

FUKIEN

ARTS AND INDUSTRIES



PAPERS
BY MEMBERS OF
THE ANTI-COBWEB SOCIETY
Foochow, Fukien, China

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FOREWORD

This book comprises a number of the papers presented to the Anti-Cobweb Society of Foochow during the seasons 1930-31 and 1931-32. They were not originally intended for publication, but it was the opinion of those who heard them that they deserved a more permanent form and should be made available for a larger public.

For the benefit of readers who are not members of the Anti-Cobweb Society, it may be well to say something about its character and aim. It is a group of Westerners (Europeans and Americans) who meet monthly in one another's houses for a couple of hours of social intercourse and intellectual change of air, in order to get rid of the "cobwebs" that gather on the brain in the course of routine work. They believe that the best form of mental recreation is change of occupation, and so, under the leadership of certain of their number, they have during these brief hours, turned away from the daily round to the study of some of the activities which are going on around them.

Some one might possibly ask: "What is the use of spending time and energy in studying aspects of Chinese life not directly connected with one's work? Or if some misguided enthusiasts do take time to ascertain the facts and present them to a group, why take the trouble to publish the results? Does not the whole thing constitute an unwarranted distraction from one's primary work, and inflict an unnecessary burden on men and women already overworked?" It is scarcely conceivable that such questions should be asked, but anyway the reply is obvious. Whatever our work, we are living among fellowmen, and everything we can possibly find out about their mental attitude, their daily activities and so on, will make our own lives more interesting and more fruitful in every sense of the word. Those who have listened to these papers have learned much which otherwise they could not have easily found out about the Industries and other sides of the life of the people of Fukien, a province which though not so well known as some other parts of China, yet is not unimportant; a pro-

FOREWORD

vince which has given many illustrious sons to the government, to art, and to the commerce of the country as a whole; whose wealth and resources are by no means insignificant; and, which, in short, deserves much more attention than it usually receives.

But those who heard these papers and those who wrote them can claim that they have gained an enrichment not merely intellectual. The study and presentation of the facts connected with lumber, paper, tea, lacquer, temples and monasteries, and so on, help up all to gain fresh views of the people of China and to sympathise more sincerely with them in their special burdens and tasks. It is in the earnest hope and confidence that others may, though necessarily in a lesser degree, share this experience through the printed page, that the Editorial Committee has cheerfully undertaken the task of preparing these papers for the press. If this book serves to develop in its readers an attitude of sympathetic interest in the People, and to arouse a determination to study for themselves other branches of the industry and commerce, the history and civilization of China, it will not have been published in vain.

Special acknowledgements are here made to Rev. Guoh Baik Ting, Miss A. C. Woods, and Mr. Norman Culver for drawings. The editorial work was in the hands of a committee of the Club consisting of Mr. Henry V. Lacy, Mrs. Frank C. Martin, Miss E. Williamson, Mr. E. H. Munson, Mrs. R. W. McClure, and Mr. Charles P. Culver.

E. M. Norton

President, Anti-Cobweb Society, 1932.

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"MEMORIES OF OLD FOOCHOW"

This is a big subject and one difficult to limit to a short space of time. But in order to try to interest you I have exercised my memory, I have gleaned, I have borrowed! So it first behooves me to thank Mr. Oswald who is present with us to-night for the albums containing most interesting views of old Foochow, taken by Mr. Schoenke who was here when I first arrived. He took wonderful pictures, as I think you will agree when you look at them. Mr. Oswald has also been most helpful, reminding me of certain points which I might otherwise have overlooked and which will certainly interest you.

I have also to thank Bishop and Mrs. Gowdy who have kindly lent me a book which came into their possession in rather a remarkable way. On one of their many trips to or from China they met a man from Australia, who, discovering where their field of work lay, said he would send them a large book full of valuable old photographs (taken by a Mr. Thompson, Fellow of the Royal Geogr. Society) which would mean far more to them than to him who had never seen and never expected to see Foochow. He had merely picked the book up at some auction sale. Wonderful to relate the man did actually send the book, and it is well worth study if one wishes to visualize Foochow in its early days.

