

Observations on the Social Life of a North China Village

(CHIEN YING, WU CHING HSIEN)

Oct-Dec. 1924

JEAN DICKINSON

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF SOCIOLOGY

YENCHING UNIVERSITY

PEKING



Publication of the Department of Sociology

Series C No. 1 Price 50 Cents





any extensive area of China. The observer's main object in the investigation was to become more intelligent and understanding on matters of rural life, family conditions and Oriental psychology for the instruction of her Chinese students. The idea of a survey was secondary. Nevertheless, it is hoped that the following pages may help others who are interested, to secure a clearer appreciation of village life in North China.

Location of the Study.

About fifty miles from Peking and somewhat nearer Tientsin, on the railroad that connects the two great cities of North China, is a little station Chang Chuang,* (張莊) made momentarily famous as the location of the chief skirmish between the troops of Feng Yu Hsiang and Wu P'ei Fu in November, 1924. Incidentally this action temporarily interrupted the study. Three miles southwest is the market town of Huang Hou Tien, (皇后店) (which translates into Queen's Inn). Only a mile away lies the large village of Chien Ying, (尖營) (formally known as Chen Chia Ying, (甄家營) but commonly abbreviated) which was selected as the center for this study. These are among the 800 villages of the county of Wu Ch'ing Hsien (武清縣).

This whole area lies in North China's great alluvial plain, the yellow "loess" soil of which is so rich that fields regularly flooded need no fertilization. The alluvial deposit has amounted to five or six feet in 200 years, (see P. 19) A very small river and a canal lie on opposite sides of Chien Ying, both being located some miles away, but near enough to constitute serious factors in times of flood. The fields belonging to this village lie on ground slightly higher than those of neighboring villages, which is the chief cause of its relative prosperity. Most of the land adjacent to the railroad all the way south-east to Tientsin is frequently inundated to a depth of several feet, so that, every few years, crops are totally destroyed. The heavy rains of summer regularly cause partial and temporary flooding, but not necessarily extensive destruction. The denuded mountains whence the floods come are some sixty miles to the north and west, hardly visible even on exceptionally clear days.

The spring preceding the study (1924) was so dry that the wheat crop throughout North China suffered considerable loss. In the summer occurred one of the heaviest floods in years, so that taking the most favorable estimate the farmers of Chien Ying suffered a 30% to 50% loss, and in some cases, even in that locality of slightly higher ground, a total loss of the fall crops. Corn, millet, and especially cotton, suffered. The sorghum (also called Kafir corn and Indian millet) (高粱) stood high enough out of water to be little damaged. Prices of staple foods were double the normal even in December, and the crux of suffering would be due in March and April, just before the following wheat harvest.

Population. (See tables in appendix)

The facts a village knows about itself are very few. Chien Ying consists of 306 "hu" (戶). A hu is literally a gate, opening on one of the two

* Pronounce Ch as J.

long main streets, "front" and "back", or one of the few cross roads. Within the hu may be as many as ten courts all under one family. (In this study "Chia" or family, is taken to mean the economic unit, the group which prepares its food and cultivates its farm as a unit). Or, the hu may include several brothers supporting their families independently, and living in one or more courts. In some cases two or three poorer families may live in the different houses around one court.

Politically the hu is the unit for taxation and the only basis of count. Therefore the question of how many persons live in the average hu, was one which had to be studied in order to estimate population. Of the 45 complete hu investigated, more than half had but one family each, and a third had two families. Two large clans of 37 and 43 persons were so exceptional as to have been omitted in making a general average. If the average be set conservatively at ten persons per hu, the population of the village would be just over three thousand. The population is reported to be increasing slowly, chiefly due to more immigration than emigration.

Of this population, it was estimated from the 555 persons studied that 25.7% were men; 35.2% women, and 39.1% children. An explanation is due as to what constitutes a child and an adult. Since well over half of the population is married by the time they reach sixteen years, and the boys have long before that shared all phases of farming, and the girls all sorts of house work, the division between adult and child was taken to be the married state, or "18 sui" (歲) which is approximately 16½ years*.

Almost the entire village are Chinese, all are thoroughly Chinese in custom; but two or three families trace back to a Manchu origin, now all but forgotten. There are very few really old people in the population.

Agriculture.

One of the few matters of common knowledge is the area of the village and each family's holdings and liability for land taxes. "Paring the long and patching the short of it", as Mencius says, the land owned by the villagers is 4 by 10 "li", or about 4½ square miles. This makes approximately 7000 "mu" (a "mu" (畝) is ⅓ acre). The farmers estimate 4000 mu of this is first grade land, alluvial, needing no fertilizer, selling at \$30.00 **and renting at \$3.00 a mu. About 2000 mu is sandy, needing fertilization even for such crops as peanuts, selling at \$20., and renting for \$2. The remainder is too salty for any crops and is useful chiefly for willows and brick kilns. This sells for

* A Chinese is in his first year at birth, in his second after New Years, and so on. Therefore, if a child is born shortly before Chinese New Years, he may be reckoned as two years old when he is less than two months. In asking a baby's age it is usual to ask the months, or if it has passed a birthday. Thus the Chinese reckoning by "sui" averages a year and a half more than western years.

**All money quotations are in local currency. The Chinese dollar fluctuates around \$45-50 U.S. Gold.

\$10-\$12, and rents proportionately. This land could produce commercial salt by evaporation, with the expenditure of a little labor; but salt is a government monopoly, and the people are forced to buy poor quality at high rates, which is a real grievance. Land along the village street where all houses are gathered is naturally worth two or three times the value of the fields outside.

A leading elder estimates that four fifths, or more, of the villagers own land, and that the mode is 20-30 mu per family. Not all of the landless families are poor, a few depending for a comfortable income on members of the family working in Tientsin or elsewhere. It is obvious, however, that most of those without land are the poorest, and, lacking land, they have an insecure income. A few families, recently moved to the neighborhood, rent land and make a comfortable living.

Since inquiries were made almost entirely from the women of the various families, it was not possible to get accurate details concerning agricultural matters. It was rarely possible to talk at any length with the men of other families than the hospitable home where "Teacher" lived. Moreover it is a custom to modestly minimize one's land holdings, so that a family having in reality over 100 mu would reply that they owned "several tens," an answer most delicate to probe. Since this was the case, one of the subjects of supplementary study by the two Chinese men trained in social work, one of whom was a native of the village, was the holding of each family that was studied. Partly due to the above difficulties, partly due to the fact that each family had been questioned concerning the area cultivated, the answers on the question sheets varied greatly with the facts. The cases where the family had claimed to cultivate more than it was later ascertained that they owned, are undoubtedly due to the fact that many families rent or "tang" extra land. In Dr. Buck's survey of 200 families in the Wuhu district, it appears that those who both rent and own are more prosperous than those who merely own, largely because the holding is then large enough to farm efficiently.

Land or houses may be rented, or mortgaged or "tanged"* (典) if the farmer has not money to own them outright. In the case of "tang" the owner is given a sum of money, say \$20, for a small house, for a period of three or five years, without interest, while his house (or land) is being used. At the end of the time the tenant may extend his lease, by repeating payment of the sum, or the owner may return the money, entire. In case the tenant wants to go before the time is up, and the owner does not wish to return the money, he may sub-tang, or tang to others, who, in the end, receive the returned sum. If the house is injured by floods, the tenant must repair it or receive less money in return. If it burns down, he must rebuild, or forfeit the sum. What it really comes to, is that the interest on the money constitutes the rent. This method is used extensively in that part of the country. Renting fields in years of flood or draught cause grievous loss to the poor—loss not only of crops but of rent.

* local pronunciation for "tien"

Of the 82 families studied, 16 owned no land,

12	"	1 — 19	mu
18	"	20 — 39	"
11	"	40 — 59	"
5	"	60 — 99	"
5	"	100 — 200	"
4	"	200 — 500	"
(village headman)	1	"	over 1000 mu

This makes an average, including the very exceptional holding of the village headman, of 51 mu per family. Omitting the headman, a fairer average comes to 30 mu per family. This average is too high to be entirely typical of the village as a whole. There were many reasons why the families studied were predominantly those slightly more prosperous, and included a few really well to do. The families of all school children and Christians were studied and the relatives of the hosts were accessible.

It seems to be a general Chinese practice for farming land to be held in many small pieces. Villages offer no adequate investment for savings, so the successful farmer adds a piece of land wherever he chances to find it, when he has a surplus. The disadvantage has often been pointed out that implements, animals and workers have to be transported, often considerable distances, to work one piece after another. This is true, but there are no big machines, difficult to transport. There are two considerable advantages in the system. The good land is not all in the hands of the well-to-do and the poorer land in the hands of the poor, so that in times of drought or flood, (and nearly every year is more or less too dry or too wet, and a first rate crop, both spring and fall, is almost unknown), the poor man does not lose his little all while the great man prospers exceedingly. The second point is that most families will have pieces of high land and pieces of low, so that whatever the weather, it is favorable to some field; if too dry, the lowland crop is good, and if the season is too wet, the higher ground is safe. In this way no year but that of most extreme drought and flood is a total loss to the farmer.

The few largest holdings in the village are breaking up, due chiefly to the gambling or opium habits of these wealthy men. The number of farmers owning land is said to be decreasing, owing largely to natural disasters and war, which has more than once centered in this crucial place between the capital and its chief seaport. The land sold is more and more being bought up by those outside the village. However, the problem of absentee landlordism is not, as yet, serious.

Farmers say that one man alone can farm 10 mu; with one animal, 20 mu, but that with two animals he can farm 80 mu. The many families who have only one animal apiece usually cooperate, thus making it possible to cultivate more land.

Of the 306 hu in the village, 110 own animals, totaling 153 head. This bit of statistics happens to be known because special taxes, like war levies, are collected on animals, a horse or mule being taxed \$2.00; a bull \$1.00 and a donkey \$.80 a fair and clever way of taxing wealth. A good mule is worth \$150-200 (silver); a horse \$100 up, a bull \$70-80; and a donkey \$60-70. Almost two thirds of the village are without animals, where only half of the families studied own none. Only one tenth of the whole village owned two or more animals; one fifth of those families studied. Again, it must be admitted, that the study is not entirely representative, even of that village. Nearly every family owns one pig, and many have more. Almost all have a few chickens; a few own goats, ducks or geese. A nearby village has a flock of sheep.

This study cannot go into any agricultural detail. It might be mentioned, however, that the chief crops of the locality are, in estimated order of importance, first, sorghum and Indian corn, millet, various kinds of beans, cotton and peanuts, for the autumn crops. The spring crop is wheat. There are a few small orchards in the neighborhood, growing peaches, pears and apricots; while so-called "date" * trees grow in many courts. Most families would have small plots of cabbages and turnips, and only rarely other vegetables for marketing. Most families would raise a surplus of these articles, except, in bad years, to be sold in the neighboring market town, whence the surplus beyond local needs would be taken by the middlemen to the big cities.

The farmers estimate that fifteen years ago the profits on the crops from one mu of land were \$2, which would buy 50 catties of flour, (1-1/3 lb.-1 catty.) Now the profits are \$3. a mu, but the purchasing power has dropped to 45 catties. The cost of all commodities has gone up. This is especially true in such a year as this, when drought, flood, and war all combine to upset economic conditions. My host, supporting six adults and three children on 100 mu of land, saves \$500-\$600 in good years.

Farm laborers are relatively scarce in the region, so that in the busiest season wages are as high as \$1. a day. During ordinary times, however, the wages for this and other forms of semi-skilled labor run about \$.20 a day, food always being included. Farm workers far prefer, however, the dependable position of annual contracts, receiving only \$30. a year beyond food and lodging; (food has been generously estimated at \$4. a month.) In all families under observation, they have been entirely well treated, fed everyday food such as the family eats, sometimes sharing better food prepared for guests, and certainly being better fed than in a very poor home. They may or may not eat with the men of the family, and usually live in a separate room, but one not necessarily inferior to the other rooms in the home.

