

II - 66 - 34. Conversations with George Bernard Shaw (Undated) 21 pp.
Although Agnes Smedley's name does not appear as the author
it seems likely that she was -- The style and corrections
and changes which seem to be in her handwriting would
indicate that she was the author. This, however, will take
time to determine.

Used

CONVERSATIONS WITH GEORGE BERNHARD SHAW

(as cut out by request of Dr. Sun Yat-sen)

George Bernhard Shaw, the great playwright, had refused all ~~invitations~~ ^{magazine} invitations of individuals and organizations in Shanghai, ~~xxxxxxx~~ ^{five} ~~xxxxxxx~~ except that of Mrs. Sun Yat-sen. To her he said: "I have no desire to see anyone or anything in Shanghai, except you; now that I have seen you, why should I go ashore?" But he went ashore and was her guest for the one day he spent in Shanghai. The conversations here recorded were between Shaw and Mrs. Sun and two of Mrs. Sun's friends during breakfast on the liner, Empress of Britain, and during the rest of the day. The special launch that carried them to shore travelled for two hours each way, coming and going, and during these four hours, and later in Mrs. Sun's home, ~~there~~ there was time for lengthy discussions. ~~The conversation given in the form of~~ ~~question~~ ~~xxxxxxx~~ The conversations began in the breakfast room on the liner when Mr. Shaw, a ^{tall, fragile,} ~~thin, tall,~~ gray-bearded man bent toward Mrs. Sun and questioned her:

"Tell me exactly what means are undertaken to meet the Japanese invasion."

"Almost none. The northern troops have very ^{antiquated} ~~bad~~ arms and ammunition. The best troops and the best arms and ammunition are being used by the Nanking Government, not against the Japanese, but against the ^{Workers + Peasants?} ~~Red Army in central~~ China."

"Is it not possible for the Nanking troops and the Red Army to form a united front against the Japanese?"

"In December the ~~Red Army~~ Soviet Government in Central China ~~xxxxxxx~~ issued a manifesto declaring that it was ~~willing~~ ready to enter into fighting operative agreements with any army or military

1941

old bandit. Old Chang Tso^u-lin indeed united Manchuria. . . .

~~Shaw~~ ^{Yang Chien} Chang Hsueh-liang is nothing but a spoilt child, "one of the friends remarked.

" . . . Why call him a spoilt child," another interrupted.

"He is not that." He is a corrupt and debauched creature, ~~an~~ who poisons the people of the north with opium; a murderer and petty

~~little~~ despot," ~~another interrupted~~

Shaw: "What kind of ~~Pu Yi's~~ Government is this Manchukuo-- is it a real puppet government? And what kind of man in Pu Yi? All I know of him is from Johnson, his tutor."

"He is a real puppet of the Japanese, and he has even tried ~~to escape~~. ~~The~~ This so-called Manchukuo is nothing but the puppet government of Japan."

Shaw: "~~So Pu Yi is a prisoner?~~"

"~~Yes, he is a prisoner.~~"

The conversation went over to miscellaneous subjects--to Jews in China, to temples, and Shaw asked if Marco Polo was remembered in China.

"There is a temple to Marco Polo in ~~Shix~~ Canton."

Shaw: Now do you think there may be a temple to me in China?"

The conversation turned to Nanking.

Shaw: "Just what is the Kuomintang--just what is the Nanking Government?"

"The Kuomintang ~~and the Nanking~~ is a Party, the ruling party, and it is the same as the Nanking Government."

(Shaw: But who elected that government? Who is the real power?" ~~Another~~

"Chiang Kai-shek is the real dictator of that government. Nobody elects anybody. Chiang Kai-shek, because of his army, is the dictator and no Minister or other official can hold power without his appointment or approval. He may make alliances with militarists

of politicians temporarily strong enough to make trouble for him. . . .
give ~~him~~ them jobs here and there."

Shaw: Is he a capable man?

"His chief ^{Military} strength lies in the German military advisers who draw up and direct his military campaigns. These are reactionary Fascists or officers from the old Kaiser's Government of the past. ~~His~~ ^{is} ~~6~~

~~is~~ ^{is} ~~6~~ Shaw: Tell me now, how did the people here regard the Lytton report?"

