CHAPTER EIGHT

CHINA'S DESTINY AND THE FUTURE OF THE WORLD

We know that our backwardness in science and technical skill were the obvious reasons for China's decline and weakness. During the past hundred years, the Chinese people, desiring to study foreign sciences and technical skills, worshiped all foreign civilization and did not understand the innate spirit of the Chinese nation or the virtuous character of the people, both of which have their fine points. China's native political philosophy was especially the product of the nation's innate spirit. China's political philosophy believes that warfare and production should serve men and opposes the idea that man is the servant of war and production. Mencius said: "Like material things but love the people," which means that the state should dispose of material things for the benefit of the people, and should not make the people the servants of material things. The "Great Learning"¹ said: "Where there is man, there is land; where there is land, there is wealth; where there is wealth, there is usefulness." This means that the productive system should be based on the people's livelihood, and that productive skill should not be permitted to dominate man's nature.

For three thousand years, this political philosophy and the economic principle determined the psychology of the Chinese nation, and the virtuous character of the people was affected by and existed simultaneously with this political philosophy and this economic principle. It has been previously stated

¹ The "Great Learning" (Ta Hsueh) is part of The Book of Rites (Li Chi) and was used by the Sung philosophers in the thirteenth century A.D. as a source of the later Confucian philosophy.
that the inherent virtues of the Chinese people consist of the ability to endure humiliation, accept responsibility, understand thrift, and possess a sense of honor. Because the Chinese people possess these virtues, they are not afraid of strong enemies, and do not take advantage of minorities and the weak, but rather apply their traditional principle of magnanimity, and treat others as they wish to be treated themselves. For this reason they have been for thousands of years the leaders of the people of Asia in “preserving the perishing and sustaining those that might be destroyed,” and in “helping the weak and assisting the fallen.” As a consequence, there is no historical evidence of economic exploitation or of political domination of the peoples of Asia during the period when China was strong and prosperous; nor was there any imperialism or colonialism. This political philosophy and political virtue was despised and not practiced by modern European nations. Their capitalists subordinated human life to techniques of production and strove for profits. Their imperialists subordinated human life to the techniques of war, and sought to develop colonial possessions. Due to these inter-related ideologies, internal class conflicts and international wars fill the pages of modern world history.

At the close of the First World War, when the human race was painfully reflecting on its past sufferings, war-weary philosophers placed the blame on science, stating that science had improved the instruments of killing and had thereby caused the havoc of war to spread to all mankind. They did not realize that the ending of warfare depends upon eliminating the sources of war, and not in limiting the instruments of war. Mencius said: “Is there any difference between killing a man with a club or with a sword?” If mankind cannot develop its concepts and moral character sufficiently to put an end to war, what difference does it make whether people are killed by bows and arrows or by airplanes and big guns?

The war-weary philosophers also failed to recognize that science is motivated by service to mankind. The misuse of