

PEKING: A SOCIAL SURVEY

SIDNEY D. GAMBLE



STITCHING SOLES.

Leather being scarce most of North China's shoes are made of cloth. Water is hard on them, so in wet weather it is a choice of stay home, ruin your shoes or wear heavy shoes with wood soles.

PEKING

A SOCIAL SURVEY

Conducted under the auspices of
THE PRINCETON UNIVERSITY CENTER IN CHINA
and
THE PEKING YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION

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NEW YORK
GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY

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**DEDICATED
TO
THE MISSIONARIES
WHOSE WORK HAS MADE
THIS STUDY POSSIBLE**

FOREWORD

The social survey of Peking marks a milestone of advance for the Continent of Asia. Constantinople and other centers are already following the example of Peking in making thorough social surveys. We must know our problems before we solve them. We must know the present reality before we seek to rebuild in the light of an ideal.

The timeliness of this survey is significant. China is in the midst of a vast transition, and it is essential that the Orient, as far as possible, be saved from the costly mistakes made by the Occident. We have learned after slow centuries of effort to coördinate the personal and the social. Between these two poles of truth flows the current of life, and we must recognize this polarity. It is not enough to change the social environment, wages, hours, conditions, and material prosperity. If the hearts of men are selfish and sordid, no change in outward environment, no program or panacea of social reform can regenerate the nation. We must change the heart, regenerate the individual and also change the environment, and both processes must be simultaneous and continuous. Neither the personal nor the social transformation alone will be sufficient. It is not enough, for instance, to save the souls of a few slaves if the social institution of Slavery is dragging down its millions. It is not enough to save a few drunkards, if the social evil of drink is ruining multitudes. It is not enough to save a few individuals from the gutter or the city slum, or the abyss of social injustice, if the social evils of poverty, child labor, inhuman conditions for women and the ruin of manhood continue in a social order fundamentally inhuman and un-Christian. Mr. Gamble, Mr. Burgess, and the leaders of the social survey in Peking recognize this polarity of truth, this relation of the personal and the social. This survey is the result.

An army of more than six thousand missionaries and 23,000 Chinese workers is striving to change the hearts of men, and in the evangelistic and educational missions in China the primary emphasis is placed upon personal regeneration. There is urgent need, however, for the social application of Christian principles upon the mission field. First of all, the membership of the infant

Church needs a social Gospel both as a field and as a force for social service. The Christian forces must be the leaders in the development of new and higher types of life in other lands. The timeliness of the Peking Survey is further emphasized by the fact that the Church at home is beginning to realize the importance of social and industrial problems and by the rapid social changes occurring in China itself, of which the following pages give evidence.

Occupied, as most missionaries are, with their own important evangelistic, educational, medical or personal service, and busy as the members of the native Church are in the struggle for subsistence, it is imperative that specially trained men and women should be set apart for social service, for the making of surveys, the creation of a new social consciousness, the imparting of social dynamic, and for leadership in the transformation of these congested centers of Oriental life. Thoroughly trained leaders are needed to develop practical programs and to furnish the Church with an adequate social expression. They are also needed to furnish an invaluable point of contact with the educated leaders of the non-Christian community and other forces willing to cooperate for social betterment and for the work of social reform so deeply needed in China and other lands to-day. It is necessary that trained specialists be set apart for this task, as the present missionary force has neither the time nor training for the work, and it is not likely that American methods can be directly applied to China, but will have to be modified and adapted to the different conditions of the Orient. The field is wide open to-day. Will the Church and mission forces occupy that field or will they forfeit their opportunity and let civilization develop without Christian leadership?

If the missionary goes not merely to rescue a few individuals, but with the wide vision and the bold faith of seeking first nothing less than the Kingdom of God, that His will may be done on earth as it is done in Heaven, that the whole Gospel may be applied to the whole of life and all its relationships—political, social and industrial, as well as religious—the significance of this social survey will be apparent to its readers. May it be the forerunner of many similar undertakings, and may these surveys lead to action, to reform, to social reconstruction, to the building of the City of God in the midst of the poverty, the slums, and the wreckage of manhood and womanhood and childhood in the vast congested population of the cities of the Orient.

