

In addition to the clan and neighborhood organizations, there are other kinds of intravillage groupings. Families of similar social and economic status, families which support a certain school, and the families which have become Christianized all tend to divide off into special groups.

Families of the same neighborhood may not be as close as families of different neighborhoods, because of status differences. Two or three Liu families, for example, live in the neighborhood where most of the Yang families live. The Lius are very poor and do not have much to do with the Yangs because they feel inferior to them, and the Yangs do not make overtures to them, either. But another Liu family, which has recently become prosperous, has gradually become intimate with the Yangs. Their children were asked to attend the Christian school. The mother of another Liu family had tried desperately to achieve these social relations without success. To this end, she sent one of her two sons to the Christian school, but failed in her purpose because her husband and sons had a bad reputation in the village.

A Yang family which lives in the northwestern part of the village had gradually built up their relations with a P'an family who lived in the eastern end. Each family had four sons. Most of the sons and grandchildren of the two families were graduated from modern schools. Consequently, they are regarded as learned families. Some of them have traveled a good deal, and members of the two families are familiar with the new currents of thought. In addition, each family owns about the same amount of land. For these reasons, members of the two families consider themselves equals and meet frequently. Both families have attracted others which are either equal in status or have educated members. Formerly, the ten or twelve wealthy families of the village had more intimate relations with each other than they had with their neighbors. There was also a group of middle-class families. Their association was not strong but recognizable. The poor families also constituted an informal group. In the past decades, distinctions based upon wealth have broken up because of the decline of the rich families and the general disruption caused by the war. In general, this kind of stratification is rather superficial, for, as we have seen, the status of a family may change in a few genera-

tions. The shifting certainly counteracts the building up of permanent social classes. Another point to be mentioned is that a family with wealth but no culture is usually the most isolated; the rich cultured farmers look down upon it, and yet it does not want to associate with the poor people. Thus, wealth alone does not give a family high position in the community.

For several years the village school and the Christian school divided the village into two groups. Families who sent their children to the village school were drawn together by numerous activities, such as organizing the school council, discussing the finances, making plans for entertaining the teacher, and so on. In the same way, the families who sent their children to the Christian school also came together.

The introduction of Christianity brought about new groupings of families. Ten or twelve families belong to the Protestant church, and five or six families belong to the Catholic church. The Protestant families include the Yangs and Ch'ens and, formerly, also one of the P'an families. The Catholic group is composed of four or five P'an families and two of the Ch'ens. Because Christianity is a new religion and is contradictory in some ways to the traditions and customs of the local society, the two groups of families which identified themselves with this belief are sharply differentiated from other families. This differentiation caused a kind of "we-group" consciousness in each of the two groups. The dozen Yang and Ch'en families have maintained closer relations than would have been likely under other circumstances. The several P'an families which belong to the Catholic church are poor and of very low social status, and are considered by their kinsmen as a group of outcasts. As a result, they have developed a feeling of unity among themselves. Both the Protestant and the Catholic groups regard themselves as "chosen people," thinking that they belong to Heaven while the rest of the villagers are sinners, or people of this world. The preachers of the churches have taught their members to distinguish themselves from the other people. Needless to say, this has tremendously widened the gap between the Christian groups and the rest of the families in the village. But the distinction does not stop here. Protestant-Catholic antagonism has split the two Christian groups. All the non-Christian families practice ancestor worship. They have the Kitchen God in their kitchens, burn incense sticks and kow-tow in the shrine of the God of Earth on the New Year Festival, and patronize the Buddhist temple in the district. For these reasons, we may consider them as another religious group, though they are by no means organized.

When a village is thus partitioned, it is natural that conflicts between different groups should occur now and then. Here are some important village conflicts which actually took place in Taitou in the last few decades. One was a conflict between Protestants and Catholics. The first converts were members of the Ch'en and Yang families and included a Ch'en scholar and his second brother. They were all ambitious men, and their primary purpose in conversion was to get positions as country preachers, and then to establish a church-subsidized village school, to use foreign influence through the church to deal with their opponents, and to sell food to the missionaries. As a result, resentment was fostered in the minds of the other villagers and the whole Christian group became a target for attack. Later, for some unknown reason, a top member of the P'an clan also joined the group. His action stirred up a great controversy in his own clan. It was regarded by some of his kinsmen as a great shame to the clan and their ancestors, and measures against him were secretly planned. Since he was a rich man and a member of the important clan, the few Christian members and the church authorities honored him as their top man in every case. This created jealousy among the Christian Ch'ens, one of whom felt so badly that he refused to stay in the group.

