parents are eager to listen to talks on educational principles and on practical problems of home education. All this helps them greatly, as experience shows, to improve their family education, following the Christian ideas of the school. Much more in this line could be done if there were sufficient experienced personnel available. This lack is felt especially in many nuns' schools, as the Sisters cannot as easily visit the homes and often do not have the self-confidence to give talks and conferences of this kind.

c. With regard to people outside the school "family"

The mere fact that a Catholic school is known as a good school adds tremendously to the prestige of the Church. Moreover, many

*Merry group of teachers
at our Koriyama
primary school, Japan.*





educators in other schools, public or private, as well as members of educational organizations, are taking more and more notice of the educational policies, aims, and practices of Catholic schools. At a time when moral training is causing concern, the Catholic schools increasingly draw the attention, and often the envy, of other schools on account of their clear ideas, their discipline, and their education. The schools are often visited by other educators, and quite a few of the priests working in Catholic schools are asked to address teachers' meetings, parents' meetings, meetings of students in other schools on questions of general education and morals; they have even been asked to cooperate in guidance seminars for public school teachers. Several principals of Ca-

tholic schools have been appointed by the civil governors to the advisory boards for private school questions. The better the Catholic schools are, the more this influence will grow.

The teaching of religion and the results

The kind of apostolate that has been described above is the necessary foundation and preparation also for direct religious instruction, that is, for teaching catechism to non-Christian students.

The procedure in teaching catechism to the students is different in different schools. Some schools carry religious instruction as an obligatory subject, others as a selective course, others as a completely voluntary extra-curricular activity.

a. Catholic doctrine as an obligatory subject

The schools following this practice reason in the following way: Private schools, after the war, are free to include the teaching of religious doctrine in their regular schedule. As they announce such a course explicitly on their programme, the parents sending their children to such a school know about it, and by freely sending the children express their wish to have them take part in the course.

This practice is relatively easy in the case of children of grade school age and perhaps also at the junior high school level (especially in girls' schools). It is not so easy in senior high school. For this reason, quite a number of schools, while making the course obligatory in grade school and junior high school, put it on a voluntary basis from senior high school on.

b. Teaching Catholic doctrine on a voluntary basis

Other schools judge it better and more effective to make the course on Catholic doctrine optional. Undue and unwelcome pressure might, in their opinion, easily create in many of the students ill-feelings and thus even weaken the general educational influence. Even if we suppose that parents, by sending their children to a Catholic school, consent to have them receive religious instruction, the psychology of the children themselves is often quite different. That is especially the case when the students enter the critical years. Furthermore, it is extremely difficult to teach religion effectively to a whole class, if quite a number of the students attend only because they are forced. The atmosphere of such classes too easily becomes rather negative, so that it grows more difficult to lead even those of good will to baptism. This is mainly felt in boys' schools and

in the upper classes of all schools.

It may be added that the term "mission school" does not sound too well in the ears of the Japanese people. By a mission school they understand a Christian school in which all the students are forced to take part in regular religious practices, worship, Bible classes, etc. For this reason many Catholic educators judge that greater freedom and spontaneity guarantee greater influence and more direct results.

Experience confirms the validity of these arguments. In many schools more than fifty percent attend these voluntary catechism classes a percentage higher than in schools that follow the other practice.

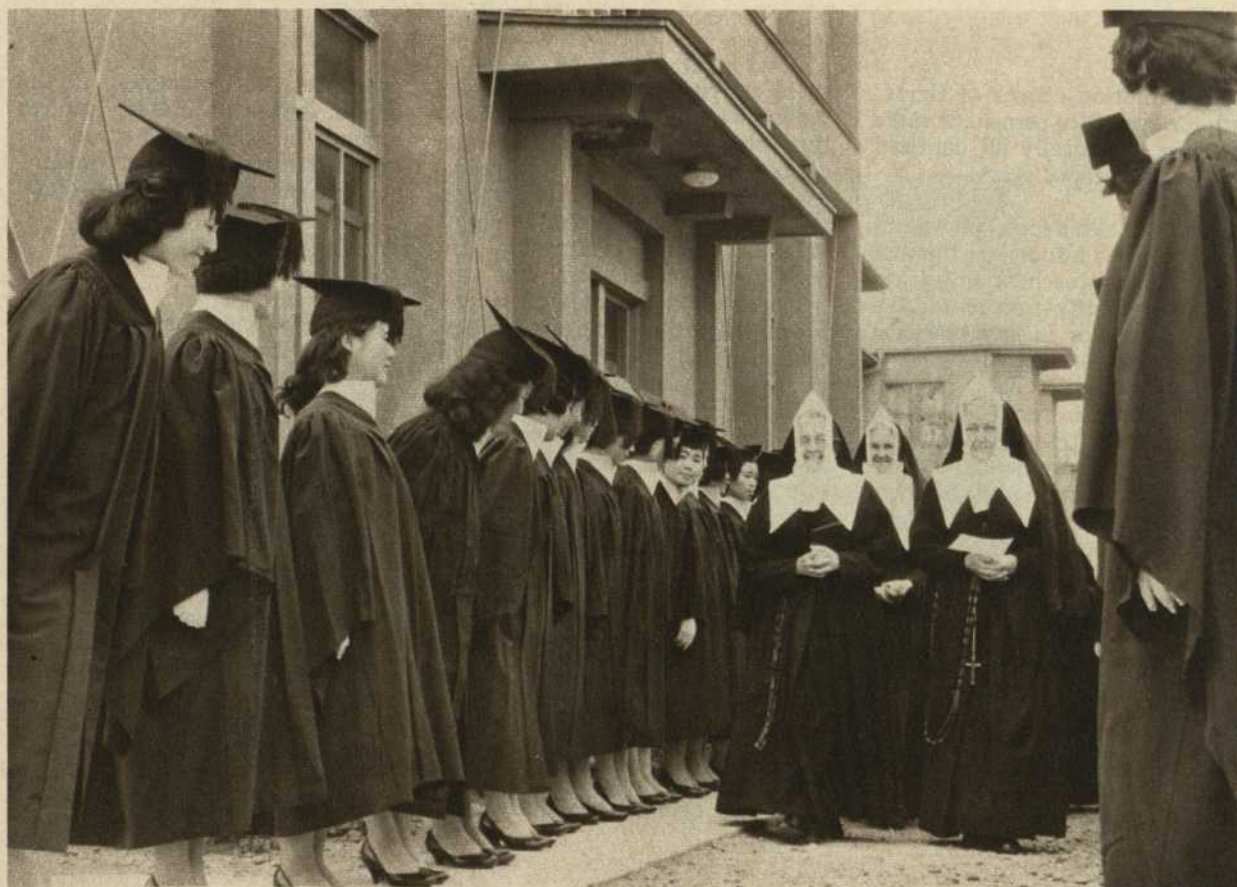
c. Results

It is evident that not all the students taking part in religious instruction will receive baptism. Apart from the difficulties each one has to overcome to take this final step, the opposition of the parents is also to be reckoned with. Many are quite willing to give their children permission to take instruction, but they often oppose their actually joining the Church. This is the case especially with girls, as the parents fear that the marriage laws and religious ties of the Church may prove an obstacle for suitable marriages. Quite a number of girls, however, receive baptism after marriage with the permission of their hus-

