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# HARVARD ALUMNI BULLETIN



HARVARD MEN IN THE  
CHINESE REVOLUTION  
BY PROFESSOR HOLCOMBE

SOME EARLY DAYS OF  
HARVARD ASTRONOMY  
BY PROFESSOR BAILEY

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# Harvard Graduates in the Chinese Revolution

BY A. N. HOLCOMBE, PROFESSOR OF GOVERNMENT.

WHEN travelling in China two years ago, investigating the progress of the revolution in that country, I was struck with the important part which Harvard graduates were taking in the revolutionary movement. The extent of their influence surprised me, although it is not surprising that graduates of American colleges should take a prominent part in the revolution, since the most important fact in the whole revolutionary process up to the present time is the seizure of power in China by men with Western educations or under the influence of Western ideas, and American colleges have taken the lead in furnishing the new China with such men and such ideas.

Twenty years ago the government of China was still in the hands of the old mandarins with their ancient classical education. Operating in the name of the Manchu Emperor, they dominated the political scene, subject to a more or less distant and precarious control by the Imperial Court. Their position in some respects resembled that now existing in India, where the British bureaucracy dominates the political scene, subject to the authority of the Imperial Government at Westminster. How greatly the position of the old mandarins had changed at the time of my visit was revealed most clearly by the Chinese "Who's Who," which showed the extent to which the places of leadership had passed into the hands of men with Western educations. Men possessing the old classical training comprised barely a quarter of those for whom such training was particularly designed, the experts in government and holders of civil offices. They comprised less than one-tenth of the educators, who were training presumably the bulk of the future rulers of China, if the China of the future were to be ruled by educated men of any kind. Taking all occupations together, men with the old ed-

ucation were less than one-fourth of the total, somewhat more than another fourth had received a Western education of some sort at educational institutions, chiefly missionary colleges and state military academies, in China, while half of the total had been educated abroad.

The influence of American-educated Chinese varied greatly in different fields of action. Of the foreign-trained men in the Chinese "Who's Who", whose education had been received in military academies, only three had been trained in America. Seven had received a military education in Europe, and twenty-eight in Japan. On the other hand, forty-five of those who had been trained for educational work had studied in America, while ten had studied in Europe and only four in Japan. The leadership of American-trained men was almost as remarkable among those who had been trained for a business career. In the field of government and politics, which tradition in China reserves for men with special training for the public service, the rivalry between the different groups of men trained abroad was keen and the issue doubtful. To say nothing of the men trained in Moscow and elsewhere in Soviet Russia, who had not then attained recognition in English editions of the Chinese "Who's Who", a clear majority of the politicians and bureaucrats noted in "Who's Who" had been trained abroad. Of these, seventy were American-educated, forty-three had been educated in Europe, and ninety-five in Japan.

Harvard was represented by an even dozen of the celebrities in the issue of the "Who's Who" which was current at the time of my visit. In view of the large number of American universities and colleges among which Chinese students seeking a Western education have been distributed this is an impressive showing. No doubt, Harvard's representation will be



much greater in a few years, when the young men who have studied at Harvard since the War have had time to make a name for themselves. During my travels I met many of these in various parts of China who were rapidly forging to the front. Since the triumph of the Nationalists two years ago has made the way for young men with modern educations far more passable than ever before, the number of such men in positions of importance should increase rapidly. I met four young Harvard graduates who were presidents or deans of colleges, but who were not included in the current "Who's Who," and four others who had studied at Harvard and were occupying or had occupied the important post of Provincial Commissioner of Foreign Affairs at as many different provincial capitals. Few of these still hold their places today, so swift are the changes in the political scene in revolutionary China, but they will find other places of usefulness and distinction because they are young men of vision and practical capacity and China needs many more such men than have yet become available. Indeed the progress of the revolution is limited more by the dearth of such men than by any other single factor.

