

LECTURE VI

LESSON XX

THE question we are going to discuss in this lecture is how we can recover our national position. First of all we should not forget our present position, which is that of a subcolony. It is even worse than the position of Korea and Annam. What position did China hold before? She was the leading power in the Eastern world. What has been the cause, then, of her downfall from a position so high to a position so low? The principal cause was our loss of nationalism. To recover our position we must revive nationalism, and to do this two things are necessary. First, we must realize our danger; and second, we must unite ourselves by using the family and clan systems, which we already have. With the united stand of four hundred million people, we can easily win back our lost position.

China reached her powerful and prosperous position in early days in several ways. Military power was, of course, necessary in the beginning, but it was followed by the development of civilization. China's high standard of morality was her greatest asset.

The Mongols were for some time the strongest Asiatic people. They brought both Asia and Europe under their yoke. But before long they fell. China, at the height of her prosperity, never extended her rule to the west of the Caspian Sea. Although she was conquered first by the Mongols and later by the Manchus, yet the Chinese race has survived and assimilated its conquerers. All this was due mainly to her national morality. We cannot, therefore, recover our national position unless we revive our old virtues.

What are China's time-honored virtues? Loyalty and filial piety come first. Then we have love, faithfulness, and love of peace. Some who crave the new form of civilization want to throw away these virtues. They say that these old relics have no place in modern civilization. They are wrong, however; because China can ill afford to lose these precious virtues.

One day I went to a family temple. In the innermost hall I saw on the right side of the wall the character for "filial piety," but on the left side the character was gone. Whether it had been removed by farmers or soldiers, I do not know; but this has been done in many temples. The character that was removed must have been the one for "loyalty." People think that in a republic no loyalty is needed. Loyalty, they take it, is to the crown alone. As there is no king in a

NATIONALISM

republic, this virtue is not necessary. But should we not show loyalty to the nation and to our duties?

It is very necessary that we be loyal to our duties. We should stick to them until they are done. If we do our duties with a willingness even to the point of sacrificing our lives, we have loyalty. It is a great mistake to think that loyalty is to the king alone. We should be loyal to the people. Is it not nobler to be loyal to four hundred millions than to one individual? So we should still have loyalty.

Filial piety is an especially high virtue of the Chinese. The teachings concerning this virtue in the "Classic of Filial Piety" cover almost everything. None of the civilized nations of to-day can equal China in her teachings in regard to this virtue. It is a virtue that we should always keep. If all the citizens of the Republic will practice loyalty and filial piety to the best of their ability, we shall have a powerful and prosperous nation.

LESSON XXI

LOVE another virtue of our people. Micius is the leading philosopher of love. His teaching of "equal love for all" is similar to Jesus' love of one's neighbors. In ancient Chinese politics the king was taught to love the people as his own

children. He was to love the people and all things. So love embraces everything. This was the way in which this virtue was practiced in ancient China.

When foreigners came to China, they established schools and hospitals to help the Chinese. This has made our people think that the teachings of love by our philosophers are not so good as those taught by foreigners. But the real difference lies not so much in the teaching as in the practice. We do not practice love as foreigners do. We should learn from them how to put love into action. Love, however, is with us an old virtue. What is needed is to revive and develop it.

Faithfulness is applied by the Chinese not only to individuals but also to nations. Our people are much more faithful than foreigners. This we can see in business dealings. In Chinese business no written contract is necessary. The spoken word is just as binding. For instance, with Chinese firms the only thing necessary is to enter an order in the book; but with foreign firms long contracts must be made, except in rare instances when no lawyer or consul is available.

For instance, after an order is given, should the market price suddenly drop from ten thousand to five thousand dollars there would be a loss of five thousand dollars to the buyer. If the buyer should be a Chinese, he would rather keep his word than

escape the loss. But if the buyer should be a Japanese, he would try to avoid the contract by refusing to accept the goods. This is why lawsuits against Japanese merchants are common; while foreigners dealing with Chinese all admire their integrity.

As to international faithfulness, China never destroyed any nation even in the time of her greatest prosperity. For instance, although Korea for several thousand years was a dependency of China, she never lost her independence. She was independent as late as twenty years ago, when she was annexed by Japan.