A few years later, the Catholic church in a distant village also secured members among the villagers. The Catholics wanted converts and did not care what kind of people they were. They hinted that those who came to the church would have financial help and the protection of a foreign power if they were ever involved in any legal disputes. This attracted many restless, propertyless, and oppressed people. Before long, a group of several dozen poor people of the village declared their affiliation with the Catholic church. The priest and headman imitated the Western church fathers in assuming a belligerent attitude toward the Protestant group. This situation was immediately seized upon by the villagers, who hated the foreign religion and its believers, and by the ambitious and discontented Ch'en scholar, as well as by the P'an clan heads, who resented the affiliation of some P'ans with the Protestant group. The anti-Christian villagers wanted the two groups to destroy each other; the Ch'en scholar wanted to defeat the P'an who had defeated him among the Protestants; and the clan heads of the P'ans wanted to punish their rebellious member. They all set to work. The villagers and the P'an heads incited members of the Catholic group to quarrel with the Protestant group, while the Ch'en scholar joined forces with the Catholics. One day a rumor reached the Catholics to the effect that the Protestant members had insulted their

God and their priest. The young Catholics immediately seized the P'an member and did the most shameful things to insult him. Then they threatened and abused the other members. They also insulted the brother of the Ch'en scholar. The Yang members had been threatened but not actually insulted. The clash did not develop into a real row because the Protestant group decided not to oppose the Catholics. After the P'an member and the Ch'en scholar's brother had been insulted, the main purpose of the fight was accomplished and the village leaders mediated the conflict, which ended with the Protestants' promise to entertain the important Catholic members at a formal dinner.

The Christian groups and the other villagers came into difficulty over the question of sharing expenses for practicing opera in the village. The opera was a most important amusement and it was an annual occasion. All the families contributed to it according to their means, except the Christian groups who refused to pay their share. They held that the opera was a kind of thanksgiving to the Dragon God and therefore contradictory to Christianity, and Christians could not give money to it; but that did not prevent the Christian families and their relatives from attending the performance and enjoying the entertainment as much as anyone else. This greatly annoyed the other villagers and the Christian groups were regarded as no longer properly belonging to the village. The villagers' resentment grew when they were told that the Christians were protected by foreign power.

This was not the only friction that occurred between the Christian groups and the other villagers. The Christians were taught that they were God's chosen people, that they no longer belonged to this world but to God's world, and that they must organize themselves into one body against all who were not Christians, and who, therefore, were "sinners." The poor Christians who felt that they had been oppressed or ill-treated by the wealthy people, wanted to avenge themselves and to express their feeling of injustice. The ambitious members assumed that they were as good as, or even superior to, those who held leadership in the village, the village gentry. They considered it an injustice that they did not have the opportunities to demonstrate their leadership. Besides, the Christians had the attitude that the non-Christians were pitiful because they resisted the "true God" and were, therefore, committing the sin of worshipping false gods. On their side, the non-Christian villagers regarded both the Protestant and the Catholic groups as mean people—people who refused to pay homage to their ancestors, who betrayed their country-

men but made friends with foreigners. Since both sides had prejudices like these, conflicts could hardly be avoided. It was only after people had had time to become more familiar with the religion, and the excitement at the strange things had abated, that the hostile attitude of the non-Christians was lessened. The reconciliation was also attributed to the enlightenment of many of the Christians. In recent years, many well-trained leaders grew up among the Chinese Christians who understand Christianity much better than their predecessors, the first converts, did. These men take a liberal attitude and cooperate in many collective activities with other groups, and refrain from condemning other beliefs.