Just before and during harvest, the countryside in most places is dotted with high platforms heeded with matting, in which some member of the family stays every night to watch the crops. Good felling preserves are

*Jujube (*Zizyphos jujuba*) (2)

similary guarded. Chien Ying, however, taxes its people 20 coppers* per mu, and hires ten men to guard the crops. There is relatively little pilfering. There is also the regular village watchman, who, according to universal custom, makes his rounds clattering his rattle to warn intending thieves to do their business elsewhere. When the crop is harvested, however, -and is piled high around the threshing floor, which is usually an outer court, adjacent to the street or fields, and unwallled, a tepee of stalks is built, where the man of the house sleeps, his dog sharing the guard in the most exposed position. One or more dogs can be heard barking all night long. It is curious that after the grain is stored in a houses, the threshing floor is then fenced with sorghum stalks buried in a shallow trench, interwoven and tied, making a really effective and inexpensive protection, since no man or beast can get over or through it without destroying it, which would make a clatter that no conscientious dog would overlook.

Crops are cut near the roots, (which are later dug up for fuel) and in case the family has no cart or animals, carried home to the threshing floor hung to the ends of the long shoulder pole. Here the heads of grain are cut off and the stalks stacked for fuel. A few chosen heads of sorghum and millet are threshed by hand, that the stalk may not be broken. These are later made into brushes by an itinerant craftsman, (at 2 1/2 coppers a brush.) The wheat straw is carefully saved in bundles to weave hat braid during the long winter months. For the rest, the heads of all grains and the entire bean plants are severally spread on the open space and threshed by leading an animal around and around dragging a small stone roller over them. The crop is turned and rolled, repeatedly. In families without animals, the roller is dragged by men. Women may lead the animal and turn the heads. As a rule men do the winnowing, throwing a basket full of grain into a high arc, so placed that the wind carries the chaff into one pile, while the heavier grain falls in another. The process is usually repeated several times. The chaff is gathered and saved as part of the food for pigs. The grain is swept up, dried on mats and stored, usually in a separate room of the family courtyard, in huge baskets of matting, which may be 5 or even 10 feet across and many feet high. Vegetables are stored in great pits in the courtyard to prevent freezing. The pits are roofed with poles, cornstalks and mud, with matting over the entrance. When war comes too close, valuables, and even people, are hidden in these pits, which are, however, too universal and obvious to be very good protection. Peanuts are sifted in the field, by the men. Corn is husked and shelled, beans are shelled, and all other lighter work of the threshing floor is done largely by the women and any children over eight or thereabouts. Woman's work on the threshing floor is largely sitting down, and is very sociable, especially as it is so often adjacent to the street. Women in this neighborhood rarely work in the fields, except the few poorest; but after harvest the poor women and children go to glean in the fields which the

* In 1924 a copper was worth 1/4 of a U S cent but its value is steadily declining

farmers have finished. The wonder is that there is anything to gather, after the stumps and scraps have been pulled, raked and collected. But for some weeks in the early winter, poor families can glean enough straw and stubble not only to keep their own fires, but also to sell for a pittance and feed the family.

The cotton is picked before it is all fully blown, that it may be sunned and stored in the more easily guarded spaces around the home. Cotton picking is the last of the fall harvest. After this, the men go again to the fields to put in the winter wheat, using hand made, irontipped ploughs, and single or double seeders, trampling the seeds in with their feet. When this wheat is up three or four inches and winter cold stops its growth, the animals are pastured on it, thus saving about twenty cents worth of fodder a day, and doing no harm to the crop. While the wheat is ripening, the next crop is put in between the rows, and after it is harvested, it is replaced by a later planted fall crop. The Chinese, like the Indian, makes his succotash in the field, planting his beans between rows of Indian corn or Sorghum.

So much for the untechnical observations of one agriculturally untrained. In general the Chinese farmer wastes nothing whatever but human time and energy. But all his traditional lore and endless patience and labor are not enough. Anyone can see the difference between the crops of peanuts or cotton from local as compared with American seeds. Agriculturalists in China urge the use of better seeds and better methods, to improve the economic condition of the farmers as a whole.

Trade and Supplementary Crafts.

It has already been stated that the market town is only a mile from Chien Ying. Markets are held on every 2, 4, 7, and 9 occurring in the moon calendar, that is, four times in every ten days. Men gather from villages within a radius of five miles or more, bringing in bags of grain and beans or vegetables, or baskets and other craft products, for sale; and buying oil, tea, condiments, kerosene, meat, tinware or other necessities of life. Crops are sold bit by bit, the well-to-do, especially, waiting to sell until or only when prices are relatively high, while the poor sell now and then as they have need for cash. The market streets are jammed with people every time, animals are brought for sale, and every possible article of common use is to be had. Poor women and children hang around the grain market, eagerly brushing up the grains that are dropped during the measuring, and these are later sifted from the dust. Soups, bread, sweet potatoes and other foods are offered on stands or wheelbarrows to the hungry farmer from far away.

This market town must have a mile or more of regular shops, covering every local need. The large proportion of the population are chiefly engaged in trade or manufacture, but on the other hand, most of these same families would own or rent enough land to produce much or all of their own food.

The village of Chien Ying has no stores. Its four places of business are

two hot water shops and two small inns, at any of which only trivial articles, such as tobacco, candies, and nuts, are sold, outside the regular business. Since almost no cold water is drunk (an age-long sanitary precaution) and since every guest of any degree must be offered tea, boiling water is incessantly needed. Few families waste the fuel to boil water for themselves, (unless in winter the well-to-do supplement the warmth of the brick platform bed with a tiny portable coal stove), so the hot-water shop is a well nigh universal institution. Hot water is sold for about a copper a quart, and since the teapots are usually much smaller, they use bamboo tallies similar in value to the "cash", or punctured coin common in most parts of China. An economist has said that one can judge the economic standards of a society by the smallest unit of exchange. This is less than 1/50 of a U.S. cent.

The villagers are not dependent on the market town for all their purchases, however. There was no opportunity to study accurately the relative amount of trade in Huang Hu Tien with that from the itinerant peddlers in the village, but one would guess that outside the larger transactions in grain, animals, carts and the like, the greater quantity of trade was carried on at the village doors. All manner of edibles, live fish in tubs, all local fruits and vegetables, cloth, notions, embroidery patterns, crockery, ironware, baskets, coal, meat, toys, candy, nuts, and cigarettes, soap and lotions, old clothes,—indeed more than twenty kinds of wares pass through the village, transported usually in baskets swung from the shoulder-pole, or on wheel-barrows, and occasionally in donkey-paniers. Two or three men a day pass with the things in common need, as cloth and thread. There were always four or five venders of fruit, candies and cigarettes in different parts of the village, showing the waste on luxuries, even among the poor. Sweets are constantly bought to avoid that intolerable condition of life, a child crying.

Every peddler has his own peculiar chant or cry to advertise his wares. Less often than in the cities do they use mechanical sounds, rattles, tuning forks etc. to announce their services.

The candy and fruit vender has a bamboo tube filled with protruding sticks. These he shakes and the prospective buyer has three chances to draw out a trio of sticks to see if he gets the lucky sum of dots. Thus they gamble in transactions of even a copper or two. There is similar drawing of lots in temples where the gods cure disease. In accordance with the chance number on the stick, the suppliant receives a prescription for his ailment.

Besides the peddlers there are many itinerant craftsmen, repairers of shoes, (for such as do not patch for themselves;) the tinsmith, and blacksmith, repairers of pails, bamboo-ware and baskets, sieves and dishes. They camp beside the hot water shops or public mills, remaining as long as there is work for them. There are those, also, who buy eggs, old iron, rags, cotton batting, and cat or dog skins. (Mine Host says that the only people dogs really bite are these last. However, one would not trust a dog in his own courtyard not to bite an intruder unless properly introduced and accompanied by some member of the family.)

Printing defects are original to this copy.

These various peddlers and craftsmen mostly live in the villages round about, supplementing their farming by winter work. Some are sent out from shops in the market town, as for instance those representing the cloth merchants. A few, like the blacksmiths, take their bedding and cooking utensils along with anvil and tools on a wheelbarrow, cooking over their forge, and sleeping in the inn wherever they happen to be working, not returning home for months at a time.

Among the families studied, there were many supplementary winter trades, of which the peddling just described was the most frequent. One family put up the matting sheds used at funerals and weddings, and also made malt-and-sesame candy. Another made a sort of translucent bean-macaroni.* Some wove matting, sewed together the tops and soles of shoes too heavy for the women, sold notions at home, wove willow baskets, made cheap musical instruments, burned charcoal or raised bees. Some ground flour for others, used their animals, wheelbarrows, or carts to transport men or goods to market or the railroad, or did ordinary coolie labor. All but the most well-to-do women constantly weave hat braid during the winter, while they mind the baby or gossip with the neighbors. Twenty or thirty women and a few men are employed, at 19-30 cents a day, sorting, patching winding and inspecting hat braid, in the two homes which run that business. A few of the poorest women sew for others, and one made flowers, providing her own materials and selling the product at a couple of coppers each.

The income from these trades is very hard to ascertain, since no records are kept, the work is usually done by the family, and the materials used are largely home grown. The hot water shop takes in about three dollars a day, but has heavy expenses for coal, etc. Most of the itinerant venders and craftsmen earn little more than enough to pay for their food and lodging. If the best of them save a few dollars in the winter months they are doing well. Shoesoles are sewed on for 14 coppers a pair, and 6-7 pairs can be done in a long days work. This is almost clear gain, for only the hemp thread is provided. But to learn this trade a lad worked four years as apprentice in Tientsin; receiving only his food and bed, such as it was, and working 12-14 hours a day. The "macaroni," malt, and honey would yield considerable profits, but the materials are home grown, and they themselves keep no record of the profits. Matting weavers can clear twenty cents a mat, which is a full days work of one adult, either man or woman. The itinerant workers who gin and tease cotton, can make 140-150 coppers a day per man, from which they also must pay board and lodging and transportation of their ginning machine and great old teasing bows.

The House

Village houses in North China are largely built of mud, though those of the well-to-do are of partially baked brick with tile roofs. The base of all

* Fen t'iao-erb (乾粉條)

walls must be of brick to protect them from the greatest moisture of the flooded seasons. Above this is commonly an inch thick layer of straw to insulate the upper wall from dampness. Then the walls are built up with sun-dried mud brick, stuck together with more mud. The weight of the roof is borne on the upright and transverse beams, usually unhewn trunks, which constitute the main expense of housebuilding in this land where wood is scarce. The number of transverse beams, usually ten or twelve feet apart, count off the rooms (*chien*). The average house is three or five rooms long, costing \$30. a room to build. Brick construction costs nearly \$100. a room, in Chien Ying. The mud house, with its grass-grown mud roof, will last, with repairs, twenty years, or more. The loess soil is clay, very fine and hard. It is usually mixed with straw for building.

The courtyard faces south, the main house, where the elders live, being the northern building. This is five rooms long, for the larger homes, and in many cases, in this particular part of the country, the two end rooms are thrown together, making exceptionally large, airy apartments. In winter, the inner half may be curtained or papered off, to reduce the space to be heated. If the five rooms are divided, the inner or end ones are more often used for storage than residence. Entry is always through the center room, which is kitchen, pantry and hallway. Here too is the picture of the Kitchen God, (*Tsao Wang*), pasted over the fire, and often the carved shrine in which are placed the ancestral Tablets. There is usually an altar here, as in ancient Greece.

The three room side buildings are used for the residences of sons or younger brothers and their families, for storage, or for the animals, as the size of the family indicates. All windows, generously large, at least four feet square per room, open on to the court. These are papered for the living quarters, usually having some scrap of glass pasted in, to afford outlook. In summer, sections of paper are attached only at the top, rolling up and down for air. This space is occasionally screened with netting in the more modern homes. In winter the largest ventilation ever given is a two inch hole at the top. One household may have many such residence courts, usually connected through the central passageway, the northern one being the most honorable. Side court may be semi-detached for branches of the family, or may be used for animals, for storage, or for a threshing floor.

As previously explained, several courts may be organized as one family, or, on the other hand, the two halves of one building may belong to independent families, not even related.