I left London on the 10th. of March, 1887, by the Messagerie Maritime steamer "Djemna," having received an appointment in the princely house of Jardine, Matheson & Co., Ltd. Mr. F. S. Deacon, a well

known Tea-man in Hankow was asked by Mr. W. Keswick, the head of the Firm of Matheson & Co., London, to bring me out under his wing, and I well remember the good care he took of me. It was all most wonderful and interesting, being my first voyage.

On arriving at Hongkong I lost no time in going aboard the Douglas steamer "MAMOA" of which Captain Pocock was the skipper. Just three years later he was shot by pirates on board the same vessel. Captain Hodgins, was the Chief Officer, and he is now living in retirement on his farm in England.

Amongst my fellow-passengers were Mr. Galton (who five years later became my father-in-law) and Mr. Gerald Slade, who was Taipan of Gilman & Co., and who lived in the house which is now the Customs Club.

How well I remember reaching Sharp Peak on the 28th. day of April, 1887! It was a perfect day and the journey up the river was most fascinating, for it was only three years before this that the French Bombardment had occurred, and there were still evidences of it in the battered forts and derelicts at Pagoda Anchorage. Also to be seen were the graves of the large number of Chinese who lost their lives in that one-sided battle.

Arriving at the Anchorage how well I remember the "EWO" coming to meet the steamer, and what a long journey it seemed to reach Foochow! My anticipation ran high, wondering what kind of life lay before me.

At Jardine's jetty there was no pontoon as at present, only a wretched flight of steps which obliged

one to perform an acrobatic feat before one could land. I was met by Mr. R. W. H. Wood, who was Taipan of Jardine's, and Mr. Charles King, who was the "Cha zee" (Tea Taster). They gave me a warm welcome, told me I should find my room all ready, and that they had arranged for a "Boy" to be my personal attendant. This "Boy" took charge of my luggage, and Mr. King at once took me to the tea room. I confess I felt rather like a fish out of water, for it was all so different from what I had been accustomed to. However we soon went upstairs to tiffin, and the Boy took me to my room. There, for the first time since I had left home, I really began to feel homesick! The furnishings had all been allowed to run to seed, and gave a general feeling of neglect and discomfort. Later this was gradually put to rights . . . I sat down and felt rather as a prisoner must feel when condemned to five years' penal servitude! How ever could I stand FIVE YEARS of this life?! However, I soon went to the dining-room and there conversation quickly roused me from my depression, and I was glad to hear my future companions tell of Foochow and of the life here.

What first struck me was the strange language used between foreigners and Chinese. This I afterwards found was known as 'Pidgin English.' Soon I found I must use it myself and quickly became quite familiar with it. This accounts for my never having studied the Chinese language. It was not required of us at that time, and I found I could do all my business quite well in 'Pidgin English.'

Some of you may not have heard any of this spoken, so I will give you a brief illustration of it.

Mr. Wood (above mentioned) invariably had for his breakfast two *boiled* eggs. One morning when he sat down the boy set before him a plate with two *fried* eggs. Greatly surprised Mr. Wood looked up and said, "What thing, Boy?!!" pointing to his plate. The Boy replied, "Oh, Master, boil 'em spoil 'em – fry 'em can do." (frying concealing the fact that the eggs were not *quite fresh*!)

My first introduction to the Foochow Club was that same evening (28 April 1887). A chair and three coolies were included in my allowance and in this I was conveyed in state to the Club. Fastened to the back of the chair was a lantern with the characters for "Ewo Cha Hong" and the middle coolie carried a lantern on which were the same striking characters. You can imagine what a gay and pretty sight it was to see all these chairs and lanterns grouped outside the Club – far more picturesque than the present day.