A conflict between school factions also made village history. Years ago, an ambitious and self-made scholar of a Ch'en family wanted to become a schoolteacher. He fostered the idea among the families of the Yang, Ch'en, and Liu clans that their children were not treated as well as the P'ans by the teacher in the P'an clan's school. Since all three clans felt subordinate to the P'an clan, indignation was not difficult to arouse. In addition, a number of families of the Ch'en and Yang clans had accepted Christianity, and this new religious belief had brought the families into close relationship. The scholar vigorously advocated the establishment of a new school for their own children so that they could be independent of the P'an school. He finally succeeded, and a second school was opened in the house of a Yang family. All the pupils were boys of the Ch'en and Yang clans. The teacher of the "orthodox" school and important members of the P'an clan resented this new move. Rumors were spread by them about the Ch'en teacher, attacking his scholarship, and also warning the minor clans that they could expect retaliation in one form or another. The Yangs and Ch'ens called a meeting at which they resolved to uphold their rights and support their teacher in every way. The antagonism between this group and the P'an clan lasted for several years. Since the second school was primarily a result of the ambition of the Ch'en scholar, the bitterness of the P'ans was largely directed to the Ch'ens rather than to the Yangs and Lius. Besides, most of the Yang families had fairly good relations with many individual P'an families as well as with the clan as a whole. The Yangs, understanding that they were in a minor position in the village, never tried to compete with the P'ans in any of the village affairs, and the P'ans treated them frankly and generously.

An interesting point in this conflict was that, in both the Yang and Ch'en clans there was a leading family which did not take sides with

its own kinsmen. The head of the Ch'en family, a younger brother of the Ch'en scholar, believed that good relations with all the clans in the village should be maintained by all means. As a result, he was not on speaking terms with his own brothers, but later was supported by the P'ans when he held the office of village head. The head of the Yang family was a very ambitious person, who kept aloof from the conflict because he himself was antagonistic toward the Ch'en leaders as well as the important members of his own clan. Had the Ch'ens and Yangs asked him to lead the fight, however, he would certainly have taken part, for he loved to dominate.

The two schools had both undergone some change, as we have seen. The one supported by the P'an clan became a public school, receiving recognition and subsidies from the county government, while the one sponsored by the Ch'en and Yang clans became an institution of the village Protestant church. Conflict between them was considerably eased because of the automatic division of territories from which each school recruited its pupils. The territory of the Christian school was the western section of the village, while that of the village school was the eastern section. Further improvement was brought about by the good relations between the young teacher of the Christian school and the younger generations of the P'an families. When the teacher of the village school realized that his school could not take care of all the boys and that his training was really inferior to that of the teacher of the Christian school, the antagonism was lessened. The seeming harmony between the two schools and the friendly attitude of the P'an leaders encouraged two brothers of a Yang family to hope that the schools could be united. One day they invited the village head and the teacher of the village school to talk over this idea. The brothers made it clear that their suggestion was entirely for the good of the two schools and for the children of the whole village; that they themselves did not have any personal interest in the affair because their careers lay outside the village; that one school would be much stronger than two, separated in both finance and teaching; and that the present teachers would have charge of the new school, where they would have the advantage of dividing the courses among themselves in accordance with their specialized training. The response from the teacher and the village head was favorable. The next day the two brothers left the village to attend to their own businesses. After several months, news came to them that dissention had again arisen between the two school factions. In the first place,

the village schoolteacher and other P'an leaders had misunderstood the proposition. They thought that it was a trap, a trap set up by the Yangs and Ch'ens, or by the council of the Christian school, to absorb the village school for the purpose of upsetting the position of the P'ans. Second, the members of the Christian council were unable to convince the others of their sincerity and unselfish motives as the two Yang brothers had done. Because of this the teacher of the village school and all the leaders of the P'an clan resumed their unfriendly attitude toward the Christian school and the Protestant group. A son of the village head was studying in the Christian school and the village head himself came to the school to talk with the teacher and members of the school's council almost every day. But both the father and son ceased their visits and were embarrassed when they met persons of the Christian group. This was because the village head was also a member of the P'an clan, so he had to act on the side of the village schoolteacher. The originators of the plan were greatly disappointed. They had a deep fear that the good relations between the leaders of the Yang clan and the leaders of the P'an clan might be undermined. The situation has now been remedied to a considerable extent, but the idea of consolidating the two schools must wait for a long time to come.

