

SOCIAL LIFE
OF THE CHINESE

(IN PEKING)

By

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PREFACE.

Every great City has some special features which distinguish it from all others. Peking, once the Capital of the Liao, Kin, Yuan, Ming and Ching Dynasties and now the seat of Government of the Chinese Republic, certainly possesses many characteristics of its own.

About the people and things of China in general and Peking in particular many books in English and other foreign languages have already been written by able writers, mostly foreigners. On the other hand, those Chinese who wish to write books about China in foreign languages, are inclined to discuss politics, philosophy and other serious subjects. So far, very little has been written about the social life of our people in English by our own writers.

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SOCIAL LIFE OF THE CHINESE

During my stay in the United States as a college student, I was frequently called upon to speak on Things Chinese. But as China is such a vast country and her civilization so rich and varied I was obliged to limit my talks to the social side of Peking where I have lived intermittently for more than twenty years.

Since my return to this City to serve as an official of the Ministry of Interior and a professor of the National University I have made fresh observations about the changes of our customs in marriages, funerals and social intercourse. Such changes, for better or worse, are certainly inevitable in this period of transition.

In the following chapters which consist of my random notes on Peking made in both America and China, the reader, it is hoped, will keep in mind that many of our imperfections and "necessary evils" are bound to be cor-

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rected like those of other countries with the progress of time. As a matter of fact, the changes during the last twenty years have been far more radical than those of the last twenty centuries.

In the production of this little book I have been kindly assisted by many of my foreign and Chinese friends. I wish to thank particularly Mr. George Gor- man, Mr. A. Cecil Taylor and Mr. J. C. Sun of the North China Standard who have helped me with valuable suggestions and information. Mr. Henry Vetch of the China Booksellers, Ltd. must also be remembered with much appreciation for having facilitated the publication of this volume.

JERMYN CHI-HUNG LYNN.

Peking, June 1928.

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I

VISITING.

It has become an established custom in Peking that a new arrival must call upon his friends and relatives first. If he is thoughtful and well-to-do he will bring some gifts with him. Anybody who comes from Hangchow, be it his home town or a place he has just visited, will bring with him some silk while one from Soochow is apt to carry a few pieces of embroidery. If these gifts are bulky they can be sent ahead of him; otherwise he will give them in person.

A friendly call is usually made between nine and eleven o'clock in the morning. Twenty or thirty years ago it was seldom a visitor gave the butler a visiting card and it was only necessary that he should give his name and address to one who answered the door. This is because the old type of visiting cards which were printed on large pieces of red paper, was not very convenient to carry on one's person. In the case of a familiar visitor the card also was unnecessary.

As soon as a guest was ushered into a drawing room the servant provided him with a cup of tea. Cigarettes or a waterpipe also were offered before the host came to greet him. Formality demanded that he should occupy

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a side seat unless urged to do otherwise by his host. Again, if the social position of the guest was inferior to that of his host he must sit on the edge of a chair. Under no circumstances, would he permit himself to cross his legs while on a visit to a superior or aged person. And it was also bad form for him to smoke in this case.

Formerly it was common for a butler to say "tang-chia" to a visitor when his master refused to see him. Here "tang-chia" means that the visitor can not be received. Now the general excuse is that the host is out, whenever he declines to receive a guest.

With a Chinese gentleman of the old school, it is still unpopular to greet a friend by shaking his hand. Generally he salutes with a "yi," or a bow with both hands.

After the exchange of "yi" between the host and the guest the former will ask the latter to take a higher seat. If the guest thinks that either his age or his social position should entitle him to be at least on an equal footing with his host he will move to the allotted seat without much persuasion; otherwise he must cling to the side seat which he had taken at first. As soon as the seat question is settled it will be the turn of the host to ask the visitor to have some tea. Usually they will drink together.

As everything in China revolves around the family the first few words of greetings between friends and rela-

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tives will be devoted to inquiries of health about the folk of each other. It is the host who starts the conversation by asking the health of the parents of the visitor. If he has any brother the same question will be asked. But in the case of two persons who meet in the house of a third party, it is the elder one who will ask first.

It is not always true that our people place no value on time. Any important man in officialdom or in business circles allows himself to be interviewed by his personal friends for only a limited span of time. Generally he receives friends between nine and eleven o'clock in the morning. For one who has not made an appointment it is perhaps better for him to call a little before nine.

With many of the local officials who like to ape the mandarins of monarchical days, the custom still exists that a host can send his guest away by lifting his tea-cup or by ordering the servant who stands nearby to pour more tea into the cup. Any person who understands this hint, will take instant leave by saying that he will call again. But if this hint is ignored by his visitor the host must go a step further by shouting "tou-ché" to the servant. This is to mean that his "ché," or car must be kept ready for his own departure.

People who are familiar with the habits of local mandarins, seldom take offence at such phrases as "tang-chia" and "tou-ché" for they are not intended to be an insult. Their only fault lies in the lack of frankness.

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No matter whether one likes his guest or not a return visit must be paid.

Generally the host asks the visitor in person as to what time he will be at home. Knowing that his host means to return the visit the guest will tell him not to stand on ceremony. But anyway the visit is returned within two or three days.

In case the age or social position of the proposed caller is too high above that of his visitor he sometimes only sends a servant to leave a card at his residence which is meant that he is too busy to make the call.

Between intimate friends and near relatives there are no fast rules governing the visits paid to each other. What is necessary is that younger persons should go to the elder ones a little oftener as seniority counts a great deal in this country especially in Peking.

Twenty or thirty years ago it was quite unusual for one lady to call on another except upon occasions like birthdays, marriages and funerals. The unwritten law stipulates that the duty of a married woman was to look after the household. Young and unmarried women were not allowed to visit each other without the special permission of the head of a family. In case a girl was found to be too much fond of ch'uang-men or going into another home she would be a subject of gossip among her neighbors.

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Now, ladies of all ages are seen visiting each other just as freely as their men folk. Many reasons have been given for this change. In the first place, modern education has elevated their status in society. They are not satisfied to be confined to the home where they rule supreme. In fact they are claiming voice on all affairs of the community. Secondly, the household work itself has been much simplified with the introduction of the sewing machine and other Western inventions. This certainly leaves much time for the women to devote to social affairs. Thirdly, the fact that a girl can make many friends among her school-mates, is also responsible for her being kept busy outside of house work.

Friendly calls between ladies are usually made in the afternoon. Unless they are very young and unfamiliar with the city, they are seldom chaperoned. Any modern-educated girl dislikes the idea of being attended by a maid on her visit to a friend as her mother or grandmother had done. Like gentlemen of the new school the ladies of Modern China have no use for such formalities as "tang-chia" and "tou-chê." Whenever a lady calls on another she sends in her card or just gives her name and address to the butler.

Hand-shaking has taken the place of the old form of salutation which has been known as "lien-jen." Beside the customary cup of tea, there will be dishes of melon-seeds and peanuts to refresh them during their conversation.

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But unlike the man, a ladyguest must leave some money for the servants at the end of a visit. For a lady of average means she will give a tip of one dollar for the first visit. Later she needs only tip the servants of her friends on the three great festivals like all men do.

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Our people seldom give a tea party in honor of their friends or relatives. It is only the high officials and prominent politicians who occasionally give such a party to entertain local journalists and leaders of public bodies in Central Park and other places when they wish to issue a statement through them.

The ordinary people give dinner parties either at home or in restaurants when they desire to do honor to somebody.

There are numerous names given to dinner parties. The most popular of them is perhaps the "chun-chiu," or spring wine. During the first moon of a Chinese year most well-to-do persons devote themselves to social affairs. After the exchange of New Year greetings they will invite each other to a party of "chun-chiu." If one has a nice house and also a good cook he will probably give his reception at home, but if he must entertain his friends in a restaurant he generally does it in the latter part of the month as many old-fashioned eating-houses keep their doors closed during the New Year holidays which may last from five to fifteen days. In the eyes of the society people of Peking these "spring-wine" parties are very important.

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If one's name is not included in the list of guests of a certain person it means that his friendship with one has ended.

Next in importance are the farewell and welcome parties. Whenever a person is about to leave for a distant place and also for some time he will call on all his intimate friends and near relatives to "tsu-hsun" or bid fare-well. These friends and relatives must either give him something to eat on the journey in the form of cakes and hams or entertain him before he starts. It is usually the well-to-do people who can afford to "chien-hsun" or celebrate the departure of a friend with a dinner party. In many cases people send money in the name of "chen-yi" or travelling expenses to the proposed traveler.

A welcome party is either called "hsi-cheng" or "chieh-feng" in literary Chinese. Here "hsi-cheng" means to clean the dust of a new arrival while "chieh-feng" is supposed to receive the lucky wind which the honored guest has brought with him. The welcome party must be given within a few days of the guest's arrival or of his first visit to the host.

Invitation cards must be sent out three days in advance. It is not considered as polite if these cards are sent right on the day of the reception.

Recently it is common to use the printed form which can be purchased from any stationery store and fill the

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blanks with exact dates, names and addresses. And it is also common to send them by post.

But the most polite and in a way, the most conservative fashion is to use a long piece of red paper which can be folded several times. Usually the name of the guest of honor is written on the top of this red paper while those of the other guests will follow his in the order of their social importance.

On receipt of this card the honor guest will write the "chin-pei-mu-ts'o" phrase right below his name if he decides to attend. Here "chin-pei-mu-ts'o" means that he will respectfully take the last seat. But when he refuses to accept the invitation he will use the phrase "chin-hsia" meaning that he can not attend but wishes to thank the host respectfully.

The other guests will sign "chin-chih" or "respectfully noted" if they desire to come, or "chin-hsia" if the invitation can not be accepted.

Only recently it has become a custom to give the reason of one's refusal to attend in a few words below his own name. In this case the general excuse is that he will be a host himself at the appointed time.

In conservative circles, it is not only necessary that a written reply accepting or declining the invitation should be sent at once but it is also considered as good manners to return the card to the host with a "yi" or bow at the time when one attends the party. Many a careless guest

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only sends a telephone message to the place where the reception will take place when he finds himself unable to attend. This often places the host in a difficult position as he will be unable to know how many of his guests are going to show up.

Another difficulty of the host lies in the fact that most of the guests do not arrive on time. Often a self-important guest keeps his host and the other people waiting for two or three hours on the ground that he has too many engagements at the same time. Unlike the foreigner, a Chinese guest considers it quite right to accept several invitations for the same evening, and he can manage to keep his appointments with more or less punctuality.

Until recently there were only stag parties. The old custom demands that men and women should not dine together unless they were closely related to each other by blood or marriage. Even in that case an unmarried girl was not allowed to sit with the husband of her sister.

With the invasion of Western ideas, this system has been radically changed. The participation of young ladies in social affairs has become the order of the day.

Often invitations are sent out under the joint names of the host and hostess when both men and ladies are invited to a party. It is also common for a lady, young or old, to give a dinner party in honor of her own friends. The local restaurants and the dining rooms of the Y.M.

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C.A. and the Western Returned Students' Club are doing a large part of their business with these lady customers.

While it is true that the Chinese are noted for the richness of their food people pay more attention to the quality of liquor than to their cuisine when they become hosts. This can be proved by the fact that all invitation cards bear the familiar phrase "chieh-cheng-hou-kuang" meaning that the wine cups have been polished to await your presence.

Again when a table of food is meant the expression "chiu-hsu" is often used. "Chiu" means wine and "hsu" is a mat. A mat of wine represents thirty or forty courses of well-cooked food. But, needless to say, no dinner party can be described as "chiu-hsu" without wine liberally served to all guests.