G. SHERWOOD EDDY.

FOREWORD

This ordered study of realities in the great capital of the Orient will serve to bring its ongoing life within range of all who are familiar with the point of view of the social constructors. It clears away much of what has seemed to be inscrutable. It brings surprise not so much by what is strange as by the essentially familiar human lineaments which it discloses. It offers many interesting points for comparison with western ways. The student of social evolution will find the like of many ethical and industrial institutions and customs as they flourished at various stages of European history. If we can believe that a nation can progress without a military front, and can pass from the gild system over into a coöperative form of industry, here is the beginning of the method. Some of the right starting points are set out for what may be the most momentous racial development of the third millennium of the Christian era, as that of the Anglo-Saxon has been of the second.

It is certain that this presentation, with the organization of forces to which its preparation has already led, will find a clear and sure welcome from the increasing number of modern-minded leaders in the organized life of the Chinese cities upon whom, whether as officials or private citizens, the reconstruction of the nation so largely depends. The preparation of the study itself has opened the way in Peking for new common interests among many organizations and many kinds of people; and its inevitable indications must lead to many more of such new common understandings and enterprises as will make a basis not only for local well being but for that national coherence upon which the future of the four hundred millions so largely depends.

The Survey comes at a moment of peculiar exigency and potency. The broad wave of the new learning is spreading over the land. The first fruits of modern education, in the impartation of which America has had so large and fine a share, are beginning to be apparent and influential. The present patient, luminous disclosure of opportunity of many sorts for the advancement of the cause of the people and for equipping them with more of the resources of life, must give not a few clues to a new generation of educated young men and women with a zest for patriotism

of which the rest of the world at this moment cannot present the equal.

Those who have prepared the Survey have worked in the light of a peculiar and well justified confidence. They know that China is in the deepest need of that to which this diagnosis should lead; and they know equally well that a great part of the capable leadership of the Chinese people not only is conscious of the need, but is ready to welcome right-minded help from the West in meeting it. It is indeed a moving experience to find how simply and ingenuously the friendly and informed American overture is received by the best of the Chinese.

Surprisingly often this recognition of need goes with an acknowledgment of Christian motive as the power through which the need can be met. It cannot be doubted that the introduction of well considered social work into the missionary program in China represents the next step in the strategy of a cause before which lies an available opportunity comparable to that which was presented by the later Roman Empire. These pages suggest the attitude of a large proportion of the members of the mission staffs, their eagerness to adapt every working principle and method to the spirit and habit of the country, to join hands with every person of good will, and to go to the help of all who are burdened. Readers of this book will begin to appreciate Professor Ross's estimate of the American missionaries in China: "picked, trained men, equal in character and learning to any body of apostles that ever carried a faith to an alien people."*

The human reconstruction of China must engage a varied leadership: missionaries who, deeply convinced, may return for special study and preparation; new recruits from among trained social workers in America who shall feel that they serve their own country none the less in going as its representatives in a great moral adventure; established Chinese citizens, and especially Christian laymen who shall come to have concrete, living experience of the meaning of their faith; above all, Chinese students, men and women, in American colleges and in those several spirited reproductions of them which are being built up in China. The Survey represents one example, of many that might be given, to show that such different approaches are already leading into a common loyalty. It is particularly interesting that all of these types of persons are already joined together in a project for centralizing the study of social conditions and preparation for social work for Peking in the noble university which is being built up by the united Christian forces in the capital city.

* *The Changing Chinese*, p. 258.

The great humanitarian demands of Europe upon America are subsiding. The awakened instinct for world service must not and will not subside. China is calling. The vastest of the republics is in the making. The United States has proudly espoused the duty of protecting China. She must above all be protected from within.

ROBERT A. WOODS.

PREFACE

"People often say that they are talking against a background of facts. In China there is no background and there are no facts." So says Dr. Arthur H. Smith after forty-seven years' residence in China, and it takes only a slight experience to make one believe that Dr. Smith is correct. There is a wealth of generality concerning things Chinese but very little detail. It was with the hope of supplying some of this missing detail that this survey was undertaken. But how to get the facts? General observation had been used with the above result. The survey method had been successful in American cities, but so far as we could find no one had ever tried to use this method in studying an oriental city. Can it be used in a Chinese city? Will the people answer correctly the many questions that will have to be asked? In the past the Chinese have been suspicious of the foreigner and all his ways. It used to be a superstition that it was bad luck to give information concerning your family or business to a stranger or even to a government official. But do these conditions still prevail? Haven't the many changes of the past years made it possible for foreigners to use successfully a foreign method in making a study of a far eastern city? These were the questions that we faced as we considered making a survey of Peking. However, the thought of making a study of the temple and palace filled, walled city that had been the capital of the old Chinese Empire and was still the center of Chinese political and educational life made the experiment seem worth while even though it might secure only a small amount of information.