Clan feuds were a not uncommon source of village conflict. Such a feud existed between some families of the P'an and the Ch'en clans. In the course of it, a Ch'en family was attacked one night by gangsters whose faces were either painted or covered by masks. The family and their relatives all suspected some of the P'ans, but since they could not produce any evidence for their suspicions, the P'ans pronounced the accusation a great insult. Although the case did not develop into a serious clan fight, the bad feeling between the two clans was heightened and another incident occurred. On the main road north of the village, the Ch'en clan had erected a stone monument to honor a faithful widow among their ancestors. It had stood there for several decades when one day it was found lying on the ground. The Ch'ens discovered that the damage had been done by some young people of the P'an clan, and they immediately took this as a challenge. They were ready to undertake a lawsuit but, fortunately, the P'ans realized that the mischief they had done could not be justified or excused in the court. Therefore, they sought the aid of the village leaders to arbitrate the case. The Ch'ens finally accepted the P'ans' offer to erect the monument again and build a brick frame to protect it, and the case was settled.

It is clear that the causes of such feuds are complicated and refer back to a number of things. Clan prejudice is an important factor, for upon it depend most of the associations or divisions among families. Religious prejudice has intensified these divisions, though this is an unfamiliar and a recent thing in China. There is suspicion in relations between a strong clan and a minor one. The Ch'en families, for instance, had in the past thirty years always thought that they were unfairly treated by the village officers (who happened to be members of the P'an clan), in regard to the sharing of the expenses of village administration. For this reason they were considered troublemakers, and the important P'an families could not but come into conflict with the Ch'ens.

Insult to a family's or a clan's ancestors will always bring repercussions. Damage to an ancestor's graveyard, speaking of an ancestor's less worthy deeds, making derisive signs or gestures at an ancestral hall or at anything related to ancestors cause serious ill-feeling between families or clans. When a family or a clan is prosperous and clan consciousness is strong, its members vigorously defend their ancestors and all that pertains to them. Children of poor families may swear at each other at the expense of their ancestors without causing serious clashes between their parents, but this is not true of richer families. The *fung-shui* (graveyard site) is sometimes an important factor in conflicts between clans. Since a clan's most important function is to make sure that their ancestors' spirits are happy in the other world and their progeny numerous, rich, and honorable in this world, finding and defending a place of good *fung-shui* is a very important task. Any damage to the place endangers the happiness of the family, and such an offense could not be tolerated. This belief has become so strong in Chinese minds that a deep-rooted sentiment has developed around ancestral halls and ancestral graveyards. Lawsuits over ancestral property are all too common in the Chinese countryside. Because of their agricultural occupation and their peace-loving tradition, the Chinese masses are comparatively hard to arouse against a national enemy. But once convinced that the enemy would destroy their ancestors' residence and turn over their ancestors' graveyards, they will fight to the last ditch. In Chinese history one can find numerous war slogans referring to the "protecting our ancestors' graveyards."

Quarrels between neighboring families are often caused by children's squabbles. The children of the upper-class families are usually taken care of by their siblings when they are young and by a schoolteacher when they are above six or seven years old. They have few chances to get into

trouble with other children. Their parents are afraid of being criticized for spoiling them and therefore refrain from siding with their own children when quarrels arise. When upper-class families are involved in such a quarrel, it is a more serious matter than a noisy dispute between women or a street fight between men. It may lead to a lawsuit or a long lasting hatred.

Through many generations the Chinese village gentry have learned an interesting way to end certain kinds of village conflicts. This is to do nothing about it. When two lower-class families get into a dispute, the mothers scold each other on the street, their husbands may have a fist fight, and then it all suddenly stops. The next day their children play together as usual, the adults may not speak to each other for ten days or more, but they conduct their own business as usual and gradually forget the matter. Disturbances of this kind are usually ignored by the village leaders. To be sure, this is not always the case. Occasionally, small matters develop into something extremely serious. For instance, two poor families quarrel one morning. Every one of the neighbors think it is just another quarrel, but the next day the head of one of the families is found murdered. This lies beyond the power of the village leaders, because the case is no longer a village conflict but a criminal act, and can only be settled by law. Or, a family may find one night that their home, or a heap of straw, has been set on fire. This must also be dealt with by law.

When two leading families, or two village dignitaries, or two clans, come into conflict, the case will not be ignored but must be mediated by the village leaders. Pacification has been for long the measure usually employed to end important village disputes. Usually this is done through the good offices of the village leaders, but when the gentry or the chief clans are involved, the ordinary village leaders do not have sufficient prestige to intervene. In these cases, leaders from other villages are called in. These may be no more capable than the local leaders, but because they are from a different village their presence means more to the conflicting parties, and, therefore, they have a greater "face." Many disputes are thus settled by outside intervention.