No detailed report can be made on overcrowding. Any reasonably well-to-do home has plenty of rooms, but for considerations of warmth or sociability they may not all be used for residence. Few Chinese would choose to sleep alone. The estimate would be an average of not less than two adults and two children to a room. In poorer homes, however, there would be as many more than this, as there would be less in comfortable homes. The crucial facts of overcrowding, however, would not seem to lie in numbers,

but, first, in the absence of ventilation in cool or cold weather; and, second in the problem involved when children and adolescents sleep on the same k'ang (see below) with their parents, where no privacy, on even the most intimate matters, is possible. It is the custom for the poorer people to undress completely every night, in order to turn the clothing wrong side out to lessen the productivity of undesirable insects.

The Furnishings

Each corner inside the central door is filled with the great pot, two feet across, ten inches deep, of very thin iron, built into the masonry that leaves a stoke-hole underneath. The flues pass into the next room, where they run back and forth in a network of clay bricks, the "k'ang" (炕) a platform built under the window, at a height of 18 inches to two feet. The flues then go out through a low chimney at the far front corner of the room. The k'ang occupies one half to two thirds of the floor-space of any room. When new-built this is a comfortable system of heating, warming that part of the room where folks sit, eat, work, and sleep. When old, the clay cracks, and smoke leaks through into the room. The materials which the clay absorbs from the smoke make it valuable fertilizer when the k'ang is broken up and re-built, every five or six years.

The k'ang is edged with wood or cement, sometimes faced with brick or plaster, and is covered with matting. Quilts are often spread during the winter. On the center of the k'ang is a table not more than ten inches high, and in the corners are neat piles of the family bedding made up of large cotton quilts. Even in this cold climate, sleeping on a warmed k'ang with several people occupying a room closely shut up, one thick quilt is ample covering. It is the general custom, except for very small babies, for each person to lie wrapped in his own quilt. Observation easily shows that few families visited in that village seriously lack bedding.

The remaining furniture of the room varies with the financial position of the family, but always includes at least a table and big boxes, with all the motley of household utensils. The table is opposite the k'ang, in the center of the wall, with a chair or bench on each side (rarely at the end of the room). Above it hang such scrolls, pictures or decorative writing as the family owns, and on it are displayed jars, the almost universal wedding clock which never goes, mirrors, tea cups, and other ornaments, arranged as far as possible symmetrically. In the center may stand the chief ancestral tablet if it is not in a special shrine in the kitchen. The walls are likely to be covered with some sort of pictures, clippings from newspapers, cigarette advertisements, or cheap prints, of luck-bringing babies, or of legendary scenes. Hardly a home in these days but has at least a few framed photographs of members of the family, and treasured picture postals*. The well-to-do home will have high cupboards where the clothes in constant use are kept, and great chests, that serve as tables, too, for storing better things. These are set up on bricks to

* Such as an uncolored photo of the wharf at Seabeach or the post office in Smithville!

protect them from the damp of the brick or dirt floor. In the poor home, all farm implements as well as things for household use must be kept in the house, presumably in the crowded kitchen.

An attempt was made to list the belongings in one of the poorest homes in the village, but the items were far too many. Innumerable are the crockery jars, large and small, for foodstuffs; baskets of all sorts, especially the universal one that hangs high out of the reach of cats and dogs, for the leftover bread from meal to meal; bottles for condiments and oil; the ubiquitous Standard Oil lamp, and sometimes the little dingy hemp-oil lamp on a tall stand like a candlestick. A box of hairdressing utensils, soap dish, basin, sewing materials, old shoes and the like are certain to be lying round. A high shelf piled with books may indicate that some present or former man of the family was to some extent a scholar. The family towel, none too clean, is certain to hang over the door. The doorway is hung in summer with a reed screen, in futile pretense of keeping the flies out of the living apartment; in winter with a wadded curtain, which also substitutes for roller towel. In the kitchen are all the bowls, bread boards, brushes, choppers and other utensils of food preparation.

Very few articles of common use come from "the West," even in a town so easily accessible to foreign trade. The universal things are the Standard Oil products and cigarettes. (There is no such universal propaganda for Christian missions as for the Standard Oil Company and the British American Tobacco Co.) Many articles come from other parts of China, however, even from relatively distant parts, or from Japan. Tea, salt, condiments, (cloves and other spices being generally used), cloth, crockery, toilet articles, and some other things, are brought from outside the neighborhood, (neighborhood being defined as the area served by the market town.) The surprise is rather how much of what they use is locally grown and manufactured;—hemp for home-made thread, rope, and lubricating oil; cotton for thread, (still spun by a few women,) and for wadding garments; sesame and peanuts for the common cooking oils; ploughs and other farm implements; coarse paper, and many other things. A few men are buying cheap foreign-style overcoats, hats and even leather shoes, but clothing is still almost entirely home-made.

FOOD AND COOKING.

The diet of the North China farmer recalls the Kentucky mountaineer, consisting largely of corn meal mush, corn pone and beans. The farmer eats three meals a day during the busy season; at daylight, noon, and dark; and two during the winter, in the middle of the morning and early afternoon. The children might almost be said to eat all day, nibbling bread or turnips or something, whenever it occurs to them. Every meal consists of three things even for the poorest, unless under famine conditions:—a porridge, a bread, and a vegetable, which is usually "salt vegetable," a small quantity of turnip soaked for a year in brine, the universal savory. The vegetable may be turnip or beans boiled into the mush, or cabbage fried in a little oil, or, for

the prosperous, fish, beets, sweet potatoes, a variety of bean products, onions, and on great occasions, meat prepared with some vegetable.

For the poor, the bread and the porridge are chiefly Sorghum or Indian corn, the finely sieved portion making steamed corn-pone, the remainder being boiled into mush. Beans are often ground with the corn. Millet is some what more expensive. Wheat is used largely and in a variety of forms, mostly made by rolling dough and chopping it into macaroni-like strings, or flaking it into scraps, boiled in the great pot. Breads are also made of the whole wheat flour, (usually not raised); and vegetable fillings are wrapped into pancakes of dough to be boiled or steamed into dumplings. White flour and rice are almost never used, and only for the greatest occasions. Sweet dishes are rare. Peppers are used but little in this region, though extensively in parts of North China. Black bread made of tares (or darnell) is used by the poorest, and is sweet and palatable, if not so nourishing. This common diet is thoroughly catable, though usually rather heavy, requiring more chewing than they commonly give it. The starches are disproportionately heavy. The poor people get too little fat and protein; but those in comfortable circumstances who use more oil in cooking, and eat quantities of beans in one form or another, get a more balanced diet.

There seems no quicker method of winning one's way into the hearts of country folk than to like their food, unless it be to care to learn how to cook it. The average meal is all cooked in one big pot, the cabbage fried first, with water added to make a soup, and then this is set aside in a covered bowl. The mush is next boiled in the bottom of the pot, the cornpone is slapped onto the upper sides in slabs the size of a hand, or there is a reed grating set over the liquid on which bread or sliced turnips are steamed, and the dish of cabbage placed to keep warm. Preparation and cooking of a simple meal like this takes a very short time, and while the fire is doing its work the woman fixes her hair or attends to other duties. The fuel being hay, twigs, or at best cornstalks, the fire needs constant attention.

But there are other things,—the dumplings, for instance,—which require hours of preparation, quantities of cabbage must be chopped up, (or leeks, or any vegetable); and if the father has happened to shoot a bird or rabbit, there may be meat added. Whole wheat flour is most elegant, but more commonly used is the red flour mixed with Sorghum, or green with ground beans. The flour is mixed with water only to form a stiff dough, which is rolled out into hundreds of thin disks two or three inches across, into which dabs of the filling are placed by the use of chopsticks. An oyster-shaped dumpling is made by pinching the edges firmly together. These are then boiled for ten minutes, and served with vinegar and garlic. It took four women three hours to make enough for eight adults and two small children to eat. Yet, in winter, they will prepare these dumplings once a week, or more, the men occasionally helping, which is a very sociable proceeding.

The elaborate preparation and cooking of a dinner for guests, however, may be very unsociable for the feminine guest, who must always arrive before

the cooking is begun. She may be left almost or quite alone while the women do the work. A man guest, of course, would be entertained and dined in a separate room with the men of the family. But if the guest be a woman, the men do not appear, eating outdoors, in warmer weather, or crouched on their heels in the center room, or in another of the family houses. In eight weeks residence in a Christian family, the father and son rarely ate in the room with "Teacher" and the elder women, and if they did, sat at the table, and never on the k'ang with the others, as they would, had the family been alone.

Phases of marketing have already been touched upon. Farmers obviously raise almost everything they eat. The few village families not farming, usually buy grain in the market town, vegetables at the door, and fuel from some neighbor. It has already been indicated that oil, condiments, etc. are purchased either from the peddlers or in the market.

Hygiene with respect to food is little known. Experience of the ages has taught them to drink boiled water in the form of tea, and largely to eat cooked food. It is only an occasional villager with some modern education who has any appreciation of the danger of flies, which are indescribably numerous, especially in the open kitchen. Dishes are inadequately washed, and the dogs and cats lick out the family bowls. The brush with which they clean out the pot is kept quite rigidly separated from the other brushes, but the floor brush or the family hand towel are used to clean the table on which bread and other foods are set. The dogs wait patiently beside the k'ang for bones and scraps, and the cat goes where he pleases, being so well fed, on the whole, one wonders how many mice he annoys in the rooms where grain is stored. The chopsticks may be wiped on the curtain, just where the dogs brush through, and it is an almost universal practice to scald out teacups and then wipe the inside on the family towel. These things distress our germ-conscious minds, but it is doubtful whether American farm women of our grandmothers' day would have done differently.

Babies are nursed whenever they make a fuss, up to the second or even third year, just as among the Appalachians. Before they wholly stop nursing, they are given any adult food, and tea. Large greasy doughnuts, bought on the street, and other particularly indigestible things, may be premasticated before being given to the baby. A child of three was whimpering on the k'ang. The mother explained that it had indigestion, and in order to pacify it, gave it raw turnip to eat. How do they stand it? Those not strong enough to stand almost anything, would have died in early infancy.

One primary part of food preparation remains to be discussed, the grinding of the grains. There are two kinds of mills; those where one round flat stone is turned on another, never, under my observation, worked by woman-power; and the kind where a stone roller or cylinder is rolled over a flat foundation. Wheat and finer flours are ground by the former mill, always by animals or men; the poorer people either going without, or borrowing the mill and animals of their neighbors. There were five public mills of the latter sort, and but few private families owned them. Most women ground daily, for

immediate use, pushing the roller with the aid of her older children or daughters in-law. Sorghum was husked by this same process. Families owning animals usually did several days grinding at one time. These mills constituted one of the few social features of life for many poorer and busier women. Several might be waiting their turns. Neighbors passing would pause to gossip. In winter the idle men would gather on these prominent corners to pass the time of day. The mill corners supplemented market day as the news exchange for both local and political matters.

Clothing.

Chinese clothing is remarkably sensible, comfortably adapted both to winter and summer, inexpensive and hygienic. Men, women and children all wear trousers bound in at the ankle, and a jacket, which is longer for the women than for the men. For better occasions the men wear in addition the long gown reaching to the ankles, and open at the side so as not to impede walking. For the farmer's family, these are all made of most durable, heavy, cotton cloth, usually indigo blue. There are three weights,—the single, the lined, and those wadded, more or less heavily, with cotton batting. For complete comfort, two of each should be available for each individual, to facilitate washing. Those who possess them, wear single garments under and over the wadded ones, to protect these from soil. In any case the wadded garments are ripped up annually and washed, the cotton being thoroughly respread and if necessary supplemented, when the garment is made over. The same cotton wadding may be reused for as long as 30 years. For the poor who have no under garment, and live in the one wadded outfit throughout cold weather, the state of filth is unthinkable. In bitter cold weather, layer after layer of clothing is added, making an unwieldy bulk. The Chinese garment is loose and comfortable, except that it is flat across the chest, which causes city girls of the more stylish sort to use too tight undergarments. The string with which trousers are held at the waist need only be firm. Chinese stockings are made of similar heavy cloth, usually white, and also single, lined, or wadded, for the different seasons. Children under six or eight years old wear open trousers, so that when they sit down there is nothing between them and the cold stone or dirt. In winter a wadded square tied on behind prevents this, but in no way protects them from exposure to cold or chapping.