bands. And many other boys and girls, who did not have the courage to ask for baptism during their school years, do join the Church after graduation.

It would not be just to judge the efficiency of a school in the apostolate only by the number of baptisms. Local differences, prejudices, and many other reasons forbid this. There are not a few Catholic schools that even after many years have had very few baptisms. This means heroic work for the priests and religious who carry on without the consolation of visible results. They may have to wait for the second and third generation to see these results. On the other hand, there are schools

*Students of Our Lady of Japan College, Fukushima, Japan,
greet Very Reverend Mother General of the Sisters of the Congregation
of Notre Dame, Montreal.*





*Saint Francis
Xavier
Primary
School,
Koriyama,
Japan,
conducted
by Missionary
Sisters
of the
Immaculate
Conception.*

with graduating classes of thirty, forty, or even fifty percent or more Catholics, practically all baptized during their school years.

Much will also depend on whether a school has a sufficient number of able priest-teachers or of religious sufficiently trained for the work. Mistakes in psychological approach or a too lifeless and mechanical way of teaching the "dry" catechism result in making religion less attractive to young people. Efforts are being made to give a better formation to teachers of religion and to provide them with suitable text-books; but there is still much to be done in this direction.

d. Teaching religion to parents and families

The interest that parents take in the educational activities of the school creates at the same time more interest in the spirit behind

these activities, that is, in Christian philosophy and religion. Thus, there are many parents and groups of parents who come to study catechism. The number of parents and of entire families thus brought into the Church is growing. In such cases, the chances that the baptized students will persevere are much greater. The possibilities for extending the apostolic influence into the family could be more extensively utilized if more experienced priests were available. Except in a few special cases, it is not advisable to send parents that show interest in Christianity to parish priests whom they do not know. Doctrinal instruction should be imparted by the school staff or by persons connected with the establishment. Parents generally do not begin instruction with the intention of becoming Christians, but rather because they wish to know something about what their children are taught and about what lies behind the educational

principles and practices of the school. Their interest centres around the school and school life and it is from here that prudent and patient guidance must start.

e. Perseverance after baptism

Criticism is at times voiced with regard to the lack of perseverance in the faith of those baptized in the schools. It is said that the student neophytes stay faithful as long as they are protected by the atmosphere of the school, but that a disproportionate number drift from the faith and the Church after graduation.

It cannot be denied that a certain percentage of neophytes does drift away, at least for some time (many of them find their way back, for instance on the occasion of their marriage, etc.). But an honest study of the situation will show that this percentage is hardly

greater than that in the parishes, especially if one considers the special circumstances and difficulties most of the graduates have to face once they leave school. Many if not most of the students baptized in the schools are from non-Catholic families; many have to leave home and parish for universities or jobs in distant places where they come into surroundings and under influences of an often very dangerous kind; this makes it difficult for anyone to keep and practise the faith. It is consoling to see that by far the majority proves to be very faithful and

active as Catholics in the different spheres of activity: Catholic students' movements, Christian study circles, social work groups, etc.

It must, however, be considered a very important part of the apostolate of the schools to follow up their Catholic graduates, to hold for them gatherings, reunions, retreats, etc., in order to keep their connection with the school, and thus with the faith, alive. This is all the more imperative as, especially in Japan, the graduates consider their old school as their spiritual home and

their old teachers as their "parents". Even in the parishes, the ties that bind the new Christians to the Church are very often much more the personal relationship to the priest who instructed and baptized them than to the "objective" Church. It is rather difficult for new Christians to persevere once they lose contact with their priest. This cannot be completely avoided among new Christians in a country where personal relations weigh so heavy. This situation may not be ideal, but one cannot easily change it; one has to reckon with it and make the best of it.

Excerpt from Catholic Educations and Catholic Schools in Japan, 1963.

*Sister Saint Vincent Ferrer, M.I.C.
(Isabelle Ethier, Montreal)
gives a drawing lesson in Wakamatsu, Japan.*





He checks savings bills on the same abacus he used to beat mechanical calculator.

The Abacus

*DWARF VERSUS
GIANT...*

In our century of scientific progress with its ingenious electronic contrivances and its lightning mechanical calculators, it is refreshing to see a small, primitive calculating device holding its own — the dwarf abacus versus the giant IBM.

According to ancient Chinese legends, the abacus came into use in the Middle Kingdom some time during the Hang Ti dynasty (2600 B.C.). It was brought from China to Japan by a famous mathematician, Kambei Shigeyoshi Mori, in the latter part of the 16th century.

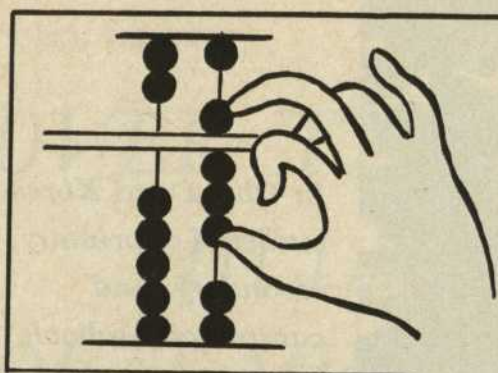
The speed of the abacus became known to the West after World War II when, on November 11, 1946, an abacus manipulator competed with an electric computer expert in Tokyo defeating the latter in addition, subtraction, and division problems. Three days later, a Chinese student of banking at Columbia University, finished an 11 figure calculation with an abacus in 40 seconds; his American opponent using a computer required 48 seconds.