Speaking of wine, the local drinkers are very particular. No host who wishes to entertain his guests in a proper manner would care to use homebrew "pai-kan" meaning the white wine made of kaoliang. The most fashionable drink is the "shaoshing" or yellow wine made in Shaoshingfu of Chekiang Province. There are about fifty kinds of Shaoshing wines. At a regular dinner party people drink "hua-tiao" more than anything else. It is said that the old custom of Shaoshing requires that the parents manufacture some wine as soon as a daughter is born. The wine which has been known as "hua-tiao" will form a part of the dowry at the time of her marriage.

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It is true that the Chinese are very particular about their beverages. But it is equally true that the native diners pay great attention to the quality of food.

Formerly there were only four types of cuisine although the way of cooking is different in each province. They were the Shantung, Honan, Szechuan and Liang Hwai types.

During the Ching dynasty, the central government in Peking spent many millions of dollars for the Yellow River in Shantung and Honan. The officials who were supposed to take care of the so-called Sorrow of China, had practically nothing to do but devote themselves to wine, women and song. It is said that some of these River officials went so far as to insist that each dish must be prepared by a separate cook in order to insure efficiency. Ducks must be bought from Peking, hams from Yunnan and water melons from Hami of Sinkiang. High rewards and severe punishments awaited the success and failure of their cooks. As a result, the Shantung cooking and Honan cuisine have become slogans of all Chinese diners.

But the salt merchants in Szechuan and in the districts along the Hwai River known as Liang Hwai used to lead a life just as extravagant as that of the River officials of Shantung and Honan. With no militarists and bandits to practice Communism with them at that time these rich and leisurely merchants had but one goal in their life which was to find the best

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way to enjoy themselves. In their programme of enjoyments, food was always an important item. Very often the talented cooks of other provinces traveled thousands of miles to offer their services to these princes of salt. It was small wonder that the food served to such patrons should become a type of its own with the progress of time.

To-day these four great types still retain their characteristics although all of those River officials have gone and many of the salt merchants are no longer wealthy. But two new and strong rivals have appeared in the field. They are the Cantonese and Fukienese.

The people of these two Southern provinces are very industrious and as a result, very rich. But many of the well-to-do Cantonese and Fukienese who may hesitate to buy a new hat at a dollar, are quite prepared to spend two dollars for a duck. It is even said that in the City of Rams people pay as much as thirty dollars for a single dish of shark's fins. Besides they prove to be able propagandists of their good cuisine. Wherever live the Cantonese and Fukienese there are restaurants of their own. Here in Peking these two types are quite well-represented and for some years, have been threatening the future of the other four types.

Lately it has become a custom for a Cantonese host to entertain his guests in a Cantonese Restaurant and a Shantung host in a Shantung restaurant. One of the reasons is that he always likes his native food best. An-

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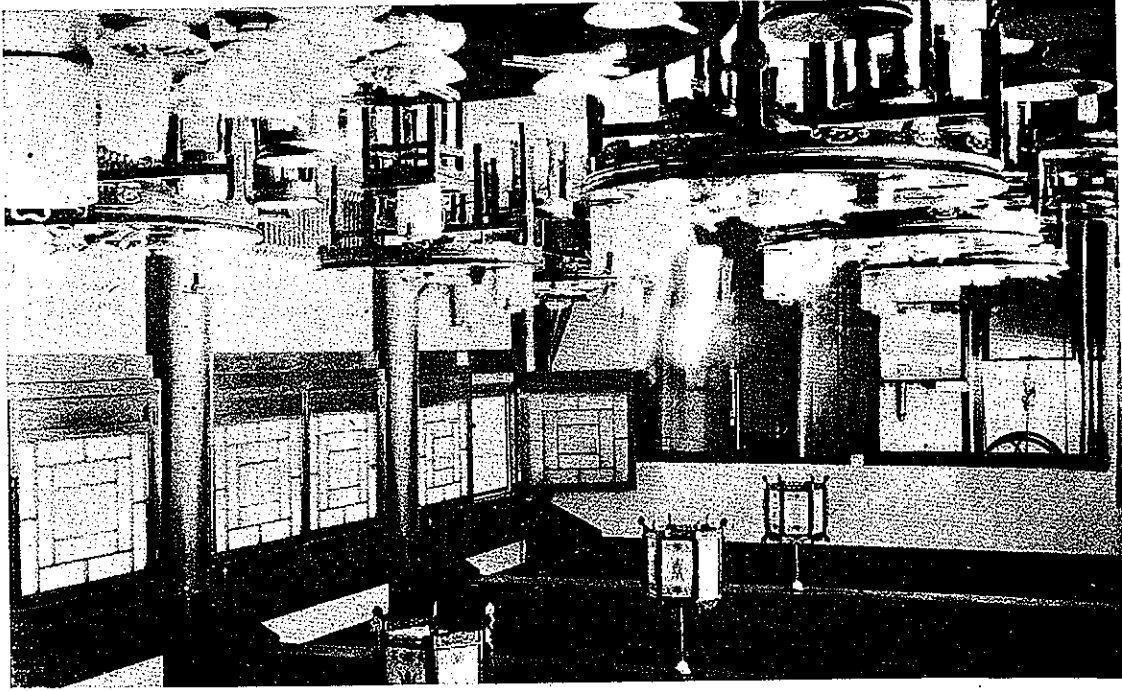
other reason is that because of his personal friendship with the management, there will be better service, if not better food, for the reception.

In case the honored guest is a much more prominent man than the host this rule will probably be reversed. With a view to pleasing that gentleman, the host will entertain him in a restaurant with which the guest is known to be familiar. What is more, the management will be told in advance to prepare a few of his favorite dishes so as to insure his enjoyment.

Many important men, however, do not like the idea of dining in a restaurant. Some of them are afraid that some unfortunate incident may occur to them when they are unattended by their bodyguards. Others fear that their private conversations and random discussions might be overheard by outsiders and cause later embarrassments if they are reported in the press.

Therefore, an influential person or one who has influential friends often entertains at home. If he has an able chef, well and good, or a regular "chih-hsu" will be ordered from a well-known restaurant when he has no confidence in the ability of his own cooks.

More recently, well-to-do people prefer to entertain their friends in the exclusive quarters of a public garden. The water-pavilion known as Sui-Hsia of the Central Park, the Committee Room of Pei Hai or the North Sea Park, the newly-repaired Tsung Ping Tang of the Agri-



A dining hall.

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culture Park, and the Ping Feng Tang and Chang Kwan Lou of the Zoological Garden are most popular with the local hosts. Anybody who is prepared to spend ten or five dollars for the rent, and makes the necessary arrangements in advance will be entitled to have one of these quarters to himself for a whole day or the entire evening. Here he can bring his own cooks or those of his familiar restaurants. He can even send for an orchestra to play music if his purse will permit him to do so.

During the summer many Chinese and foreign pleasure-seekers dine themselves on board a boat in the North Sea Park while the moon shines over them. Auto-owners even travel as far as the Summer Palace in order to attend a dinner party at the side of the Kun Ming Lake where the late Express Dowager used to spend her spare time after court.

The generosity of a Chinese host is almost incomparable. As a merchant he may bargain with you at his counter over the small sum of a few dimes or even a few cents. As a journalist he may attack you in his columns in a very nasty manner. In more ways than one, a foreign resident will disagree with his Chinese neighbor, but the moment he becomes his guest the only thing on which he will not agree with his host, will be the latter's liberality with his wine and food.

At a formal dinner party there will be a round table placed in the centre of the dining room. In some cases,

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there will be a square table with only a round cover on top. This table will accommodate twelve or eleven guests.

As is known most Chinese are very particular about the position of their seats. Generally the host will sit at the end of the table with his back toward the door. The guest of honor sits right opposite to the host while at the left side of the former will sit the guest who is considered as next in importance. Those who sit near the host are either insignificant persons or his most intimate friends.

Before the guests take their seats the host will announce the name of the honor guest and pour some wine into his cup. One by one he will fill up all their little cups with the famous liquor from Shaoshing. While he is performing this "rite", his guests will lodge some friendly protests against the high seats which he has allotted to them. Only with an apparent reluctance will these modest friends and relatives take their seats one after another.

The regular "chiu-hsu" or "mat of wine" will consist of between thirty and forty courses of food. Long before the guests take their seats the table is covered with a white spread on which are placed the chopsticks, spoons, and tiny dishes. Besides these there will be one dish of almonds, another dish of melon-seeds, four dishes of fruits and also four dishes of cold food such as ham and salt eggs.

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As soon as the guest of honor has arrived or news has been received that he will not come to attend the party the host will tell the servants to "warm" the wine as Chinese seldom drink cold liquors especially when they have the "shaoshing". The dinner usually starts when two pots of wine have been brought in by a waiter.

Among the four cold dishes, that of ham is considered as the most important. It must be placed directly before the guest of honor. In the absence of any ham, the dish of sliced duck will predominate.

As soon as the host utters the word "chin" or "please" the guest of honor lifts his pair of chopsticks and starts to take food from any of the dishes. His action will be quickly followed by the other guests. Generally the host will wait till all his guests have received their share. It would be bad form to show signs of haste by eating first.

After the four dishes have been tasted a huge dish of sharks' fins will appear. This is the most important of the forty or so courses. As soon as it is placed upon the table the host will smilingly ask all his friends to "kan-pei" or dry the cups. Whether one can drink or not he must lift his cup as far as his lip if he wishes to be polite. This being done the host again will say "chin" with his chopsticks in hand.

If the dinner party is given on a grand occasion or if the host is both wealthy and liberal a bowl of swallows

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nests will be served. In that case, it will come right after the sharks' fins. To do justice to that important course, the host will pour wine into the cups of his guests, and ask them to "kan-pei" again.

After that, ten "fried dishes" like fried shrimps and pigs' loins will come one after another. Two kinds of sweet refreshments like hot orangeade and also two kinds of pies will come between the ten "fried dishes" and the ten "big bowls" like pork balls and fish balls.

As soon as a big fish is placed in its dish and a duck in a bowl are brought in the guest of honor will ask the host to allow the whole party to eat the rice. Here if the host is thoughtful he will ask all his friends to dry their cups once more. Only with an apparent reluctance will the host order his servants to bring in the rice. But at this time another four big bowls known as "fan-tsai" or "rice courses" will be served.

It must not be supposed that ten or eleven persons could eat up a "full table" of forty or so courses. Generally the first half of these dishes are eaten heartily by the guests while the rest will either be partially cooked or merely exhibited as a sign of the generosity of the host.

Of late, many complaints have been made against such dinner parties. One reason given is that they are not sanitary. As so many persons take their food from the same dish or bowl with chopsticks, contagion is likely.

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Another reason is that it is too much of waste of money and food.

Now it has become a fad to entertain one's friends in a foreign or a foreign-style restaurant. During the summer, the local diners take a particular fancy to these restaurants where foreign-style food is served.

But the high standard of Chinese cuisine has not been denied even by the over-Europeanized returned students. They may kick very hard against the unsanitary condition of Chinese restaurants but they like to go there, and have a "bite" once in a while.

Recently a remedy has been found. Many fashionable eating-house like Tung Hsin Lou in the East City and Chung Hsin Tang in the South City will serve their Chinese food in a foreign style if the waiters are told to do so in advance. In this case, each guest will be given five or seven courses, and he can eat from his own plate with knives and forks.

Besides it has now become fashionable to entertain people with a "banker's table" which will waste neither food nor money. A few years ago when an ex-Premier who has become a banker, invited a party of local bankers to dinner he told his cook to prepare only ten bowls instead of forty or more courses. This powerful man is called the God of Wealth in all circles. His action has been quickly followed by most bankers and smart men of other professions. But up to this day a table of ten

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courses which should be reasonable enough for ten or eleven persons, is called the "banker's table".