Here I must mention that the wage for chair-coolies in those days was four dollars a month – no more, no less – and for this they worked very hard. They carried the bath-water, did the necessary cleaning in the house, carried chits, and made themselves generally useful, besides carrying the Chairs whenever required.

You will be interested to know that the first gentleman to call upon me – and he did so the very next day – was the Rev. Mr. Stewart. He welcomed me to Foochow most heartily and gave me a standing invitation to join the Sunday evening suppers in his home at Sie Buo. He told me that Mr. King, Mr. Silverlock, Mr. Sutherland and Mr. Millard were always of the party. I naturally accepted the invita-

tion with alacrity and what happy evenings we used to have! It was a treat to hear Mr. Millard sing—and I have here the very book which Mr. Stewart gave me then—"The Christian Choir"—from which we used to sing. Mr. & Mrs. Stewart were later, as you know, amongst the victims of that terrible massacre at Kucheng (a Summer resort similar to Kuliang) which occurred on the first of August, 1895.

How delightfully spent were those first days in Foochow! There was much business to attend to, of course, but we could get much variety in our leisure hours.

In those days in Foochow there were two Race Meetings a year and they were a great attraction. I may mention in this connection that Mr. Oswald was one of the keen jockeys. Many of you who have been to his house must have seen his many Racing Trophies in evidence of this.

The drawing of the "Subscription Ponies" on their arrival from the North brought a large circle to the "EWO" paddock. The Mahfoos (who took care of the horses) were ready to take the ponies to their respective stables, and then the training began in real earnest. The early morning training, when many of the ladies came down, eagerly interested in watching the merits and the progress of the various ponies, all of us being served with coffee, was an enjoyment never to be forgotten.

On one of the Race days the Mandarins would attend and bring with them little souvenirs which they presented to the ladies.

After a few weeks the Races were held and lasted for three days. What a gay scene it always was,

until unfortunately circumstances obliged racing to be given up here.

Another great pleasure was that most of us owned House-Boats, and we could ply freely up and down the river at our pleasure. If we wanted to spend the week-end on the Yung Fu river, on Friday afternoon we would send our house-boats round to Yung Kee, which, as you know, is on the far side of this Island, and on Saturday, after business was over we would walk across the Island and find our boats ready for us.

For the benefit of those who have not been up the Yung Fu River let me tell you something about it. The first stopping place was the *Sulphur Springs*; and then gliding up the lovely river one came to the *Waterfall*, and a charming walk it was to get there. What a joy it was to form a picnic party for this expedition, and I look back with the greatest pleasure to the many holidays I enjoyed there.

On one occasion when we went up-river we started a party of *five* and we returned a party of *six*! How do I account for this? Well, Mr. & Mrs. Lloyd, Dr. & Mrs. Adams and I were the party. . . . but early one morning Dr. Adams came to announce that his wife had presented him with a fine son!!

Returning to the House boat again one would 'uloo' on again as far as *Bamboo Creek*. Crossing on stepping stones one came out on what reminded one very much of English scenery. Then ascending the hill one came to the glorious Bamboo Groves, and how romantic it was to walk through these groups of feathery bamboos, occasionally coming to

an opening and gazing upon a scene of perfect beauty. . . . hills towering above one another in the distance, with the stream running through the valley below, while here and there a water-wheel added a little variety to it all. One listened to the swish of the bundles of bamboos being dragged down the well-worn ruts, and it really seemed impossible to think that all this was so near the rather squalid city of Foochow.

Again we returned to our boat, and once more gliding up the river we came to what is known to foreigners as the "*Bankers' Glen*." Here we took a walk of an entirely different kind. The scenery is grand beyond description. One could either walk from there to the Ung Fu Monastery, or returning be dragged up the small rapids in a flat-bottomed boat and then take a beautiful walk to the same Monastery.

For some years we have missed all this, owing to the regrettable turmoil in China, and we feel that our opportunities for enjoyment are now very limited.