Mrs. Sun: The people oppose it, but the Government accepted it. ~~There will soon be an Anti-War Congress here~~ Perhaps you know that

~~the Anti-War Congress in Europe appointed a special commission to come to China in March and make an investigation of Manchuria, and then to hold a conference in Shanghai. It is headed by Henri Barbusse, Theodore Dreiser, and a number of other such men."~~

Shaw: Barbusse and Romain Rolland approached me to sponsor ~~their~~ that Congress in Europe. But ~~they~~ such a Congress really cannot end war. The war to end war is no way to solve this problem. ~~It is~~ ~~not~~ Only if the nations come to a ~~friendly agreement~~ ~~can they~~ real determination to live in peace can there be an end of war. The people themselves do not want war. After the World War, all participants found that they were far worse off than they had been before that time. All were ruined. This has an effect to discourage war among the people. They do not want war. This Anti-War Congress, and this conference out here will not really end war at all."

~~"No. It is ~~not~~ ~~to~~ ~~give~~ ~~publicity~~. It will be mainly a matter of publicity, of propaganda against war. ~~But~~ ~~we~~ know that the people in that Anti-War Congress are not at all opposed to national wars of liberation. This Conference in Shanghai will chiefly be for publicity, for education. . . . the only thing that can end war is to end the capitalist system."~~

Shaw: "That will still be war. There is an instrument in the International Bureau of Intellectual Cooperation in the League of Nations. If the intellectuals of the world could use that as an instrument against war, it might be better than to organize a separate League."

~~"This conference in Shanghai will be chiefly for publicity, for propaganda against war. . . . the only thing that can end war is to end the system that causes war--the capitalist system."~~

Shaw: But aren't we all capitalists? ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~
I am--considerably so. . . aren't you? His eyes twinkled in a smile.

"No--not at all."

E As the launch sped along the Whangpo, Shaw lapsed into ~~XXXXX~~ occasional silences, watching with interest the shore, the foreign gunboats, asking questions. One of the Party explained:

"That is Woosung which the Japanese devastated during the invasion. All along this stretch of territory there was fearful fighting. In Shanghai itself the Japanese used the International Settlement, which is supposed to be neutral, as a base of operations. They would advance beyond it and attack the Chinese army; when driven back they would retreat into the Settlement. The Chinese could not follow because that was said to be 'neutral' territory."

Shaw laughed satirically. "Yes. . . of course. . . that is the way they all do." *E*

Mrs. Sun: Mr. Shaw, I should like to show you the devastated area of Chapei. ~~XX~~

Shaw: But all devastated areas are alike. Once I was taken on a trip through Flanders, and when I saw all the ruins I said to my guides: but this is nothing compared with my own native town of Dublin after Eastern Week.

Mrs. Sun: I would like to show you something of the real China.

. . . that is, the factories, where the Chinese ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ workers work, and the homes of some of the workers."

Shaw: I know already!. They are dreadfully poor. Like the East Side of London or other such cities. . . . Is there no factory law here?"

"Yes--on paper. The conditions in the factories are much the same as in the early days of industrialism in England. Take the silk filatures--there are about 60,000 silk workers in Shanghai. Of these, 20% are little children, 40% women, and the rest men. The so-called factory law that remains on paper says the age limit is ~~12xxxx14xx~~ 14. But little children work for their living, under very bad conditions, from the time there are six or eight years of age."

The conversation turned to Soviet Russia. Soviet Russia permeated the conversation of Shaw from the beginning to the end.

~~(He constantly referred to his experiences and interviews in the Soviet Union.)~~

Shaw: "Litvinoff and Lunacharsky went with me as I went about in Moscow. . . of course people would say that was to control me and show me only what I wanted to see. . . . that is nonsense. I found that they went because they themselves had seen nothing of their ~~their~~ own home town! You know, it is as it is everywhere--they have been so very busy that they have never had time to go about and see their own institutions. They were as much interested as I was. . . . ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~

. . . . I did all sorts of things to see things for myself, ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ without preparation. One day we were driving through the streets of Moscow and I suddenly ordered the car to stop in the center of the road. 'Where is the nearest police station?' I asked. ~~They pointed to it~~ The chauffeur pointed to a building not far away. . . ~~XXXXXX~~ I got out and went in--up four flights of stairs. There I entered the police station where cases were being tried.

