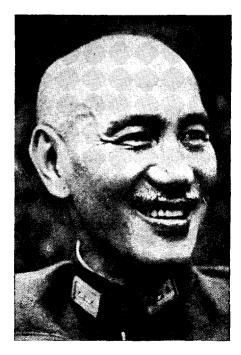
Generalissimo—Intimate View

"Chiang Kai-shek: An Unauthorized Biography," by Emily Hahn (Doubleday & Co. 382 pp. \$5), is a portrait of the Kuomintang leader and an account of his career to defeat by the Chinese Communists and retreat to Formosa. Wilbur Burton, who reviews it here, has covered China and the Far East for newspapers and magazines for the past two decades.

By Wilbur Burton

Y ENERALISSIMO Chiang Kaishek is indubitably in that group of world leaders-including Sun Yat-sen, Mao Tse-tung, Gandhi, Nehru, Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin, Hitler, Mussolini, and Franco-who have arisen in our twentieth-century "time of troubles"; but less is known of Chiang personally than any of the others save perhaps Mao. The group, it may be noted, has nothing in common unless it be Nietzschean will to power, and Gandhi may be exempted from that; but it is significant that most of them are of areas that in the last century counted least in international affairs.

Information about Chiang is now increased to a considerable extent by Miss Hahn's new essay in biography. In this field she has previously en-



Chiang-"a very happy snowstorm."

dowed us with lives of Fanny Burney, Sir James Brooke of Sarawak, Raffles of Singapore, and the Soong sisters, as well as "China to Me: A Partial Autobiography" of one of the most charmingly unconventional American women ever to enliven the China Treaty Ports and the British Crown Colony of Hong Kong. And, as always, she writes in extremely lucid narrative style.

There have been, of course, previous biographies of Chiang, though notably few, and they have been either sketchy or official apologias such as are ever being wrought by members (or would-be members) of the entourages of eminent political figures. In the general field of literature on China there is a considerable amount of valid material about aspects of Chiang's varied career; and it is to be regretted that Miss Hahn has not utilized some of this. On the other hand, through her quite intimate acquaintance with at least two of the Soong sisters, Madame Chiang and Madame H. H. Kung, as well as others close to her subject, she had a unique chance to get data not easily available, if at all, to other writers.

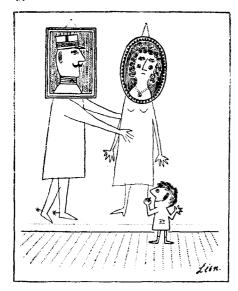
Miss Hahn justifiably makes the most of this-but she unduly denigrates those who have ever seriously crossed Chiang or written adversely about him. Thus, Madame Sun Yatsen, the Soong sister now in the Communist camp, is less than fairly presented: for there is no evidence that she had "dedicated her faith to Communism" as far back as 1923, when Dr. Sun was still alive. She definitely was not a Communist, or more than sentimentally pro-Communist, when this reviewer had considerable contact with her in 1927, and her subsequent Red involution was probably from idealistic reaction to Chiang's sometimes questionable course rather than from Marxist conviction.

Borodin, the Soviet advisor to the Kuomintang in the 1925-1927 revolution that elevated Chiang to sufficient power to break with both the Chinese Communists and Moscow, is implicitly dismissed as an old roué who was in love with Mayling Soong, now Madame Chiang. This is indeed news to this reviewer, who was privy to the gossip of both the foreign and Chinese elite of the time. According to that gossip, Borodin was in love with Madame Sun! Actually, there was not an iota of truth for the story; and, as a



THE AUTHOR: The life of Emily Hahn is a striking example of a St. Louis girl who did most of the things girls usually don't. "You are the epitome of modern woman—mining engineer, novelist, essayist, traveler, who supports herself much better than I do," a renegade of the stronger sex told her back in 1932 on her return from the Congo, "and I am frightened to death." Miss Hahn, puffing awesomely on a cigar, agreed. By then Mickey, as she is known, had given the world only a glimmer of her potential as a gay slaughterer of convention. She began in 1926 by getting the first degree in mining engineering ever granted to a woman by Wisconsin. She subsequently taught geology at Hunter, devoting a minute of her time to dashing off a spoof called "Seductio ad Absurdum," which got a lot of talk. Listening and wanderlust don't mix, so Mickey left for Africa, where she looked things over between 1930 and 1932. Those experiences quickly resulted in two books-"Congo Solo," a travel diary, and "With Naked Foot," a novel. By 1935 restlessness again set in, so she left for China. She wrote articles for The New Yorker and she met Major Charles Boxer of British Intelligence, They had a child. All three of them were among the Allied nationals who were in Hong Kong when it fell in late 1941. Mickey, with Carola, her daughter, finally returned to the States in 1943. Around that time she turned out "The Soong Sisters" and "China to Me," in which she said: "I have deliberately chosen the uncertain path whenever I had the chance." The Major, after spending years in a Japanese prison camp, arrived here in 1945, and Charles and Mickey got married. They have since had another child. The Boxers live in Ringshall End, Little Gaddeston, Berkhamsted, Herts. That's somewhere in England. These days Miss Hahn is revisiting Africa, looking up some old friends. She is still a great cigar lady; on her last New York visit, in 1954, she whipped out a Havana in the lobby of the St. Regis and fired it up admirably. People stared, but Mickey, bless her, blew beautiful smoke rings.