In Taipei on May 10, 1961, was held the first Asian abacus conference attended by 11 delegates from China, Japan, Korea, Macao, and the Ryukyus. The following year, on November 30, China, Japan, and Korea set up the International Abacus Association.

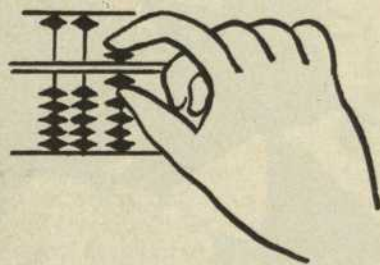
The *suanpan* (Chinese abacus) is a small rectangular frame featuring from 9 to 17 vertical reeds or pivots on which beads are strung. Each reed represents one place in the system of notation, that is units, tens, hundreds, thousands. A horizontal bar divides the frame into upper and lower sections, the two beads in the upper part being reckoned as five, and each of the five beads below as one. An average *suanpan* weighs two pounds; the most common have thirteen reeds.

Smaller and lighter in make, the *soroban* (Japanese abacus) features only one bead per reed in the upper section reckoned as five, and four on each reed of the lower reckoned as one each. The *soroban* usually comprises twenty-one reeds.

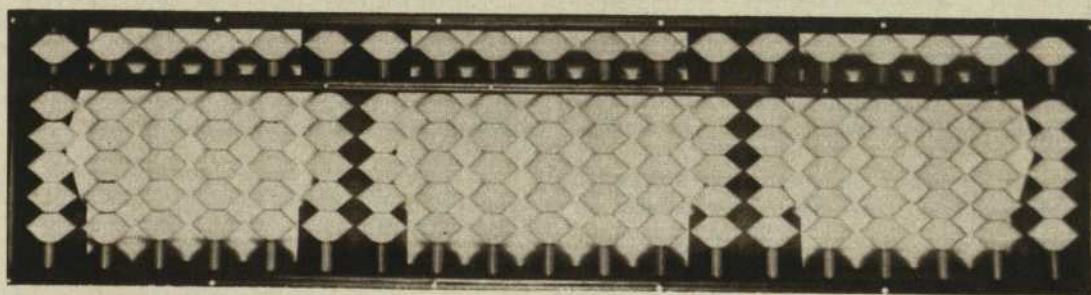
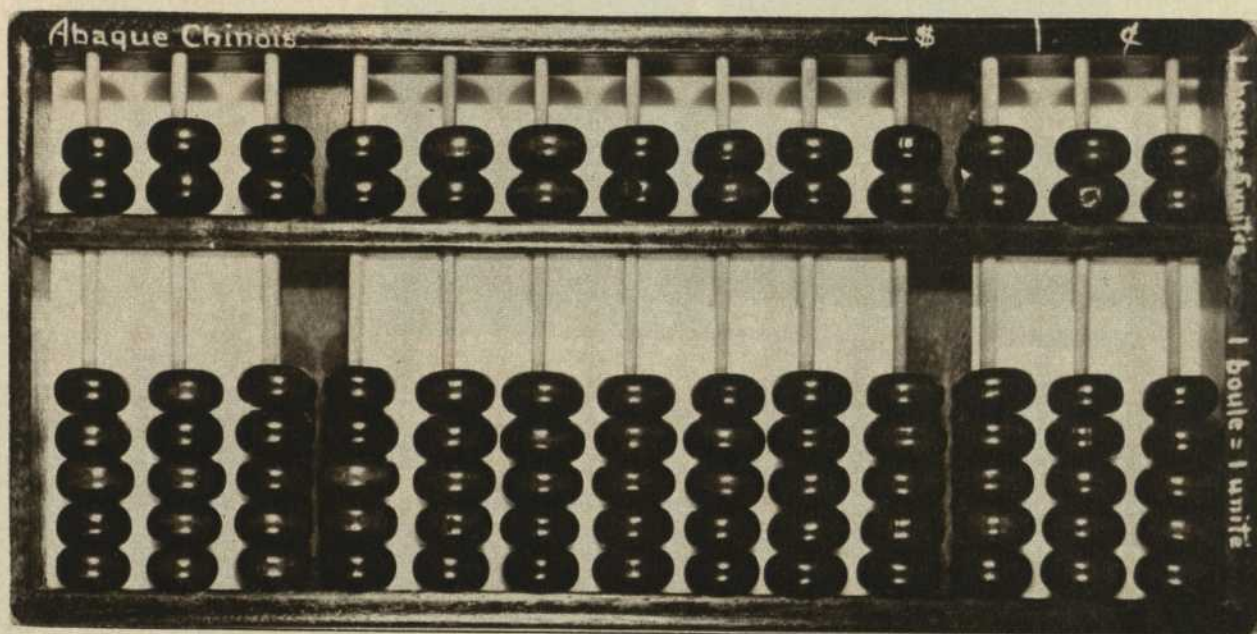
With a view to facilitating multiplication, division, and extraction of square roots, Professor Lee Kai-chen of Tamkang College, Taipei, has recently combined the seven-bead Chinese and the five-bead Japanese models into a single device.



Chinese method



Japanese method



Japanese abacus.



In China and Korea students of primary, secondary, and commercial schools learn the use of the abacus.

Chinese use the thumb, index, and middle fingers to operate the abacus, but the Japanese do not use the middle finger.

Proficiency with the abacus being a major qualification for students who wish to step into clerical positions upon graduating, experts have opened thousands of schools solely to instruct in the use of this magical little gadget. The standard is so high that on 1,103,064 who took examinations in 1960, for instance, only 328,321 were granted diplomas. It is interesting to note that in the abacus grading tests held annually by various chambers of commerce, girls and women usually beat men.

In China, in Japan, and in Korea, instruction in abacus calculation is a compulsory subject for students in commerce and in home economics.

The abacus is, moreover, used in primary schools to teach arithmetic.

An infant's future is sometimes foretold, in certain parts of China, thanks to the abacus. Baby is presented with a *suanpan* and a writing brush. If his tiny hands reach out for the calculator, a career in business is supposed to beckon.

America itself has fallen under the spell of the dwarf. Since 1959, Professor Lee Kai-chen of Taiwan has been giving a nine-month correspondence course to hundreds of Americans. It comes as a surprise to know that Japan annually exports 100,000 *soroban* to the United States.

Thus does the one-dollar dwarf — the abacus — hold its own against the huge IBM (International Business Machines) which cost thousands.

Adapted from This is Japan, 1960 and Asia Magazine, Oct. 1961.