But the room was not like a ~~court~~ police court at all. There was just a big room, with some chairs and tables about, and at one end of the room a long table on a low platform. The person on trial was a woman—an abortionist who had performed an abortion with a permit. It was her second offence and people said it was very serious. ~~In the Soviet Union, I learned, no one can perform an abortion without the permission of~~ I learned that a woman must secure the permission from two physicians before she can have an abortion. This. . . Very soon the magistrate returned. She was a woman, and it appeared a very capable woman. . you know, the sort of woman you might see as manager of a hotel in England. There were two assessors, both men. They declared the offender ^{to be} was guilty. . . . Then that prisoner, the woman, arose and told ~~them exactly~~ the magistrate exactly what she thought of her! She told her that she would never have anything to do with her again, and she would never set her foot in that courtroom again! She said it was a scandal and a shame that this judgment had been delivered ~~against her!~~ Then she stalked out of the room, furiously. . . . she went back to work, wherever that was. Of course she ~~is watched and~~ must be under guard at night. . . . but that was the scene I witnessed.

. . . . At another time We were in ~~the district of Moscow~~ a district and one of our party, a young American, took pictures on the least provocation. At one time a militia ^{man}, or policeman, stepped up and told him he could not take pictures in that district, and had to stop. The ^{young fellow} American, being an American, ~~declared it his right, as~~ ~~an Amer~~ declared that as an American ^{it was his god-given right} ~~to~~ to life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness, and to take pictures at any time and in any place he pleased! And nothing could stop him! But the militia told him to stop it and to wait right there on that street until he, the militia, went and asked his inspector about this. So ~~we~~ the American

was left standing on a public street, rooted in his tracks, while the policemen went away to the police station to ask his inspector if he was right or the American right. After a time he returned and told the American it was all right--he could go on pursuing life, liberty, and happiness.

. With me in Soviet Russia were Lady Astor and Lord Rosemere. Lady Astor, you know, was quite determined to find unhappiness and make people admit they were all ^{depressed and} ~~unhappy~~ and unhappy. ^{she had a bad time of it.} I remember ~~once~~ ^{we visited there} on a Cooperative Farm. ^{and} She ~~there~~ met some American workers, ~~or~~ Russians who had formerly ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ been in America. ~~She simply would not believe it.~~ They talked to her in England and she ~~could~~ would not believe her ears. 'Where are you from?' she screamed at one of them. 'From Massachusetts', ~~she~~ ^{he} replied, ^{in perfectly good English.} 'Why on earth did you ever leave the United States and come to this awful land?' she asked. He replied: 'Because I wanted ^{for one thing} ~~freedom~~ I wanted free speech, ~~for one.~~' Lady Astor screamed: 'Free speech--but you have none here--what do you mean?' He answered: 'In the United States I wanted ~~the~~ free speech and they would not give it. I wanted for instance to talk about Communism. ^(But you can not attack Communism here) Well, I left the country and came here, ^{where I can talk about to,} where I can talk about ~~Communism all I want!~~' After our trip was all finished, Lady Astor ^{replied.} still would not believe and was still searching for unhappiness. ~~Once~~ ^{Once} she drew her chair right up to Litvinoff, put her hand on his arm, and look ^{ed} ~~him~~ ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ straight in the eyes and asked: 'Now, just between you and me--now, tell me the truth: aren't you sorry that the revolution took place?' ^{During this tale} ~~Here Shaw laughed with hilarity in memory,~~ ^{and then laughed hilariously,} arose, demonstrated the action of Lady Astor, ~~speaking dramatically.~~ 'Litvinoff merely replied to Lady Astor: 'My dear lady, I have been working for the revolution all my life--and still am.' ~~Shaw laughed in merriment at the~~ ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ memory of Lady Astor hunting for unhappiness ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ and oppression in the Soviet Union.