The general procedure is as follows: First, the invited or self-appointed village leaders come to the involved parties to find out the real issues at stake, and also to collect opinions from other villagers concerning the background of the matter. Then they evaluate the case according to their past experience and propose a solution. In bringing the two parties to accept the proposal, the peacemakers have to go back and forth until

the opponents are willing to meet halfway. Then a formal party is held either in the village or in the market town, to which are invited the mediators, the village leaders, clan heads, and the heads of the two disputing families. The main feature of such a party is a feast. While it is in progress, the talk may concern anything except the conflict. The expenses of the feast will either be equally shared by the disputing parties or borne entirely by one of them. If the controversy is settled in a form of "negotiated peace," that is, if both parties admit their mistakes, the expenses will be equally shared. If the settlement reached shows that only one party was at fault, the expenses are paid by the guilty family. If one party chooses voluntarily, or is forced, to concede to the other (as in the case of the Protestant-Catholic dispute), it will assume the entire cost. When the heads or representatives of the disputing families are ushered to the feast, they greet each other and exchange a few words. After a little while they will ask to be excused and depart. Thus, the conflict is settled; but sometimes the settlement may not be conclusive.

Generally, when the two conflicting parties both belong to the middle or upper class, no compensation is paid when the settlement is made. Receiving money or other material compensation from a losing opponent causes great shame. The victory lies in the general opinion of the public that one is right and the opponent wrong. When this is won, any damages suffered can be overlooked. The important thing is that your opponent has to admit that he has been wrong, and this is very hard for a man of equal status to do. A feast provides the ideal situation for such an enforced acknowledgment. Overtly the feast is given to the mediators, actually it is an admission of defeat. The person who pays for it apologizes by this means.

Very few—perhaps none—of the disputes in this village have been solved by a lawsuit. Even the case in which a Ch'en family was attacked at night by their neighbors was settled out of court. Villagers forced into a legal case must go to the county seat and hire lawyers, and the ensuing costs are prohibitive for any of the farm families. Nine out of ten families who have sought recourse to the law have had to sacrifice a great part of their small property. Countless stories and proverbs have discouraged farmers from referring their cases to the government. Private mediation has been and is now the most important legal mechanism in rural districts throughout the country. Social justice has been in the past much more important than legal power in protecting the weak against violence of any sort. It is a fact that no matter how small or weak a family may

be, if its members behave fairly to the other villagers, both the strong and the lawless will either help it or leave it alone. If it is unreasonably attacked, the attacker would sooner or later be discovered and the whole village would punish him. In the last twenty years, when bandits have been numerous in the countryside, the families that were attacked were those who had bad relations with most of the villagers, especially the poor ones. A number of rich families who seemed logical targets for the bandits were unmolested throughout the chaotic period because the members of these families had always behaved well in dealing with their fellow villagers, rich or poor. The bandits refrained from attacking them because the deed would be condemned by both men and gods.

Since a number of village conflicts are caused by hurting somebody's "face," it is necessary to discuss the losing or gaining of "face." "Face" is a literal translation of the Chinese character *lien* or *mien*. Although *lien* or *mien* means just what the English word face does, the Chinese expression *tiou lien* (losing face) or *yao mien-tze* (wishing a face) has nothing to do with face in our usual understanding of the term. It does not mean a certain expression on, or the physical appearance of, the face, such as implied by "a funny face" or "a sad face." When we say in Chinese that one loses face, we mean that he loses prestige, he has been insulted or has been made to feel embarrassment before a group. When we say that a man wants a face, we mean that he wants to be given honor, prestige, praise, flattery, or concession, whether or not these are merited. Face is really a personal psychological satisfaction, a social esteem accorded by others.

Perhaps this can be better understood by analyzing the factors involved in losing or gaining face. The first factor is the status of social or other equality between the persons involved. For instance, if a village dignitary asks another to make a social call with him or to grant some other favor and is refused, he will feel that he has lost face. If, on the other hand, a peasant is similarly refused by one of his own rank, he will not have this feeling. As another illustration, when one of two equally popular professors is refused by the other in some request, the former will have lost face, but if a student is similarly treated by a professor, the student does not suffer loss of face.