One day I had a talk with a Japanese friend. The European War was just at its height, and Japan had joined the Allies to fight Germany. This Japanese remarked that Japan really did not want to join the Allies. It was more advantageous for her to join the Central Powers. But she had to be faithful to her treaty with Great Britain.

“Has not Japan signed the Treaty of Shimonoseki with China?” I asked. “In that treaty Japan forced China to recognize the independence of Korea. Now with her treaty with Great Britain she has to keep faith, but why did she go back on her word in her treaty with China?”

It simply shows that Japan was afraid of Great Britain, but not of China. She joined the Allies

out of fear of power, not because she wanted to be true to her word. China is more faithful than Japan and other countries in international relationships.

Love of peace is another great virtue of the Chinese. We are the only people now in the world who love peace. All foreign nations like wars and try to destroy other nations. They are beginning now to talk peace because they have suffered too much bloodshed in recent wars. Several peace conferences have been held; the Hague Conference, the Versailles Conference after the World War, the Geneva Conference, the Washington Conference, and recently the Lausanne Conference. They went to conferences simply because of their fear of more wars. It is not a natural desire for peace, but a forced desire. With China, however, the love of peace is natural. In personal dealings we lay stress upon politeness and tolerance, and in politics we stand against killing. So in Chinese the virtues of loyalty, filial piety, love, and faithfulness are, in many instances, more pronounced than in foreigners; and the Chinese love of peace is far above that of any other nation. These virtues form the national character of the Chinese people. We should preserve this character and develop it in order to recover our national position.

LESSON XXII

BESIDES our old virtues we should recover our lost ability and knowledge. After our subjugation by the Manchus, our people went to sleep mentally as well as morally. To revive our national spirit we should not only awaken our conscience but also our intellect.

What knowledge did we have? China had an excellent knowledge of politics and philosophy. In spite of the recent rapid progress of the West, the so-called new civilization still cannot excel that of China. There is a most systematic political philosophy in China which is yet unknown to foreign students of political science. The steps required in effecting peace in the world are given in the "Great Learning" in the following order: "Study of nature, completion of knowledge, honesty of purpose, uprightness of heart, perfection of personality, orderliness of the family, rule of the state, and peace of the world." This teaching traces the peace of the world to the heart of the individual. The perfection of the individual is the foundation of world peace. It is certainly a precious knowledge of political philosophy and we ought to preserve it.

Because we have lost our national character, we read these lines without understanding. It

is a difficult task to attain an honesty of purpose and an uprightness of heart. The learned scholars of the Sung dynasty diligently practiced this part of the philosophy. From reading their books one can see the degree of their success. But none seems to have yet succeeded in gaining perfectness of personality, orderliness of the family, and rule of the state. Throughout the last few centuries our people have utterly failed in these respects. So we cannot rule our country, and foreigners, realizing it, propose international control of China.

What makes foreigners think that China cannot rule herself? I think foreigners cannot see our families clearly, but they can see us individually. We fall very short in our task of developing personality. A few moments' contact with our people enables foreigners to discover our defects, while our merits cannot be appreciated except through long contact or by such great philosophers as Bertrand Russell. This is why ordinary foreigners call us barbarians.

A few incidents will show our lack of propriety in our behavior in society. Once an American captain of a steamer told me about a Chinese minister who traveled on his boat.

"He spit everywhere and even on this expensive carpet," he said, pointing to the carpet in front of us. "It was certainly a nuisance."

"What did you do about it?" I asked.

“I could do nothing,” he replied. “I simply took out my silk handkerchief in his presence and cleaned the carpet with it; but that did not seem to impress him in the least. Most Chinese are like that.”

Another incident, which caused foreign restaurants to exclude Chinese, occurred in this way. One night a great dinner was on in a foreign restaurant. The dining hall was crowded with refined men and women. One Chinese guest let forth some gas and the foreign guests left in disgust. An action like this is certainly crude; and yet many of our people, even the learned, think nothing of it.

The allowing of one's nails to grow to a length of more than an inch is another bad custom. The Frenchmen also like to keep their nails long in order to show that they do not do manual labor. But the length of their nails is usually only one or two tenths of an inch. Our people keep their nails long for the same reason. But it will be going against the principles of our Nationalist party, which respects labor, if we look down upon manual work.