The twelve Harvard men in the Chinese "Who's Who" held a total of seventeen Harvard degrees. There were six masters of arts, four bachelors of arts, two bachelors of science, two doctors of medicine, and one bachelor of law, one master of business administration, and one doctor of philosophy. The last, Ku T'ai-lai (better known by his English name of Telly Koo), was English secretary to the late dictator at the northern capital, Chang Tso-lin, an estimable servant of an unworthy master, and lost his life during the debacle of the Northern Militarists shortly before the dictator's assassination. Of the others, two have achieved distinction in medicine or surgery, two in educational administration, one in railroad engineering, one in social service, and the rest in politics or the public service—which unfortunately are

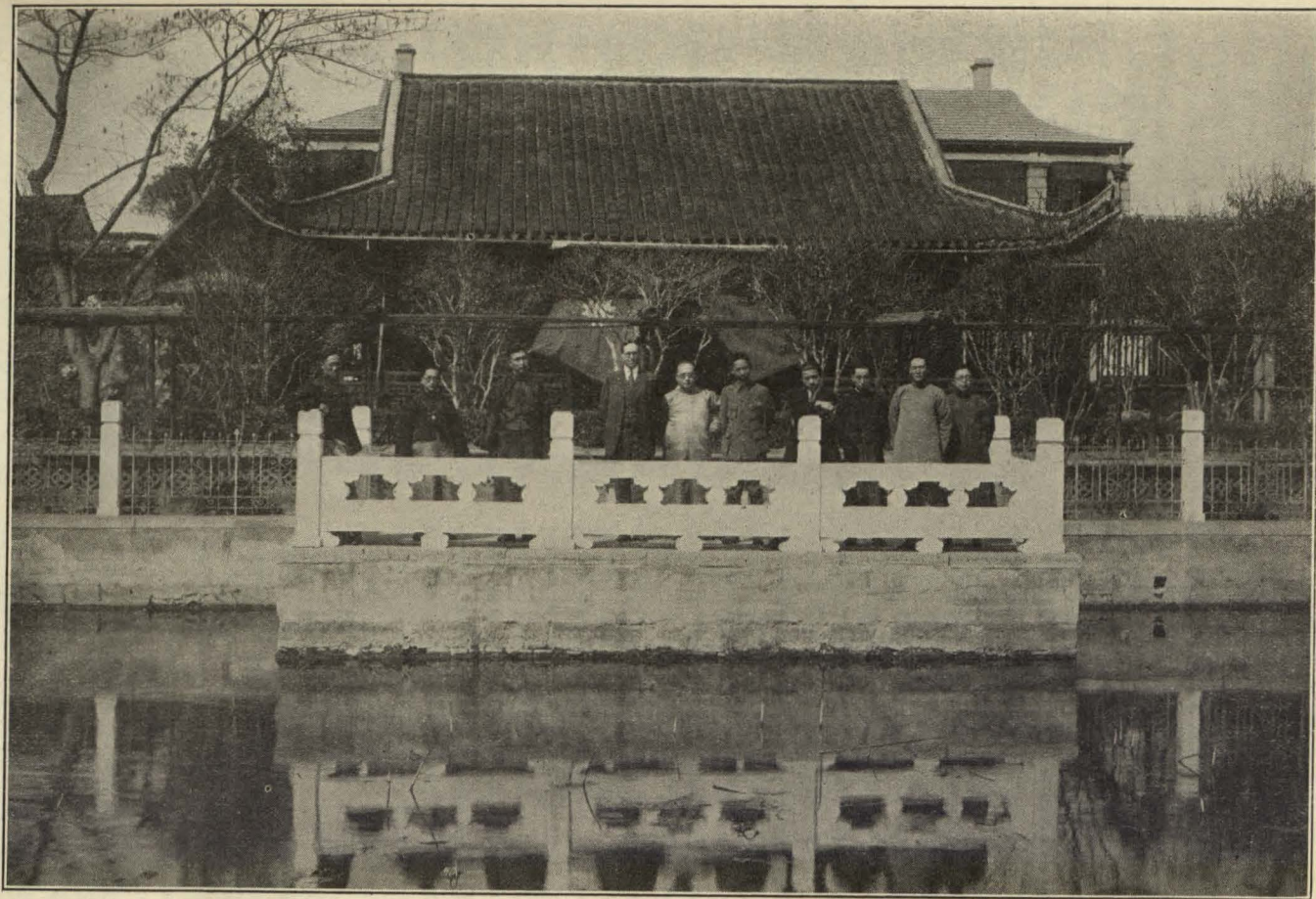
not precisely the same in China as in other parts of the world.