The second factor is the inequality between the social status of the two persons. When a boxer is defeated by an opponent as strong as he is, he will feel sorry but will not lose face. But if the victor is known to be inferior to him, then he will consider his defeat a great loss of face.

Likewise, a village gentry's embarrassment at being defeated by a man of his own class would not be as serious as if he were defeated by a junior village officer. However, this principle cannot be extended indefinitely. It would not be true to say that the lower the opponent's status, the greater the loss of face. If the insulting person is only a plain peasant or one who has been considered ignorant or mean, a cultured man does not lose face at all, because people will say that the trouble is caused by the peasant's ignorance and is not the other's fault, and if the latter remains impervious to the taunt, he will win great praise from the villagers for being too great to quarrel with a mean person, or so kind that he can forgive another's ignorance. Inequality of social status can nullify the feeling of loss of face in another way. When a plain villager is scolded or injured by a gentleman, he may resent it but he will not lose face. Similarly, a junior village officer can be insulted by a government commissioner, by a powerful village leader, or by an influential clan head without much loss of face. In the academic world, a junior writer who is scolded or insulted by a well-known scholar is proud of it rather than ashamed.

A third factor is the presence of a witness. In fact, the question of losing or not losing face is based on anticipation of the effect upon a third person or party. If the indignity has not been witnessed or is certain to remain unknown to anyone else, then bitterness may be roused but not the sense of losing face. When one does something socially wrong but keeps it secret, he does not feel embarrassed before other people. Whenever the secrecy is violated, he will lose face. Therefore, the village streets or public gatherings are places where one is in danger of losing face. The restoration of face must also be accomplished at a party presented by mediators, village or community leaders, and the two parties involved. But the effectiveness of the presence or knowledge of a third party varies with the degree of intimacy between the third party and the persons involved.

Thus, social relationship is a fourth factor. If the third person is intimate with one or both of the opposing parties, the defeated or insulted party does not feel that he has lost face, or at least the feeling will be negligible. But if the third person is not an intimate, the situation is quite different. In the family, for instance, there is no problem of losing or gaining face in relations between husband and wife, parents and children, or between siblings, but there is such a problem between the in-laws. The problem becomes more serious when the social distance extends

outside the family to the neighborhood, to the village, and even beyond. Beyond a certain distance, however, this factor becomes ineffective. When a man lives in a completely strange society there is no problem of face, no matter what kind of mistakes he may make, because nobody knows him. He can visit disreputable places or commit an immoral act without uneasiness as long as he can keep it from reaching the attention of his friends or home folks. That is why a person who always behaves well in his local community may act very differently in a big city.

A fifth factor is social value or social sanction. One may commit different and numerous mistakes, but not all of them entail loss of face. In a society where agriculture is the main occupation, one loses face if his farm is not cared for. People pay much attention to filial piety and ancestor reverence, and a family loses face if its members do not hold together as long as their parents are alive or do not conduct a proper funeral for them when they die. On the other hand, a person of such a society can come back to live as usual after having failed to be a good apprentice in a market-town store or a successful student in the high school in the county seat. A father-in-law would be greatly shamed to be caught joking with his daughter-in-law when no third person was present, as would a girl discovered in a love affair with a neighbor's boy, for these actions violate deep-rooted traditions.

The consciousness of one's own social prestige is a sixth factor. The more conscious one is of his status, the stronger is his fear of losing face. For instance, a liberal or free-minded village gentry would not be particularly disturbed if a junior villager should unwittingly offend him. But if he were highly conventional or orthodox, he would be outraged and if the offender did not apologize immediately it would become a serious case. That is why ordinary villagers never dare to deal directly with this type of village gentlemen. Not a few self-made leaders are always in trouble with fellow villagers just because they care too much for their social prestige and are overly sensitive about it. This is especially true in cases in which middle-aged persons are involved.

Thus, age becomes a seventh factor in the problem of face. Young people have not as yet acquired much social prestige and therefore do not have much face to lose. On the other hand, old people frequently do not feel loss of face. They can easily be excused (and they always excuse themselves) on the ground that they are old, and besides, experience has made them too mature to be easily embarrassed. Only the middle-aged people, who are very careful to safeguard their social prestige, are serious

about losing or gaining face. Lastly, a person's sensibility is also a factor. A situation that makes one person lose face leaves another unhurt. It is very easy to hurt a sensitive person's feelings and if the slight occurs in the presence of a third person he is certain to feel that he has lost face.