Many men were keen sportsmen in those olden days, and there was a sufficient amount of game to make it worth while to carry a gun; Speaking of a gun I must tell you one amusing incident. . . . The French Consul landed up country with his 'Ting-Chai' (who carried his gun) and sport was pretty good. Presently the Consul sighted a bird across the paddy field and fired, whereupon the most terrible screams arose—evidently he had wounded a woman he had not seen working amongst the paddy. Her yells were such as to bring out the whole village in a very few minutes. The Consul, through his Ting-

Chai, expressed his regret at the accident and offered to take the poor woman down on his hoat to the Hospital at Foochow as quickly as possible. This offer was refused, and so, as usual, it became a matter of dollars. After considerable argument the figure was agreed upon, and a man was to come down to Foochow with the Consul to receive the money. At this juncture the Consul noticed that the woman was no longer screaming, but was taking a lively interest in the discussion about the money. Thereupon the Consul said, "I notice the woman does not seem to be so much hurt as I feared I'd like to examine the wound" This was interpreted to the woman—whereupon she jumped up in great haste, and fled back to the village at top speed, amidst the roars of laughter of the crowd!! She had not really been hit at all; it was all a put-up job to get money from the foreigner.

And then there were the *Flower Shows* :—

In the olden days there were two Flower Shows held here every year, and how attractive they were! One great feature was the large variety of Chrysanthemums shown; and the exhibition of other flowers and vegetables was really wonderful. Moreover it was the means of bringing the community together.

By the way—I wonder how many of you have seen the wonderful dwarf plants they have at the Canton Club; (all in pairs) they are well worth seeing. Unfortunately at present it is not possible to visit that Club because it is being used as a barracks for soldiers.

FOOCHOW WAS OPENED TO FOREIGN TRADE in 1842 By the *Treaty of Nanking*. Previous

to that nothing had been known of the place, except that one Dutchman had passed through on a special embassy in 1664. Fukien Province was known to be a great tea-growing country. I may remind you that the first great War between China and Great Britain was in 1840-43 its causes being the uncivil treatment accorded to Lord Amhurst, China's claim to universal sovereignty, her refusal to treat on equal terms with foreign nations, or to grant liberty to commerce.

As a result of this War China was compelled to open Canton, Amoy, Foochow, Ningpo, and Shanghai to foreign trade; to cede Hongkong to Great Britain, and to pay an indemnity. In 1844 treaties were also made with France and the United States. Then in 1856-60 the second War with Great Britain occurred, and in this connection let me read you from a circular I have by me, dating back to 1855, one of many – some of which are hand-written.

In one of these old Circulars it is interesting to read : –

“The complete success of the Election in favour of the policy of Lord Palmerston, testifying as it does the general feeling of the Country in favour of the measures adopted by the Government on the Chinese question, has produced a feeling of greater confidence and security on this side, and the appointment of Lord Elgin as Ambassador Extraordinary has given satisfaction, the known wisdom and judgment displayed by his Lordship in his previous diplomatic career inducing a well-founded hope that the present crisis of affairs may be brought to an early issue, and that hence-forward our relations with the Chinese may be placed on a broader and a sounder basis than has ever yet been secured.”

It was in 1845 that the first British Consul (a Mr. Lay) arrived, and it is interesting to read of his first experiences, until arrangements were made whereby

he could live in a Temple which was leased to him on Black Rock Hill. There the British Flag was hoisted for the first time in Foochow.

In 1846 a Spanish Priest was sent by the Roman Catholics, and shortly afterwards the Rev. Stephen Johnson, with three helpers, arrived to represent the American Board Mission, settling on Chang Chow Island. The Methodist Mission also sent representatives about the same time, and in 1850 the Church of England Mission opened here. Terribly uphill work it was for all missionaries for many years, but eventually their patience, perseverance and courage enabled them to report progress; and in 1887 when I arrived here I found all three Missions well established.