Use

Shaw: Freedom? What is it? In India, the British have given the Indians a free trial by jury. When the jury acquits prisoners, the judge then reverses the verdict and sentences them to prison. These are called free British institutions. Free speech--what is it in most countries? Only a few people have the right to say something. The only real free speech or the only real democracy that is of value is that which gives the worker and peasant the chance to squeal when he is hurt, and to change the conditions that hurt him. That is the kind of freedom they have in Soviet Russia. I was always impressed by the fact that in Soviet Russia ~~the~~ just the right men seemed to be ~~imx~~ ~~xxxxx~~ at the head of affairs. In other countries, ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ the heads of affairs are only- figure-heads. But in Soviet Russia they do their job by hard work, and if they do not, they are thrown out and someone else is put in to take their place. ~~If the masses are left to choose their leaders, they invariably choose the same ones.~~

" . . . I ~~was interested in Stalin.~~ When we interviewed ^{Stalin} him, we ~~thought~~ ^{we} thought we had been with him but about 25 minutes, but ~~when~~ ^{then} then we ~~looked at our watches~~ ^{looked at our watches} it had been 2 1/2 hours! ^{Stalin} He is a man who ~~does~~ ^{seems to} pay little attention to mere theory. He is a practical man and when ^{his} a plan works he says, 'there, that is Marxism!' ~~A thing that works he calls Marxism!~~

(Shaw squinted up his eyes quizzically and looked into the distance, ~~as a critic views a picture,~~ or a theatrical director views a rehearsal from the back of ~~the~~ theatre;) "The first impression you get of Stalin is that he is a very handsome man--brown eyes, a Georgian. . . very handsome. Then you think: 'Now, just what is it that he makes me think of? Yes. . . a touch of the military about him--austere uniform with no decoration of any kind, just a coat buttoned up to ~~his~~ ^{the} throat, ~~the~~ ^{but} military buttons covered with cloth. . .' Then you look further down--^{yes} a little plump, then you think, 'oh yes, the Pope!' ^{you know} His mother tried to make a priest of him in his youth, but instead he became a Bolshevik! Once, he robbed a bank for the Party. . . but you must not remind him of that . . .

~~today!~~ ~~Max~~ He is a man who permits you to talk ^{all} ~~and talk all~~ you want to. He says nothing, but listens in silence. Then, when you have finished, he modestly asked: 'If you don't object, I would like to say a few words.' Then he says what he has to say! A very practical, realistic man! To say the least: ~~I think he is a nationalist.~~ ^{He is} ~~an opportunist.~~ . . . by opportunist I mean he tries a plan on Monday, and if it does not work, he tried another one on Tuesday; if it does not work, he tries another on Wednesday. It is not so much theory, as the goal he is after. He gets there, but he does not care how. But he gets there!

. . . With me was Lord Rosemere who proposed to Stalin that Lloyd George be invited to the Soviet Union . . . because Lloyd George ~~adapts himself exactly to the conditions about him.~~ ^{always want to please his audience.}

. . . in a short time he would be making revolutionary speeches in Moscow.
 . . . I do not understand ^{the} Russian, ^{language} but when Stalin replied to ~~this~~ ^{Lord Rosemere's} suggestion through the interpreter, the interpreter's chin trembled. I caught in Russian the one word ~~Wrangel~~ ^{Wrangel} 'Wrangel', and understood ~~exactly what Stalin was saying.~~ . . . you remember, it was the British Government under Lloyd George that spent £100,000,000 to finance the White Russian invasions of Russia, ~~not~~ ^{not} chiefly Wrangel, after the Russian Revolution! That fact the Russians can use very well when it comes to the question of Russian paying the Czarist debts. . . .

. . . . ~~Shaw~~ Yes, I saw Krupskaya also. Now there ~~was~~ the only time I ever had the impression that the Russians were trying to keep something from me. I had heard that Stalin had ~~told~~ told Krupskaya that if she did not obey, he would withdraw from her the title of 'Lenin's widow' and confer it on someone else!

Shaw laughed merrily at the joke, ~~widely spread over Europe,~~ and turned to Mrs. Sun with the interruption: "Tell me, has the Nanking Government tried to withdraw from you the title of 'Sun Yat-sen's widow?'"

Mrs. Sun laughed merrily also: "Not yet--but they would like to," she replied.