Peking was chosen for study because it is the capital of China and the center of so much Chinese life; because, if we should be successful, our experiment would probably have a nation-wide influence and the chances of success seemed to be better there than in any other Chinese city. In Shanghai, Hankow, Tientsin and some of the other treaty ports, the people had perhaps had more contact with foreigners than in Peking, but those could hardly be called Chinese cities. In this connection it must be remembered that what is true of Peking is not necessarily true of other parts of China. Conditions are very different in different parts of the country.

The Peking survey in its inception was very frankly an experiment, though one or two small studies, one of the labor gilds in Hangchow, Chekiang, and the other of some ricksha coolies in Peking, made us feel certain that we could secure some information in three or four fields. It was such an experiment that it could not command either a large budget or a large staff. We could not ask that other people be released from their regular work to assist in it and even we could not give our entire time to it. All expenses had to be met privately except for one contribution of \$100. The work was done, however, under the auspices of the Peking Chinese Young Men's Christian Association and the Princeton University Center in China.

In making the survey we found the foreigners interested and glad to cooperate and the Chinese most willing to give us detailed information concerning the various phases of their life. Officials gave us every opportunity to investigate the work of the governmental agencies and access to much of their information concerning the city. Business men and others answered numerous detailed questionnaires. As the work progressed we found fields opening to us that originally we had not planned to attempt. More and more people were enlisted to help in gathering data and it seemed best to enlarge the scope of the survey and extend the time for its completion. Field work started in September, 1918, and was finally completed in December, 1919.

It was evident from the start that, aside from special calls and interviews, we personally would not be able to do any great amount of field work, and that most of the material would have to be gathered by Chinese investigators working with questionnaires. We were fortunate in securing as our chief field workers, Mr. C. H. Chen, an American returned student, who had been in business in Peking and was in close touch with the industrial life of the city, and Mr. Liang Tsai Chih, who as a member of the local Board of Education was familiar with the educational life of the city, and as author of the Peking Guide Book could give us many valuable facts. On special studies, we were assisted by the officers and members of the Congregational churches, by the students of the Peking (Union) University and by a seminar of the students of the North China Union Language School, foreigners studying the Chinese language preparatory to active mission work. We were also given access to the reports of some of the Government Boards, and from these secured many fundamental statistics concerning the life of the city. In order that full statistical tables may be available they have been put in the appendix rather than in the text, and the figures for the different police districts, etc., are given so that those who are working in different parts of the city may have the figures for their own

particular district and be able to plan their work accordingly.

Other problems connected with the survey were those always present where work must be done in two languages. Questionnaires had to be translated into Chinese and reports into English. The terms on one questionnaire were discussed for over two hours by a group of Chinese who knew English well, and foreigners who were expert in the Chinese language, and even then the results showed that the entire meaning of the English terms had not been put into Chinese. It was also difficult to find men who could make accurate tabulations, figure percentages, etc., and practically all of that detail had to be carried by the authors.

As the survey has been a study of present day social conditions, we have made practically no attempt to go into the records of the past. A personal study of the Chinese documents was impossible because of the language barrier. Material concerning Peking, in a language other than Chinese, is scarce, and practically none is of recent date. The study of published material concerning other cities in China would be of little value. Where we have included historical data we have had to depend for most of it upon those who have made special studies of the records. We have, however, found valuable material in the following books: Favier, *Peking*; Morache, *Pekin et ses Habitants*; *Encyclopedia Sinica*; *China Year Book* 1919; 1919 and 1920 Supplements of the *Peking Leader*; Thomas Cook and Sons, *Peking*; *Imperial Japanese Railway Guide, China*. The article by Macgowan on the Chinese guilds in the *Journal of the North China branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1886, and Morse's book, *The Guilds of China*, have only been suggestive as they deal with the guilds of Central China.

We have used the silver dollar as the standard of value unless otherwise noted as it is the standard ordinarily used in Peking. The tael is an uncoined standard used in commerce. Its value in terms of the dollar fluctuates somewhat but is ordinarily between \$1.35 and \$1.45. In terms of the gold dollar the value of the silver dollar is constantly changing. The usually accepted standard value is 50 cents but during the making of the survey varied from 80 cents to \$1.33.