The chief difficulty about Chinese clothing is the time taken in the making. The seams are done with fine stitches, taken individually, either "over and over" or "backstich;" and each seam twice, if not more. The cutting and folding must be very exact. As in so many other matters, not a scrap of material is wasted, but endless human time and energy is consumed. This is even more striking in the case of shoes. Scraps of damp cloth are smoothed out in a single layer on a board, spread with flour paste and another layer put on, with infinite patience. Several thicknesses are used in the making of uppers, and very many layers are necessary for the soles of men's shoes. These stiff foundations are lined and faced, usually with new cloth, and stitched, sometimes at intervals of an eighth of an inch, often in decorative patterns. The soles

must usually be stitched with an awl. The poorer women do not even get help for the heaviest and hardest process of sewing the soles and uppers together. It takes a week or ten days to make such a pair of shoes, and men will wear them out in a month or two, and women who are all active in three or four.

FAMILY LIFE.

Family relationships

The question has often been asked, especially in working out budgets or minimum wages. "What is the average size and composition of the Chinese family?" This will vary with the locality and the income, but the modes and averages for Chien Ying may be suggestive elsewhere.

Defining the family, stbe as the economic unit, preparing its food and farming independently, we find as the extremes, a family of one and another of twenty-one. For the 82 families studied, the mode falls at five and the average at 6.3 persons actually living at home. If however, we count the 29 men who work in Peking, Tientsin, or elsewhere, contributing more or less regularly to the family budget, and the few children who are away at school; but still partially or wholly dependent on the family, we get 6.7 persons per family. As has already been said, one quarter are men, more than a third women, and almost 40% children.* This would mean that the average family would consist of one or two men in residence, two women, and two or three children. For convenience, we might say conseratively that the typical family consists if six, four adults, and two children, (remembering that marriage or 16 $\frac{1}{2}$ years, is our line between child and adult).

Families of 13, 15, 16, 19, or 21 persons are obviously what we usually call the large family, or clan family system, where several sons and their families have remained with their elders. In no case did the brothers remain in one economic unit after the death of both parents.† They frequently continued to live in the same court, but supported their families independently. The well-to-do usually remained in the larger units, while the poorer families were more likely to split, even during the lifetime of one or both parents. It would seem that in homes of plenty, family differences were more easily overlooked; but with the very poor, disagreements were more acute, resulting in economic division. This division of family property is usually arbitrated by some elderly neighbor. In general, at the death of the parent all sons share and something may be set aside for the support of younger daughters, who would live with a brother, presumably the eldest, until marriage.

A few cases will illustrate the causes of the break-up of families into small units. One poor old widow has two sons. The elder is strong and happy-go-lucky, with a wife selfishly rejoicing in the fact of never having borne children. The younger son is going blind from trachoma, and his wife is very lame, though not helpless. They have lost three babies. These brothers quarrel, so the elder and his wife moved out, supporting themselves very comfortably

* See appendix p. 41

† Brothers and even cousins are said to remain together more frequently in the South.

on rented land and by day labor. The younger, though left with the entire very meagre patrimony, finds it impossible to feed his mother and wife without assistance from relatives.

One very young couple and their child moved to a room in some neighbor's house, because he was a gambler and good-for-nothing, and his family quite clearly had turned him out to shift for himself. In many cases, however, there is no evident dissension in the family, but the several brothers each attend to their own affairs, around the same court, sharing the same threshing floor and mill, and frequently owning an animal in common.

In this connection, let us recount the whole interesting history of the Sheep family. Mr. Sheep had been a Christian, and had prospered in business. He had gone to Tientsin to work for a few years, became just a little too prosperous, perhaps, and had bought a concubine from the usual shameful source. When he brought her home to the village, his wife committed suicide, and was discovered by the small daughter hanging dead. The man was immediately put out of the church as soon as he came home. Missionary friends took the two girls to the city to school and made it possible for them not to return except at rare intervals, for short visits. The concubine has had no children. The older son and his family of several small children have their independent home in half of the five-room main house. Now the sixteen-year old wife of the younger son has been fighting hard with the concubine for two years, though they, too, run their separate household in a side building of the family court. When the concubine beats the girl, the father takes his daughter-in-law's part and beats his concubine. At last one day, an elder woman in the tribe came into the Chapel all eagerness to share her news.

"Sheep family is fighting again." She sat on the k'ang and related how the little concubine had finally run away to a nephew's home, (chief elder of the church), and refused to go back. There had been blows all around, and even wounds, it seemed, and the poor woman actually threatened to return to the life from which she had come, rather than remain. The breach was patched up again, however, and there is armed neutrality in that little court. The concubine locks her room when she leaves it, and the girl does not appear while the other is around. The whole makes grist for the gossip mill of all the neighbors, and they grind it fine.

Except for such disrupted homes, most families include three generations, and many have four, women are often grandmothers at forty or earlier, and may be great grandmothers before sixty. Although most homes would include elders, few of these would be really old. Only $4\frac{1}{2}\%$ of those studied were 60-70 years; 3% 70-80 years; and there were only five over eighty, mostly women. The oldest individual was 89 years old. It is a strenuous life, and old age arrives early. There are few widowers and many widows, for men freely remarry, and women only if their own and their husband's family are entirely too poor to support them. A widow must wed a widower, if she marries at all.

Great honor is paid to the woman, who, widowed early, remains true.

In many places arches have been erected by the Imperial government to faithful women widowed over thirty years. The exceptionally fine marble arch near Chien Ying bears the legend that the man had been murdered and the widow herself, in default of men in the family, secured retribution. At her death the arch was erected at the graves of the couple, with a marble table laden with offerings before it. In 200 years, the table and base of the arch have been completely buried in silt from the almost yearly flooding.

Family Terminology

As an example of the subordination of the individual to the family the matter of names may be taken. A baby is given a "milk name," which may be humorous, like "Little Pig;" register the family disappointment at having a girl, as "Golden Brother," or "Good Son;" or may have some charming meaning, like "Jade Jewel" for a girl, or "Little Love," or "Excellence," for a boy. The name sometimes apparently has no particular significance. If the child goes to school, a more dignified name is given, and incidentally, this may be quite freely changed, to the annoyance of school registrars. Such names usually have very pretentious meanings. Ideas of purity, beauty, grace, run through girls' names, ideas of literary ability, patriotism, strength, for boys. Chinese will know that certain characters clearly indicate boy or girl, (as we would have no doubt of Charles or Mary), but other names might be for either sex, as for instance, there were a man and a woman student, entirely unrelated, at Yenching College, both named "Strong Earth." A mature man will also have a "hao", a formal name, by which even strangers may address him, a highly complimentary name, bestowed by some friend.

But the curious part of it is that names are used almost not at all, especially in the villages. A little child's name may be frequently used by relatives or friends, or by elder brothers and sisters. But the child is more commonly called "Third Sister" or "Great Son," and inevitably so by the younger children. For example, a fine 18 year old lad named "Self-Faith" was never called by name at all, but always addressed and referred to by his parents and other elders in the family as "Fourth Son" (incidentally, the older three had died); by his sister, as "Older Brother;" and by the hired men as "Old Fourth." His letters were addressed by his "hao". His sister-in-law used the term "Our Youngest (literally *old*) uncle," from the point of view of her children, this illustrates a point most confusing to the outsider, especially a foreigner. They never say "my husband" and rarely "my son or brother," but usually designate the person as "Little Splendor's Father," or "our Grandfather," collectively from the point of view of the children. The preacher's wife, a fine modern woman, called to her daughter-in-law,—"Little Ceremony's Mother, come eat."

There is no word for "uncle" in Chinese, but there are different terms for Father's elder brother, his younger brother, Grandfather's elder or younger brother, and entirely different terms for relatives on the mother's side. The

designations for aunt are as numerous and as definite. Cousins, however, are puzzling for the opposite reason. Since the sons of one family all live together, their sons are counted in one series. Babies dying shortly after birth do not count at all, but any who live long enough to establish an identity remain permanently in the count. Thus:-

"Are all the these children brothers?" "Oh, yes, Here is Great Brother, Third and Fifth and Sixth and Eighth."

"Oh, no, I have only this one, "patting the Third, "Great and Fifth are Our Elder Uncle's. And Sixth and Eighth are Fourth Uncle's."

Unless they are pinned down in that way to definite parenthood, family terms may be very vague. Imagine the difficulties of determining the number of persons in a family, their relationship and ages, when this is constantly happening:-

"Are you all one family?" is asked in a room crowded with women and children.

"Yes, this is our daughter-in-law, "(having already found out that the old lady had but one son living,)" and these our two grand-daughters-in-law."

Then, turning to the daughter-in-law,

"How many sons have you?"

"Just this baby, the others all died in infancy." So the wondering question is asked as to whom these granddaughters-in-law belong.

"Why they are in Third Grandfather's family, living next door."

It may be guessed that with family terminology such as this, with all the neighbors and all branches of the family crowding into the room to satisfy their curiosity, and asking the "teacher" almost as many questions as she herself was asking, it took many visits, and the Evangelist's help, to unravel some of the families.

In short, a man's name is rarely used, and a woman's name practically never. There are 100 surnames in China, and some of these are uncommon, so there will be numberless families in one village having a common surname, though they may be of entirely unrelated stock. (It may be mentioned that Chien Ying is properly named "Chen Family Business," indicating that once it was the home of the Chen tribe. It is decidedly unusual that that tribe is no longer represented by anything but graves, though surviving members of the family regularly return for worship and repair of the graves. Most villages are named for families, and that particular clan usually continues to predominate in the place.) Since there are many named Chang, it is not always enough to say that this is Chang Three. It may be necessary to distinguish him by his name. But a woman is nothing but so-and-so's wife, daughter, or mother. If she returns to her own home, she is only "Second Aunt". Even if she registers for a class in reading the Thousand Characters, at best she combines her maiden surname with her married name; she has no name of her own.

If a woman has no child by way of which to address or speak of her husband, she may speak of him, or of her father-in-law, as "Our Family

Head" or "Our Business Head." Speaking to or of members of another family, the family status is still usually used, as "Here comes Second Grandma Horse" or "Come in, come in, King Elder Sister-in-law." In addressing people, it is generally more courteous to use name and title than to say "you."

The Woman in the Home.

If a woman is asked about "her family," she will always reply concerning her husband's family, unless the question specifically refers to her *Mother's* home. Relationships are traced wholly through males. It is probable that in the distant past, China, too, followed the metronmyic system for legendary references suggest it, and the writing for surname is composed of two words *woman-born*. A sister's son is called "Outside born". Maternal relatives are not of the "family," but are classed under different terms. Therefore the average family almost always consists of relatives on the father's side. It is a rare generosity that takes in some aged and uncared for relative from the mother's side. Only now and then do a daughter and her husband live with her parents, and then only when his family are all dead, and the young people are extremely poor. If a husband is called to work elsewhere, and has no parents with whom to leave his family, they may temporarily return to her parent, to whom the husband sends funds for their support. But the widow or deserted wife who has "in-laws" is expected to remain permanently with them. An old couple, without children of their own, adopted a son, who proved worthless. Immediately after his marriage he disappeared into army service, and may have been killed for all they know. His clever little wife is now studying to be a Woman Evangelist so that she will be able to support the old people, who are already too infirm to work very hard.

Little can be said of the relationship of husband and wife, from any intimate point of view, for the very simple reason that except in the Christian home in which "Teacher" lived, she rarely saw the men at all, having little chance to observe husbands and wives together except in the relation of eater and cook. Pleasures are not taken in common. If there are men guests, the women may not even appear to serve the food. If women guests, the men may or may not enter to join casually on the edge of the gossip, but certainly do not eat with the women. The men congregate at market or on the street corner, in the leisure of wintertime, and the women on the k'ang for gossip. A few old folk of a rather disreputable class, mix for gambling. The women take little or no part in conversation if men are leading it, even in the family.