Leaving aside the question of hygiene the old-fashioned Chinese dinner has many points in its favor.

In the first place, people are apt to feel the warmth of the party when they sit closely together at a round table, and take their food from the same dish or bowl. It often helps to make new acquaintances better acquainted and intimate friends more intimate.

Secondly, the diners are given a good chance to make a free selection of their favorite dishes from a great variety. It is only reasonable that one should have a few dishes which he likes best, at a regular party. Given only five or seven courses as in the foreign-style restaurants, the chance for a diner to make his own choice, is rather limited.

And lastly, it is much more economical for a large party to eat together. For instance, a table of food with sharks' fins and swallows' nests for twelve persons will cost only between twenty and twenty five dollars at the most fashionable restaurants like Tung Hsin Lou and Chung Hsin Tang, but if the host orders the same restaurant to serve in foreign fashion only five or seven courses with shark's fins and swallows' nests he must pay five dollars per person. Then twelve covers will cost sixty dollars for the food alone.

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Speaking of expenses, the host is left with his own choice. The same "chui-hsu", which costs one twenty dollars or more at Tung Hsin Lou or Chung Hsin Tang, will only cost ten dollars or so at a smaller restaurant. Politicians and society people who are fond of "show" would spend twenty dollars in one of the aforesaid places rather than ten dollars in a place where he can be given the same enjoyment. The name of a famous restaurant is often believed to lend dignity to the host as well as to his guests. Prominent men in Peking especially the self-styled prominent ones, seldom go to a small eating-house even when they are invited.

It should be remembered that if a host is willing to pay twenty dollars for the food he must be prepared to spend another twenty for wine, tips and car fares.

Wines in Peking are none too cheap. Because of freight charges and numerous taxes, one catty of medium quality "shaoshing" will cost fifty cents or more. It is very common for ten or eleven persons to drink twenty or thirty catties at one party. Besides, foreign liquors with soda and lemonade are often served when the host wishes to be liberal. One should not be surprised if the wine bill alone amounts to ten or fifteen dollars.

All the world is kicking against the tip system but many people in Peking are specially bitter against it. It is not because the local Chinese are typically unmindful of such little services which waiters, porters and other

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classes of servants perform. But the methods for levying tips are far from satisfactory.

Take the system in a restaurant for instance. When you order a table of food for twenty dollars you have to pay a two dollar tip known as "hsiao-chang," or small bill. Again when you drink ten dollars of liquor you must pay another "hsiao-chang" of a dollar.

The ten percent tip or rather tax is charged on cigars, cigarettes and anything which a host may desire to buy for his guests. After you have paid all these regular tips which are openly stated on the bill you will be obliged to pay the extra tip called "chiu-chien," or wine money.

Customers who either refuse or neglect to pay this extra tip will certainly be given the cold shoulder by the waiters. But if you pay liberally, say twenty per cent. of the whole bill, you will at once be given a rousing farewell in the form of several loud cries of "tu-li" meaning "much ceremony". The two or three ushers standing at the gate of restaurants who have heard these joyous remarks, also will make very respectful bows when you are passing out.

A few hosts who have been in the habit of spending freely, pay this extra tip with pleasure. Because once you give a handsome cumshaw your name is likely to live in the memory of these grateful waiters for a long time to come. The next time you go there many smiling faces

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and loud cries will greet you, apart from the fact that your name will be coupled with the high-sounding title of "ta-jen" or Your Excellency although you may never have been a government official in your life.

Here it may also be mentioned that unlike the other cities of China, the tip system of Peking is not confined to hotels and restaurants. Everywhere you go you are followed by the tip curse. If you spend thirty cents for a hair-cut it may be necessary for you to pay a tip of ten cents. Even when you have a cup of ice-cream for twenty cents you may also pay five cents as the customary cumshaw. Whatever be its name, a tip is required for any work that has been done by a person who belongs to the servant class.

In connection with the car fares which the host at a dinner party is obliged to pay for his guests, a little explanation seems not out of place.

The guests in Peking as elsewhere pay all car fares themselves save in the case when one or two guests forget to bring some small change to pay their hired rickshaws. In this instance, the management of the restaurant will be asked to pay for them, and credit the sum to the bill of the host.

The fact remains that a host at any dinner party must pay a considerable sum of money to the drivers of his friends' cars. This is known as "chê-fan-chien" meaning the rice money for car drivers. The system exists in

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Shanghai and many other parts of China but the sums are particularly large in this city.

The regular "ché-fan-chien" for a rickshaw coolie is 20 cents, for a mafoo (even in the case of two) 40 cents and for a chauffeur with or without his assistant 80 cents.

As soon as the host asks the guests to sit down at the round table a waiter will come forward with a printed form of the "ché-fan-chien" bill. Knowing what is meant, the host will ask every guest as to what sort of vehicle he has. When he has filled in the names of these guests and the classification of their respective vehicles the host will hand back the list to the waiter standing behind him. Generally the waiter asks in a half whisper how these drivers should be paid. Any experienced host will shout back the answer "chao-li", a familiar phrase in North China meaning "stick to the rule."

There are cases where a host is not willing to abide by the rule, and only wishes to pay these drivers in coppers. Then he must put down the sum under the name of each guest. There are also cases where the host with an anxiety to please his guests particularly the guest of honor, may order the waiter to "chia-pei" or double the usual sum.

Blessed be the host if his guests are all military leaders and prominent mandarins. For each of these

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gentlemen will bring a group of bodyguards who must be fed and paid by him.

Several foreign friends of the writer have asked the question why local chauffeurs are willing to work for twenty five dollars a month for a Chinese rather than forty dollars for a foreigner. The solution lies in the system of "ché-fan-chien." Any Chinese who is in a position to keep an automobile, must have several dinner parties in a week if not in a day. In the case of a dinner in a disorderly house, the chauffeur will get three dollars instead of 80 cents. It is small wonder that he is unwilling to serve a foreigner who has no "ché-fan-chien" for him.

The custom that the host must visit the guest of honor within a day or two after the party has also been discarded. It was an idea on the part of the thoughtful host to make inquiries after the health of his honored guest and at the same time, to ascertain whether he has enjoyed the entertainment.

It is no longer necessary that the other guests who have only been invited to keep company with the honor guest pay their respects to the host the following day. What is important, all guests must not forget to thank their host whenever and wherever they meet him again.

In former days no guest would stand up and leave his seat if there was one who had not yet finished his food. Now it is only necessary for the host to sit at his table till the last guest is through with his rice. Gen-

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erally as soon as one has finished his rice or noodles as the case may be he will leave his seat and clean his mouth with a cup of cold water which the waiter has placed on another table. Some of the conservative guests will remain in their seats until the lion of the party has gone through with his last bowl of rice. In case all guests choose to wait with the host then the latter say "kwentso, kwentso" meaning that they can leave their seats at liberty.

Usually it is the honor guest who will first bid farewell to the host after having thanked him. The other guests will leave in a body so that their host need not see them off to the gate one by one. The new custom requires that he should only accompany his guests as far as the door of the dining room if the party is given in a restaurant or in a public place like the Central Park.

In Peking as elsewhere people seldom entertain their intimate friends and near relatives with a full table or table d'hote unless there is a good reason to do so.

It is said that even in such fashionable restaurants as Tung Hsin Lou and Chung Hsin Tang, the greater majority of customers dine a la carte. Many small restaurants do not supply table d'hote dinners even when they are so ordered.

Generally when a host decides to dine his guests a la carte he will not take the trouble of issuing invitation cards. He makes his appointments by telephone messages

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or brief notes. More often, he makes his engagements impromptu, and gives no advance notice to the restaurant.

As soon as he arrives at an eating house the host will tell the waiter how many of his friends will be there. If he happens to be a regular patron of that establishment the waiters will not ask his name but simply put down his surname with a brief address on the little signboard outside of the dining room assigned. The moment the covers are laid a list of telephone numbers will be given to a waiter so as to urge guests to come at once.

Unlike at a formal party, the guests of "bien-fan" or plain dinner will not keep the host waiting for any length of time, especially if he has a good standing in society. Should the appointment be set at 7 o'clock most guests will arrive before half past seven. In the case of one or two who were engaged elsewhere but intended to come by all means they send word to that effect and tell the host to proceed with the dinner as usual. Here the highest seats will be reserved for the late-comers.

It is the general rule that the host who arrived before all guests, ordered the four cold dishes like ham, fried fish, salted eggs and sliced duck, and has them placed on the table as if it were a regular party. As soon as the guests have taken their seats a waiter will bring in a printed menu pasted on a square board and show it around. After taking a glance at the menu the guest will name a dish.

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The unwritten law demands that no one should name a dish that any other guest in the party has already named. But if he is not familiar with the restaurant he can ask the waiter whether its chef is a Shantungite or a Hokenese. When he has ascertained the birthplace of the presiding cook he ought to be able to name a dish right away. Any hesitation on the part of the guest will betray the fact that he is not quite a society man.

But if the host is liberal or thoughtful he will insist that each of his friends must name two dishes instead of one. Besides if any of his guests should fail to think of a new dish he must make a suggestion off hand.

"Bien-fan" or plain dinner, has become a familiar term in conversation between friends. This is because most Chinese are modest or at least like to appear modest. Even when a host gives a regular party he calls it "bien-fan" before his friends.

The general rule is that all full tables are called "chiu-hsu" or mats of wine while to dine a la carte is described as "bien-fan." In addition, there is a third class called "chia-chang-bien-fan" or the home-made plain dinner.

Only the most intimate friends and closest relatives are invited to a "chia-chang-bien-fan" party. This informal dinner which is given in the house of the host, will not consist of more than twenty courses. In the case of four or five guests the dinner will have only ten courses

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or so. They will be four cold dishes, between four and six big bowls and one huge bowl of soup.

At such an informal party the host is at liberty to decide whether he shall supply wine or other drinks if it is summer, but if the host wishes to have a lively evening he will most probably supply his friends freely with wine.

Unlike regular dinners, no "hua-tiao" or other Shao-shing wines should be served as a necessity. The less expensive "pai-kan", "yin-chen" and "wu-chia-pi" can be used instead. It is said that the same "wu-chia-pi" which can be bought for 30 cents a bottle in North China is sold for ten dollars gold in America. The Chinese bootleggers in the United States call it medicine or Chinese brandy.

Recently the "chia-chang-bien-fan" parties have become very popular among all classes of people. The prominent men like them because in a well-guarded home they will not be disturbed by their political enemies or other outsiders. Besides they can talk about anything they like, without any fear of being overheard, and if they are particular about food they can also have sharks' fins, swallows' nests and even the precious bears' paws known as "hsung-tsang", in the Chinese classics.

Persons with a limited purse like these informal dinners chiefly for economical reasons. So long as they dine on home-cooked food the officials of the stamp duty bureau, amusement-tax bureau and the luxury-tax bureau can do nothing against them.

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An important factor, however, must not be overlooked, namely, if you dine in the house of the host you can play a few rounds of mah jongg after dinner. Nowadays no home is complete without a mah jongg set.

Among the pleasure-seeking people of Peking, three new kinds of dinner parties have recently come into fashion. They are the "sheng-jih-hui" or birthday parties, "hsiao-han-hui" or winter-killing parties and "chi-tsai-hui" or Dutch treat parties.