-BERNARD KALB.



matter of fact, Borodin was so wracked by both malaria and political difficulties he probably could not have mustered the mood for any romance.

CHIANG'S political career, as Miss Hahn well recounts, started in 1924 in Canton where, fresh from a few months in Moscow, he was put in charge of the military academy that was largely staffed by Soviet instructors under an agreement between Dr. Sun and the Kremlin on an antiimperialist, not Communist, revolutionary basis. But, according to Miss Hahn, Chiang was already suspicious of Muscovite intent, and she quotes a letter from him to a friend in proof of such prescience. But she does not quote what he himself publicly avowed in the academy's annual of December 5, 1925: "The National Revolution cannot do without Dr. Sun's Three Principles of the People [nationalism, people's sovereignty, people's welfare]. Neither can the International Revolution neglect Communism. We cannot deny that the Chinese Revolution is a part of the World Revolution. The realization of the Three Principles of the People means the realization of Communism."

In any event, Chiang did utilize his first opportunity, early in 1927 when the Kuomintang armies directed largely by a Soviet general were established in the Yangtze Valley, to break with both the Russian and Chinese Communists and set up a ruthlessly anti-Red regime in Nanking. Then, too, he was married to the Christian Mayling Soong, and converted to Christianity-after, as Miss Hahn reports from his pastor, he had prayed before a battle with some dissidents and "God did answer his prayer by sending a very heavy snowstorm, which was unusual at that time of the year, so that his enemies could not advance any nearer."

There is less about another moot

point in Chiang's career, his handling of the opium traffic. Miss Hahn dismisses it with mere mention of his instituting "a Government monopoly, like that maintained by the British in Hongkong," adding, "He needed the revenue." The same defense, of course, could be made today of Mao-Tse-tung for smuggling narcotics abroad.

Miss Hahn's discussion of Chiang in his long dilemma of dealing with the Chinese Reds and the Japanese aggressors, both coming to the fore in 1931 although discretely, may engender much criticism by equally competent observers. She makes the best case possible for Chiang, and it may indeed be that he did the best he could from any save a pro-Japanese or pro-Communist viewpoint. But he was perhaps less of a hero against either the Reds or the Japanese than Miss Hahn implies. In the case of the Reds this reviewer still finds brilliantly pertinent a remark oft made to him circa 1933 by Eugene Chen (foreign minister of the first Kuomintang regime who broke with Chiang), that "Chiang Kai-shek's historic role is to arm the Chinese Communists." Certainly they then, and much later, seized far more arms from Chiang's forces than they received from Russia. Eventually Chiang did conquer the first Soviet Republic of China, mainly by American airplanes against which it had no defense, but the Red armies remained intact to wax strong enough to vanquish him fifteen years later.

The Japanese, of course, were utterly defeated by the United States in the Second World War; and the American role therein and thereafter so far as Chiang is concerned is a matter of much debate. Miss Hahn adequately reports the known facts, in a manner generally creditable to Chiang but including this critique of the Kuomintang: "Local government had broken down; corruption was increasing; the future was uncertain." (Miss Hahn's emphasis.) And so Chiang was forced to flee to Formosa.

Although this biography is unauthorized, the reviewer finds little if anything at which Chiang could cavil—unless in manifestation of Confucian modesty or Christian humility.

Song

By Alfred Kreymborg

THE soul soaring on indefinable wings

over blurred shapes and shades of varied hues,

after flying from view to grander views,

slowly returns to earth, and there he sings.

Fire in the East

"Wanted: An Asian Policy," by Edwin O. Reischauer (Alfred A. Knopf. 276 pp. \$3.75), is an analysis of what we must do in respect to the Far East to prevent a worldwide conflagration from starting in that area. It is reviewed below by Kenneth Scott Latourette, Sterling Professor of Missions and Oriental History, Emeritus, at Yale University.

By Kenneth Scott Latourette

VEN if we agree that for the United States Asia must be secondary to Europe we cannot help remembering that the first rumblings of the storm of World War II were in Manchuria in 1931. Nor can we forget that more than anywhere else it is in East Asia that the aftermath of the storm has been marked by fighting. We are painfully aware of the threat to Formosa and the certainty that if that island and the smaller ones associated with it fall into Communist hands much of the rest of East Asia and its adjacent lands will be the next target. Indeed, we are all too conscious of the wooing of Japan and of the menace to what remains of free Indochina, to Malaya, to Indonesia, to the Philippines, to Thailand, and to important sections of India. We are also not unmindful of Iran and the Near East. Were Asia to pass under the hammer and sickle the peril for Western Europe and the Americans would be greatly aug-

It is with this that Edwin O. Reischauer deals in "Wanted: An Asian Policy." By birth, early rearing, and long specialized study, teaching, and writing closely identified with Japan, from that vantage he looks out on all Asia. His modest disclaimer of expert knowledge cannot obscure the fact that far more than the overwhelming majority of his fellow Americans he is equipped to speak on the subject to which he addresses himself. Indeed, it is to the lack of adequate knowledge of Asia that he attributes the striking failures or weaknesses of American policies in China and Korea. He believes that our more adequate preparation insured the relative success of the occupation of Japan.

As he views Asia Professor Reischauer sees, correctly, that it has no unity except in the fact that it is not the Occident and in the revolutions brought by forces which have issued from the Occident. He reminds us that even Marxist Communism was