TAIPEI, TAIWAN

OVER THE HILLS OF TAIWAN

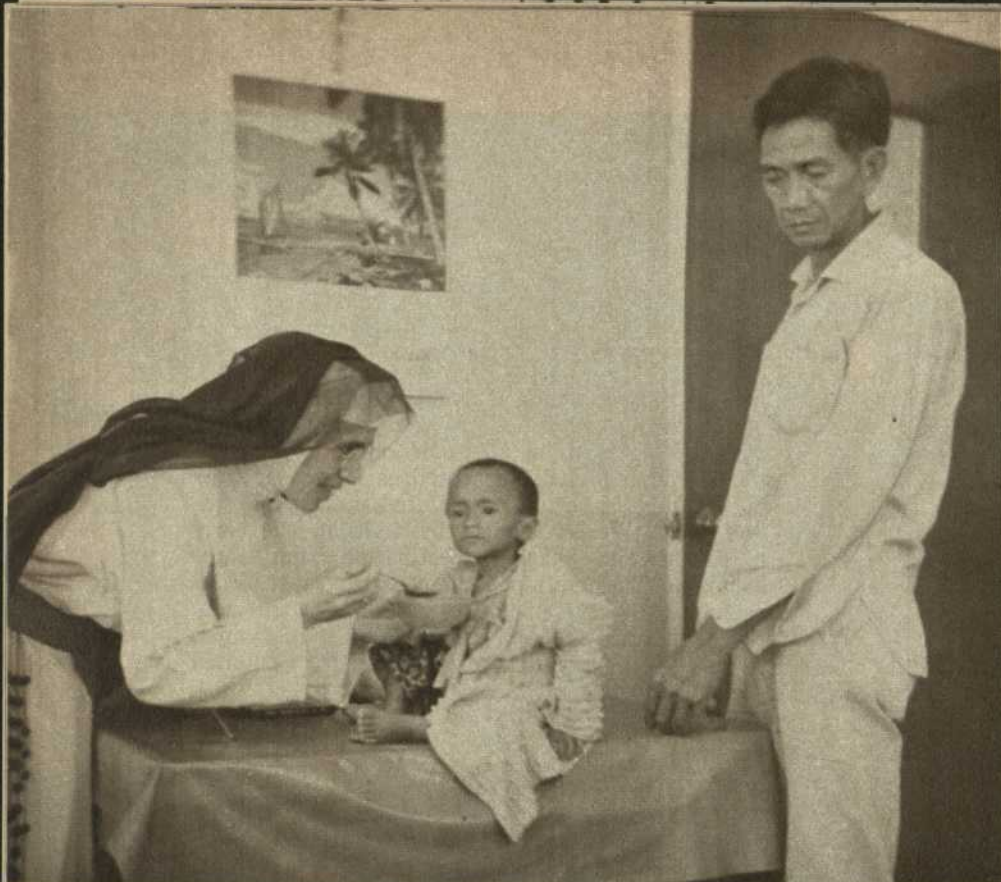
by SISTER OF THE NATIVITY OF JESUS, M.I.C.

(Therese Giroux, Quebec.)

We go on an excursion

A group of young Taiwanese girls who share our apostolic activities invited me, some time ago, to join them in an excursion to Suao, invitation which I gladly accepted as it gave me the opportunity of getting acquainted with my Promised Land. We left Taipei by train in the early afternoon and reached destination that same evening. The trip along the coast revealed varied enchanting vistas of mountain, valley, and seashore. I was surprised at the number of tunnels we passed through — all of seventeen, if I counted rightly, on the way out.





*Sister of the Nativity
of Jesus (Therese
Giroux, Quebec)
cares for young
patient at Taipei
dispensary.*





*Convent of
Missionary
Sisters of the
Immaculate
Conception,
Suao, Taiwan.*

As the rice harvest was in full swing, farmers were busy in the fields everywhere, cutting down the golden grain and threshing it by hand. No sooner was the ground cleared than fresh shifts of men and women turned it over with hoes, then harrowed it with crude disk harrows. Power is provided by the ubiquitous water buffalo, tractors being available only for larger tracts of land. Though the farms average only about three acres, they produce over one million tons of rice and nine hundred thousand tons of sugar annually. Favourable climate, irrigation, and the use of fertilizers allow for two crops of rice a year followed by a third of wheat. Such is the demand for arable land that strips along some city streets are green with growing vegetables. I have been told that labour in the fields is so arduous, the farmer and his family must eat five times a day during the harvest season.

Stopover in Suao

Our Suao convent is situated on the shores of a quiet little bay. The panorama is breathtaking with a backdrop of high mountains wreathed in mist and in front the opalescent waters breaking on the shores in ivory foam. There is one drawback to this wonderful site—the recurrence of rampaging typhoons. Our Sisters were overjoyed to see us arrive, for visitors rarely come to their

Eden by the sea. We took a light supper with the community, then to bed.

The following morning I went down to the seashore with a companion to admire the scenery. We had to take our parasols along, for the sun was scorching even at that early hour. For a while we watched a group of fishermen pulling in their catch, then we sat down on a boulder facing the sea, lost in admiration of God's wonderful creation.

Cliff Highway

After a whole day of rest at Suao we left for the excursion Suao-Hwalien.

The small chartered bus of fourteen places had to be on time in order to take place in a convoy since the highway is wide enough for only one car, except at occasional turnout points. Within ten minutes we were at the station. An official pointed out that the bus had a defective tire. Not in the least flustered, our Taiwanese driver alighted, took his time examining the maligned tire, got in again, and made a few turns on the road.

These comings and goings finally took up so much time that we missed the convoy. A tele-



*The Chinese called the island "Terraced Bay".
Terraced agriculture is still carried on.*

phone call was put through and we started on our way alone, fearful of some risky meetings.

Slowly and carefully our vehicle wound up the incline. Below, on the left, the small village of Fang Ao nestled in a cleft at the foot of the cliff. Jesuit Fathers from Suao minister to the needs of the faithful, and our Sisters conduct a kindergarten.

Portuguese explorers christened this island Formosa meaning "Beautiful", but the Chinese knew it long before as Taiwan, "Terraced Bay". Terraced agriculture is still carried on by hardy farmers who raise sweet potatoes, peanuts, tea, bananas, pineapples, and many kinds of vegetables. In recent years, wheat, soybeans, jute, and tobacco have become important crops.