Of those who have achieved distinction outside of politics, probably the most widely known is Yü Jih-chang (A.M. 1910) commonly called David Yui, the present head of the Chinese Y. M. C. A. He succeeded C. T. Wang (Yale 1910), the present minister of foreign affairs at Nanking, as general secretary of the national committee of the Chinese "Y" fourteen years ago, and has been ever since one of the most vigorous and influential Christian leaders in China. While in Harvard he won one of the Bowdoin prizes for graduates, and also acquired a healthy interest in competitive sports which led him seventeen years later to take the vice-chairmanship of the committee in charge of the first Far Eastern Olympic Meet at Shanghai, a land-mark in the social life of the Orient. (In fairness to Yale it should be added that C. T. Wang was chairman of this committee).

Another outstanding Harvard man is Liu Jui-heng (J. Heng Liu, S.B. 1909, M.D. 1915), professor of surgery at the Peking Union Medical College and superintendent of the hospital since 1924. He has also been president of the Chinese National Medical Association, and is now minister of public health in the National Government at Nanking. Like David Yui, his strong sympathy with the Nationalist movement has brought him into close touch with Chinese politics in recent years, but, again like Yui, his professional spirit has hitherto dominated his interest in politics. The other Harvard man who has attained prominence in medicine is Niu Hui-sheng (W. S. New, M.D. 1914), a leading practitioner in Shanghai. He has been president of the Shanghai medical society and has lectured in the leading local medical schools.

The Harvard men who had attained most prominence in educational administration prior to the time of my visit to China were Ch'in Fen (A.B. *magna cum laude*, 1909, A.M. 1910), and Ts'ao Yun-siang (Y. S. Tsao, M.B.A. 1914). The





FIRST ANNUAL DINNER OF THE HARVARD CLUB OF NANKING

T. S. Wei, '16, M.B.A. '18, Grad. '19-20; G. L. Chen, M.B.A. '22; Fu-yun Chang, '14, LL.B. '17; Professor A. N. Holcombe; F. S. Chien, '10, Grad. Bus. '10-12; Chien Yang, M.B.A. '18; T. S. Ch'en, A.M. '22, Ph.D. '24; C. H. Chen, '16, Grad. '16-17; K.-L. Lou, A. M. '21; C. C. Tseng, A.M. '24.



former had been professor of mathematics and astronomy at the Peking National University and dean of the school of science there and also director of the division of technical education in the ministry of education at Peking. But the collapse of the Northern Government in 1928 checked the careers of the administrative officers in the northern capital. Y. S. Tsao, who also holds an A.B. from Yale, was at one time a councilor in the foreign office at Peking and subsequently president of Tsing Hua College. This is the institution founded to prepare Chinese students for advanced work in America and financed by a grant from the American share of the Boxer Indemnity Fund. In recent years Tsao has given most of his time to the work of the China Foundation for Education and Culture and the International Famine Relief Commission, both of which organizations have been largely supported by American interests. Since the Nationalists established the capital at Nanking, other Harvard men, not mentioned in "Who's Who" at the time of my visit, have been coming to the front in the educational world, notably Chien Yang (M.B.A. 1918), who has held the post of vice-minister of education and research, Chien Tuan-sheng (S. Chien, Ph.D. 1923), who has also held responsible positions in the ministry of education at Nanking and has been professor of political science in the National Central University there. H. H. Chang (Chang Hsin-hai, Ph.D. 1923), vice-president of Kwang Hua University at Shanghai, and Lin Ching-jun (C. J. Lin, A.M. 1922), president of Fukien Christian University, are other Harvard men who have recently come to the front in Chinese educational administration.