The elder woman in the home does, however, hold the purse strings so far as domestic expenses go, and it would seem to be a common household treasury. There are notable exceptions, where the woman is head and heart of the house. Grandfather Open is mildly "cracked," his weakness being religious, for he contentedly belongs to both Protestant and Catholic Churches, in the village. It is Grandma that runs the house and farm. What is more, when her eldest son was only a baby, she started an industry that has affected thousands in that and neighboring villages. Through some middle-man she learned that Germany wanted hat braid, learned how to weave it from the

local wheat straw, taught her neighbors, and all winter, bought it in large quantities, bound it in commercial sizes, bleached it and shipped it in bulk to Germany; a business that handled thousands a year. During the war, only such limited quantity could be produced as was demanded by Chinese trade, but now the business is reviving again.

With rare exceptions, the women travel little, cannot read, and have very little knowledge about public affairs even within the village. In less modernized places, the women could not appear on the main streets at all, and might not even recognize their next door neighbors. Here, there is greater freedom. Limitations exist, however. When "Teacher" and the Evangelist were invited to watch the seven sons of a well-to-do family making the bean-macaroni, the various sons' wives followed into the side building of the family court, to watch the process for the first time. That they had never seen it before would hardly be fear of bothering the workers in so large a room, nor indifference in a land full of curiosity. The Evangelist explained that the sisters-in-law should not see Second Brother with his coat off, in the intense heat of the steaming kettles. City rickshaw runners and other coolies do all their summer work stripped to the waist; but these women are sheltered in the home. Another time, a young woman evinced the greatest embarrassment at almost intruding where the brother-in-law was washing his chest crouched with his back turned to the door, his coat very modestly flung across his shoulders.

The hat braid is one of the few things a woman can make for sale. Even so it is doubtful if she could support herself on such a pittance. Some few poor women are servants in others' homes, receiving a couple of dollars a month besides their lodging. There is little demand for such workers in villages, for most families have poor relatives needing help.

One hears a great deal about mothers-in-law. Even in the West, they are almost as popular a joke as step-mothers, and their cruelty is undoubtedly partly founded on fact and partly grossly exaggerated. The great contrast lies herein, that in China, the wife is never mistress in her own home so long as there is a mother-in-law living, and at all physically and mentally able to carry responsibility. Even where the mother is in all things fine and lovable, the daughters inevitably resent their lack of independence and freedom, the fact that they are treated like children, and that they have no final authority over their own sons and daughters. Contrary to American practice, the married daughter returning to visit in her own home is the guest,* is waited on by her sisters-in-law, though they may be her seniors, and if she sews it is on her husband's shoes, or the like. The intimacies of everyday living where there is no privacy, and with constant causes for friction not unnaturally cause occasional quarrels. These are more verbal than physical, are not hidden in the privacy of home, and are the chief source of entertainment to the neighbors.

* In Manchu homes, the sister-in-law must bow first to the unmarried girl, every morning, though she may be many years older.

Cases of the vilest cruelty do certainly occur. To cite an authentic case. A woman in Chien Ying, left her daughter's feet unbound. After the girl's marriage, her mother-in-law bound them, so tightly as to break the bones, making the girl continue to walk on them and work. "She died when her first baby was born", commented her own mother. In a village five miles further from the railroad, the granddaughter of a Chien Ying family is the only child unbound, to the constant scorn of the neighbors, who have but one argument: "How will you find a mother-in-law for a girl who is unbound?"

Is there then still footbinding? It is against the law: Yes. But the Provisional Civil Code is not well enforced. The Manchus never bound their girls' feet. The one well governed province, Shansi, has succeeded in enforcing the law in all but the most out-of-the-way mountain valleys. The boat people of the south do not bind, nor the Hakka folk, (who cling to the traditions and language of central China which were theirs before they secured "guest homes" in the south, in the eleventh century.) Education and Christianity are gradually influencing public opinion in the centers of communication, and it is rare to see girls under 15 with small feet in any of the big port cities. But outside these groups, the vast majority of Chinese girls are bound at the age of four or five, thus restraining the feet from normal growth. The hindering is tightest just before marriage, after which the bandages are somewhat loosened.

But it is astounding what they can do on little pegs of feet, so small that they cannot long keep their balance standing, nor walk more than a couple of miles even at the necessary snail's pace. They will walk a mile and back to market or to church. The school girls play "hopscotch" and jump rope, and the older women love to forget their dignity to learn "drop the handkerchief" or "three deep." But very few women claim that it does not hurt, especially during the early and tightest binding.

Concubinage.

The sad story of the only man in the village to take a concubine has already been related. Few country folk have the funds to support two families and they are not so influenced by style as the officials and merchants of the big cities. Chien Ying has one case of a man taking two wives, however. The headman's brother died childless, so his son has a second wife, daughter-in-law to the widow, and living with her in a separate court from the headman's home. There must be sons to carry on the family name and ancestor worship, and there must be daughters-in-law to help the mother. The more usual solution among farmers is to adopt a son, usually from some brother's family, or at least a cousin on the father's side. This happens not infrequently.

Woman's Life.

A woman's work is never done. But as a rule she rarely works under high pressure. During harvest seasons she rises at cock-crow, (since few families would have timepieces), so that the men and farm laborers may eat

early and get out in the fields by dawn. They usually go to bed shortly after it becomes really dark, and the women will have been working steadily all day. General housework is light. A careless brushing of the matting on the k'ang and of the brick or dirt floor suffices, and little if any dusting is done except in a remarkably tidy home. Cooking, sewing, and threshing-floor activities have already been discussed. Care of the baby takes a very unnecessarily large proportion of time, for he is universally spoiled, and must not be allowed to cry. A baby that can crawl and is still too small to get off the high k'ang alone, cannot be left unwatched a minute. (Babies have been burned to death by falling off k'angs into the fire in parts of the country where the cook-stove is in the one room.) Generally speaking, every child under two takes the full time of one adult or older sister for all its waking hours, most of which time is wasted, since few occupations can be carried on at the same time, though mother may shell the beans or get a little sewing done if the child is very small, or grand-mother may stand at the gate chatting with her cronies, with the baby on her back.

The woman's hairdressing takes a very long time. None but a sloven would fail to comb it once a day, a process which takes at least half an hour. Since the hair is only washed annually in summer, it is kept free of dust (and other things) by daily, thorough fine-tooth-combing, with the family comb. Different forms of coiffure indicate different ages, styles and ranks, but they all require glossy smoothness throughout, which is obtained by endless combing, wiping with an oiled rag, and tying so tightly that old women usually lose their hair. Some styles of head dress require foundation forms or ornaments of wire and cloth, the hair is secured with strings, home made nets, and a single straight pin, which on dress occasions is silver or enamel.

The fine hairs on a woman's face are considered seriously to spoil beauty and the married women must keep their hair plucked out to form a high square forehead. Therefore another woman, with a complicated twist of string held in her hands and teeth, tweaks out the hairs from the whole face and back of the neck, which can hardly be a comfortable process.

The amount of bathing, especially in winter, is scanty. Between the high cost of water and fuel, and the lack of privacy, it is doubtful if much more is done than the frequent washing of face and hands, and the necessary weekly care of bound feet. A cold snap came one Tuesday, and between dirt and wind, three year old got very chapped where her open trousers failed to protect. Bathing and oil were suggested. "But she was washed last week, we can't bathe her again."

Mother's chief recreation, as already indicated, is gossiping. For the women who do not gamble there is nothing else to do. During the busy seasons, they are tied rather closely to the duties of home, relieved by gatherings at the public mills and leisurely purchases at the gate. In winter the older women leave their daughters-in-law to do the cooking, perhaps take the baby, while they visit with the neighbors. At this season, also, every woman who

can be spared from home, takes all her small children and packs off to her own home, for a visit of a fortnight or a month. The elder woman of the house, however, cannot usually be spared, short of a wedding or a funeral. During the slack months nearly every home is lacking a daughter-in-law, or entertaining a returned daughter. It is the custom, also for brides to make long visits to their own homes, and in this locality the bride spends alternate months of her first year with her mother and her husband's family. Likewise, on the third day after a child is born, its maternal grandmother comes for a visit of several days, and when the month is completed, the mother and her children return to her own home for perhaps as long as another month. If a daughter-in-law falls sick, her mother may be called to come and stay with her, to relieve the "in-laws" of the care of nursing her. Altogether there is not a little visiting. When a woman returns to her home village, her relatives call on her, invite her to dine with them, treating her as a guest, and she calls on other neighbors and friends. The home visits continue as long as her own mother lives, and perhaps while she still has a father.

The courtesy and hospitality of the Chinese is superlative. Passing women on the street the greeting is exchanged:—"Have you eaten?" "Eaten: Eaten?" "Eaten!" "Come in and rest a while, yes, do come in and drink tea." It is almost impossible to proceed past the door of a friend's house, if one is seen. No Chinese would eat, even among the motly assortment of strangers on a train, without first offering the food to everybody in sight. It is frequently embarrassing to avoid eating at every house on which a call is made. With extreme apologies for their humble food, with endless trouble and expense to buy better if it is at all obtainable, they press the visitor to dine. No trouble is too great for a friend.

Births and Deaths.

No statistics of births or deaths yet available are comparable with Western census figures. It was impossible at Chien Ying to compile them in the usual way. The questionnaire hopefully included age at death and causes, but it was soon found out that posthumous inquiry by a layman was useless. Three causes of adult death are given:— age, indigestion, and fever. Further inquiry rarely produced more specific facts, and other questioning was necessarily so full and persistent that it seemed wisest to abandon the hope of eliciting from widows and bereaved mothers the desired information. Obviously they themselves know little of diagnosing diseases. Babies die of "wind" during the first few days.

Mrs. King was an especially bright woman, whose older children were all educated, even up to college grade.

"How many children have you?"

"Six; four students and two daughters", replied the mother.

"Have you lost any?"

"No, I am particularly fortunate. I have not 'thrown any away'".

"You mean that in your whole life you bore only six?"

"Oh, no, but the four who died of wind don't count."

Information is hard to get!

"How many children have you borne, Mrs. Lee?"

"Several, I don't remember; seven or eight, perhaps." Her own daughter interposed.

"Is it not ten, Mother?" Between them they calculated, and concluded it had been eleven.

"My own sister," continued the mother, "bore twenty-two, but she 'threw away' all but two."

"Were the two who lived older or younger?"

"One of her first and one of her last." Is that physically possible? Yes, she may have been married at thirteen or fourteen, and continued to bear into her forties. As the Evangelist once remarked:—

"If husband and wife are at home together, it is almost impossible not to have one a year, if they die, and one in two years, at least."

It is a curious fact that many women do not bear children ("open the flower" or "blossom") for four, eight, or even ten years after marriage, and then have several. With these country women this is absolutely involuntary. A woman wants a son, it is not only her duty to the clan, and the customary desire to have sons, but also it gives the daughter-in-law a place of honor in the home.

There is another reason why it is extremely difficult to determine the birth rate. If many women must stop to count, or be pressed to note the babies who died in infancy, before they took their places in the numbering of sons and daughters in the clan, even less do they keep any memory of stillbirths or miscarriages, which properly come into birth records. (It is hoped that the cooperation of a few rural school teachers or pastors' wives can be secured to record, year by year, the pregnancies and losses of the women in the neighborhood, but even then it is doubtful if trustworthy facts can be secured showing the births per thousand inhabitants.) The best that could be done in Chien Ying, in so short a time, was to cross-question mothers, especially the older ones, concerning their own children, born living. The results average 7.4 births per mother, (widowed or over childbearing age) 4.5 deaths, or 60%. Of these, many would still be small children, so that it would be likely that an average of about two children per couple would live to maturity. These figures include sterile women and a few young widows' cases which counterbalance the appalling frequency of such facts as:— born 13, died 12; born 9, died 7; born 11, died 9 etc. For the younger mothers, the proportion of deaths was even a little higher, 62%.

Children are assisted into the world by the older women of the family and a midwife. She is usually a very old woman, receiving a dollar, or less, for her services, according to her skill. One, still in practice, was proud of her eighty years. She had been rather unsuccessful herself, having lost seven of her eleven children shortly after birth, and two later.