Up we climbed higher and higher until we felt literally "in the clouds". The mist was so dense that the bus seemed perspiring! On the brushy slopes of the domed mountains grew palm trees, cypresses, camphor trees, Chinese firs. Thatch-

roofed huts emerged here and there proving that these isolated mountain regions were not without inhabitants. Nowhere did we see any wild animals.

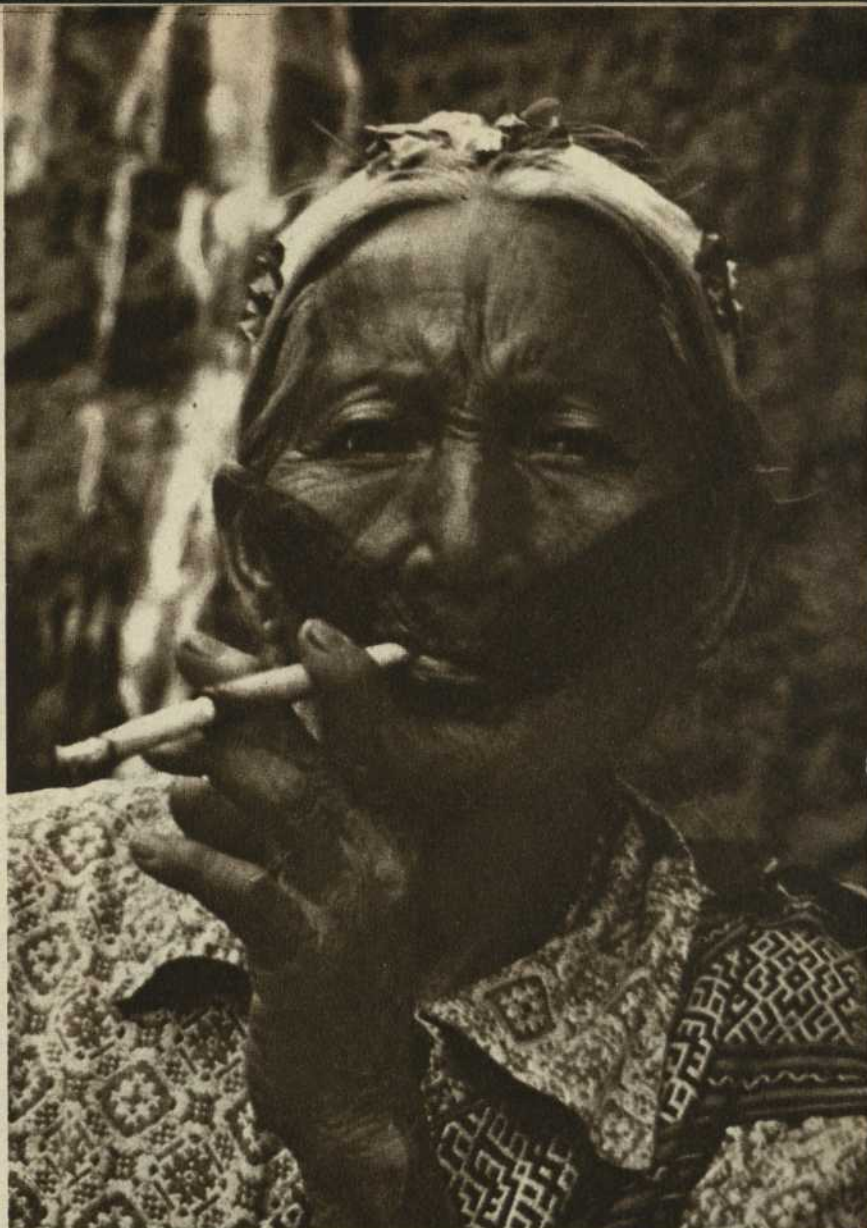
As we drove down the opposite slope we again admired the sea with fleets of fishing craft bobbing over its surface. Lower down, we entered the small fishing village of Tong Ao. Four years ago, not a Christian was to be found there. Today, a Jesuit Father is in charge of a flourishing parochial centre. A young Catholic teacher trained by our Suao Sisters conducts a kindergarten for the small fry.

Next to Tong Ao came Nan Ao a rather important village where Reverend Father Chang, S.J., is pastor. In the paddies and fertile fields ringing their village the people grow rice and peanuts. Farm women work with their men in the fields assisting in planting, weeding, and harvesting. In their moments of leisure they smoke long-stemmed bamboo pipes. A group of farmers waded in a near-by stream tending their water



*Reverend Father Chang,
pastor of Nan Ao.*

*Tattooed marriage mark forms
a blue-black line running
from ear to mouth,
then up to the other ear.*



buffaloes. Lacking ability to perspire freely, these huge beasts of burden enjoy cooling baths after hours of labour in the fields.

As the bridge at the other end of the village had collapsed we had to drive across the river. Fortunately, the water was low the drought having lasted for several months.

Late in the forenoon, after a stop at a small town to pick up two young girls going to study in Hwalien, we entered the narrow coast highway gashing cliffs beside the blue Pacific. In many places the road drives through solid rock. Travellers are warned beforehand they will have to go through at least ninety-eight tunnels.

Mountain folk and their pastor

Once, we had to negotiate a meeting with an oncoming vehicle. Our driver nonchalantly moved over to one side, a mere twelve inches from the edge of a precipitous incline, and laughingly reassured his passengers, "We're just hanging three hundred feet over the ocean!"

Our next stop was for Ho Ping. We had hoped to visit the Blessed Sacrament in the little church built here, but we found it closed for the day. The villagers explained that the pastor had to close it to keep the mountain people from taking naps there during the hot noon hours. As if in confirmation of this, we came across a mountain



The Scout movement is compulsory in all of Taiwan's secondary schools.

woman sprawled under the porch, stealing forty winks in the shade. She woke with a start when she heard our voices. The tattooed "marriage mark" on her face formed a blue-black line an inch or more wide running from ear to mouth then up to the other ear. These marks are tattooed with a substance like lampblack obtained from burning oily nuts.

A Saint Bernard Father is in charge of the Ho Ping parochial centre as well as of several

outposts in this district. The mountain people are very much attached to their dynamic apostle. The men wear the tribal tattoo on their foreheads and the chin mark that once meant the wearer had taken a head. Not so very long ago, these mountain folks used to be fierce head-hunters. No stranger was safe who ventured within tribal premises. Now they are a people whose standard of living remains primitive but who respond warmly to friendly gestures.

