

ON THE HOME FRONT

"Shikan" and "Renmin Wenxue" Republished

SHIKAN [Poetry] and Renmin Wenxue [People's Literature], two national periodicals, were republished in January 1976.

The first issue of *Poetry* carries two poems written by Chairman Mao in 1965: "Chingkangshan Revisited — to the tune of *Shui Tiao Keh Tou*" and "Two Birds: A Dialogue — to the tune of *Nien Nu Chiao*." *People's Literature* reprints the two poems in its first issue.

A wide range of subject matter couched in rich artistic forms appears among the items in the first issue of *Poetry*. There are excerpts from a long poem, a political lyrical poem, a translated poem, children's rhymes and verses, and songs with musical scores. The first issue of *People's Literature* carries the libretto of a modern revolutionary Peking opera, stories, poems, prose, reportage, notes on literature and essays.

Both young and veteran writers, most of them workers, peasants and soldiers, are enthusiastic contributors to these two periodicals. This shows that Chinese workers, peasants and soldiers have made their voices heard in socialist art and literature thanks to the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. Their works with a strong flavour of real life are fresh, pungent and militant. With class struggle as

the key link, they eulogize Chairman Mao and the Chinese Communist Party, praise socialism and hail the tremendous achievements of the Great Cultural Revolution and the socialist newborn things.

Diesel Locomotives Reach Advanced Level

THE 4,000 h.p. Tungfeng-4 diesel locomotives made at the Talien Locomotive and Rolling Stock Plant are up to the world's advanced level in all requirements. This is one more fruitful result of the Great Cultural Revolution.

This achievement has been made in this 75-year-old plant by mobilizing the workers to go in for technical innovations and technical transformation instead of building a new, big modern plant for the purpose. After criticizing Liu Shao-chi's servility to things foreign and doctrine of trailing behind at a snail's pace during the Great Cultural Revolution, the plant's workers, technicians and cadres made up their minds to catch up and surpass advanced levels. They created a dozen or so new technological processes and set up over 50 automated or semi-automated production lines.

Locomotives of this type have been in use since 1973. Having a designed speed of 120 kilometres an hour, they run steady at 130 kilometres an hour. Fast- and smooth-riding on lines with the greatest gradient in the country,

they can stop immediately and start quickly even on steep slopes.

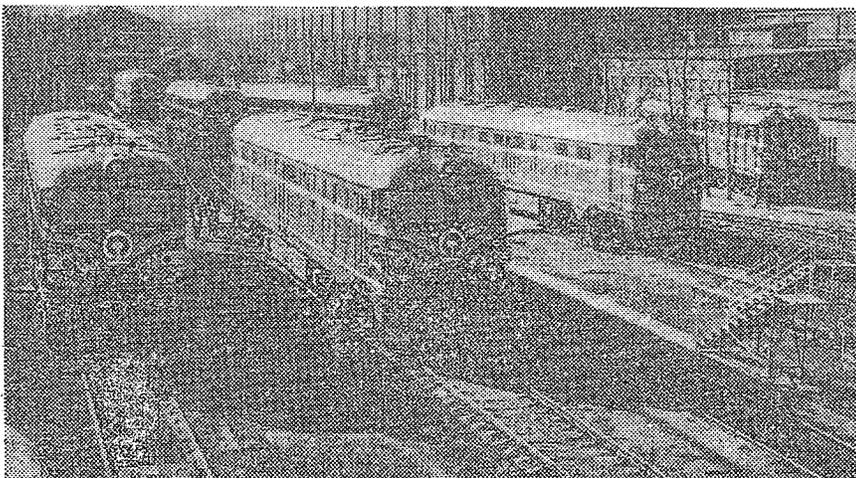
Improving Alkaline Soil

ACHIEVEMENTS in improving more than half the alkaline farmland in China have helped increase farm production in alkaline-soil areas where yields have remained low over a long period of time.

Alkaline soil which contains excessive amounts of soluble salts that hamper the growth of crops is found in many parts of China. Before liberation, the reactionary rulers, bent on oppression and exploitation, neglected to repair river courses in those areas stricken by alkalinity. What with frequent drought and waterlogging, such areas kept expanding, alkalinity became more and more serious and agricultural production suffered.