~~"Yes, you are the enfant terrible!" he smiled and observed her with deep interest.~~

~~XXXX~~

Shaw: ~~XXXX~~ I wanted to present Krupskaya with one of my books, and to talk with her. But in Moscow the officials put it off from one day to the other and told me all sorts of things. . . first it was that she was sick. . . next it was that she was not in Moscow at all! So I thought they were keeping something from me, and were keeping her confined somewhere because of her rebellious ideas! At last I put my foot down and said: 'I want to see Krupskaya!' They replied with a shrug of their shoulders: 'All right--if you must'. So I drove out of Moscow for a number of hours, and there in a lovely villa of a former Lord or landlord, on a broad, sunny verandas supported by great white pillars, I met Krupskaya. She was not at all a prisoner, nor was she unhappy. I found that the attempt to keep me from her was ~~by her own desire.~~ ^{self: because she is very nervous and shy} She did not want to see me--she ~~xxx~~ had said: 'After all, what is he, who is he? We know his ideas!' She did not think it worth while to see me--I belong to the 19th Century and at best they call me the 'Grand Old Man'.

. . . But I found Krupskaya entire different from what I had expected. ~~She is xxxxxxxx~~ On her photographs she is very ugly. But in reality she is a very lovely, sweet old lady, with ~~an interesting~~ ~~and~~ a strange Mongolian face--high cheek bones; one of the most interesting women I have ever seen, ~~in my life.~~ You get the impression that children would love her and tumble over her.

. . . .Yes, I saw Gorki also, and he also was living in a villa outside the city, with broad sunny verandas. He is a tall, haggard old man. . . . what can one say of a writer, anyway; all his wares are

in the window--in his books. I had met him 20 years before, after I had read and seen his 'Night's Lodging', ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ and other plays. . . . and there is his ~~xxxxxx~~ memoirs, especially "My Childhood". . . .

one of the
A friend spoke: "Is it not ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ wonderful--great, one of the greatest things ever written?"

Shaw: Yes--it is wonderful. . . after all, the only part of a person's life that is worth recording in ~~xxxxxx~~ memoirs is the childhood. . . after that, all is alike. . . . I have now written something of my own childhood; in my latest book that has just appeared, this has been published. . .

A friend spoke: "Have you read Gorki's "Forty Years?"

"No".

~~"It is the story, in three volumes, of the life and thought of the Russian intelligentsia for 40 years before the revolution--you know, the utter futility of their lives, their endless philosophical speculations that have no end--they were like dogs chasing their own tails. The ~~xxxxx~~ work is too long--filled with useless discussions and details--but like the discussions of the intelligentsia of that period.~~

Shaw: All books are too long these days--nothing under three volumes. ~~xxxxx~~

Friend: "~~xxxxx~~ Georki's ~~xxxxx~~ characters in his Forty Years remind me of your 'Heartbreak House'."

Shaw: Yes, that was written on a Russian model--I said so.

Friend: I loved ^{you} old Captain Shotover!

Shaw smiled quizzically and began to recall memories. "You could not imagine where I got that character. One day an actress friend of mine who likes to talk began to tell me of her old father, an old

heathen sea captain who had toured the Seas, chiefly in the West
 and sick
 Indies. He was old/and the doctors said he would soon die. ~~The girls~~
~~This actress, one of his daughters,~~ were urged by priests to prepare him
 him for death. . . they did not like to tell ~~me~~ him of his impending
 death, ~~but~~ but finally they did so and induced him to accept the church
 and take the sacramental bread. . . but he could not swallow the
 sacramental bread unless there was cheese on it!

Shaw threw back his head and laughed in ~~high~~ hilarious glee
 at the thought. "When I heard ~~that~~ the old sea captain could not take
 sacramental bread unless there was cheese on it, I decided to put him
 in a book. . . that old ~~fellow~~ ^{heathen} did not die, ~~though~~ . . . he got well-
 . . . I am certain it was because of the cheese!" *a bread & cheese!*

The cabin of the launch rang with laughter.

Someone asked Shaw: Did you see anything of the theatre in
 Moscow?

Shaw: No--I was there ~~when~~ when the theatres were closed. I
 saw nothing except one play, and it a most miserable one ~~that~~ ^{with} has no
 connection with Soviet life. It was 'The Beggar's Opera', ~~really~~ a very
 bad play, badly produced; and ~~the~~ the performance was interrupted
 by a process ^{with} parading across the ~~back~~ ^{carrying} of the stage ^{with} banners 'Welcome
 to Shaw' on them! It was a most abominable play! Later the Russians
 themselves said it was a play ~~with~~ that has really no place in Soviet
 life. . . . ^B But the Russian films are very good indeed--very good.