The young widow of the Open family's grandson had worked hard up to the very night before the baby came, squatting on the floor to stoke fires, chopping vegetables, washing the heavy cotton clothes, and doing all the other chores of life. At five o'clock the little first cry was heard, with the grandmother and midwife in attendance, and an aged dependent running errands. The new arrival's uncle kept the fire going briskly under the pot heating both the water and the k'ang where the young mother lay. The only other child was a girl, and of course the posthumous baby should have been a boy; and the great-grandmother long refused to believe it was only a girl.

An hour later visitors called on the latest arrival, laid in a pile of fine dust which filled the cracks where her eyes would be, and the fine fluff of black hair. She was tightly bound in a square of blue cloth, red tapes at her elbows and knees. The mother sat in a similar pile of "loess" dust which was not removed until next day, this being much the easiest thing to clean up, in a land where water is scarce, fuel still more expensive and washing therefore difficult and little indulged. The baby was dressed after the third day in a red jacket and bag of dust, nice "clean" dust, warmed before putting the baby into it, and changed when needed. This dust is as fine and soft as talcum powder, but it is no wonder that one form of the "wind" of which so many tiny babies die, is tetanus. Since a baby cries before its mother's milk is adequate, some relative comes in to nurse it, as the baby makes demand. Otherwise the baby was handled surprisingly little during the first few days. But it was not bathed for weeks. Over the door of the baby's room were very promptly hung the symbols of her fate—an onion, a printed sheet, and a red rag. (Red signifies joy, in China.)

All the first day, nearby relatives were dropping in to see the child and congratulate the mother. On the third day the midwife was feasted, along with those who happened to be in residence, and the maternal grandmother arrived for a visit. All friends presented eggs, and the mother was expected to eat them constantly. The ceremonies of the "completed (first) month" were missed because of absence due to war. Immediately afterwards, the young mother and her two little girls went to her mother's home, for the usual visit. It was curious to notice how much Christianity had influenced character, and how entirely the science which so constantly attends its spread had failed to change the established ways. Mother and baby came through the ordeal in fine shape, but rather in spite of the treatment than because of it.

Age at Marriage

Both boys and girls are often married before adolescence and physical maturity. This undoubtedly affects motherhood. Of 100 men studied three were married at 11 years, 25 under 15 years. The mode age for marriage of boys proved to be 15 and 16, and only 20% were still unmarried at 21. The mode is the same for the 150 women studied, nearly half being married during those two years. No cases were found of girls married below 12; but, on the other hand, only 2 were left spinsters at 20, both cases of daughters needed

Printing defects are original to this copy.

at home until younger brothers could bring in daughters-in-law to help the mother. If these figures are at all inaccurate, they are half a year too high. for the Chinese count averages a year and a half above the Western reckoning. Moreover, it has already been pointed out that the families studied were above the average in income and education. This fact of early marriage is one of the most notable things shown by the study. Among city people, the educated and the well-to-do, the age at marriage is considerable higher.

The village family in comfortable circumstances seeks to marry its sons early, to a girl somewhat older than the boy that the mother may have a helper. But they do not hurry to marry off their daughters, waiting until they find a suitable match for them, every family always wanting to place its daughters in a little better position than themselves. The poor, on the other hand, cannot afford to add another mouth to feed, until the boy is old enough to carry his full share of her support and can save enough for her wedding gift; or, indeed, he may have to wait until he is nearly thirty, meanwhile helping to support his younger brothers and sisters. But daughters are married off young in order to relieve the pressure on the family larder, and to squeeze a little, perhaps, from her wedding gift. So it comes about that there is often a discrepancy in age between husband and wife, a quarter of the husbands being 4-10 years older than their wives; a third, 1-3 years older; while a quarter of the wives are 1-3 years older than their husbands. Curiously few are of exactly the same age, which probably has something to do with the astrology employed when determining if the birth-dates of proposed bride and groom are in a lucky relation.

Marriage Arrangements

It has been said that brides are chosen from villages other than their own because many villagers are too closely interrelated, because any altercations can less easily be swollen into family feuds, and probably, also, because a girl should never be seen by the members of her future home. A group of 12-14 year old girls was asked to map a certain section of the village road in beginning geography class, but the plan was frustrated by the fact that one of them was betrothed to a family up that way and she must never pass her mother-in-law's house. Only 15% of the brides were from the village itself. On the other hand, less than 14% came from more than seven miles away. The remaining 71% came from the innumerable little villages dotting the nearby fields. The North China bride is carried to her husband's home in a tightly closed and curtained sedan chair, and it must lessen the discomfort, especially in summer, when the distance is short. Likewise, since her visits home are in jolting, springless carts (which may be hired,) proximity would be convenient.

It is too well known that marriages are arranged by the parents through some go-between, either professional or friendly, to need more comment. The custom of dowry and gift to the bride's family varies greatly in different parts of the country, and is hard for a foreigner to understand. It some-

times seems as if the gift to the bride's home constituted a purchase, for in parts of the country it is said that it is impossible to get a bride without the expenditure of \$200. The sum is not so high around Chien Ying. One woman was discussing the problem of her oldest son, a childless widower. She had long wanted him to remarry, but he had to wait until he had saved enough money from his work in Tientsin, to get a wife. The girl in prospect was likewise widowed (and childless,) so it would not cost as much as usual but the year was a hard one, and the girl's first "in-laws", who were making the negotiations, insisted that they must have a first installment of \$30. immediately. Another \$20. was yet to be paid, before the marriage could take place.

Well-to-do families do not arrange prices, but if the poor man did not receive some help how would he provide his daughter with the clothes, bedding, furniture, ornaments, and other equipment that she must take with her? These would be a total loss to him, and he cannot afford it. The groom's family provides the house, (or room), for the new couple to live in, and the girl's home furnishes it. Where, as in this locality, the gift and the dowry are supposedly equal, the element of purchase is lost. It remains a problem, however, for the poor man to provide the necessary housing and money for the establishment of a new home for his son.

Funeral customs.

Funeral customs cannot be discussed in detail, as only one was attended. Some features of the event are worth mentioning, if only to show the mixture of Christian and non-Christian elements. The deceased had been a Christian himself, and his wife and sons had only passed the first step of registering as inquirers. Other members of the family had not been won, however and followed the usual customs. The father died of "old age" at sixty-four, his truly bereft widow, (a second wife), being a dozen years younger. The sons were under twenty, with wives somewhat older. Their various clans assembled three days before the funeral, including members of the daughters-in-laws' families. An older daughter had previously come home from Tientsin, three months before, at the time of her father's death; but returning for the funeral, she proceeded directly to the coffin, to sit before it shrieking and moaning, describing her grief and her father's virtues for ten minutes. Immediately afterwards she entered the house where all crowded round her to hear her lively tale of coming through on the first train running in several days, owing to troop movements. The household of the departed made a hurried kowtow three times to each guest as he arrived, passing tea and the long pipe, the men entertained in one house, the women in another. As long parted friends and relatives came together, they gossiped eagerly, of weddings, babies, prices and family quarrels, in a medley of names and places impossible for an outsider to follow.

All distant relatives who arrived during the first two days were somehow housed as well as fed. A great matting shed was built over the outer court,

Printing defects are original to this copy.

terminating in a shrine, highly ornamented with gay paper flowers, streamers and inscriptions. A white banner was hung at the entrance, stating the name, birth-and death-dates, and salient facts of life history for the departed, which according to some superstitions, entices the spirit of the departed to hover around until the permanent tablet is made for its residence, and the inscription finished off at the grave with a final dot, in blood. In the center of the shrine, stood the huge coffin, end on, with a table before it loaded with tall candles, incense burners, and many plates of food, mostly highly colored breads. These would be later taken to the grave and burned to insure the family against evil after effects from ghosts. In the center of this array stood a white cross!

On the third day all members of the immediate family save the widow wore coarse, unhemmed white gowns, white shoes, with white in hair or caps, in place of the lesser mourning of white buttons and sash they had previously worn. As each guest came, he was led to the coffin, where he kowtowed three times, while the men of the family knelt beside it. He was given a piece of white cloth for mourning if he were a direct relative of the dead, and he handed in his tiny offering toward the great expenses of the funeral. Women guests of the family bound their ankles in white, and twisted white paper in their hair. Unrelated guests were dressed in their brightest and finest array. Still they congregated on the k'ang, gossiping, and much enjoying the festivity which is always a welcome break in the monotony of daily life. The little widow had been suffering for days with acute earache. Her part in the affair seemed to be chief coolie, running errands for the cooks, supplying coppers for this and cart fare for that, and in general making everybody happy. She had no part in the program, but the brunt of the work and the only deep sorrow. When the pastor arrived, a very brief "Comfort service" was held before the coffin, with the women gathered behind the curtains. The two bands of wailing Chinese music continued to play right through the hymn of hope and comfort, as they did all day.

All the cooking during these days had been done in an outdoor kitchen specially built for the occasion, by villagers hired to help. They prepared a good feast, economical, without meat, which was served to the men first. While the women were finishing, the shrine was already being demolished, and put into carts in sections, in preparation for the next wedding or funeral in that part of the country. The family did not eat, but their food was laid out, candles lit, and they took two mouthfuls, each, for good luck. The candles would be blown out on returning from the grave and all who blew would be assured of wealth. A great pancake had been prepared and each of the family tore off a huge bite, (which was not eaten,) their future prosperity to be in proportion to the size of bite. Each mourner was to carry a white bun to the grave, also for good luck.

There was great merriment over these plays, and then suddenly these same folk were howling dismally, with the greatest facial contortions, as the coffin was carried out, and continued to wail until they left the village. It

was part of the program. The heavy outer lid was wedged on to the coffin with ceremony, while the men mourners knelt in the road, and the gay embroidered canopy was placed above. Village children carried tall banners and umbrellas hung with bright colored silks, to make a long and impressive procession. Bands and banners, mourners, supported by their friends, the catafalque, and carts full of wailing women moved slowly off, leaving behind a sick, grieving little woman, with unshed tears shining in pathetic eyes, who had to return with the neighbors and bear their continued chatter.

The family capital consisted of $3\frac{1}{2}$ acres of land, and the small houses. The younger son had been married in the Spring, and the combination of two big occasions in one year made it necessary to sell two acres and go into debt. This was a very modest funeral. Another family of the village had sold their entire farm to give the father a handsome funeral. The family name is important. Funerals are more elaborate than weddings for the past is greater than the future, and the parents more to be honored than the sons.

RELIGION.

In matters of religion, conditions in Chien Ying are not typical. Nearby villages, far smaller, have numerous shrines and temples, to gods of soil, wells, threshing floors, wealth, posterity, or family ancestors. Chien Ying has only one, a prosperous temple, well painted and kept up, for the two priests support themselves comfortably on a few acres of temple land, and there is the usual big temple fair in the Fourth Month. This is the great social occasion of the village, and neighboring countryside, when theatricals run for days, contests of stilt-walkers, pole climbers, etc. are held, and side-shows vie with bargains for public attention.

There were a few Christians in Boxer year. They escaped to Tientsin, but their property was destroyed. Part of the indemnity given was the control of several pieces of public land, including four of the five public mills, and two tumbled down temples to be used as schools. The Church has been semi-independent and too prosperous ever since. Yes, too prosperous, for they have lost the incentive to sacrifice, and have deteriorated. A more serious cause of the weakening of the Church is the fact that many leaders have gone out from there, to be teachers or preachers in bigger places, or at least to be prophets outside their own country. While Chien Ying complains of an aged and little admired pastor, the best rural preacher in all the Congregational work in north China has left his home in that parish for Shansi. While their boys' school suffers for lack of a good Christian teacher, seven young men of the village have gone to teach elsewhere. It is a universal rural problem, that the best leadership of the country goes elsewhere.

Nevertheless, the situation must not be pictured too discouragingly, for there are fine, conscientious Christians among the 92 left, and many of them, even of the bound-footed little women, will walk a mile and back to church on the Sundays service is held in the other two chapels of the parish. A woman Evangelist has recently joined the chapel staff, and is proving an important

Printing defects are original to this copy.

addition, for she can reach the women whom the preacher may not visit. Forty or fifty boys enjoy quite fair education. About 20 girls attend the little school taught by a very young but well-liked teacher. Big Christmas parties, with plays and special hymns attract large crowds.