The general rule for a man to celebrate his birthday is to issue the invitation cards in the name of his children and grandchildren. All his friends and those of his offspring will send him scrolls and other gifts as soon as they have received such notices. On that eventful day the guests will come to his home or a restaurant to offer him congratulations. In return he will entertain them with a regular dinner and also a theatrical performance if he can afford to do so.

But the idea of the "sheng-jih-hui" is for ten or twelve persons to form a "hui" or society in order to hold such celebrations in turns.

Anyone who is willing to join a particular group, must take steps to sound the feelings of other members beforehand. If he can be assured that he is persona grata the applicant will disclose the date of his birthday to one who can introduce him to the society. Sometime he must wait for a long time before a vacancy can be secured. For

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most of these societies do not accept more than twelve members as a round table can only accommodate that many. To pay for an extra table of dinner just for the sake of a new member is certainly out of the question.

There are two sets of rules for all birthday societies in this city. Some societies require that the person whose birthday is due, must give a dinner party to entertain all his fellow members. Others stipulate that all fellow members must pay for the celebrations given for one whose birthday is due.

The "sheng-jih-hui" system has become very popular with government employees. Thinking that it is a good way to promote friendship among themselves, these officials have become very enthusiastic about it. In many cases, a person whose financial condition permits him to make as many friends as possible, may become a member of several "sheng-jih-huis" at the same time.

In some of the government offices, the tendency has become such that he must be a social out-cast if he fails to join any "sheng-jih-hui" formed by his colleagues. People in banking and other commercial circles are also hard hit by this social pest, it is said.

To Chinese scholars, winter is particularly a gloomy season. Usually they do not skate or play any kind of games to while away these cold and dreary months. Nor do these men of letters care to take picnic parties in the nearby hills.

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From time immemorial, the only pastime of Chinese scholars has been poetry and wine. As a result, these two romantic things, poetry and wine, have become associated terms. Anyone who likes to compose poems, must try to drink a few cups of "hua-tiao" or "pai-kan" whether he loves it or not. At the same time, the person who can both write and drink will be hailed as a "feng-liu-tsai-tse" or romantic genius by people of his own circle.

As is known Peking has been a mecca of Chinese scholars for centuries. Whether you go to a tiny teashop at the corner of a street or a ruined temple in the outskirts of the city you will come across some elderly Chinese who are either discussing their own poetic works or copying those of others.

It is these gentlemen who form the real nucleus of all "hsiao-han-huis" or winter-killing societies in this great city.

Like "sheng-jih-huis", most "hsiao-han-huis" do not take in more than twelve members for the same reason that they can not afford to pay an extra table of dinner for the sake of one man. But unlike the members of birthday societies, the "winter-killing" people do not feed themselves with such high-class "chiu-hsu", as Tung Hsin Lou, Chung Hsin Tang and other fashionable restaurants would supply.

As a rule, each member brings to the party one or two dishes which his wife or daughter has prepared for

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him. In the case of a bachelor, he may bring a piece of ham or some sausages. But if he is too poor to buy such delicacies the struggling scholar will bring some peanuts instead.

Like their Western brothers, Chinese writers do not take their poverty seriously to heart. On the contrary, they, in a way, enjoy life much more than those mandarins who own beautiful mansions in foreign concessions.

Formerly the "hsiao-han-hui" members loved to hold their parties in teashops and temples. Since the North Sea has been thrown open to the public as a park many such a get-together meeting have taken place along the lakeside. The Yi Lan Tang palace and the Wu Lung Ting arbors must have heard many beautiful poems composed and loudly read under their roofs. These guests seldom talk about politics and are even ashamed to discuss the quality of their own food. In short, they center their attention on poetry and wine.

Of all public dinners, none is so democratic and popular as a "chi-tsai-hui" or Dutch treat party.

The greater majority of "sheng-jih-hui" members are government employees and wealthy merchants while the "hsiao-han-hui" people have been exclusively men of letters. Now the pleasures of a "chi-tsai-hui" can be enjoyed by all classes of people and all the year round.

It was members of parliament who first desired to organize political cliques by promoting some sort of society

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among themselves. They started the idea of "Dutch treat" and managed to meet once or twice a week in their club-houses.

Gradually the college professors who saw that there was much fun and little expense in this practice, adopted it among themselves. Some of them choose Saturday evening to hold their get-together while others prefer to have a good time at noon on Sunday. Everyone who can pay a dollar or two, will have the satisfaction of partaking of a regular feast.

Later, lawyers, doctors and other professional men who wished to forget their rivalry for a time, also planned to have some sort of gathering where they could benefit by the frank exchange of ideas. Once a week or fortnight they now go to their own association to be dined and winned without making them much the poorer.

To-day all people who can claim to have one occupation or another, have a "chi-tsai-hui" from time to time. Taking advantage of such informal meetings, the employers wish to discuss among themselves the best way of securing from their workers the maximum efficiency with the minimum pay, while the employees will devote their conversation to shorter hours and better wages. Small groups of railway and post men are seen dining in street-corner restaurants on week-ends. When their debates on the merits or demerits of a boss become too hot they may end their well-meant "chi-tsai-hui" with a free-for-all fight.

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Very often, the residents from the same district of a province may call a "chi-tsai-hui" to be held in their own guild where the diners must be "tung-hsiang" or fellow townsmen. Here people can bring their wives and children in order to get acquainted with each other. A group picture will be taken before or after the dinner.

From the personal experience of the writer, the "chi-tsai-hui" of college professors are usually the most lively and joyous. Not only are learned people enabled to discuss philosophy, literature, arts, politics and all other branches of human knowledge, but their appetites will be improved with their college yells, songs and jokes especially if there are a few Western returned students among them.

III

MAH JONGG.

No study of Chinese social life can be considered as complete without some discussion of the mah jongg game.

With a history of only a little more than half a century, this game of 136 pieces has become so popular in China that from the most highly-placed officials down to the poverty-stricken rickshaw-coolies every Chinese, old or young, likes to play a few rounds when there is the opportunity.

To some of our people, mah jongg is a sort of gambling game. They either make a living out of it or play the game with a desire to obtain some money. But the greater majority of mah jongg players enjoy the game just as their Western brothers do their indoor games. High officials and successful business men who can make money much quicker in other ways play this game hour after hour with a party of their friends. It should be said that a mah jongg game can be played with different motives.

For many years, people have been trying to trace the history of the famous pastime. Some have said that

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mah jongg or "sparrow" which used to be a royal game played only by emperors, princes and their immediate relatives in the imperial family, has been in China for hundreds of years. Others declare that a clever mathematician in Ningpo invented it some fifty years ago for the amusement of his personal friends. The fact that many of our mah jongg experts are Ningpo men, lends weight to the belief that the world-famed game originated in that Southern port.

The present name of mah jongg as known in Europe and America is a pronunciation of Cantonese settlers who carry the game wherever they reside. Although different names have now been given to this game the proper pronunciation for the word "sparrow" after which it has been named, should be "mah chiao".

When one friend writes to another asking him to play mah jongg he generally uses the phrase "shou-tan", meaning to talk with hands. Sometimes players like to say "cho-lin-tse-hsi" or to play a game under the bamboo as all these pieces are made of bamboo and ivory. In conversation, people may speak of it as "ta-pai" or to strike at cards. It is true that the Chinese have several kinds of card games. But since the discovery of mah jongg all other games have been relegated to the back-ground.

In most cases, mah jongg parties are held in the homes of friends, but here, as in the disorderly houses, the play-

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ers must also contribute some money toward the "water." Some hosts honestly give all the money to their servants who must wait upon the players so long as the games last. Others distribute such money among their domestics only after they have deducted all expenses incurred from such sums.

It is strange that in the South people consider it a great shame to let their friends pay for their own food, fruit and other expenses through the "water", while the local officials—many of them holding responsible positions in the government—collect such tips from their friends in a matter-of-fact manner. Many important men who live in beautiful mansions and have soldiers and police to serve as their bodyguards, are receiving thousands of dollars every evening from their gambling friends in the name of "water".

Generally it takes four persons to play a game of mah jongg, but there can be one extra person or candidate whose title is "dreamer". No matter who wins each time the "dreamer" is entitled to some "meng chien" or "dream money", the sum of which must be fixed beforehand. As soon as one round is over this candidate will sit to play while one who has drawn the card marked "East" will have to leave his seat and become the "dreamer" in turn. Instead of playing four rounds as the minimum limit these five persons will play five rounds each time so as to give everyone a chance to become the privileged "dreamer".

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In cases where there are more than five but less than eight persons to organise two parties, the persons who sit or stand behind the players can make their bettings with each other on the success of one or the other. At the time when these four or five rounds are over some one may like to quit in favor of another.

Usually the host will give up his place when there are more persons than the quorum. He may also propose that some of them should go into partnership, and play for bigger stakes.

Most players, however, do not like the system of "dreamers" and partners. The fact that many onlookers cannot refrain from discussing or suggesting about the cards of each player, is mainly responsible for its unpopularity. It must be remembered that most mah jongg experts can tell exactly what cards his rival has when a little hint is given.

Many old China hands will agree that our people can successfully combine business with pleasure. The mah jongg game certainly furnished a good illustration of this.

More often than not, a matter of business which has been outstanding for weeks and even months, can be satisfactorily settled at a mah jongg party in a short time. Unlike the other forms of gambling or of sports people can play and talk at the same time with an air of ease.

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It is said that many political schemes involving intrigue and counter-intrigue originated from such parties. The moment one sits down at a square table with three other persons all the reserve and etiquette between them are cast aside. Jokes and gossip fall thick and fast.

Taking advantage of this freedom of speech, many shrewd persons can push their business or political schemes with greater success than they could over a cup of "lung-chin" or "dragon well" tea. Office-hunters obtain their sinecures, and match-makers arrange their marriage in a game of mah jongg much quicker and more successfully than anywhere else.

Mah jongg can be played in different places and under different circumstances. Very often a person invites three or more of his friends to a house of ill-fame. In the room of his "girl," eight rounds of mah jongg will be played. The winners of this party must contribute some money as "water" or tip for the girl and her servants who in turn, supply the guests with food, fruit, cigarettes and even rice-money for their chauffeurs. In Peking the customary tip is from forty dollars upwards. However, if these gentlemen wish to play another four or eight rounds they must pay another sum of forty dollars or more.

Here it must be mentioned that most people in Peking especially the government employees, never consider it a bad or unmoral practice to play a game of mah

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jongg in a disorderly house outside Chienmen. In fact many Cabinet ministers and other responsible officials have been frequenting such places evening in and evening out. To them these houses are the equivalent of clubs in Western countries.

Like other forms of gambling, there are sharpers in mah jongg parties. Generally politicians who play for big stakes, are less honest than merchants and other classes of people.

Very often, a gang of three persons who may carry high-sounding titles and drive in limousines pick up an easymark and cheat him to the amount of four or five figures with smiles and other gestures of friendship. At times people may commit fraud for the sake of fun.

It is not seldom that an experienced sharper can turn on three of his partners. Here several ways are open to him. First, if he knows that his friends are just as dishonest as himself he will approach every one of them separately with the proposal that he is to share with him all his winnings and losses in that particular game. With the conclusion of such an arrangement, this clever player will try to lose as much as possible. As soon as the game is over he will ask each of his three confederates to pay him half of his losses. Supposing that he has lost one hundred dollars he can get hundred and fifty back from these accomplices with fifty dollars as his net profit.

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In the second place, it will not be difficult for an experienced but dishonest player to steal or change cards when he is playing with three greenhorns. Most beginners who find themselves already too busy to look after the thirteen pieces in their hands, naturally have no time to watch the movements of their rivals. Once an important card is stolen the success of this player will be more than insured.