Since liberation, the Party and government have shown great concern for agricultural development in these areas. During the big leap forward in 1958, a survey of alkaline soil was made throughout the country with the participation of the masses. It initially revealed the distribution and characteristics of alkaline land in China and the causes of low yields. Local people's experiences in treating alkalinity were summed up as well. Since the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, there has been an upsurge in farmland capital construction and soil improvement, which has brought about new developments in utilizing and improving alkaline land.

A farm on the northeast fringe of the Tarim Desert on the south slope of the Tienshan Mountains in Sinkiang was once a barren and uninhabited alkaline land. The farm workers, however, adopted comprehensive measures to leach out the salts: they dug irrigation and drainage channels, practised deep-ploughing, applied more organic fertilizer and grew paddyrice. Their strenuous efforts over the past two decades finally turned 8,500 hectares of wasteland into fertile fields which now yield twice as much grain and cotton as before. Following this farm's example, others in the Sinkiang Uighur Autonomous Region have already improved 530,000 hectares of alkaline land with varying degrees of success.



4,000 h.p. diesel locomotives ready for delivery.

Alkaline soil in plains on the lower reaches of the Yellow, Haiho and Huai Rivers was mainly created by the silting up of river courses which made it impossible to divert flood waters and caused prolonged waterlogging in pre-liberation days. The local people, working under unified planning of departments concerned, have dredged river courses, dug drainage channels and combined the work of controlling alkalinity with that of harnessing the rivers, so as to bring drought, waterlogging and alkalinity under control in an all-round way.

In Hsinhsiang Prefecture, Honan Province, dyke breaches and course changes of the Yellow River in the past left 100,000 hectares of farmland seriously stricken by alkali. Over the past decade and more, the local people have dredged the river course, while building drainage and irrigation works. Using muddy water from the Yellow River to silt the alkaline land, they have brought most of the sandy and alkaline land under control and turned many of them into stable- and high-yielding farmland.

Professional scientific and technical personnel have played an active part in this work. In the past, three to four years or even seven to eight years were required to build embankments and wash away alkali in reclaiming land from the sea. Agricultural scientific and technical personnel in Chekiang Province, who carried out scientific experiments together with the masses, have

worked out ways of shortening the time required and increasing the varieties of crops planted. Scientific research departments have succeeded in studying and producing some chemicals for soil amelioration, something new in controlling alkalinity. Mass scientific and technical contingents have also been formed in many parts of the country for this purpose.

New Technique In Aluminium Processing Industry

A SUCCESSFUL experiment has been carried out by a plant in Harbin, northeast China, on a new technique for casting and rolling aluminium sheets directly from liquid aluminium. This is an important technological transformation in China's aluminium processing industry.

The plant used to go through seven processes in producing the sheets. It first melted the ore, teemed the liquid aluminium into ingots, then heated and rolled them into sheets of various specifications. Now, with the adoption of the new technique, six separate machines form a production line which does the rolling in two processes. This shortens the production cycle, improves the quality of products, lowers costs and raises labour productivity by 40 per cent. It is comparatively easy to build an aluminium sheet processing plant using the new technique, which calls for only one quarter as much investment as a similar plant using the old technique.

Pushcart Shops

IN Luta, northeast China, lots of shop assistants go around the streets and lanes every day with pushcarts, warmheartedly serving the masses.

Aiming at better service to their customers, China's commercial workers have adopted this method of retailing in residential quarters, port areas, railway stations and other public places. They carry various goods including daily necessities, vegetables, cigarettes, candy and fruit. At present in Luta, there are more than 200 such carts catering to an average of 70,000-80,000 people a day.

The pushcart shops are open not only during regular shopping hours, but also in the early morning and in the evening. The price and quality of the goods are the same as those in the shops.

The shop assistants also organized a special delivery service for the old and ailing residents. An old woman in her seventies living alone in one of the residential quarters was deeply moved when vegetables, food-stuffs and other daily necessities were brought right to her door.

The customers' suggestions and requests are jotted down by the shop assistants so as to continuously improve their work. This has won praise from the masses.

The scope of their service is now being expanded to include postal delivery, repairing household utensils and haircutting.

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