Other Harvard men who had made names for themselves in administrative activities were Chu T'ing-ch'i (T. C. Chu, S.B. 1909), who has held several important positions in the administration of the Chinese railways, Ho Chieh-ts'ai (G. Zay Wood, A.M. 1918), who has been connected with the foreign service and

written extensively on Chinese foreign relations, Chung Chih-wing (A.B. 1908, A.M. 1909), and Ma Tai-chun (A.M. 1910), who were connected with the administration of the finances under the former government at Peking, and above all Sung Tsu-wen (T. V. Soong, A.B. 1915), minister of finance at Nanking since 1928, and the group of eager young Harvard men whom he had gathered around him in his ministry. Of the latter, Chang Fuyün (F. Y. Chang, A.B. 1914, LL.B. 1917) was the only one who had been admitted to the Chinese "Who's Who" at the time of my visit. He was chief of the bureau of customs and is the principal author of the new Chinese tariff, which has recently gone into effect after years of contention between China and the Powers.

The most important contribution which Harvard has made to the Chinese revolution is apparently T. V. Soong. His importance springs in part from his own character, for he possesses a high degree of natural intelligence and buoyant energy as well as excellent training in modern public finance and the best business experience that life in the Chinese treaty ports affords, and in part from the circumstances of his official activity, for he is the principal representative of Chinese capitalism in the Nanking Government.

Soong was born of a wealthy Christian Chinese family in Shanghai in 1891 and is consequently still under forty years of age. After graduating from Harvard, where he concentrated in economics, he was employed for a time in a banking house in New York and then returned to China to enter upon a business career. But he could not keep out of politics. His family had long been interested in the revolutionary movement, and eventually became allied by marriage with the most prominent revolutionary leaders. His oldest sister, a graduate of a woman's college in Georgia, married Dr. Sun, the "father" of the revolution, and was his constant companion and helpmate throughout the vicissitudes of his later career. After his death she became



a member of the Central Executive Committee of the Nationalist Party, and through her unswerving loyalty to her husband's name and ideals acquired a high position in the councils of the party. A second sister married H. H. Kung, a direct descendant in the seventy-sixth generation of the great Confucius. Kung was formerly an active worker in the Chinese "Y" and has been minister of commerce and labor at Nanking. A third sister, a graduate of Wellesley College, became the wife of General Chiang Kai-shek, the head of the Nanking Government and commander-in-chief of the Nationalist forces. These matrimonial alliances opened the way for the rise of the House of Sung in Chinese politics.

T. V. Soong was well equipped to take advantage of his extraordinary opportunities. Proceeding to Canton, when the Nationalists were established there several years ago, he was appointed president of the state bank and later minister of finance. Introducing the systematic fiscal practices which he had learned in America, he put a check to private fraud and official corruption and caused the revenues of the government to flow into the public treasury in unprecedented abundance. His friends could apply to him the striking description which Webster coined for Alexander Hamilton. "He struck the rock of the national resources and out gushed abundant streams of revenue. He touched the dead corpse of the national credit and it sprang to life." When Soong followed the Nationalist armies to Hankow, however, he was unable to repeat his successes at Canton. The conditions at Hankow were different from those at Canton, and the Nationalist government brought depression instead of prosperity. At Nanking, where he resumed his rôle of minister of finance two years ago, he again succeeded in accomplishing the apparently impossible. He financed the punitive expedition which drove the northern militarists from Peking, and secured the funds for maintaining the National Government at Nanking in a precarious but as yet dur-

able primacy among the contending factions of the new China.

