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FIVE CITIES IN CHINA

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And Two Where The Spirit Of Resistance
Still Lives On



While Japan and the Wang "Government" talk of "treaties" and "settlements of the China question" in Nanking, from Chungking the Government of free China firmly maintains its stand against aggression. These two cities are among five discussed by James Bertram in his talks on China for the NBS. This talk was broadcast by 4YA last Monday (September 9). Although it was prepared and broadcast by 2YA earlier this year, recent events make it unusually topical. Mr. Bertram himself, is now back in China

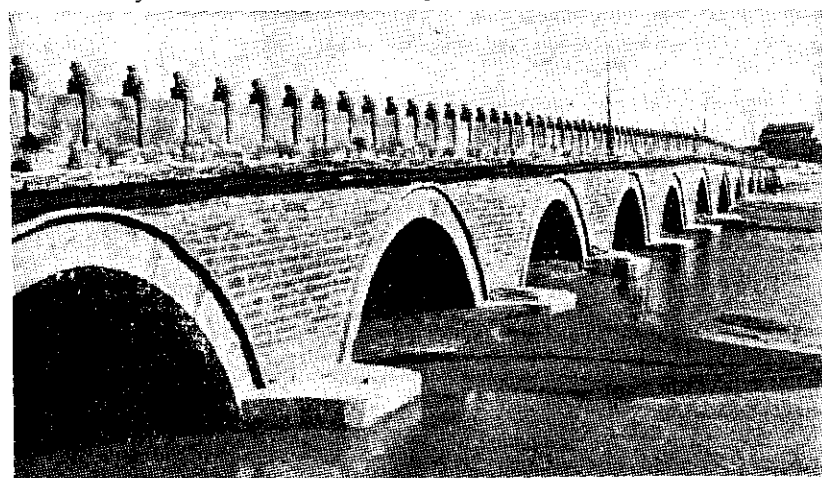
cratic state, and it was no good pretending that it was. Nanking in those days was a secure haven for indolent bureaucrats, who drew up wonderful codes on paper (for example, the Chinese Factory Laws, which were the most enlightened in the world, or would have been if anyone had thought of putting them into effect!); and the same people painstakingly pigeonholed all the careful reports drawn up by League of Nations officials and expensive foreign advisers, and went to sleep on them.

Red tape rather than barbed wire made up Nanking's defences; and the end of it all was, in one sense, the final exposure of the bluff. General Tang Sheng-chih, a hero of the Civil War who had killed off a good many bright Chinese youngsters in his time, was put in supreme command of the defence of the capital. In public speeches he vowed that he and

PEKING remains for me the most beautiful city in the world, though I suppose other travellers may challenge this opinion. Certainly it was a delightful place to live in, with its old palaces and gardens, and those beautifully-poised temples in the Western Hills, with their age-old white pines and ginkgo trees where foreign residents and the superior people from the Legation Quarter used to spend their week-ends. Peking under snow, as I first saw it, is

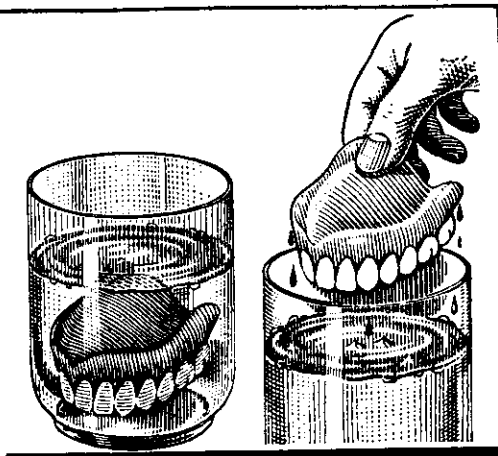
something one would cross continents just to look at.

But already, in those autumnal days, the stage was set for tragedy; already the Mikado's sacred tanks went rumbling down the long streets, past the pink walls and curving gold-tiled roofs of the Forbidden City.



RELIC of the ancient glories of China is the Marco Polo Bridge, spanning the Hun Ho, not far from the old capital of Peking, the "Forbidden City"

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St.28

I shared rooms in Peking with a young Chinese student whose passionate resentment at his country's fate was typical of the outlook of a whole generation. He had been three times imprisoned for "anti-Japanese activity"; but he had consoled himself in gaol by writing a long poem on Chinese Freedom which was smuggled out and published secretly, and made him famous overnight. This former room-mate, as it happened, was one of the last people I saw before I left China—he is now an officer serving with the Chinese armies on the northern front.

Peking was beautiful; but it had known too many conquerors. When the Japanese attack came at last, it folded up with only a parody of resistance. I went back once, after the Japanese had settled in properly, to find that they had turned the universities into barracks, and cheap little bars and geisha-houses were spreading like a rash along the fine old streets. Peking had had its day.

Bluff in Nanking

THERE was a good deal of bluff about pre-war Nanking and all that it stood for. China just wasn't a modern demo-

cratic state, and it was no good pretending that it was. Nanking in those days was a secure haven for indolent bureaucrats, who drew up wonderful codes on paper (for example, the Chinese Factory Laws, which were the most enlightened in the world, or would have been if anyone had thought of putting them into effect!); and the same people painstakingly pigeonholed all the careful reports drawn up by League of Nations officials and expensive foreign advisers, and went to sleep on them.

I've said a few unkind things about the Nanking Government and Chinese officialdom in the first war months; but if all that were true and more, the city had done nothing to deserve the reign of terror that descended upon it when General Matsui, the Mackensen of Japan, rode his charger into the doomed capital and gave the word for its sack.

Iris Wilkinson's Pilgrimage

HANKOW has sometimes been called the Chicago of China: it is primarily an industrial and commercial city, and it did no harm to have the government for once located in a centre with a strong industrial working-class. A lot of the old "face," so dear to the Kuomintang, was sacrificed; and I for one thoroughly enjoyed looking up discon-

(continued on next page)