The government has built schools for these long neglected tribes and education is opening new doors to the young generation. Old ways and customs are changing. Brides no longer sport the blue ear-to-ear tattooed band, and young men do without tribal forehead and chin marks. Gifted with agreeable voices, all love to sing songs old and new. They also perform folk dances with exquisite grace.

Converts to the Catholic faith are as a rule fervent and faithful in the discharge of their religious duties.

Leaving Ho Ping, we crossed gingerly a suspension bridge half a mile long. Planks in the flooring were so loose that they rattled ominously as our bus drove past. Now we left the tall mountains behind and threaded our way down into the plain of Tsoung Tee. In this region, water buffaloes are replaced by yoked oxen. Herds of cows with their calves were grazing in the plain. Here and there, we met with flocks of quacking, flapping ducks.

We came across another suspension bridge past Tsoung Tee. A quarter of a mile long it was painted a bright red with silver patterns. Beyond, lovely arches in the Chinese style marked the junction between the autoroute Suao-Hualien and the Tien Hsiang railway via the Tailuko pass.

The bus driver agreed to stop here in order to allow us to admire the splendid panorama. We were examining the arches at close range when a Father of Saint Bernard, pastor at Tien Hsiang, came over to invite us to have dinner at the parochial centre a short distance away. The road may have been short in the pastor's opinion, but we found it so precipitous that from the bus windows we could see neither the top of the mountains nor the depth of the ravines we skirted.

At long last, after bolting through at least five dozen tunnels, we reached the centre perched high on a windy eminence. On the grounds outside, a Lourdes grotto and a small kiosk had been



hewn from the cliffs. At the bottom of the slope stood a hotel, a restaurant, and several public buildings in front of which a few trucks were parked. Groups of boy scouts were unloading tents and camping equipment.

I recalled my own days as a Canadian girl guide

and my hand went up in the international salute. How pleased I was when all hands shot up in response! One of the captains, a Catholic, came over for a talk. They were on an excursion in these parts he said, excursion saddened by the accidental death of one of their number on the first day out.



Exploring cavern

Our next stopover was for Tch'an Tsouen where we admired a small but exquisite pagoda situated back of a damp cavern. The dim interior was hazy with the smoke of incense sticks burning in front of a large representation of Buddha fronted by a placard bearing the caption, "Lord of the hall". In an exploring mood, we stepped out of a rear opening into a second cavern ending in a dark narrow tunnel over which brooded a statue of Buddha. Close by, a crude flight of stone steps led to we knew not where. After going up 150 steps, we gave up, too tired to push investigations any further. The bus driver blithely climbed on alone to the top where he was rewarded by the sight of still another pagoda ruled by the "Lord of the hall".

In the afternoon, we skimmed over a well-paved road to Hwalien, reaching the city late in the evening. We were given an affectionate welcome at the convent of the French Ursulines who conduct here a thriving boarding school with an enrollment of over four hundred students. They also have in charge the formation of the Sisters of Saint Martha, an autochthon congregation founded by His Excellency Bishop Verineux for service in seminaries, catechetical instruction in villages, and various other diocesan works. We were served a Chinese supper which I enjoyed in spite of the fact that I am still very awkward in the use of chopsticks.

The following day was spent visiting a kindergarten conducted by Sisters of Saint Paul de Chartres, the cathedral, the harbour under construction, and the convent of the Sisters of the Holy Heart of Mary of Mukden.

Towards noon, we struck the home trail for Suao where we arrived at 4:00 p.m.



PERU

PUCALLPA MARKET

SISTER FRANCIS OF PROVIDENCE, M.I.C.

(Gisele Guinois, Chateauguay Bassin.)

Every morning towards 4:00 a.m., the town of Pucallpa awakens to the creaking of old-fashioned barrows, the cries of little ones, the murmur of conversation announcing the opening of Pucallpa market.

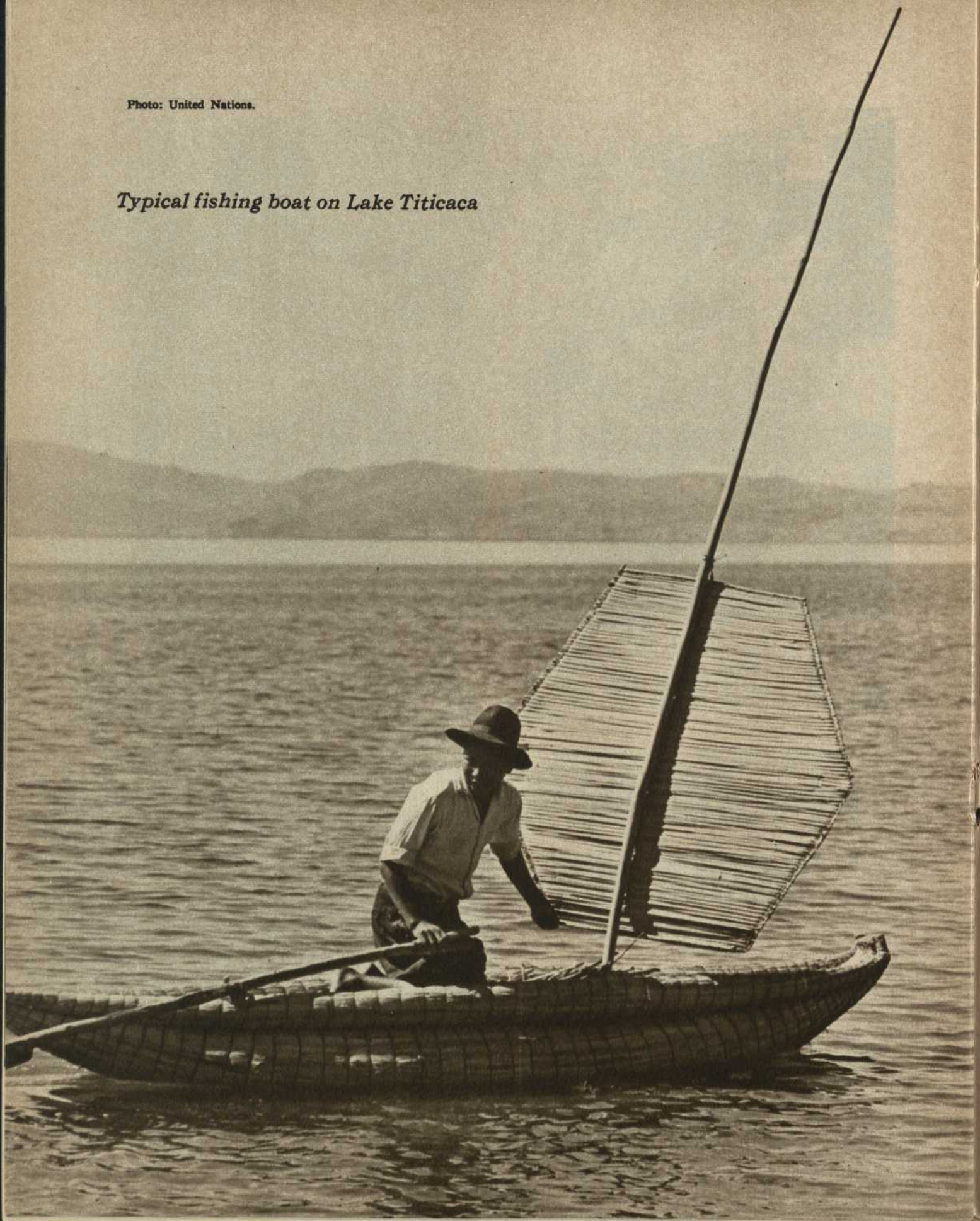
Women and children, balancing on their heads receptacles overflowing with garden produce, hasten to their stalls. Men shuffle along, lugging bunches of bananas or pushing barrows piled high with vegetables.

