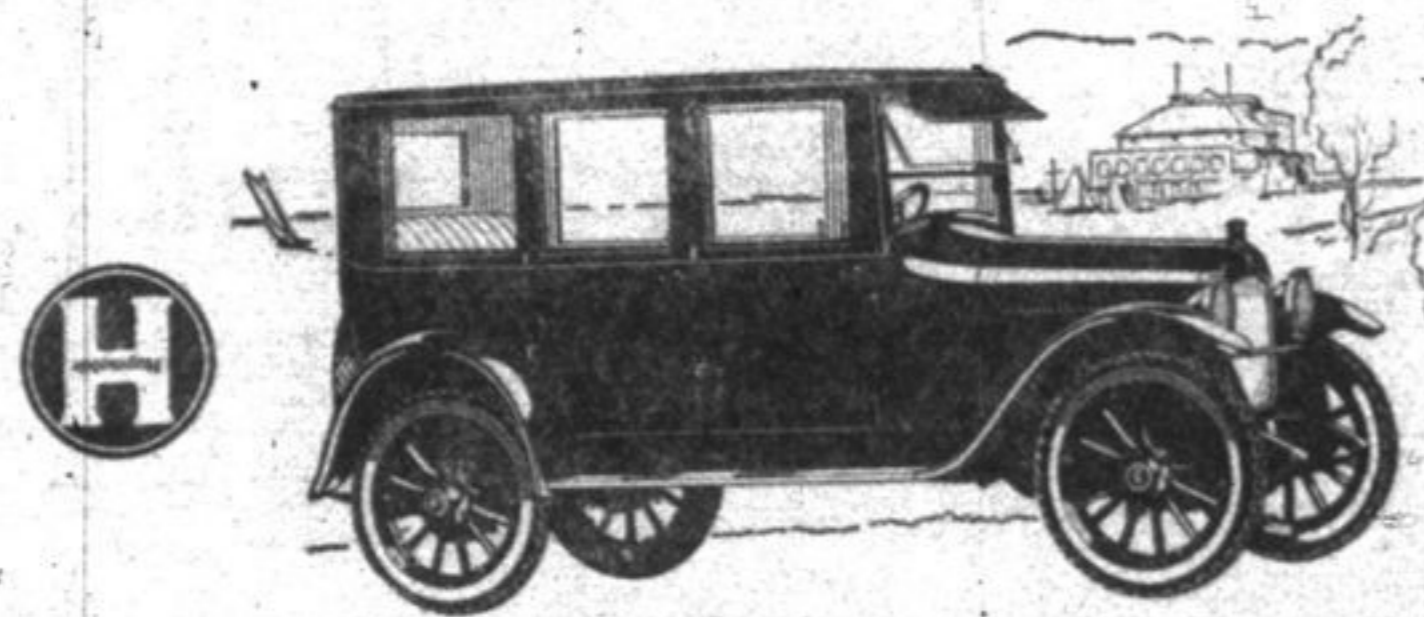


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HOUSEKEEPING AS CONDUCTED IN CHINA

METHODS VERY PRIMITIVE
No Public Water Supply or Sewage Disposal. Food Prices Lower Than Ours; Labor Cheap

Changsha, December 18, 1921
I think that I will write you a letter about housekeeping in China as that is a subject I have only incidentally touched upon and one that ought to interest a great many people at home.
The foreign housekeeper in a treaty port out here has her troubles although they are not the same with which we are so familiar in America. By "Treaty Ports" are meant those forty cities in the eighteen provinces of China proper, in which foreigners, either by treaty provisions or by voluntary concession, are permitted to live and do business. Such persons are not allowed to hold land or do business in other places, although these restrictions do not apply to missionaries.

In the first place, the number of houses suited to foreign requirements is limited and generally below the demand, so that rents are about as high proportionately as at home, an ordinary eight room house with servants' quarters ranging in price from \$100 to \$175 per month according to location, prices in Shanghai or Hankow being higher than in Changsha or Soochow. Remember that when I quote prices I am speaking of Chinese silver dollars, each one of which is worth at the present rate of exchange about 56 cents in gold, that is, American money; normally the rate is about two for one.

These houses are generally built of brick, wood is very scarce and costly here, and are two stories high with double decked verandas supported on brick arches on three sides, they are built for warm weather—as the summers are very hot, and in central and southern China the only means of heating during the chilly winter months are small grates in which coal is burned, an excellent quality of semi-anthracite coal costing about \$12 per ton.

There is no public system of water supply or of sewage disposal, all water being brought by the water coolie from the public supply, either the river or wells. Nobody ever drinks raw water out here, the Chinese drink tea and in foreign homes the water is boiled and filtered, nor does any foreigner eat fruit or vegetables except they have been sterilized or boiled, the native methods of fertilization being such that the greatest care has to be exercised in such matters, native grown lettuce for instance, is never seen on foreign tables.

Houses in which there is any modern plumbing are very few, even in the large cities, we are fortunate enough to have such a house here in Changsha, but there are not more than two or three others at most in the city.

Human labor is the cheapest thing in China and in this city of about half a million people there is not a single wheeled vehicle except wheelbarrows, nor have I ever seen here a single draught animal, all burdens being carried on the shoulders of men. Even in progressive Hankow not long ago I saw a heavy roller being used to repair the roadway and pulled by fifty coolies, it was probably cheaper than steam power.

Naturally servants are numerous here and are paid wages that seem to us absurdly small, especially when it is remembered that they supply their own food out of their wages, being supposed never to touch the food that is provided for the master's table.