But, after all, mah jongg is the sport of gentlemen. Unless he desires to become a social outcast no self-respecting person ever thinks of cheating his partners at a friendly game.

IV.

THEATRES.

China did not possess any theatres until the latter part of the Tang Dynasty, but she had her music and singing as early as five thousand years ago when Yao and Shun, the two great emperors, ruled on the Northern bank of the Yellow River.

In the early part of the Chow Dynasty which lasted for eight hundred years, music, both vocal and instrumental, was developed to a very high degree under the influence and guidance of Duke Chow. All the four classes of people were taught to sing, play and even dance when any celebration was to be held among themselves, but theatrical performance was never a profession at that time.

During the so-called Period of Warring Nations, China was as war-torn as she is to-day. Both rulers and the ruled were too busy to pay any attention to music and other forms of pleasure. With the exception of a few feudal princes who kept a number of singing girls and musicians in their palaces the public had no chance of ever being entertained by anybody.

Chin Shih Hwang, the great conqueror who built the Great Wall of China, never bothered himself about

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the pleasures of his people. Like those princes whom he had conquered one after another, the Founder of Chin Dynasty trained as many as three thousand actors and actresses and kept them all in the notorious Wu Fang Palace. Throughout his short-lived dynasty, no music of a democratic nature ever existed.

In the Han Dynasty most rulers engaged themselves in foreign and civil wars. With the exception of Han Wen Ti who somehow managed to encourage the study of music among the masses, no successor of that House could well claim to have done anything in that respect.

Nothing was done in the direction of music at the time of Wu Tai or The Five Ages and Lu Chao or the Six Dynasties when China or rather North China was alternatively occupied by Hungarians, Turks, Siberians and other alien tribes.

As soon as Tang Min Hwang, the romantic emperor of the Tang Dynasty ascended the throne he encouraged music and acting among all classes of people. In setting an example he actually played before his ministers with Yang Kwei-fei, the famous beauty of his harem. To do honor to his memory, all theatres of China now have a little shrine bearing his name behind the stage, and all actors and actresses must kowtow to his image before they do their work every day.

There are two kinds of opera houses in Peking. On one hand there are the old-fashioned theatres represented

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by Kwang Teh Low and five others; on the other, are the modern-style ones headed by Ti Yi Wu Tai and the Kai Min Theatre. Nearly all of them are situated outside Chienmen.

The old-fashioned theatres which are dying out as a result of their failure to compete with the others, are all square in shape. The stage itself is square with two large round pillars at both wings.

There are no wooden floors in these buildings. All seats in the form of long benches are placed on flat grounds covered with bricks and sometimes merely with mud. The fact that the ground is so flat, makes those in the back seats unable to obtain a good view of the stage.

Until recently it was the rule of the police authorities that in old-fashioned theatres men and women were not allowed to sit together even if they were members of the same family. In addition, all females were required to go in and out by a side door. This harsh rule has now been modified to some extent, and persons who can afford to pay for a separate box in the upper floor, are at liberty to sit together with their women folk.

There are still quite a few undesirable customs prevailing in these houses, however. As soon as one has taken his seat he will be asked by an attendant to rent a cushion for which he must pay ten or twenty coppers. This pad is usually old and dirty, but the attendant will look displeased if you do not take it.

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The moment this "cushion man" is gone another individual will come along with a tea pot in a matter-of-fact manner. For he seldom asks you whether you desire any tea or not. What he inquires, is whether you want your tea to be red or green. Ten to one, he will give you an unpleasant look if you tell him that you do not require it. Because as a result of your refusal this "tea man" who generally pays an annual sum to the management of the theatre for his right to sell tea, will lose ten cents.

Close upon the heels of this "tea man" will come a servant with a bundle of hot towels in hand. This worthy will visit you several times before the show is over. Each time he must be given a few coppers if you accept his service.

During the middle of the show, the programme man suddenly turns up, and collects two or four coppers from each person. But in this case you can well refuse to buy his wares because he will be too busy to even give you an angry glance.

The modern-style theatres especially the Kai Ming which is owned by the famous actor, Mei Lan-fang, are clean and comfortable. In fact they are not much different from the many theatres in America which the writer has visited, only that the local ones are rather small in comparison.

Unlike the theatres in Shanghai and elsewhere, however, the management of the local house has no con-

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tract with its actors or actresses for more than a single show. The result is that one actor can play in this theatre to-day and in the other theatre to-morrow. Sometimes he may play at one place in the afternoon and at another in the evening.

Furthermore, a Peking theatre can give a good show to-day and close for business to-morrow, but on the day after to-morrow it may resume business again if the management succeeds in engaging one or two famous actors to play under its auspices. The necessary assistants and musicians known as "pan-ti," always follow the leading actors from one place to another.

This irregular system is rather hard upon the theatre-goers. Unless they keep a close watch of their movements it is impossible for them to know where and when their favorite actors or actresses will play. It is still worse in the case of old-fashioned theatres which would cancel their announced performance at the eleventh hour if there happened to be rain or snow that afternoon or evening.

Only the South City Amusement Resort which is run on the Coney Island idea, gives performances both day and night with a fixed list of actresses. As actors and actresses are not allowed to play together in this city the semi-modern theatre inside the park has now about fifty girls playing in different kinds of Chinese drama from two to six in the afternoon and eight to twelve in the evening.

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In Peking all performances are not necessarily given in theatres. They can be given in restaurants, guild-houses, and homes of prominent persons.

Nearly all old-fashioned restaurants have one or two small theatres inside their buildings. Fu Shou Tang, and Fu Chuan Kwan in the East City and Chi Hsien Tang and Hui Hsien Tang in the West City are all noted places where theatrical performances are given from time to time. Their chief advantage over an ordinary theatre is that only invited persons can enjoy the private show and the audience will feel more at home by being allowed to order any drink and food while the play is on. Besides, the programme which has been arranged by the host and his guests of honor, can be changed anytime at their own sweet will. Such a show will cost the host or hosts about one thousand dollars.

There are thousands of guildhouses in Peking representing all the provinces and districts of the country. As a rule, the provincial guilds which were established by means of contributions by members in this city, are large and beautiful. In addition to an assembly hall, a garden and several offices, there must be a theatre of moderate size. The fact that people are not allowed to lodge in a provincial guild, has made it possible to keep this little opera house in good condition.

Among all the "hui-kwan" or guildhouses in Peking, the most well-known are the Kiangsi Guild outside

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Shunchihmen and the Fengtien Guild near Hsi Tan Pai-lou. The former was built by the late Chang Hsun and the latter by Chang Tso-lin. Very often a theatrical performance by such actors as Yang Hsiao-lou and Mei Lan-fang is given in either of these two guilds in honor of a visiting warlord or for the celebration of somebody's birthday.

It is not necessary that the host at such parties be a native son of Kiangsi or of Fengtien:—anyone who is ready to pay a certain sum of money as rent, will be entitled to have the free use of the whole premises for a particular afternoon or evening. Some foreigners who wish to entertain their friends, often rent these guilds for the purpose of giving private shows. For it has become the common belief that it is more dignified to give a show in a guild than in a restaurant. As a matter of fact, the theatre of the former is often better than that of the latter in the way of accommodation.

Recently it has become a common practice to give a private performance at home when prominent persons desire to hold any celebration. As most of these officials and business magnates own mansions it is not difficult for them to build a temporary theatre in the spacious courtyard with a huge matted as the roof.

Persons who either do not possess a large house or are unwilling to take the trouble to build a provisional stage, will give a show in the home of someone else.

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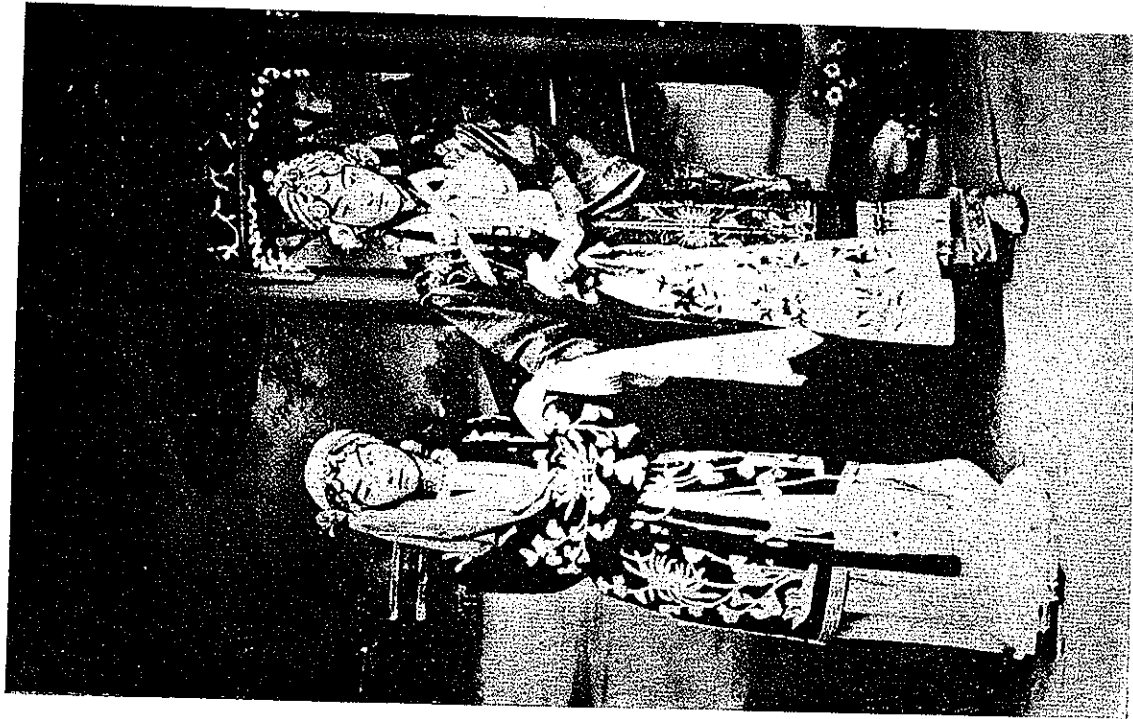
For instance, Na Chia Hua Yuen or Prince Na Tung's Garden near the Y.M.C.A. building has often been rented as a place for staging private shows. In this case, the host will have to pay a rent as high as two hundred dollars for a single show unless he is a friend of the Prince's family and can have a reduced rate.

Since the Republic, many Manchu princes who are hard pressed for money, have been living on the rent of their palaces. As it was the law of the Manchu court that no nobleman was allowed to go 40 li away from Peking without special permission these princes looked upon the theatre as their chief source of amusement. Hence they build a theatre in almost every palace.

Peking has better actors than theatres. In fact, all parts of China turn to this city for their actors and actresses.

As is known there are two types of actors in this country. They are the "ching-pai," meaning those actors who received their training in Peking and the "wai-kiang-pai," meaning those who can only play along the Hwang Ho, Yangtse and other rivers. Needless to say the Peking-trained actors and actresses are far more popular than the other class. The result is that everywhere they go they carry in their advertisements such phrases as "famous in Peking," and "just arrived from Peking."

There are many reasons for the great popularity of the local products. In the first place, Peking has been the capital city of China for many centuries, and people



A lady and a servant in a play.

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are inclined to pay a certain amount of respect to anything that comes from this great city.

In the second place, the speeches of Chinese drama are generally conducted in mandarin. As people of this city are reputed to have the best pronunciation in mandarin they naturally become good singers.

Thirdly, the natives of Peking and other parts of North China have a better physique than most people in the South. With a good figure accompanied by a correct pronunciation, it is small wonder that the local talent is most admired.