We have tried to judge the social conditions in Peking according to the progress that they show. Since China is in a period of transition, and one cannot help marveling at the changes that began with the Revolution of 1911, it would not be fair to judge her life according to western ideals. If we have compared things in Peking with the best in western life, it is not to criticize so much as to point out what we would like to see done in China. It is our hope that Peking and China may profit by the experience of other countries and be saved many of their mistakes. Since

so much progress has been made in the past few years, the Chinese ought not to be willing to stop short of the best.

Our study has given us a great love for the Chinese and the firm belief that if given time and friendly help they will be able to work out the many social problems they are now facing. The pressing questions to be answered by those of the west are: Will American and European nations help or hinder Chinese social progress in this transitional stage? Will methods and ideas crystallize in China before we of the west have made our best contribution to her changing social life, a contribution based on the knowledge gained from our mistakes as well as our successes?

Although many people have been interested and helped with the survey, we feel that for the best results it has been too much in the hands of one or two people. This, however, was necessary as the first survey of a Chinese city was an experiment that had to be worked out by a few people before others could be asked to help. In any study the detail must be looked after by one or two persons, but if a group of people do not become vitally interested in the problems studied the survey will be productive of only small results, particularly if the one directing the study leaves after its completion and there is no one to continue working on the problems that the survey has discovered. If another Chinese city is surveyed we hope that the study will be made by a fairly large and representative committee and that the various fields will be studied by small groups. In this way the problems of the city will be investigated and there will be groups of people interested in seeing that some solution is worked out for them. The mechanics and details of the survey can be handled by a director; but only when the conclusions are based upon the experience and knowledge of a fairly large number of people as well as on the reports of technical investigation will they have their highest practical value. Our experience with a group of Peking (Union) University students is a case in point. They were not only able to gather valuable information, but at the same time they had a glimpse of what life means for some unfortunates. We certainly hope that the making of the survey of the church members has given those who helped in the study a greater interest in the church and its problems.

It is our hope that this is the first of many studies of Chinese cities. The west needs to know more about China and Chinese life, and those who are living and working in the country need accurate information in order to wisely plan their work. We realize that a complete survey of a city involves not only considerable time and expense, but many of the more particularly valuable studies, survey of church membership, the study of a small district, an investigation of the amount of poverty and philanthropy

can be made fairly easily and with little expense, some for printing and, if necessary, some for the translation of official documents. We have included copies of our questionnaires in the appendix with the hope that they may be useful to others. A great many suggestions for survey work can be found in the books and pamphlets listed in the survey bibliography of the Russell Sage Foundation.

We want to acknowledge our indebtedness to Dr. G. D. Wilder, the missionaries of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions and the officers and members of the Teng Shih K'ou, Pei T'ang and Ch'i Hua Men Churches, who made possible the survey of the membership of the three churches; to Mrs. Fannie S. Wickes and *The Survey* for permission to use the article, "My Nearest Neighbors in Peking," which gives a detailed description of some families living near the American Board church in the district for which we were able to secure the general statistics; to Mr. C. B. Malone of the Department of History of Tsing Hua College for the outline of his lecture, "The History of Peking"; to Dr. L. K. Tao of the Department of Sociology of the Peking (Government) University for material concerning the background of Chinese philanthropy; to Prof. C. G. Dittmer and the Harvard University Press for permission to quote from "An Estimate of the Chinese Standard of Living," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, November, 1918; to Dr. W. G. Lennox for permission to use the figures in his article, "Some Vital Statistics," *China Medical Journal*, July, 1919; to Mrs. A. E. St. Clair, Miss Vera Holmes, Mr. L. G. Bates and Mr. H. Ray Sweetman for valuable seminar material; to Dr. Hu Suh of the Government University, for valuable material and information concerning the Renaissance Movement; to the students of the Peking (Union) University who helped in the study of the philanthropic institutions of the city; to Gen. Wu Ping Hsiang, the head of the Police Board, for a copy of the police report; to Mr. Shen, Captain of Police District Inside Left 2, for a transcript of the census statistics of the Teng Shih K'ou district; to Mr. Teng Yu An, Captain of Police District Inside Left 1, for valuable assistance; for special permission to print the national regulations for Chambers of Commerce translated by W. S. Howe of the American Consular Service; to Dr. W. B. Hill for help in preparation of the manuscript, and to many others who by their interest and help have made the survey possible.

S. D. G.
J. S. B.

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