Numerous groups of early risers call out pleasant greetings as they converge on the market place to buy what they need for the day. These dear people are full of calm dignity as they go about their affairs. For them, this early morning shopping is not irksome; it forms part of the daily tasks to be patiently performed.

The market soon becomes a hive of activity. Armed with straw baskets of all sizes and colours,

Photo: United Nations.

Typical fishing boat on Lake Titicaca



housewives thread their way through the milling crowd.

Merchants cry out their wares, bargains are struck. Even children are astute buyers and good helpers. They can be seen trudging home with bundles far too heavy for their puny bodies.

At this market one can buy all sorts of farm produce: rice, yucca, oranges, lemons, bananas, papayas, cucumbers... Meat, however, is rare. Nobody minds as the people can seldom afford to buy any. Fish is abundant and cheap, the selva being abundantly watered by rivers and streams. It sells at 2 sols, eight cents a kilogram.

The market is a favourite meeting place where one can catch up on town gossip, meet friends, exchange bits of news.

Once or twice a week, accompanied by a young girl, I also go to Pucallpa market to buy provisions for the convent kitchen. While the girl pushes the barrow, I bargain for potatoes, cabbages, fruit, fish. The people are friendly, quick to respond to smiles that send them lights of encouragement. "*Buenas dias, madrecita*, Good day, little mother," they greet me as I move from stall to stall. Men in all simplicity ask for a medal, a piece of advice on family problems. Life is not a bed of roses for most Pucallpans. They eke

out a miserable, monotonous, existence, but they are courageous, uncomplaining. If only they knew how to anchor their spiritual uneasiness in the staunch practice of the faith!

On the way home, we take time out to stop at opened doorways and inquire after the families' well being. Houses are small, furniture of the simplest; a battered table, a stool, a few chairs, a bed for Papa and Mamma. Little folk sleep rolled in thin blankets on the floor of packed earth. Surrounding certain houses is a small garden planted with vegetables, a few lemon trees, and banana plants, the latter an important staple in the diet. Indeed, with yucca, the banana is the people's staff of life. After seven years of assiduous culture these plants bear only one bunch of bananas a piece. Old plants have to be cut down and new ones regularly set in. Some produce luscious golden fruit eaten raw; others give fruits that are palatable only after being fried, baked, or boiled. Breakfast usually consists of fried bananas and yucca gruel.

Dear readers of The Precursor, please pray for this section of the Good Shepherd's Fold that it may be spared from the subversive influence of Marxist doctrines being preached even in the remotest regions of Peru. Say a prayer for me also that I may not lose a single opportunity of drawing the people of Pucallpa closer to God.

* ————— *

Computer Composes School Song

Modern calculating machines may never replace man but song composers are doubtless beginning to wonder whether they will not go the way of manufacturers of horsewhips! It has recently been published that, in Japan, a calculating machine has been utilized for the composition of a new school song for the secondary technical institution Kita-Fuji.

This school, situated at the foot of Mount Fuji, was opened in the spring of 1963. As it lacked an appropriate school song, Professor Shigeru Watanabe of the faculty of engineering was approached on this subject.

He immediately set to work with a group of students analyzing forty of the more popular songs used in secondary schools and universities. Among other things, it was discovered that the first note in these songs was usually C or E or G and that most school songs were made up of 8 or 16 bars.

These details together with a programme of musical composition were fed into a computer. When Professor Watanabe pushed the button, the machine started to pour out notes which resulted in a song of 16 bars, four part time, in F sharp. Verses were added, then Professor Watanabe produced the completed song. The school authorities officially accepted it after slight alterations had been made.

LAY APOSTLES HAVE LONG BEEN ACTIVE IN MADAGASCAR

ROLE OF LAITY IN MADAGASCAR

"The Church in the Malagasy republic cannot be called clerical," declared His Excellency the Most Reverend Claude Rolland, bishop of Antsirabe and secretary of the episcopal conference of Madagascar, during the course of a consultation prepared in common with three Malagasy bishops, in an interview by the Divine Word News service. "A few Council Fathers have insisted on the slight, almost inexistent responsibility given to lay Catholics on the local plane," Bishop Rolland went on to say. "This may be true of certain regions, but it is not true of Madagascar where, from its origins to its present-day organization, the Church is rather lay than clerical."

The Bishop of Antsirabe further pointed out that several Christian communities now functioning were organized by lay people, not by priests or catechists. "Catholics working in the mountain gold mines, took the habit of assembling people to teach them prayers and hymns. When priests were finally called they found the nucleus of a little Christian community already formed."

In such cases, a qualified catechist is appointed to take the temporary direction of the group in order to train a local member who will succeed him as an animator and as a representative of the priest. This lay official is usually a married man and father of a family. On Sundays, he leads the meeting in the absence of the pastor who today as much as in the past must minister to the needs of from twenty to thirty outposts in his district.