Not the least reason is the fact that in Peking nearly every person from the richest man down to a rickshaw coolie, can sing a few familiar songs like the "kung-chien-chi" or empty city trap and "san-niang-chiao-tse", or third mother teaching a son. Under such an atmosphere, budding actors and actresses need no special encouragement to strive to improve their art.

Many of the famous "ching-pai" actors are not necessarily natives of Peking, at least in the Chinese sense. In the last twenty years, the two greatest actors of China are Tan Hsin-pei and Mei Lan-fang. None of them has been considered as a native of Peking although they were born and brought up here. The late Tan Hsin-pei who always played the role of an old male personator, is a Kiangsu man, and Mei Lan-fang, the female im-
hailed from such places.

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Generally there are three ways for one to become an actor in Peking.

The oldest and also the commonest way is to join the "ku-pan" or a school where all sorts of drama is taught. Most of these pupils are between the ages of 10 and 16. At the time of their entrance they must sign a document that their parents or guardians would not complain if they were even beaten to death by their teachers because of stupidity or disobedience. The period of schooling is from 6 to 9 years during which the pupils need not pay anything for their board, clothing, tuition and other fees but they must also turn their salaries to this "ku-pan" if they earn anything from the theatres.

As a rule, these "ku-pan" students enjoy no liberty in the choice of their roles. Whether one shall play as a female-impersonator or an old male in their future career must be decided by the master. The most worthless are taught to be acrobats or to become the flag-bearers on the stage.

In former days, it was a very common thing to hear that the master of a certain "ku-pan" had beaten some of his pupils to death. Since the Republic the police have kept a close watch over such schools and cases of cruelty have become rarer and rarer with the progress of time.

The second way is to learn the art from a tutor. This requires money to pay for tuition and other fees but

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the young man will be thrown upon his resources when he becomes ready to appear on the stage. For he must buy his own equipment, do his own advertising and make all his arrangements with the theatre. As a rule, only sons of prominent actors or of well-to-do families are able to do this.

But these actors have a few advantages over the "ku-pan" graduates. Chief among them is the fact that they are more brilliant and enlightened because they have received better treatment from their tutors. Secondly they will be entitled to their own earnings during their student days unless they have special contracts with these tutors.

Peking, the cradle of Chinese actors, has also many amateurs who form themselves into clubs, when anybody wishes to hold a celebration but is not willing to pay for a regular private show he can engage the members of such a club to sing for an evening without any monetary compensation. What is needed, is only a table of food costing from ten to twenty dollars.

But when an amateur becomes poverty-stricken or has a large family to support he will join the professional actors. This is known in theatrical circles as "hsia-hai" meaning to dive into a sea.

Recently, cases of "hsia-hai" which forms the third way of becoming an actor in Peking, have become more and more numerous with the cost of living on the steady increase. Chu Chin-hsin, a former Y.M.C.A. secretary,

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and Chang Ai-yun, the beautiful niece of an ex-Minister of Justice, are famous "hsia-hai" members of the profession.

In passing it must be mentioned that an amateur holds a higher position in society than the professional. This accounts for the fact that many prominent men allow their folks to sing and even play as amateurs.

But if Peking is the cradle of Chinese actors Tien-chiao must be the cradle of Peking actors.

Despite the fact that there are three ways through one of which a person can become a professional dramatist, many actors and actresses of this city owe their training and popularity to these small theatres at Tienchiao known as the Bridge of Heaven to all foreigners.

For centuries, Tienchiao, the place where furs, embroideries and furniture can be bought cheaply, has been the rendezvous of "roughnecks" in Peking although Chinese poets and foreign diplomats like to go there once in a while out of curiosity. When one has walked about half a mile along Chienmen Street, the Broadway of Peking, he will hear the music and singing of these crude theatres which are situated between the Bridge and the famous Temple of Heaven.

It is true that some new theatres may grow overnight and old ones have been closed down from time to time. But there are always between five and ten houses

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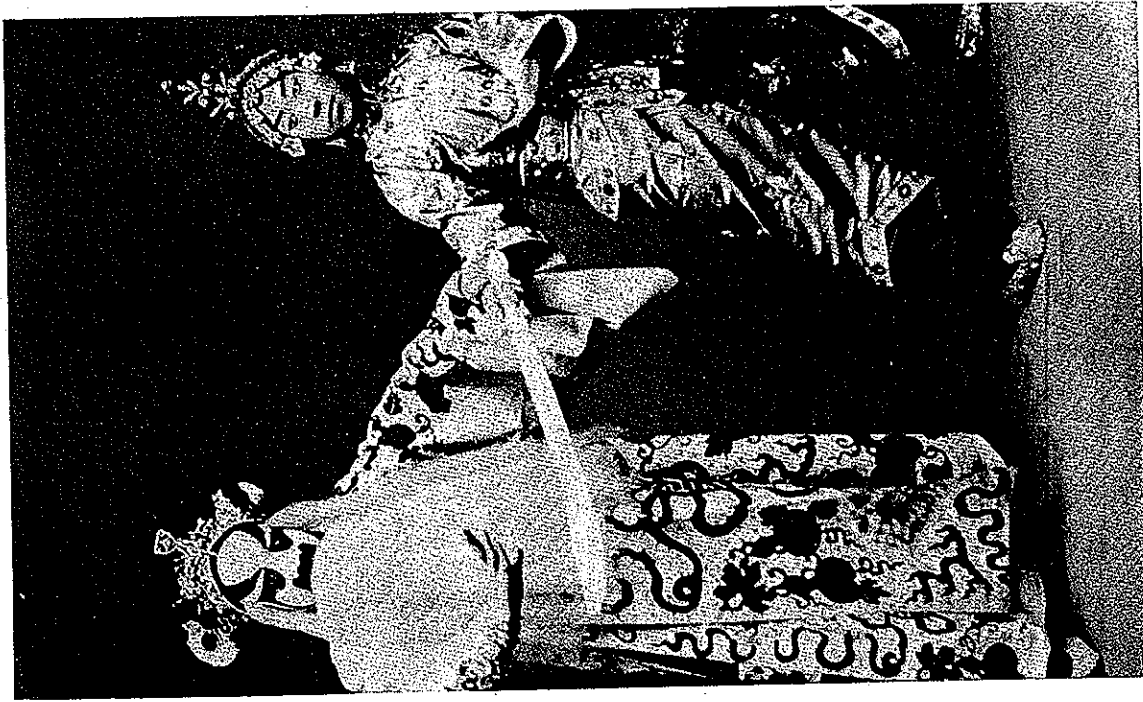
struggling for supremacy around that quarter. Recently there have been more girls' theatres than men's.

In these muddy houses and poor matsheds many of the future stars of China sing and act every afternoon for the police prohibit night shows in such places as a measure of precaution.

Most of these actors and actresses are very young, between the ages of ten and twenty. In fact, a large number of them are orphans adopted by professional actors and theatre-managers. When they first appear on the stage they receive only a few coppers in the name of rickshaw money.

Their salaries will be increased when their art and popularity improve. But none of these actors and actresses at Tienchiao can get more than five dollars a day. For these theatres have an audience of their own which is generally composed of paddlers, coolies, farmers and soldiers. As soon as an actor has attained some popularity he will bid his farewell to Tienchiao and join a theatre of greater reputation.

There are also cases when an actor who has lost his voice but is too poor to live in retirement will go back to Tienchiao to earn a few dimes. Usually these unfortunate persons do not receive the same fair support from the audience as these budding stars for all the world loves a rising hero better than a fallen one.



War on the Chinese stage.

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The idea of a public garden has existed in Peking for hundreds of years, it is true, but the name of "kung-yuan" or park did not come into existence until 1915 when the Chung Yang Kung Yuan or Central Park was first thrown open to the public.

Before the opening of the Central Park and earlier the zoological garden outside Hsichihmen, the inhabitants of this great city also had a number of places to spend their spare time in a very profitable way. Generally, men of letters liked to go to Tao Lan Ting meaning the merry arbor where they could find quiet, peace and plenty of fresh air. Other people desired to proceed to Erh Cha meaning the Second Dam, a place which many American visitors have called the "Niagara of Peking" because of its little falls. Again the well-known Shih Sah Hai or Sea of Ten Temples at the back of the North Sea Park was also the regular rendezvous of all classes of people during the summer.

Unlike the great cities of Europe and America Peking has a large number of Buddhist and Taoist temples where people can pray and play at the same time. It is not a rare sight to see groups of scholars taking wine

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and food to a deserted temple where they hold a picnic and compose a few poems. During the four seasons of the year most of these monasteries are crowded with visitors the majority of whom go there to amuse themselves rather than to worship.

As a result, the demand for parks in Peking is not so great as it is in Europe and America where the churches are closed on all week days. The fact that until recently our people had to work seven days in the week and nearly twelve hours a day, is also responsible for the absence of a large number of amusement resorts.

When Yuan Shih-kai was President and Chu Chien was the Home Minister enterprises of a constructive nature were begun. As soon as these two men had organized the municipal council and paved many of our streets they turned their attention to the establishment of parks in Peking.

CENTRAL PARK.

Central Park which is situated at Tien An Men and just inside Chienmen, is not only the first of our regular parks but will remain for a long time to come the unrivalled garden in this city if not in the whole of China.

For nearly six hundred years, the edifice of the present Chung Yang Kung Yuan was known as Sui



A crowded park on a public holiday.

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Chi Tan or the Temple of Sovereignty with an altar where the emperors of the Ming and Ching dynasties offered sacrifices every year.

It was Emperor Yung Lo, the great builder, who ordered the construction of this city-like temple, but some botanists are inclined to believe that as many of its cypress trees must have been there for seven or eight centuries the Sui Chi Tan was already a kind of temple or public institution even before the rise of the Mings.

What is certain this park which is now open to everybody for 20 coppers or 3 cents gold, was for six centuries a sacred place where only the ruling sovereign accompanied by his most important officials could visit on state functions. The fact that this park is adjacent to the three principal palaces, and is only separated from the imperial halls by a side door, indicates the importance of its location.

Against the strong opposition of many conservative officials who still prayed for the restoration of the monarchial regime, Yuan Shih-kai and Chu Chi-chien cast aside all obstacles, and turned this great temple into a modern park in the fourth year of the Republic. But in order to completely isolate the management of this garden from the game of politics, a board of trustees, composed of bankers, lawyers and prominent men of all professions was immediately formed. The qualification was that one must contribute upwards of fifty dollars at the

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commencement, and pledge a regular sum for all future years. As a result, the Central Park has been independent and making steady improvements ever since, despite the numerous revolutions and coup d'etats.

The park is rectangular and has two sets of walls. Judging by the size of the outer wall with its front gate at Tien An Men and the back gate near the Wu Yin Tien entrance, this edifice can be favorably compared with the citywall of any hsien or fu. The space inside the inner wall is also quite large and to walk around it takes twenty minutes or so.

Any visitor who approaches the Kung Yuan from the front gate, will have to go across a stone bridge as the park is surrounded by a moat which has connections with the springs of the Jade Fountain Hill: At one end of the bridge is a huge garage which is rarely used, and at the other end, stands the entrance with two red-painted doors which are kept open all the year round.

Right inside the main entrance of Central Park are four small wooden booths under a large portico. One is used as a booking office, and another for an exchange shop. The two booths near the ticket-collecting box are occupied by the Ta Tsu Co-operative Store and the Police Station respectively.

Nearly one-third of the entire park is connected by a long corridor, which is typical of Chinese gardens. One end of this corridor goes to the east wing of the park and

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ends at the famous Lai Chin Yu Hsien Restaurant while the other end passes by the green house, a photographer's establishment and extends as far as Chun Ming Kwan, Chang Mei Hsien and the famous "Pastime" cafes.