"When I was in Moscow they did ~~me~~ ^{of} an impossible
 thing! They gave a horse race in my honor, and named one of the horses
 Bernhard
 Shaw! They even made me present the prize the winner--I think it was a
 rouble note or something like that. I told them ^{before the race} that now that they
 had/abolished competition, I took it that they would have only one
 horse!

Some asked him: Have you read anything of the new

literature?

Shaw: No. I feel much as Lenin did about it--it may be all right, but I can't read it!

Mr. Shaw, what are the ideas of this age that most interest you?

Shaw: I am interested in nothing. I am a living corpse. I died long ago.

"No--no!" . *He protests.*

Shaw: Then, half dead! For a long time the younger generation forgot me. They said I was out of date--that I belonged to Victorian England. But now that Galsworthy, Hardy, and Moore have died, they have remembered me. Now they call me the Grand Old Man. . . . I know none of the younger writers of today--Noel Coward, Yes; but he is already middle aged; ~~and~~ he is not only a playwright, but also a composer. Of the young Russian ~~ixknox~~ writers I know little. The Russians are a great people, an artistic people. They are perhaps too artistic. . . . On the boat, during this trip, I write to amuse myself. There is nothing else to do. The boat and the people are awful. They dance and drink ~~xxxxxx~~ until 3 in the morning. They get dead drunk. So ~~ixknoxixknox~~ I work, you know, my father drank, and I write. I have written one ridiculous little comedy on board and am now writing on something else.

Mrs. Sun spoke to ~~a friend~~ ^{me}, saying: I don't understand how you can so vividly recall events of your past life.

Shaw: One does,--~~and~~ when one is old.

He bent forward and looked at ~~the friend~~ ^{me} with a distant, yet penetrating gaze and in his remark came back the words of ~~the old sea~~ ^{the} captain Shotover in ~~the drama~~ "Heartbreak House"; "When one grows old, one has dreams," Shaw said--"one dreams."

Mrs. Sun: Mr. Shaw, which of your works do you value the most?

Shaw: I do not grade my works. When they are finished they are finished--I put them aside and that is ~~ixkxi~~ the end of them.

"But you say your Widowers Houses was an

inferior sort of thing.

Shaw: ~~Stranger~~ Yes. Strange--that play was revived this past year! . . . now they have even published one of my ~~novels~~ first novels! Before I wrote plays, I produced four novels-- - ^{most} ~~very~~ bad, inferior things! Ridiculous. I learned to write by writing them.

They were of course refused by publishers. I kept them in my desk for years, and later when Socialist magazines asked me for mms. and I did not have any, I gave them these mms. to publish. ~~Ysxkxkxkx~~ Socialist magazines always are in need of manuscripts. I always found in my journalistic work when I was young that the conservative papers would publish articles from me that the Socialists ^{could} ~~would not~~. The Socialists were always afraid of suppression, but the conservatives ^{cons. papers} did not have that fear. There were many that suppressed some of my writing. . . . I remember once that ~~xxxxxx~~ an editor ~~xxx~~ ~~xxx~~ censored about half of what I sent in--of course the important part. When asked why he did that, he replied: 'Do you think my newspaper is an organ for Socialist propaganda?'

Mrs. Sun: Well, they do worse than that in China. The press is very subservient. The Kuomintang publishes statements declaring that I am a member of their C.E.C., or that I have said this or that, or that I am travelling with reactionary Generals, or that I am on this or that committee. When I deny it, they give orders to the press to publish nothing I say.

Shaw's eyes became slits of satirical wit. "Of course they would ~~shxxxx~~ do that! They can't afford to ~~be~~ allow people to know what you think. ~~xxxxxx the infant terrible~~. But there is some journalistic excuse for them. Now, you see, if the press reports ~~xxx~~ that I, Shaw, have murdered my mother-in-law, it makes a good story, doesn't it? But if I deny that by saying ^{it} that is a lie and that I am having breakfast, peacefully, with my mother-in-law, they do not think that good news. . . . Tell me, Mrs. Sun, just what is

your position regarding the Kuomintang and this Government."