Another defect of our people often seen is dirty, unbrushed teeth. All these habits are small everyday things which concern one's person, but our people do not care enough about such matters. So, in spite of the profound political philosophy we have, foreigners, seeing our disagreeable habits,

brand us as barbarians, and do not care to study our philosophy. If we will systematically strive to perfect our personality, even in such things as personal habits, foreigners will certainly respect us. In the task of perfecting our personal habits our modern youths may do well to copy foreigners. Unless we attain perfection of personality, it is impossible for us to secure orderliness of the family and rule of the state.

Other nations are going forward, why should China go backward? It is true that we are under foreign political and economic pressure, but one fundamental cause is the loss of the respect of other peoples due to our disregard of refined personal habits. If we want to recover our national position we must first perfect our personality, and refresh our minds with the knowledge we formerly had.

LESSON XXIII

OUR present ability is, of course, lower than that of foreigners. But a few thousand years ago the ability of our people was much greater than theirs. Many things which we invented or discovered thousands of years ago still occupy important places in civilization. For instance, the compass, which was invented by China several thousand years ago, is still the most

important instrument in navigation. Printing is an important factor in modern civilization. Though it has been so greatly improved that many thousand newspaper pages can be printed in an hour, yet it was first invented in China. Porcelain, a daily necessity in modern society, was invented in China, and we still excel foreigners in its manufacture. Smokeless powder is much used in modern warfare. It came from the black powder which was invented in China. These inventions have contributed much to the prosperity of foreign nations.

In connection with food, clothes, shelter, and traveling, we also made many discoveries and inventions. Tea, a drink which took the place of wine and which was discovered by China long ago, is now demanded in large quantities by all nations. It has maintained the health of many a person because its beneficial influence freed him from the liquor habit. Silk is an excellent material for clothes, and it was discovered by China. The principles of architecture and many important points in the art of building were discovered by China; for instance, the arched door. As to means of transportation, the suspension bridge is a Chinese invention. We find many of them spanning mountain valleys and large rivers in Szechwan and Tibet.

In the earlier days we Chinese were full of inventive ability, but we gradually lost it. As a consequence, our national position has gone from bad to worse. In order to recover our national position, we must regain this inventive ability.

It is still insufficient to regain our virtues, knowledge and ability. If we want to win a first-class position in the family of nations, besides recovering our national character, we must adopt only the best in Western civilization. Some think it is hard to understand foreign machinery. Now, foreigners consider flying to be the most difficult thing to learn, and yet every day one may see many aviators on the Taishatow. Are not these aviators Chinese? If we can learn aviation, what can we not learn?

The West has spent two or three hundred years in the study of science, and marvelous progress has been made in only the last fifty years. The newest discovery is electric power. Formerly coal was the source of power, but now it is being replaced by electricity.

There is a scheme on foot in the United States to have a central power station for the factories of the whole country. For each factory to run its own dynamo and generate its own power means much waste in coal and labor. As the factories use so much coal, the railroads cannot get enough of it to move agricultural produce.

The plan, if successful, will certainly do away with much waste and be of great benefit to the United States.

By learning the best in science, we can save more than two hundred years. It may even be possible for us to excel foreigners in a few years. Japan is a good example. Japan's civilization was much lower than that of China; but after applying herself to Western knowledge for a few decades, she has become one of the leading powers. The talent and ability of our people are not inferior to those of the Japanese. If we awake to our dangers and try hard to recover our national position, in ten years we can remove foreign political, economic, and population pressure. Our present population is ten times more than that of Japan, and our territory thirty times larger. If China overtakes Japan, she will be as strong as ten Japans, and can easily be one of the leading powers of the world.

What should be our policy if we attain to the leading position? Should we follow the powers in destroying weaker nations; or should we stick to our own time-honored policy of helping the weak and the fallen? What advantage is there to the world to have a powerful and imperialistic China? We should determine our aim and policy now. Our aim should be to destroy imperialism and help the weaker nations. Let us set our own

house in order, and then we can bring the gospel of peace to the whole world and help towards a realization of the dream of cosmopolitanism. This is our responsibility—the call of each citizen of China.