People who do not wish to enter by one of these corridors, can go straightway through the Victory Monument which was erected in commemoration of China's participation in the European War. Between the quadrangular porch and this marble monument there is a stone lamp-post which was recently taken from the old Summer Palace known as Yuan Ming Yuan, and is believed to be the most magnificent of its kind in the World.

Many visitors to Central Park like to go in through part of the western corridor and take a look at the goldfish in several rows of wooden cases before reaching the Water Pavilion which appeals to foreigners especially. At the time when the pond is beautiful with lotus the Pavilion is usually crowded with guests who may have their tea, refreshments and even supper there. In case one is willing to pay the rent of a few dollars and entertain a group of his friends he may have the beautiful bungalow to himself for the whole day. Very often Chinese or foreign artists like to rent that building to hold an exhibition of their works.

Along this pond there is a hill very artistically decorated with stones and arches. At the foot of this hill one will find a tiny arbor where he can rest a little while

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and decide by which way he will get to the Chun Ming Kwan and the other cafes known as the busiest quarter in Central Park. For there are two ways; one is to go coastwise and the other is to cross a stone bridge, and pass by a small red building called Sze Yi Hsien.

The Sze Yi Hsien hall of Central Park, which is situated on a small island is also one of the most lovely scenic spots of the Park. A part of this temple-like building has now been rented to a group of local painters as their head-office. In front of the hall have been placed several tables where visitors can have tea and cold drinks in summer. Like its neighbour the Water Pavilion, the beauty of this island will be greatly increased when the lotus on the pond are in full bloom. It is said that most of the Sze Yi Hsien guests are sweethearts and newlyweds who like to enjoy the quiet and peace of this lonely islet especially in the moonlight.

Crossing a wooden bridge, the west wing of the long corridor will come into view again. Along this corridor one may stop for a few minutes at the famous green-house where the best flowers of North China are exhibited, and before one reaches the Cantonese photographer he will pass by a small arbor with a stone tablet inside. This tablet which was recently taken from the ruined Yuan Ming Yuan, contains several poems written by Emperor Chien Lung.

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Next to the photographer's establishment which is housed in an attractive two-storied building, is the Chun Ming Kwan cafe. Like the other cafes in the Central Park, the Chun Ming Kwan occupies a one-storied house in the form of a large hall. Save in winter time, most patrons like to have their tea and refreshments served in open air under the trees. The Chun Ming Kwan has also a clientele of its own. Due to the fact that anyone who can afford ten cents for a pot of Chinese tea may sit there from morning till midnight, many poor students, petty officials and frugal persons cling to this somewhat old-fashioned teashop.

Along with Chun Ming Kwan is the Chang Mei Hsien restaurant which is famous for its Szechuan style of cooking. But like the afore-said neighbour, Chang Mei Hsien also serves tea at ten cents per person. The fact that many persons will take their supper there after dark, makes the impression upon its customers that pure "tea-drinkers" are not very welcome particularly in the evening.

The next-door neighbour of Chang Mei Hsien is the "Pastime" cafe which is owned and managed by several Cantonese merchants. The Chinese name of this popular cafe is Pa-shih-hsin. Generally they sell-coffee, milk, ice-cream and all sorts of foreign-style drinks and refreshments. Should any uninformed visitor order a pot of Chinese tea he would either be greeted with an angry

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look by a waiter or be frankly told that he should go to another place for it. As a result, persons who are not willing to spend 30 cents for an ice-cream every five minutes, and pay another 30 cents to an unappreciative waiter as tip, like to go to Chun Ming Kwang where a democratic atmosphere always prevails.

Just a little north of the "Pastime" cafe at Central Park there is another hill on the top of which a small arbor is situated. During the summer months this hillock becomes the mecca of children visiting the Park.

On one side of the hill is the former roller-skating rink which has now been rented to the "Pastime" as a branch restaurant. Further north is the small zoo composed of only one bear and three deer. On the other side lies the boulevard of the Park which leads to the moat and also extends as far as the East Wing.

Along the moat there are many fine cypresses. The old wall which bordered on this rill has recently been pulled down and replaced with iron rails in order to enable the visitors to have a better view of the lotus in the summertime. The management of the Chun Ming Kwan has placed dozens of tables along the rails on which to serve tea and refreshments. Here the guests can obtain a good view of the imperial palaces on the opposite bank. Early in the morning a few budding artists are seen here at work. When winter comes a part of the moat is made into a skating rink.

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Along this moat and in the middle of the boulevard stands the famous Yao Yen Ting meaning the arbor with "words as good as medicine". This marble arbor which contains many maxims of Confucius, Mencius and other Chinese sages is a gift from Mr. Yung Tao, a Chinese Christian who has spent nearly his whole fortune for charitable purposes in Peking.

Before one reaches the gateway leading to the East Wing he will come across a group of rocks very artistically arranged by local experts. This forms a great attraction for most juvenile visitors, and opposite this gateway there is a door connecting Central Park with the Historical Museum inside the palace. In fact, tickets for the Museum are also sold here.

Before reaching Lai Chin Lu Hsien Restaurant and the Committee Room at its side the visitor can rest for a while in an arbor on an elevation. This newly-painted arbor is believed to be the most beautiful of its kind in the Park if not in all Peking.

The spacious courtyard inside the inner wall of Central Park is really a park in itself.

Passing through the Victory Monument and turning a little to the left, the visitor will find at his right a pair of stone lions placed there as two stalwart guardians of the entrance to the inner wall. Right inside the entrance are two small houses with pink-painted walls. It is said that these were the places where the eunuchs and other ser-

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vants of the imperial court made preparations when emperors came here to offer sacrifices at the Altar of Sovereignty every year.

Between this entrance and the short wall surrounding the Altar are many flower beds. These little platforms which only the expert masons of Peking can build, are for the peonies, the national flower of China, which bloom about the same time as the cherry blossoms of Japan. Towards the end of May when the peonies are at their best, these platforms are surrounded with admirers from morning till night. Many a beautiful poem has been written about them by local poets.

A little to the north the visitor will pass through one of the four stone arches belonging to the low wall. Inside this wall there is nothing but the Altar which is built of white marble. To all conservative people this ancient structure is by far the most important of all things in the park as Sui Chi Tan, by which name this terrace is generally known, represented the independence and integrity of China in monarchical days. While all the flights of steps are made of white marble this square terrace is covered with sand of five different colours. Despite the wear and tear of nearly six hundred years, the five-coloured sand has been wonderfully preserved up to the present time. Very often when a fete is held in Central Park for charitable purposes this elevated place is chosen for a boxing bout.

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This lonely altar is graced by two brass urns. According to an official record, these two huge urns are as old as many of the fine cypresses for they were made by order of Emperor Yung Lo for ceremonial purposes.

No visit to Central Park can be considered as complete without a glance into the two grand halls inside the inner wall.

A little north of the Altar of Sovereignty there is the Sui Chi Tien or Sovereignty Hall where all the ceremonial instruments were stored during the monarchical days. Although this magnificent hall was built nearly six hundred years ago repairs have been made from time to time, and it is in good condition.

To-day this building not only shows no sign of decay but proves to be far more useful than it ever was. Very often the Chinese and Japanese artists who have formed an alliance hold exhibitions of their works there. The funeral services of such important men as Dr. Sun Yat-sen and General Tsai Ao also took place in this very hall. In fact, many of the important events which have lately taken place in Peking were celebrated or performed at the famous Sui Chi Tien.

Right back of the Sui Chi Tien is the Chi Fu Tien or dressing hall where the emperor changed his dress when he came to offer sacrifices. This hall is just as grand as the Sui Chi Tien. For several years it has been used as a branch of the Peking public library. From 9 o'clock

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in the morning till six in the afternoon this spacious room is occupied by readers.

At the right side of these two halls lies a foreign-style house belonging to the Ministry of Justice. It is for both the exhibition and sale of goods manufactured by the inmates of Peking prisons.

The Harding Monument is situated just in front of the Justice building. Upon the death of the American President this marble monument was erected by his Chinese admirers in memory of his assistance to China during the Washington Conference.

Also on this side of the inner wall are the Health Exhibition and Fire Brigade Buildings. The Health Exhibition where skeletons and parts of human bodies are exhibited has recently been taken over from the Ministry of Interior by the Municipal Council. Visitors can go in free of charge.

The San Shan Fire Brigade is a private organization. But as its members are all energetic young men it often proves a great help in time of need.

Further south is a billiard house with its main entrance facing the Chun Ming Kwan cafe.

It is a strange fact that many who are frequent visitors to Central Park fail to see the buildings inside the inner wall which form the nucleus of the park's historic attractions.

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NORTH SEA PARK.

The supremacy of the Central Park recently has been challenged by the Pei Hai Kung Yuan or North Sea Park, a beautiful palace which was only thrown open to the public as an amusement resort in 1925.

As is known Peking does not possess any body of water of a fair size with the result that all little ponds inside the city have assumed the imposing name of seas.

Six hundred years ago when Emperor Yung Lo started to build his chain of palaces he made it a point that each of them should contain a small lake in order to make it look like the scenery of his home town called Fengyang in the South. He did it by introducing the water of the Jade Fountain Hill into the city through a canal system. At the same time, the Emperor used the clay dug up from the ponds to build a few hillocks.

The three great palaces which the emperors of the Ming and Ching Dynasties used for residential purposes are known by the names of these ponds. They are Nan Hai meaning the South Sea, Chung Hai the Central Sea and Pei Hai the North Sea.

Ever since the Republic the San Hai or Three Seas Palaces have often been suggested as public parks. In order to meet the popular demand half-way, the different Presidents who occupied these palaces at various times, made it a practice to give garden parties several times a

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year to admit all classes of people for a pleasant walk. But the agitation for the opening of these "Seas" became more and more urgent with the progress of time.

In the spring of 1925 when Marshal Tuan Chi-jiu was the Provisional Chief Executive and both the Presidential and Cabinet offices had been moved out from the San Hai it was decided that the Pei Hai should be first thrown open. Needless to say, there was strong opposition to this act on the part of those mandarins with monarchist sympathies. But with the city under the complete control of the Kuomintang at that time all opposition was cast aside as it was under Yuan Shih-kai when the Central Park was first opened.

Under the auspices of the Municipal Council, a board of committee was formed to take charge of the management. In fact, it has been organized practically on the same plan as the Central Park.

The main building of the North Sea Park (Pei Hai) is the famous Yi Lan Tang Palace which can be approached from two directions starting from the marble bridge.

One way is to walk along the Pan Ju Hsiang Temple at the foot of which stands a beautiful wooden arch. The temple which is now used as a teashop, is also situated on the hill and encircled by a miniature city-wall. In front of this wooden arch there is a long bridge leading to the other part of the Park.

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Before the visitor reaches the massive wall of Yi Lan Tang he will pass by a huge stone tablet on which are inscribed the four words, Chung Tau Chun Ying written by Emperor Chien Lung. Given a free translation this phrase means "a lovely island under the shade of the spring sun."

The other way is to go through the West Wing. If one finds it to be too much trouble to walk through the small temple below the white pagoda which has now become the preparation office of the Metropolitan Library he will pass over a small bridge. Between this bridge and the Yi Lan Tang, there is the Lin Kuang Tien or Hall of Heavenly Light. The adjacent buildings of this little temple have now been rented as curio shops and book depots.