An average family of four or five persons will employ about the house five or six men and two or three women. There is the cook who on the average is paid \$14 per month, the number one "boy" who is paid the same, number two boy perhaps \$10. Every male house servant is a "boy." These men wait on table, clean, dust and make beds. The house coolie does the rougher work about the house, makes fires, cleans the rugs, carries water to the bath room, etc. The water coolie brings the water from the river and pumps it into the tank if there is one, there may be a number two cook or a number two coolie if the work is heavy. Then there is an amah for each child who needs care, and one or two laundry amahs these are paid for \$8 to \$15, according to circumstances.

Beside all these there are the outside servants, the gardener, the gatekeeper, the sampan coolies and the chair coolies, so the total personnel of a moderate establishment is very considerable.

These servants have certain prerequisites which add somewhat to their wages. The cook for instance, gets a "squeeze" of probably ten per cent on all kitchen purchases, which he probably shares with the boys, and every tradesman who comes to the house, tailors, silk merchants, curio dealers have to pay tribute, this is a recognized Chinese custom and it prevails from the cabinet minister to the chair coolie. There is no official in China who does not expect to get rich from his squeezes, and as under the present system tenure of office is uncertain their motto is to make hay

while the sun shines. A story is going the rounds at present of an official who was in office only four or five days, but who in that time accumulated a sufficient fortune to enable him to retire and live in affluence the rest of his days, and the story is probably true.

Food is cheap, except for imported articles, of which unfortunately, we require a good many. Native fillet of beef is 16 cents per pound and mutton 20 cents, neither very good, domestic duck 50c each, large wild ducks, 60c; cock pheasants, very good, 75c; eggs 18c per dozen, sweet potatoes 4c per 50 lb. sack, best table butter \$3.80 per 50 lb. from California or Australia \$1.80 per lb. Imported tomatoes in tins 50c each. Best French olive oil, \$2.50 per quart.

Wines and liquors are abundant and cheap. The best champagne \$60 per case of 12 quarts, excellent port and sherry \$2.50 per qt. Scotch whiskey, the most expensive, \$3.50 per qt., a good table claret \$1 per qt., and remember that these are "Mex" prices, not gold. Perhaps I ought not to quote these latter prices as they may cause a stampede across the Pacific.

The daily routine out here is about as follows: At 7:30 the boy brings a tray of tea and toast to your bedside and prepares your bath. Breakfast, fruit, porridge, eggs and coffee, 8:30. Dinner, three courses, at 1. Tea at 5, dinner at 8 or 8:30, usually an elaborate meal.

For my own part I would much prefer simpler food if I could have such as we are accustomed to at home. The bread here is usually bad and the toast, which is served upon every occasion, is cold and tough and clammy, I cannot understand what the cook does to it. It is hard to get good coffee and of course there is no milk or cream except such as comes in tins, usually from "contented cows." You would naturally expect to find good tea here, as Hankow is, or used to be, the greatest tea market in the world, but what one usually gets tastes like an infusion of milled hay. Rice of course is always served and always good but I cannot say as much for the innumerable Chinese vegetables, generally stewed, and more or less resembling spinach, they are as a rule watery and tasteless.

As for fruits, the Chinese pears which are sold on every street stand are pithy and watery, the pomelos are dry and flavorless, the native oranges are small and sour, the bananas are more like those we get at home than any other fruit, except some apples grown from American seedlings at Chefoo, which are good. The summer fruits, peaches, apricots and grapes are good and so are the persimmons, which we have had until lately, and which are of the sort we get from Japan and which look like tomatoes.

I think I have written enough about food to make it clear that we are in no danger of starvation and that there are no particular hardships connected with life in China.

I find I have said little about the housekeeper's trouble, but when it comes to managing such a household, and taking into account the Chinese temperament and peculiarities, perhaps they may be imagined.

P. C. Wolcott.

ZONING ORDINANCE

Notice of Public Hearing

Notice is hereby given that an adjourned public hearing will be held in the Council Chamber in the City Hall in the City of Highland Park, Illinois, on Thursday the ninth day of February, 1922, at 7:30 o'clock P. M. which said public hearing will be conducted by the undersigned Highland Park Zoning Commission, upon its tentative report and proposed zoning ordinance hereinafter mentioned.

Said undersigned zoning commission was duly authorized and established by ordinance duly passed and by the appointment of the members thereof by the Mayor and duly confirmed by the Council of the City of Highland Park on September 10th, 1921, to investigate and make recommendations concerning the subject matter of a proposed ordinance under the authority and requirements of an Act of the General Assembly of the State of Illinois, entitled "An act to confer certain additional powers upon city councils in Cities and presidents and boards of trustees in villages and incorporated towns, concerning buildings and structures, the intensity of use of lot areas, the classification of trades, industries, buildings and structures, with respect to location and regulation, the creation of districts of different classes and the establishment of regulations and restrictions applicable thereto," approved June 28, 1921, and to call, hold, conduct, adjourn and reconvene public hearings for the purpose of affording an opportunity to all persons interested within the City of Highland Park, to be heard in relation thereto.

The said zoning commission has prepared a tentative report and proposed zoning ordinance for the entire City of Highland Park, copies of which ordinance will be accessible for examination by interested parties at the office of the City Clerk of said City of Highland Park.

Arthur G. Brown,
Mrs. Frank R. Cain,
W. G. Shipnes,
George R. Jones,
Mrs. O. L. Olesen,
Zoning Commissioners.

Dated at Highland Park, Illinois, this 2d day of February, A. D. 1922. (49-2)

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