Any politician who can finance military operations on a great scale is bound to be an important factor in the present stage of the Chinese revolution. Many of the revolutionary leaders are generals who have divided China into spheres of influence, rendering in some cases little more than a nominal allegiance to the Central Government at Nanking, in others openly challenging its authority. These war-lords, as they have been called, have made a revolution of colors without in all cases greatly modifying their methods of government. In the West also there has been much experience with military dictatorship in recent times, and the persistent efforts to establish the supremacy of the civil authorities over the military have been a striking characteristic of modern history. In several European countries these efforts have not yet achieved success. Where civilian control has been most successfully established, it has been brought about in part by matching the power of the purse against the power of the sword. This has been done by organizing the commercial and industrial classes and thereby controlling the sources of public revenue. Thus statesmen have succeeded in putting their rivals, the generals, in a subordinate position. The question arises in the minds of many who view the present confusion and disorder in China, whether the Chinese militarists might not be put in their places by similar methods.

Those who ask themselves this question will watch the career of T. V. Soong with special interest. Can he and the Chinese businessmen and capitalists whom he represents assert themselves against the contentious militarists, and organize a government which, through its control of the tax-power, will be able to establish at least a pacific dictatorship instead of the heavy-handed military dictatorships which now fill the country with their armies and destroy the tranquility of the people? In short, can modern capitalism, operating



through such men as he, bring order out of the present confusion in China, and guide the revolution to a successful end? This is the question which T. V. Soong, above all other Chinese revolutionists, has set himself to solve. It is because of Soong's personification of the underlying force of modern capitalism in Chinese politics that Harvard has a much more important connection with the revolution than

the mere presence of two of her graduates in the present Nationalist Ministry at Nanking would suggest. Yale, Columbia, Oberlin, and the University of California are also represented in the Government at Nanking. But the contribution of Harvard's leading representative in that government is symbolic of that which more nearly than any other political force may prove decisive of the issue of the revolution.

## An Astronomical Interlude

BY SOLON I. BAILEY, PHILLIPS PROFESSOR OF ASTRONOMY, *Emeritus*.

IN 1849, Congress made an appropriation for an American Ephemeris and Nautical Almanac. This government department is often referred to briefly as the Nautical Almanac Office. Lieutenant (later Admiral) Charles H. Davis, U. S. N., who was the moving spirit in securing the appropriation, and also an able mathematician, became the first superintendent. Such a government service would naturally have been placed in Washington; but Cambridge was chosen on account of the superior collections of mathematical and astronomical treatises in its vicinity, and especially because Benjamin Peirce, Professor of Mathematics at Harvard University, was recognized as the leading American mathematical astronomer of that day. Professor Peirce was made consulting astronomer; and the early plans and the success of the Nautical Almanac Office were due in large part to him. For about seventeen years the office remained in Cambridge, until it was removed to Washington in 1866. Later it became a department of the United States Naval Observatory. The Naval Observatory, frequently referred to in its early days as the National Observatory, had been established by Congress in 1842, thus following the foundation of the Harvard Astronomical Observatory by a little more than two years.

Although there was no official connec-

tion between the University and the Nautical Almanac Office, a somewhat intimate relation existed between them. This was due in part, of course, to Professor Peirce, who was deeply interested in the University and the Harvard Observatory as well as in the development of the Nautical Almanac Office. It was during this period and under these influences that he prepared his "New Tables of the Moon". He also made several other contributions to celestial mechanics.

Several interesting personalities became associated with the Harvard Observatory through the presence in Cambridge of the Nautical Almanac Office. Perhaps the most remarkable of these was Simon Newcomb, later America's best known astronomer. Newcomb's birth was of the humblest, and the experiences of his youth were unique. After various vicissitudes he became, in 1857, at the age of 22, a computer in the Cambridge office. No more ideal position for a poor young man desiring to secure an education could have been found at that time. A computer received sufficient salary to enable him to live and carry on his studies. He was expected to be at the office only five hours a day and could select the hours to suit his own convenience.

During his stay in Cambridge, Newcomb entered the Lawrence Scientific School as a student in mathematics, and re-