When a villager of note, a leader for example, is defeated in public affairs or is insulted at a social gathering by one of his rivals, he will feel great humiliation and swear to avenge himself. Thus, a bitter struggle ensues. If his family or friends say that he should not take the matter too seriously and that he ought to have tolerance, his answer will, in most cases, be like this: "Why? This is not a matter of insignificance. The safety of my face is involved. How can I maintain my respectable position in this community if I accept defeat from that bastard? Of course I must fight until my enemy is on his knees. Remember, we are upper-class people. We can sacrifice everything but our face."

When an upper-class family is attacked with bad words or violent actions by another of a similar social status, a serious conflict will arise. When village leaders come to settle it, the injured family very likely says: "Money, property, these are insignificant in comparison with our family's face! Just consider it from our point of view. How could we live on as usual if our face were lost to that infamous family? We cannot tolerate this. We must fight on till our enemy admits his guilt." If the mediators continue their effort, the family may finally give in, but say: "All right, we may give up the fight if you gentlemen will guarantee that our face will be safe." And the guarantee is given: "Surely, we will see that every-one's face is saved."

An individual villager or a family may behave immorally and yet not be subject to legal condemnation. If the misbehavior is repeated several times, the other villagers discuss it in social gatherings, saying: "Since he does not care for his face, what can you do about him?" "Yes, one can do mean things when he no longer pays attention to his face. It is too bad, indeed."

After some injustice has been repeatedly tolerated the injured party may warn the offender by saying: "Now, look here! I have several times given you face. I think I have done my best. If you mean that you really don't care for it, I will let you see what I can do. You should not complain that I am a man who does not pay attention to other's face." Or, if the offended person or family is too meek to wage a struggle, he may murmur to himself: "What can I do? I have given him face already

several times, but he did not appreciate it. It seems that I will have to change my policy."

If a villager purposely reveals some secret of his neighbor before a public meeting, the neighbor will hate him and complain that he has been made to lose face in public. Or, if a person intentionally poses difficult questions to another at a meeting, the latter will also complain: "That son of a turtle purposely embarrassed me and made me lose face. I shall not forgive him."

When a villager is involved in trouble with his neighbor and is convinced that he must bear the blame, he will ask some village leaders to mediate the dispute. If the case is unfortunately revealed to the public, you may hear on the street corners these comments.

"Hear anything about Heng-sheng's case?" one villager asks.

"Not much. Only saw him running here and there. Guess he's looking for some face."

Another villager answers, "I just can't figure out what made Heng-sheng do such a foolish thing. It seems that there is no other way for him to get out of it except to find some important face. Guess he's doing that these days. Poor fellow!"

After a few days, these words may be heard in the village school: "Hey, know that Heng-sheng's case has been settled?"

"Yes, I heard that yesterday."

"How could it be?"

"Well, how would it be if not by Uncle P'an's effort? Of course, the opponent could not refuse Uncle P'an's face. Heng-sheng is lucky."

Another kind of circumstance in which face is involved is when a youngster offends a senior member in the village. When the offended man is about to punish the boy, other villagers may pacify him by saying: "For his parents' face, you may forgive him." Then the senior member may say: "All right. You are old neighbors. For your face and for his parents' face, I forgive him this time."

When two villagers are involved in a personal but not serious dispute or argument, one of them may ask the other: "Please stop it and give me a little face, will you?" When one villager asks another to do something but the latter is reluctant, the former will ask: "Please help me; it is a matter of face."

When a person or a family of the lower social class is involved in a dispute with one of the upper class and the latter has shown some gen-



erosity to the former, other villagers will say to the lower-class person or family: "He is a man of great face. Of course he would not see or do things like you would. He would lose face if he quarreled with people like you." On the other hand, when a person of high social status has intercourse with persons of low repute, the villagers will comment: "Too bad that he goes with that kind of people. His face and his family's face have been already greatly damaged."

Sometimes a family of the upper class may not act in accordance with the prevailing social customs in entertaining guests, in visiting relatives, in preparing a marriage or funeral, or in dealing with neighbors. The head of the family wants to save money by cutting the quantity and lowering the quality of the gifts or articles needed in these affairs. Then the villagers will complain: "A family like that should not be so stingy. They should pay attention to their face."