Mrs. Sun: I have nothing to do with it. When the ~~United front of the revolution was broken~~ ^{in Hankow in 1927} reactionaries split from the Communists in 1927 and formed the Nanking Government, I broke with ~~them~~ ^{the K.} and went abroad. I have never had anything to do with them since. ~~They have slaughtered the~~ ^{because the K. has} people and betrayed the revolution. (My position is not ~~personal~~ a personal one, for my sister is married to Chiang Kai-shek, the dictator of the Government, ~~another~~ another sister is married to a high government official, and my brother is Minister of Finance. I will have nothing to do with this Government or its policy.")

Shaw: You are the enfant terrible. Of course they would be afraid of anything you say!

^{Yang Chen Bent}
A friend bent forward and asked: Mr. Shaw, ~~just~~ what do you think about marriage?

Shaw: What can one think of marriage? I am married-- that's all. I think people who are married ~~are~~ are more free than if they lived in illicit relationships. The pain of a secret relationship is ~~too~~ ^{time,} too great. A number of women have proposed to me in my life, but the terms they placed upon this ~~were~~ were so impossible that I could not accept. I would never ~~subject~~ subject a woman to the pain of such a relationship. . . . the social pain and such. . . .

"~~Mr.~~ Mr. Shaw, you speak only of Anglo-Saxon countries, such as England and America, where there is social ostracism for men and women who live in free relationships. Those standards do not apply for, say, Germany or the Soviet Union."

Shaw ^{hesitatingly}: Yes, you are right. But even in the Soviet Union I found that the Party people there are very stern. If a man is living with a woman, they ~~asked~~ ask him if he is married to her. If not, he should be. If he replies that he is married to another

woman, they tell him to divorce the other woman. Up to a short time ago they were quite rigid about this, but now I noticed they are easily up on their discipline.

Friend: "I have read ^{of that} of men who have been arrested for disorderly conduct because they took advantage of the free marriage laws of the Soviet Union."

Shaw: "Why disorderly conduct: For taking advantage of the marriage laws is enough."

The discussion went over to women, and Shaw smiled a bit whimsically and remarked:

"My idea of a woman is one who will take care of a man and still leave him free to work and go his way."

Friend: Yes--if I were a man I might feel the same way. *But*

Shaw smiled. *On a woman --* *I continued:*

Friend: Mr. Shaw, most of the women characters in your plays are just like that aren't they--women who take care of ~~a~~ ^{the man} man and leave him free to work."

Shaw: You must admit that my women ~~characters~~ characters were the first to step out on the stage as human beings, *Isn't that* true? *... you know*

"Yes, that is true."

Shaw: I had a strange experience after I left ~~the~~ Soviet Russia. For all the time I was there, I had become accused to ~~see~~ meeting only women who worked for their living--professional women, working women, hard-working, ~~serious~~ serious women of every kind. Then when I crossed the frontier into Poland, I again ^{suddenly} saw the finely-dressed, painted women, fixed up to look at, ~~you know~~. Well-- I felt like calling the police."

~~Speaking further of women, he said:~~ "I never know how to judge women today--my standards are Victorian. I meet women who seem to me to be strips of girls 24 or 25 years of age, and then it turns out they have grown sons!

To Mrs. Sun: Do Chinese women still have bound feet?

Mrs. Sun: Inland, yes. In the port cities not.

Shaw: Does the joint family system still exist?

Mrs. Sun: In cities under the influence of industrialism, not; in the interior it does to a large extent.

Yang Chien?
A friend: I think the self-discipline and control you find in Chinese is due to the joint family system--each one knows his place and respects it--the relationship between the younger brother to the elder, ~~etxxx~~ and so on:

view of the
Another friend: "I have never yet one Chinese woman who defended the old family system, ^{by force} but I have met many men who do. All day long the men are ^{away} out of the home, ^{and} the home is regulated for ^{only} them and their convenience. ~~But~~ It is the women and children who must control themselves. ^{But they don't.} ~~The~~ The women quarrel ~~all the time~~ among themselves and the children yell and cry. ^{joint system} The family is feudal--it teacher subservience and loyalty of/son to father, wife to husband, younger brother to elder brother--~~xxx~~ just as the old feudal army taught subservience and loyalty of the soldier to his general.

~~Shaw:~~ Suppose I write a drama giving the other side of the picture--~~xxx~~ the soldier telling his general what he thinks of him, ~~xxxxxx~~ a son telling his father what he thinks of him, and a wife telling her husband what she thinks of him!