According to Bishop Rolland, Madagascar was the first region in the Church to place a complete manual in the vernacular at the disposal of cate-

chists. In this manual can be found readings from the Scripture, commentaries, prayers for every Sunday in the year. The catechist is always chosen after consultation with the local community. He does not, economically speaking, depend on his service of the Church but continues to exercise his professional life as merchant, labourer, or farmer... He does receive relative compensations, but directly from the community he serves.

Besides, each parish comprises a committee headed by a president chosen by members of the community (men and women) and approved by the pastor. This president is the group's representative in its dealings with the priest. Every Sunday, the president holds a meeting, sort of parliament, in the course of which are treated, discussed, and resolved local financial affairs. The pastor is thus spared worry over financial and administrative problems.

The laity also plays an important role, outside the Church, in the country's social and political activities. In Madagascar where Catholics number 1,200,000 (one fifth of the total population) several Christians are assigned important posts in the village organizations known as *fokonolona* (chosen group of elders). They are engaged in all political parties and wield remarkable influence over Christian trade-union movements linked with international confederations.

And Bishop Rolland concludes, "All this goes to show that in Madagascar, a genuine responsibility and an active role in the Church are laid upon the laity."

Excerpt from local weekly *Lumière*, (translated) November, 17 1963.

Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception

CANADA

MOTHERHOUSE, 2900 St. Catherine Road
Cote des Neiges, Montreal 26.
NOVITIATE, Pont Viau, Montreal 40.
OUTREMONT, 314 St. Catherine Road, Montreal 8.
CHINESE HOSPITAL, 112 Lagauchetière St., West, Montreal 1.
NOMININGUE, Labelle County, P. Q.
RIMOUSKI, P. Q., 85 St. Germain Street.
JOLIETTE P. Q., 750 St. Louis Street.
QUEBEC, 1073, St. Cyrille Street West.
VANCOUVER, Oriental Hospital, 236 Campbell St.
VANCOUVER, Mount St. Joseph's Hospital,
3080 Prince Edward Street.
TROIS RIVIERES, P. Q., 1325 de la Terriere Street.
GRANBY, P. Q., 235 Dufferin Street.
GRANBY, P. Q., 50 Saint Joseph Street.
CHICOUTIMI, P. Q. 766 Cenacle Street.
SAINTE MARIE, Beauce County, P. Q.
SAINT JOHNS, P. Q., 430 Champlain Street.
PERTH, N. B., P. B. 259.
EDMUNDSTON, N. B., 85 Victoria Street.

UNITED STATES

MARLBORO, Mass., 207 Pleasant Street.

HONG KONG

TAK SUN SCHOOL,
103 Austin Road, Kowloon, Hong Kong.
MOUNT GOOD HOPE SCHOOL,
Clear Water Bay Road, Kowloon, Hong Kong.

TAIWAN

KUANHSI, 783 Cheng I Lu, Hsinshu Hsien,
Taiwan, Republic of China.
SHIH KUANG TSE, Hsinchu Hsien,
Taiwan, Republic of China.
TAIPEI, 363, An Tung Chieh, Taiwan, Republic of China.
SUAO, 36 Chung Cheng Rd., Suao Ilan Hsien,
Taiwan, Republic of China.

JAPAN

KORIYAMA, 96 Toramaru, Koriyama shi, Fukushima ken.
WAKAMATSU, 480, Sakae machi, Aizu Wakamatsu.
TOKYO, 108-4 cho me, Fukazawa cho, Setagaya ku.

ITALY

ROME, via Giacinto Carini, 8.

MADAGASCAR

MORONDAVA, Madagascar.
AMBOHIBARY, Sambaina, Madagascar.
ANTSIRABE, St. Thérèse's Mahazoarivo Parish.

PERU

PUCALLPA.
LIMA, Escuela Maria de la Providencia
Napo y Centenario, Azcona (Brena.)

GUATEMALA

TOTONICAPAN, Colegio P. Betancourt, Guatemala, A.C.

BOLIVIA

SANTA CRUZ, Cardinal Cushing Business College,
Calle Lemoine, Casilla 70.
COCIBAMBA, Academia Comercial, Calle Oruro No. 3403,
Casilla 1667.
IRUPANA, Hospital Nuestra Señora de la Providencia,
Irupana, Sud Yungas.

CHILE

ANCUD, Colegio Inmaculada Concepcion, Calle Errazuriz.

PHILIPPINE ISLANDS

MANILA, Immaculate Conception Anglo Chinese Academy,
General Luna St., Intramuros.
MANILA, 2212 S. del Rosario St., Tondo.
SAN JUAN, Little Baguio, Rizal.
LAS PINAS, Rizal.
MATI, Davao Province.
DAVAO City, Our Lady of Good Counsel Hall.
PADADA, Davao Province.
BAGUIO City, 11, Pacdal.

WEST INDIES

LES CAYES, Haiti.
LES COTEAUX, Haiti.
ROCHE A BATEAU, Haiti.
PORT SALUT, Haiti.
CAMP PERRIN, Haiti.
MIREBALAIS, Haiti.
LIMBE, Haiti.
CAP HAITIEN, Haiti.
CHANTAL, Haiti.
TROU DU NORD, Haiti.
PORT AU PRINCE, Orphanage, Cité No. 2, Haiti.
PORT AU PRINCE, Novitiate, Cité No. 2, Haiti.
CROIX DES BOUQUETS, Haiti.
DESCHAPELLES, Albert Schweitzer Hospital
P. B. No. 4, Saint Marc, Haiti.
LA BOULE, Haiti.
HINCHE, Haiti.

COLON, Province of Matanzas, Cuba.

AFRICA

KATETE, Champira P. O., Nyasaland, C. Africa.
MZAMBAZI, St. John's Parish, Eutini P. O., Nyasaland, C. Africa.
RUMPI, St. Patrick's Parish, Rumpi P. O., Nyasaland, C. Africa.
KARONGA, St. Mary's Parish, Karonga P. O., Nyasaland, C. Africa.
KASEYE, Fort Hill P. O., Nyasaland, C. Africa.
MZUZU, Convent School, Mzuzu P. O., Box 24,
Nyasaland, C. Africa.
NKATA BAY, Nkata Bay P. O., Box 9,
Nyasaland, C. Africa.
FORT JAMESON P. O. Box 107 Northern Rhodesia, C. Africa.
KANYANGA, Lundazi P. O., Northern Rhodesia, C. Africa.
NYIMBA, Sacred Heart Hospital, Northern Rhodesia, C. Africa.
CIKUNGU, Kazimuli P. O., Northern Rhodesia, C. Africa.