The Yi Lan Tang whose fame has spread far and wide, means the hall of beautiful waves. It is a three-storied building. Being situated at the foot of the hill and in the middle of the Southern bank of the North Sea it commands the best view of the whole lake. The long marble balustrade which encircles this palace lends much dignity to the narrow porch along the water.

It was said that the Empress Dowager Tsu Hsi liked to linger along this porch when she spent winter in the Pei Hai Palace. At the time of the Boxer Trouble this powerful empress was reported to have held all important

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meetings at Yi Lan Tang to decide the attack upon the Legation Quarter.

To-day this same palace has become a restaurant where both foreigners and Chinese can have their tea, refreshments and dinner at moderate prices. The third floor of this unique building holds a special attraction for foreigners who like peace and quiet.

Next in importance to the Yi Lan Tang palace is the Wu Lung Ting or Five Dragons Arbors which are situated on the Northern bank of Pei Hai.

As soon as the visitor lands at the Northern wharf he will find on his left side five magnificent arbors. These arbors are all built on tiny peninsulas in curves resembling a dragon. In fact the dome of the middle arbor which is the largest of them all, has been beautifully carved with scores of small dragons. Until 1925 when the North Sea Park was renovated these temple-like arbors were a mass of ruins. It is said that more than ten thousand dollars have recently been spent for their renovation.

In the neighbourhood of these arbors are a number of half-ruined temples. The most famous of them is the Tien Wang Miao meaning the temple of the heavenly king where memorial services have lately been held in honor of soldiers killed in the recent civil wars.

Nearby is the famous Chiu Lung Pei or the Nine Dragons Tablet. This so-called tablet is more of a screen-like wall which is a common sight in front of most

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big temples. The whole structure is built of "liu-li" or imperial tiles with nine dragons embossed on the wall. Despite all the demolition during the Boxer Trouble the Chiu Lung Pei remains intact, and is now the centre of attraction for all artists visiting the North Sea Park.

Just outside the Chiu Lung Pei lies the well-known restaurant called Fang Shan Kin Sui. The fact that this little eating-house should be patroned by the elite society of Peking is chiefly because of its chef who was once the favorite cook of Empress Dowager Tsu Hsi. It is said that the master-piece of this ex-imperial cook is the dumplings which the all-powerful empress liked to eat once in a while. However, here the guest must be on his guard for the prices charged by this small restaurant are unusually high.

Passing the establishment of a photographer the visitor reaches the Ching Hsin Chai palace which the Foreign Office often uses to entertain foreign diplomats. With its pond, rockeries, arbors and trees the Ching Hsin Chai is a park itself.

Between the Ching Hsin Chai palace and the little Niagara there is the back gate of the North Sea Park. This back gate leads to the Shih Sah Hai, a famous summer resort in Peking.

The above-mentioned falls which has its origin from the Jade Fountain Hill holds a special attraction for boys and girls who often crowd the nearby bridge out of curios-

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ity. In order to be sure that the Sea is always well-watered the Ministry of Interior has established a separate yamen in the Park to take care of this falls. Usually when the lake is gay with lotus the greatest care must be exercised over the dam.

Passing through an empty temple the visitor will come to the dock which borders on the lake. This little dock is reported to have been built by Emperor Chien Lung who took a great fancy to boatbuilding after his visit to the West Lake in Hangchow. To-day anybody who is prepared to pay a yearly rent of forty dollars for his canoe becomes a regular patron of this royal dock.

Over an inlet of the Sea is a very beautiful garden called Tsang Yuen Fu or the palace of the Chinese Noble Prize Winners. As is known the Tsang Yuen always occupies the foremost position in the literary world. Being a nominal disciple of the Emperor this honored scholar must be entertained at a royal banquet in this Tsang Yuen Fu when he first came out successfully from the Imperial Examination. In scenery and natural beauty this "fu" has never been rivalled by any other building in Peking. Now a part of this spacious palace is being used by the Board of Trustees as its office and the other part can be rented by any person for a whole day for twelve dollars.

Next door to this famous building is the Hao Po Chien garden which is also built in the Bay of Pei Hai,

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Unlike the Ching Hsin Chai, the pond, rockeries, arbors and the trees of this building are open to all persons. In fact, a teashop which also serves refreshments, is doing business here all the year round. Because of its peace and quiet the Hao Po Chien has become a rendezvous of foreigners and highclass Chinese during the summer.

Before one reaches the long stone bridge which is midway between the entrance and the Yi Lang Tang, he can spend a few minutes in the new gymnasium. On fine days groups of children are seen here and there around this pleasure-ground.

SAN PEI TSU PARK.

The oldest and perhaps also the largest park in Peking is that popularly-known as San Pei Tsu Hua Yuan meaning the garden of the third prince. It lies outside Hsichihmen, and is surrounded by farms. To foreigners it is known merely as the Zoo.

It is said that the San Pei Tsu or Third Prince was a younger brother of Emperor Yuan Feng. Like most of the brothers of Manchu emperors this prince did not pay much attention to the upkeep of the garden given to him as a gift, being busily engaged with theatre parties and other forms of amusement. For scores of years this extensive garden appeared to belong to nobody.

After her return from Sianfu after the Boxer Trouble the Empress Dowager Tsu Hsi began to take an interest

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in the San Pei Tsu Hua Yuan which was much nearer to her "Three Seas" than the Summer Palace beyond Hai-tien. For five or six years the all-powerful Empress spared no effort and expense to develop this spacious garden until it was worthy of her patronage and efforts. At first, it was called Wan Seng Yuan or the Garden of Ten Thousand Animals. Later it became known as Nung Sze Shih Yen Chang meaning the experimental ground for agriculture. To-day the official name of this garden is Chung Yang Nung Sze Shih Yen Chang or the Central Experimental Ground of Agriculture while the local inhabitants still prefer to call it the San Pei Tsu Hua Yuan.

Visitors were formerly surprised to discover two Chinese giants at the entrance. One is now in the United States as a movie actor, and the other is still there as a ticket collector. Tickets are sold at 20 cents at a wooden booth outside. In connection with these two tall Chinese many interesting stories are told. One was seven feet and six inches in height and the other seven feet four inches.

Inside the Park there is a group of foreign-style buildings. The house facing the entrance is now occupied by the Superintendent of the Park who is an appointee of the Ministry of Agriculture and Labor. Ever since the establishment of the Republic the control of this garden has been in the hands of that department.

The San Pei Tsu Park is divided into two parts, namely the zoological and botanic gardens.

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To local residents, the zoo, which is regarded as the biggest of its kind in North China, is far more important than the botanical gardens. When the Empress Dowager Tsu Hsi occupied the throne large sums of money were spent for the purchase of animals and birds from different parts of the world. Since the outbreak of the present civil war many of the larger animals like lions and tigers have perished through starvation and neglect as the Ministry of Agriculture has been in financial difficulties. It is feared that before long this once famous zoo will cease to function as such.

Most visitors like to enter through the East Wing and visit the zoo first. As soon as one has passed the second gateway he is confronted by a wooden bridge as the zoo is situated on a miniature peninsula. It is true that there are not many strange animals to be seen in this garden but all juvenile visitors are inclined to linger at the monkeys' quarters where they can buy food to feed these quaint animals. The unhappy elephant whose tooth has already been stolen by a starving guard, is also a centre of attraction for the children.

The visitor will have to pass another wooden bridge before he can end his visit to the Wan Seng Yuan or Garden of Ten Thousand Animals. Once outside the zoo the visitor will find himself walking into a wide field with beautiful flowers and plants on all sides.

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Following a well-paved road one will reach an arbor in the shape of two short corridors crossing each other. The arbor was used as a sort of wharf when Empress Tsu Hsi came here to take her boats. There are still two or three houseboats left but as the pond is covered with lotus during the summer months boating is no longer possible.

Not far from here is little stone bridge named Lei Chiao by ex-Minister Li Keng-yuan. On one side of this bridge is the grave-yard of the four patriots who took part in the Revolution of 1911, and on the other side lies the Ping Feng Tang, one of the most important buildings in the San Pei Tsu Park.

Many visitors to the Park like to spend some time in the Ping Feng Tang hall where tea, refreshments, and light lunch can be had at a moderate price. This hall which had been one of the favourite rendezvous of Empress Dowager Tsu Hsi, is typical of a Chinese landscape. At its back is a little hillock with many fruit trees, and in front of it is a small pond always gay with lotus during the summer.

Connected with Ping Feng Tang is a long corridor which extends in two wings and is punctuated with beautiful arbors.

Separated by a brook lies the tiny island popularly known as Little Japan. On this island are situated three Japanese-style houses the largest of which is called Sze

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Ri Hsien meaning a good climate for all four seasons, It is said that these houses were built to appease the Empress when she talked of going to Japan for a visit. Since her death these cute bungalows have been allowed to fall in decay.

Across a tall wooden bridge the visitor will find himself in experimental farms of cotton and various fruits. On the right side are the museum of insects and the green house lying very close to the wall of the Park.

Crossing the Yu Chiu Chiao or Autumn Bridge one's attention is attracted by the Animals' Specimen Room where the skins of all the dead animals belonging to the San Pei Tsu Park are on exhibition. Many valuable quadrupeds including the so-called Chien Li Ma or Horse of Thousand Li, whose bodies are now shown here can not be replaced by new ones chiefly through the lack of funds.

The Huai Yen Lou meaning the reception room for distant guests is situated right opposite to the above-mentioned building. At the time when Tsu Hsi was again on the throne after her return from her refuge in Shensi she used to entertain the wives of foreign diplomats in Peking. Any evening when the moon shone brightest this powerful ruler would come to the second floor of the Huai Yen Lou to smoke a pipe with her attendants. Since the inception of the Republic this foreign-style house has been turned into a restaurant which recently wound up its business.

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Close to the Huai Yen Lou lies the famous Chang Kwan Lou. Here the visitor must pay ten cents to buy an admission ticket before he can enter this modern palace. Nearly all the furnitures in this two-storied building have been imported from France. The two bedrooms on the second floor which were once occupied by Empress Dowager Tsu Hsi and Emperor Kuang Hsu hold special attraction for both Chinese and foreign guests. There is also a small roof garden which overlooks the whole city of Peking.

Before one goes out of the Park he will find it interesting to visit the Chang Chun Tang which is not very far away from the Chang Kwan Lou. This typical Chinese house is surrounded by old trees. In front of this lonely building is a tall stone tablet in memory of the late Minister Sung Chao-jen who was alleged to have been murdered at the Shanghai-Nanking Railway station of Shanghai in 1913 by an agent of Yuan Shih-kai. Mr. Sung's death was the direct cause of the so-called Second Revolution.

In fairness, it should be said that the San Pei Tsu Park is not much behind the Central Park and the North Sea Park in scenery and other matters. But for those who do not own motorcars its location seems to be not so desirable.

VI.

BAZAARS.

At the end of the Ching Dynasty there sprang up in Peking a few commercial bazaars known by the name of Shang Chang or Shih Chang. Until then some of the local temples which still hold either three or six market days a month were used for that purpose. It is true that such bazaars are not exactly department stores like those in Europe and America, but here the customer has usually a better chance to get his money's worth as there may be two or three shops conducting the same line of business at one bazaar.

TUNG AN SHIH CHANG.

Tung An Shih Chang or the Eastern Safety Bazaar is certainly a place which no visitor to Peking can afford to miss. It has four gates on Morrison Street and one entrance on Chin Yu Hutung.

This is the oldest as well as the largest bazaar in this city. In fact, it is a city itself. Inside the huge building, there are four avenues with one extending from North to South and three from East to West. Besides there are four bazaars and three buildings inside the building.

Inside the wide north gateway there are two tobacconists who are also exchange agents. The big compound