The number of mission workers at that time was not large. Of the Americans that I remember there were Mr. Hartwell, Dr. Baldwin, Dr. Sites, Mr. Wilcox, Mr. Plumb, Mr. Worley, Mr. Hubbard. . . . but let me arrange them according to the Missions they worked for, as follows:—

For the American Methodist Episcopal Church there were,

Rev. Nathan Sites.	Rev. Franklin Ohlinger
Rev. Nathan J. Plumb.	Rev. M. C. Wilcox.
Rev. G. B. Smyth.	Rev. J. H. Worley.
Miss Carrie Jewell.	Miss Kate Corey, M. D.
Miss L. M. Fisher.	

For the American Board Mission.

Rev. Caleb C. Baldwin, D. D.	Rev. J. E. Walker.
Rev. Chas. Hartwell.	(Shao-wu)
(in the city)	Miss Ella J. Newton.
Rev. Simeon F. Woodin.	Miss E. M. Garretson.
Rev. Geo. H. Hubbard	and others

In the English Church Mission there were : -

Rev. John Wolfe	Rev. J. Martin.
Rev. R. W. Stewart. M, A.	(Hok Ning Foo)
Rev. C. Shaw.	Rev. L. Lloyd.
Dr. Van Someran Taylor.	Rev. W. Banister
Miss Gough. (C. E. Z. M. S.)	Miss Bushell (F. E. S.)

By the way, Mr. Martin's son Major Cyril G. Martin, D. S. O. (R. E.) got his V. C. in 1915.

Bishop Burden used to visit Foochow from Hongkong, and annually the English Mission invited the members of the mercantile community to a Meeting to hear the missionaries tell of their experiences. Often these meetings were most encouraging, but at times they were most depressing, and it seemed hardly worth while to continue work in certain districts.

Even in those days it seemed to me a pity that in China there should not be perfect unity amongst the missionaries It seemed sad they should be treading different paths to arrive at the same goal. And as the years go by and the missionaries become more numerous, one cannot help feeling that their success would be much greater if they worked entirely together as one Church.

I like so much that Missionary Hymn by Rev. Pakenham-Walsh which seems to collect all the Missionary forces into one body, and finally exclaims in unison : -

“When all creation worships Christ,
And every tongue confessing,
Ascribes to God and to the Lamb,
All honour and all blessing.
Then shall the heavenly harpers learn
The music of earth's races,
Then shall the tears of all the years,
Be wiped from off all faces.”

Now I would like to tell you something of the arrival of the *business* houses. The first merchant to arrive was a Mr. Glen, away back in 1845, and he hoped to do big business in exporting tea and importing piece goods. However the obstacles he had to contend with were so great that he soon withdrew.

The first Firm really to locate permanently here was the American one, *RUSSELL & CO.* The representative of this house saw the opportunity afforded by the difficulties of taking Tea overland to Canton (as was being done) owing to the Kiangsi Province being overrun during the Taiping Rebellion. His Firm sent men up-river to buy suitable tea, and he shipped it from Pagoda Anchorage in American vessels. Mr. D. O. Clerk, Head of their Firm, was the first American Consular Agent appointed in Foochow. Jardine, Matheson & Co., Dent & Co., Gilman & Co. and others followed, and it was Mr. Hely, of Dent & Co. who *first bought land in Foochow*, and registered it in the British Consulate.

Speaking of Russell & Co. . . . It is not so many years since they went out of business because of the severe losses they had sustained. When the Taipan in charge of the Foochow Branch told his "Boy" (or "Butler" as they called him) that all expenses must be cut down, the Boy said, "What for, Master?" When it was explained to him that it was because the Firm had lost so much money, he replied, "No fear, Master! How muchee house wanchee? My can help" And he was prepared to put up quite a considerable sum if need be to support the house!! Indeed he proved to be quite a man of means.