The Roman Catholics have been equally long in the village, and have extensive work all through that country-side. Their church is large and highly decorated. They have a boys' school and a small group of girls and women learning to read, or at least to memorize the essentials of catechism and worship, which is chanted too rapidly (and some of it is in China-fied Latin) for the uninitiated to understand. Upon learning these things, they are baptized, receiving \$3.-5. apiece. The Roman Catholic church claims to have saved nearly 1000 souls in the village, almost all of whom are the poorest of the poor. There are a few fine and devout Christians. The poor too often accept the financial help and then despise the religion that gives it. Their condition is not materially improved, nor are morals appreciably changed in this life.

It is interesting to note that most of the Elders and leaders of public opinion are Protestants. The Catholic priest was formerly an obstructionist, but has recently cooperated at times with movements for general welfare.

EDUCATION

Conditions at Chien Ying would be typical of a very small number of villages in North China in the matter of education, as has already been indicated. Both Catholic and Protestant churches have conducted some education for most of twenty years. The Catholic boys' school has about 20 pupils in four grades, giving some secular subjects. The tiny girls' school is primarily preparation for baptism. It was ascertained that few of the women and girls who have studied with them have really learned to read, in the sense of being able to recognize isolated characters. Their work is mainly memorizing, which in a only few cases stimulates an interest in learning to read. None of the older women are able to remember the form of the written word.

The Protestant boys' school has two teachers, one classical and one modern, both fairly well trained, but neither of them Christians, in this particular year. For this reason they thwart the committee's desire to have Chapel services and Bible teaching conducted by the preacher. The enrollment is 50, with an average attendance somewhat less. The work is divided into four grades and includes all the usual primary subjects, National Readers, Writing, Ethics, Arithmetic, Calisthenics, etc. Two ample class-rooms are available, though only one is used in winter. As in some parts of rural America, the holidays adapt themselves to harvests, when all the boys would be needed. The county government cooperates in financing the school. Tuition is a dollar a year.

Only the roughest estimate can be made of the literacy of this town. Many boys and young men have studied a year or two. Few have gone beyond this school to the city schools. Most boys with more than 6 years

Printing defects are original to this copy.

primary education would scorn farming. Perhaps a third of the children of school age in the village can read, but this is probably too high an estimate, since the families studied were largely those whose children would be most likely to go to school. Perhaps as many as a third of the men are also literate, at least enough to perform elementary business transactions. Of these, about a third would have picked it up more or less by themselves, another third would have had some classical education in days gone by, (a few of them are second rank scholars); and the remainder would have studied in the new schools. Of the women of the whole village not 2% can read, and fewer still can write. There are two or three who have finished primary school and gone on to high school. A few of the older women would recognize some characters but would depend on their husbands or sons to read a letter, and would have no idea of reading books or newspapers. Some of these Christian women have learned their little in classes at the chapel, reading a religious text book or extracts from the Gospels.

A class in the Thousand Characters was organized, both to help the village women, and to cooperate with the National Mass Education movement, in its initial steps toward rural literacy. The text book prepared, with large print and pictures, was extremely easy teaching material. Three women under thirty-five learned rapidly, and covered several books. But the elders, the patient, eager old grandmothers, even with the most careful possible teaching, barely learned to memorize one book starting off from the pictures, and never knowing even the commonest characters. Finding this was so, they were given Extracts from the Bible to memorize, rather than puerile reader sentences.

Most Chinese villages would have an old classical scholar or two. The larger villages now have little government schools. Rarely indeed is there any opportunity for girls to study. Few places would have as high a percent of literacy as Chien Ying, and this is due to the churches.

RECREATION

Recreation is a serious problem in China, especially in rural districts. The Chinese are a cheerful people with real humor, but have developed relatively few games. Such as they have are largely individualistic, lacking the discipline of teamwork.

The limitation of the women's recreation to gossip and gambling has already been mentioned. The gambling is done with small, heavily varnished chips decorated with futuristic designs, which evidently indicate values. The stakes are coppers and apricot pits. A few families spend much of their time in gambling, and it is reported that many gamble occasionally, especially at festival times. Those who gamble steadily almost inevitably show the marks of financial troubles.

Another financially disastrous respite from the monotony of daily life, and relieved by adequate amusements, is smoking opium. The actual number of people in such a village who can afford to buy it, and can get hold of it in the first place, are few. But several families, once wealthy, are now in dire

Printing defects are original to this copy.

poverty because of heavy smoking. The headman of the village formerly owned 200 mu of land. At present the thousand that are still nominally in his name are mortgaged for more than their worth. It is reported that the elder members of the family spend five dollars a day on opium. Morphine and other drugs cannot be gotten in so small a place but are rumored to be procurable not many miles away. Moral degradation frequently accompanies the use of these drugs. A woman of good family whose husband squandered a huge farm on opium, was bemoaning the character of her sons. One, a chauffeur in a city far to the north, receives good pay.

"Does he send any home to you?"

"Not a cent. He gambles and 'supports somebody'."

"He is not married?"

"Who would marry their girl to a bad boy like that?"

Her own family lend this woman a piece of land the cultivation of which she personally supervises, to support herself and the younger women of her home in something barely above pauperism. Opium might be listed as recreation or as crime.

It is well known that the East has looked down on physical activity, so that strenuous games are not prevalent. Well-to-do men have far too little to do in Winter. When the animals are tended, and the few chores done, they sit around, gossip on the street corner, and the like. Probably not a dozen men in the place read for amusement. The chapel takes a newspaper which employs but little time of a few of the more intelligent.

The younger men and boys, especially of the poorer people, have a few seasonal games, hitting one another's sticks across a line, kicking the shuttlecock, marbles, and stiltwalking. The school boys have learned many games, but do not continue to play them out of the school courts, where they spend most of their time. There are commercialized entertainments only at the Temple fairs. No organized recreational societies were reported.

Little girls have more plays. Hopscotch and jackstones seem to be indigenous. The former is played just as in the West; the latter, with the knee bone of the pig, five at a time, to the accompaniment of a charming chant, half describing the play, half just chatter to keep the rhythm. School games have largely displaced the Chinese plays, which are more dramatic than competitive. These plays deal with some phase of everyday life, cooking, sewing, spinning and so on, and are fully planned out,—movement, speeches and all. There is very little activity or competition of strength or skill. For example:—Several children squatted in the center of the threshing-floor as "flower pots". The two other players are the owner of the flowers, who is leader of the play, and the "old lady".

"Old lady, old lady, will you watch my flowers while I go wash my face?" While she runs off, the old lady steals a "flower pot", and the child stands behind her "invisible". The leader comes back, getting very excited over the lost pot. "Where is it?"

"A gleaner came and stole it."

"Where has he gone?"

"East." She makes a feint of searching to the east and returns.

"I cannot find him."

"To the west", and so on through the four points of the compass.

"Old lady, old lady, please watch my flowers while I go comb my hair" Again a child becomes "invisible" when the leader returns, and the excuse is given that a child came and begged for the flowers. Again the hunt in all quarters. This is repeated until all the flower pots are lost, with one every-day excuse after another.

When the "old lady" has them all, she "goes to sleep," and the leader steals them back. The "old lady" makes a great fuss pretending to hunt for them, till the leader comes out with the children in a string behind her, calling out like a peddler that she is selling flowers. The "old lady comes up to them:—

"But aren't these my flowers?"

"We will see whose flowers they are" says the leader, and then the "old lady" pats the children one by one on the head, and if a child responds by lumping up and down she joins the "old lady"; if not, she remains on the leader's side.

In one such game, there is a good bit, of "tail catching." All but one player string out in a long line, holding each other's coat tails. The one left out tries to catch the last one, the leader preventing her with outstretched arms while the "tail" slips out of the way.

Several games were found which were well adapted to the needs of women on the k'angs. Two strings divide the k'ang in thirds, the women squatting at the ends, apingpong ball placed in the middle. If those on one end can blow it across the far line, they score. Even more popular was the "Frog Race," cardboard frogs jiggled along strings threaded through their noses. Great-grandma and greatgranddaughter competed! The older the women, the better she played!

GOVERNMENT.

Rural government impresses the Westerner as the rule of local custom rather than of formal government, because so many things which the law controls in the West are efficiently determined by tradition in the East, like marriage, care of dependents, etc.; or completely ignored, like sanitation. The farmer comes in contact with the national government through taxes collected by the county. Some trustworthy member of the village records the land owned by each inhabitant. These records are not kept well up to date, but a rough check is kept on them by the fact that gross errors call forth a demand for justice on the part of the injured one or by general public opinion. Neighbors know pretty accurately how much one another owns, and object if some man gets off without paying his share. The taxes are five cents a "mu", to be paid at the office of the "ch'u" or section" (one eighth of the county), which happens to be five miles from Chien Ying. Each man makes a special strip, during harvest. The Christian leaders are hoping to form some organiza-

tion to cooperate in this, and save time and trouble. If the tax is not paid, the county sends collectors; but in bad years they are lenient, and will let the tax carry over till a good harvest.

There are a county magistrate, (appointed from Peking,) whose duties are both executive and judicial, and a deputy magistrate. The county chief of police is appointed by the state police system. He in turn appoints the police heads for each *ch'u*, or section of the county, who have charge of local police, a few in each market town, or important center. There are two educational officials in the county, one appointed by Peking, and the other, elected by the teachers. The county assembly has two houses, the upper house, consists of two members elected by the house of representatives, and two appointed by the Magistrate. The lower house includes two men from each section. This assembly is very democratic in form, but has no power. The elders of the *ch'u*, or sections, are elected by the village elders in that section, and attend to county business in that area.

The village Headman and vice-Headman receive no remuneration, so these must be well-to-do men. The honor is likely to run in certain families. While officially representing the village, they do little of the actual work. The village elders, of which there were 24 in Chien Ying a few years ago, but now only eight, are theoretically elected by ballot of the whole village, but in practice are appointed by a few, or merely accepted for an indefinite term of service. They are the leaders of local policy. Each street or section of street has a captain, who protects the peace, settles quarrels, and generally looks after the welfare of his neighbors. The head street captain receives a salary, and does most of the work of the village government.

There are also in each *ch'u* volunteer associations for preserving the peace, (*pao wei t'uan* 保衛團) each with a head and two counsellors, for protection against thieves and other dangers. Chien Ying taxes each farmer 20 coppers for each *mu* he cultivates, and pays ten watchmen to guard the growing crops, and to walk through the village at night clacking a rattle.

Under the Manchu regime, there was a narrow ascending line of officials through which taxes passed, and squeeze was collected. Under the ill-organized democracy, the line of officials has spread out like a fan, and those wanting squeeze are innumerable. Moreover the iniquitous system of farming taxes is practiced, and the farmer bears the brunt of it with no redress. The taxes are not exorbitant, but numerous. Both buyer and seller of an animal pay a 3% tax. The weighing in the market is done by licensed weighers (which may make for standard scales, or may leave loopholes for bribery). In some transactions each side pays 3%, in others 1%. A tax is charged for killing an animal, 30 cents for a sheep, 45, for a pig, and \$2. for a cow. Besides these, there is a stamp tax on all documents, including bills over a minimum amount. The village also taxes 30 coppers a "hu" for general business, but the assessors overlook the poorest homes. "If we taxed them we would only have to help them that much more."

In addition, there are special war levies at times. The recent county

magistrate collected loans from the farmers, in myriad small sums, "for the conduct of the war" and then absconded with \$30,000. The soldiers conscripted animals, carts and coolies from the whole countryside. In Chien Ying, instead of drawing lots, the village assessed each man according to the animals he owned, thus taxing wealth. With the sum, they bought the required outfit. They were fortunate enough to have all returned, instead of having the animals starved to death and the carts abandoned, as happened near Shan Hai Kuan.