Yang Chien:
Friend: Some wives do that as it is!

Shaw: ~~Relative~~ The family is a most artificial system. Relatives are thrust upon you. You always try to get away from them. The natural and pleasant thing is to choose the people you want to

9/51

~~The~~ Old age dominates the thought of Shaw. Old age and Soviet Russia. ^{Shaw's} ~~His~~ conversation constantly returned to ^{his age} ~~these two~~ subjects.

"Before 70," he said, ^{once} "I was so old that nobody liked to read my works. But now that the others of my age have died, and I am left alone, they call me the Grand Old Man. Gorki and I alone remain--but Gorki is good for another twenty years."

Shaw: recalled ~~men~~ men and books of the past. ~~The~~ ^{two} Of the books on his life by Harris and by Henderson he said: The one by Harris is the best, because all the real facts ^{in it} about my life I wrote ~~in~~ myself. After Harris died, Mrs. Harris, alone and poor, had ~~the~~ the manuscripts of this book on her hands. I went over them and wrote in the real truth about my life. You know, Harris did not intend to write this book about me. He wanted to write a book about Jesus Christ, but the publisher said: 'No, we are not interested in a book about Jesus Christ; we want a book about Bernhard Shaw.'

"Harris spent much of his telling that he had found he starving on his doorsteps and that he took me in and made a man of me. I got very tired of that and once I wrote an article and sent it

to him to publish in his magazine "Pearsons, in New York. In this article I told how I, a rich, famous man, was one day sitting in ~~my office when~~ my study when I looked through the window and saw a thin, haggard, ragged little man standing in the rain on my doorsteps.

See p. 17

I opened the door and let him in--and it was Frank Harris! That was the article. But Harris would not publish it. ~~in his magazine!~~

There was ^{again} ~~again~~ ^{hilarious} laughter ^{passed through} in the cabin of the launch.

~~A friend~~ said: But after that, Harris published a big advertisement on the back of Pearsons. Across the top of the page ~~was~~ was the one line: Three Great Contemporaries. Below,

on the left-hand side, was the picture of you, ^{Mr.} Shaw; to the extreme ~~right~~ right ~~was that of~~ Oscar Wilde; and in the middle, ^{in the strategic center} a larger picture and ^{was a picture} ~~higher up~~ that of Frank Harris ^{himself!}

Shaw laughed. "That was Harris," ~~he said~~ ^{really} "But it is a shame ~~that~~ there is no one to collect and write the really good things he did."

~~The conversation centered on Harris for some time and other anecdotes were related, much to Shaw's amusement.~~

Shaw turned to me and asked:
To one of the friends with Mrs. Sun, ~~Shaw~~ asked: "Have I not met you somewhere before?"

"No," ^{I answered} ~~replied the friend~~, "but once I ~~wrote~~ wrote and asked you humbly to read one of my manuscripts to find if there was anything in it worth publishing."

~~Shaw xxxxxx that xxxxxx if xxxxxx good~~

~~Shaw xxxxxx that xxxxxx if xxxxxx~~

Shaw replied: ^{how that was a bad idea of yours} "If there is a good idea in a manuscript, ~~it is~~ ^{you should not} ~~not~~ good to send it to another writer, ~~for~~ ^{he} will only steal ~~it~~ idea."

As for me--if I should take a manuscript to a publisher, the publisher would say: 'I don't want this manuscript; I want one by you.'

^{so I write}
~~Shaw~~ When Shaw met Lo Hsun, ^{he} remarked: "They call you the

Gorki of China, but you are handsomer than Gorki!

Oh, replied modestly,

Lo Hsun replied: "As I grow older I will become still more handsome!"

we

When Shaw met a group of friends at Mrs. Sun's home, he remarked: ~~There~~ I have been hearing that all the advanced people have been killed--but here I see a number, and some of them quite old, who are still very much alive. How is that?

"Men are killed for being Communists or killed as Communists. One or two of the men present live in hiding."

"On the run, as in Ireland?" Shaw remarked.

.....

When newspaper men asked Shaw for his opinion about China, he replied:

"What is the use of asking me such a question--everywhere people ask me what my impression of China is, what my impression of a pagoda is. After all, it does not matter what I think of China--you won't take my advice. Now, if I were a General and had killed 100,000 men, you would respect my opinion very much."