The war poured around Chien Ying and left it alone. When General Feng executed his "coup" and "captured" Peking, Wu P'ei Fu hurried back from the north and their troops met on both sides of the railway at Chang Chuang 3 miles from Chien Ying. Feng's troops were quartered in temples and other public places in villages to the north west, and Wu's in homes through the south east, but not a one in Chien Ying. Two explanations were offered, that the place has grown up within the last 200 years and is known not to be on military maps, or because of the two Christian churches there, and the usual policy of avoiding "foreign property."

Although this was the main engagement between the opposing sides, the casualties were few. The trenches were but a foot deep and scattered. Many Chien Ying children went over to the next village to watch the cannons fire, and gleefully collected shells, afterwards. While the country folk all opposed Feng's "treachery" they had only good to say for his soldiers. But concerning Wu's and Chang's men, who came later, they had nothing but fear and bitterness. When these soldiers camped in a village, all women and children fled before them to relatives and friends in safer places, while some of the men stayed to try and protect their homes. The soldiers, lacking food, killed off all the pigs and chickens, and hunted out the buried stores of grain. They ripped up even the reed ceilings or broke up the furniture for fuel, and of course walked off with any desired bedding or clothing they found. Some families would return to their homes in the middle of winter to find only the clay shell of the house, or at best the doors and windows, and everything filthy beyond description.

Sometimes soldiers would roam off from a city headquarters on marauding expeditions of their own. If they came singly, they might now and then be turned off with some cash or a good meal. Once a party of four went to a near by village and held the people up for some big sum in the name of an official levy. The elders suspected it was not straight, and delayed them in partly ostensibly to collect the sum, while word was sent to headquarters, and the officer in charge of the division had the decency to send out a detachment of men to take them. Two were killed in the process of capture; the other two were taken for severe punishment. The area affected by war in China is relatively small, compared to our idea of modern warfare, but the suffering in the immediate area is nothing short of absolute tragedy.

Social Pathology Crime

The countryside seems remarkably free from crime, and the minor misdemeanors are negligible. Pilfering there is, of vegetables, fuel and the like, dealt with by the defendant himself if he catches the offender, and the neighbors enjoy the beating as quite a diversion. Squabbles over land, (there are no fences between fields, and no evident markings, more than sighting from some grave or stump), would usually be settled by the local authorities but could be appealed to the officers of the ch'u or county. Housebreaking, murder, and the like would be taken to the magistrate. A six year old boy was stolen while playing near the edge of the village a couple of years ago. He would be worth as much as \$600., it is said, for work in some shop or factory. But such crimes are exceptional.

Degeneracy

A village gives the impression of high average physical condition. The lame, the halt, and the blind must largely have died off in infancy, in the desperate struggle against unsanitary conditions. Moreover survivors of these types stay pretty well at home, appearing little on the street. Three or four cripples were observed, several blind, and innumerable with eye diseases, a couple of deaf, and very few other defectives. Insanity does occur. Where it is not violent, the sufferer is likely to be bound, fed, but otherwise neglected, till he dies. One man of good family became violently insane at the age of 23, and was beaten to death, leaving a young widow and little daughter. Feeble-mindedness is less apparent where so much of the work is unskilled and so few have notable mental attainments. Some, however, are of such low grade of intelligence as to be quite apparent. Where they are included in the larger family group, they do their share of the simpler, heavy work, and can get along fairly well. "There is one old idiot in the village who cannot support his mother, wife and child. He proposed to sell his wife, but the whole neighborhood rose up in protest, so we all help to provide for his family."

Dependence

Because of the co-operation among the various members of the large families and among neighbors, there are few isolated dependents. Rarely would an old, and therefore honored, relative be allowed to want. Widows of the very poor may be remarried, if they are young enough, (the children staying with their father's family, of course), and orphans would be looked after by uncles or cousins, if the grandparents also were gone. If there are relatives, no matter how poor, it is their duty to find help if they cannot themselves provide it. The family in comfortable circumstances will take in some poor relative, half as member of the family, half as servant. A relative on the mother's side may be so helped, though there is no proper claim on them for this.

"An honorable man, with a good reputation, can always get help for the winter." He may go to the farmer for whom he does day labor in harvest and ask to borrow a few dollars, promising to pay in labor, when the times comes. No interest is demanded on such a loan, it is a matter of friendly help. The poor man may pawn his clothes in the market town, but the rates are twenty to thirty percent a month. These are the regular interest rates for money loaned to the poor, where securities are doubtful. The rich can borrow to better advantage, having land and other securities.

A man of poor character must beg, but he goes to other villages, where he is not known. Beggars come constantly to the farmer's door, especially in years of cumulative disaster, such as this, whining most pitifully, "save life, save life," and a few even keep it up for as long as half an hour, if they want money for opium. The country people give regularly, handing out left-over bread or porridge. The beggar need not starve. Neither need he lack a place to stay, for the comfortably situated farmer has sheds enough to let the beggars crowd in, or to admit some reputable man in unusual straits. "The poor suffer in the cities for they cannot find houses to live in without giving rent. But in the country they can always find some generous rich man who will give them a place to stay."

Supplementary Comment

In May, 1927, shortly before going to press, another opportunity presented itself to return to Chien Ying for a couple of days, to see what developments might have taken place in about two and a half years. Matters of personal interest predominated, new babies, children growing up to school age, recent brides, and other changes. Sheep Family were no longer quarreling. The wheat straw braid was largely being used for home consumption, being stitched into hats, coarse cheap ones, made by the women at home, and finer ones done on a machine, to be sold for 30 cents. Bundles of 500 were waiting shipment.

In spite of waves of invasion by the dreaded northern soldiers during the previous summer, when many homes were robbed and successive levies were put upon the village, there were striking signs of prosperity. Brass basins were in evidence, formerly hidden; the poorest homes had more furnishings, fresh window paper, better equipment; and the schools were growing. Attendance in both boys' and girls' schools had doubled, and a fine new building was going up for the boys. A younger preacher and better trained girl teacher, father and daughter from within this parish, were attracting students from other villages, some girls walking back and forth every day, even during the phenomenally heavy snows of the previous winter, and a few from farther away living in the school court. Not one of the girls was bound-footed, though some were unbound and still hobbling. They showed far greater teamplay and skill in games, and sang much better than before.

The International Famine Relief Commission and the Mission were co-operating in a demonstration farm, on the outskirts of the village, with a trained agriculturalist in charge. This is increasing the knowledge of and interest in

seed selection and poultry breeding, but has not yet had time to greatly influence local farming.

Like hundreds of thousands of other villages throughout China, if only war will cease and a just and stable government will largely leave them alone, as in former days, to local self government, growth and prosperity is the outlook for Chien Ying.

TABLES

Table I. Number of persons per "family" (i.e. economic unit)		Table II. Number of persons per completed "hu" (i.e. gates to the street)						
Families having	Number	Number of families per hu						Number of persons per hu
1	1	1	2	3	4	Total		
8	2	3				3	3	
12	3	1				1	4	
8	4	3	1			4	5	
13	5	6	2			8	6	
11	6	3				3	7	
8	7	2				2	8	
5	8	1	3			4	9	
5	9			1		1	10	
1	10	1	1	1		3	11	
3	11		2	1		3	12	
	12		2			2	13	
1	13		2			2	14	
	14	1				1	15	
2	15	1		1		2	16	
2	16			2		2	17	
							18	
1	19	1				1	19	
1	21	1				1	20	
							21	
82 Total families			1			1	37	
					1	1	43	
		24	14	6	1	45 Total hu		

Table III. Average number of persons per family					Table IV. Total persons in the 45 complete hu studied 488 Average 10.8 persons per hu, (omitting exceptional cases, conservative average, 10 persons)	
Living at home		whole family (including those away for work or study)				
Number	%		Number	%		
133	25.7%	men	162	29.1		
182	35.2	women	187	33.7		
202	39.1	children	206	37.2		
517	100 %		555	100 %		
6.3		Average number persons per family				
living at home		6.7 in whole family				
or about 2—men						
2 women						
2+children						

Table V. Age at Marriage					Table VI. Relation of Ages of Husband and Wife			
		Women		Men		No. of years	Cases	%
Age	No.	%	No.	%				
11			3		Husband older	10	2	
12	4	} 22	6	} 25		9	2	
13	2		8			8	3	
14	26		8			7	5	} 27
						6	2	
15	38	} 43	14	} 26		5	6	
16	25		12			4	7	
17	22	} 33.5	7	} 29		3	10	
18	19		8		Husband and wife same age	2	13	} 34
19	7		5			1	11	
20	1		9			0	4	4
21		} 1.1	6	} 20	Wife older	1	10	
22			7			2	9	} 27
23	1		5			3	8	
24	1		2					
Totals	146	100%	100	100%		4	4	} 8
						5	3	
						6	1	
					Totals		100	100%
Table VII. Births and Deaths per Mother over 40 years (Total of 71 women studied) Average, 7.4 living births per mother Average, 4.5 deaths per mother i.e. 60% of those born died								
Table VIII. Distance between "Mother's home" and Husband's home								
No. brides		%	Came from distance of					
22	16	} 14	same village					
35	25		1-5 "li"					
41	29		6-10					
22	16		10-20					
11		} 14	21-50					
3			50-100					
5			over 100					
139 brides	100%							

Table IX Education Amount	Number of		
	Men	Women	Children (8-18 "sui")
None	86	176	65
Reads very little	17	8	5
Old classical	17		
Modern schools			
1-3 years	14		24
4-7 "	6	2	9
Totals	140	186	103

Table X. Ownership of Property

Land owned per family (a "mu" is $\frac{1}{2}$ acre)		Animals owned per "hu" (gate on street)		
No. families	having No. mu	No. hu having	No. animals	Total
16	0	28	0	0
12	1-19	18	1	18
18	20-39	3	2	6
11	40-59	3	3	9
2	60-79	2	4	8
3	80-99	3	5	15
3	100-149	Total 57 hu		56
2	150-200	Proportion of hu owning animals		
2	200-250	No. hu	No. owning	Proportion
2	250-500			
1	1000 or over			
72	Totals	Total village	306	119
The general average is 51 mu per family omitting the exceptional case average 39 mu per family mode 20-39 mu per family		Hu studied	57	29
				38 50%

INDUSTRIES

I. Persons Working away from Home (whose occupations were known) . (men unless otherwise indicated)

Occupation	Number	Place	Number
Teachers	7	Tientsin	16
Trade	3	Peking	6
Carpentry	3	Chihli	3
Cooks	2	Mukden	1
Masons	2	Kiangsi	1
Preacher	2	Shantung	1
Bank coolie	1	Hsinchiang	1
In customs office	1		
Weaver	1		
Y.M.C.A. Secretary	1		
Paper Shop	1		
Book store owner	1		
Egg Factory	1		
Barbar	1		
Students			
Men	1		
Women	2		
Total	30	Total	30

II. Occupations in the Village

(other than farming, and supplementary to it)

Occupation	Number of families
Peddling	5
Shed builders	1
Candy makers	1
Manufacturers of bean macaroni	1
Matting weavers (men and women)	2
Chapel servant	1
Bee raising, selling honey	1
Sewing shoe soles	1
Coolie	1
Exportation of hat braid (men and women)	2
Grinding flour	1
Day laborers on others' farms	5
Other trades in the village, in families not in the main study	
Carting	
Selling notions (men and women)	
Weaving hat braid, (by women)	
Musical instruments	
Paper flowers (by women)	
Teasing cotton	

III. Itinerant Occupations

Pedlers of;—

candies, fruits, cigarettes
 cloth and thread
 notions
 embroidery patterns
 embroidery threads and silk
 crockery
 matting baskets for grain
 iron ware
 live or dried fish
 sweet potatoes
 pears; red fruit; dried jujubes
 willow ware
 bean macaroni
 candy and small ironware
 mutton

 turnips
 coal
 cotton batting
 soap, lotions and oranges
 toys and knick-knacks

Craftsmen;—

broom maker
 shoe mender
 blacksmith
 tinsmith
 cotton teasers
 repairers of
 pails
 bamboo ware
 baskets
 sieve bottoms
 dishes

Buyers of;—

eggs
 old iron
 old rags
 old cotton batting
 cat and dog skins

