

**HUMANITY AND
LABOUR IN CHINA**

人之初
性本善
性相近
習相遠
苟不教
性乃遷

The character of men at birth is naturally good.
Their characters are much alike, but in their conduct they
differ widely.
For if instruction be not given the character deteriorates.



Photo by

Mrs Stephen Morland

P'AILOU, ENTRANCE TO THE SACRED WAY TO THE MING TOMBS, NANKOW (NEAR PEKING)

HUMANITY AND LABOUR IN CHINA

AN INDUSTRIAL VISIT AND
ITS SEQUEL (1923 TO 1926)

BY

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TO
THE CHILD WORKERS
OF CHINA

PREFACE

THE strong interest shown, during the year 1925, in the efforts of the Municipal Council of the Foreign Settlement of Shanghai to carry through a small preliminary measure of protection for child workers in the Settlement found world-wide expression.

Thereby the writer of this book was much encouraged in the expansion, already begun, of her diaries into this contemporary record of events and experiences in relation to conditions of labour in the most important industrial centres of China.¹

Messages of sympathy and of warm endorsement of the project of the Municipal Council, for a Child Labour By-law, were sent from many quarters: to the Council itself, to the British Chamber of Commerce, leading newspapers, various groups of citizens, and to officers of committees engaged in promoting the reform in Shanghai. They came from highly representative sources, in Great Britain, France, Czecho-Slovakia; from the United States of America; from India and Australia, and from Japan. The messages are set out in *Bulletin No. 1* of the Joint Committee of Shanghai Women's Organisations, published in the autumn of this year, 1927. A copy of the Bulletin has now reached me, just when my corrected proofs are ready to return to the printers; it brings welcome support for the account given in Chapter VI. of the leading part played by the Women's Clubs in direct appeal to the Council, in 1923, to initiate a measure for protection of the children.

Other authoritative documents freely quoted in the following pages include: *Reports of the National Y.W.C.A.*

¹ Some parts of the material have already appeared; the most of Chapter VII. in a series of short articles in the *Woman's Leader and Common Cause*, February 4 to May 6, 1927, and the workers' letters in that chapter have been freely quoted in various publications.

and the *National Christian Council of China*; the indispensable *China Year Books*, edited by Mr H. G. W. Woodhead, C.B.E. (Tientsin Press); the *Municipal Gazette* of the Foreign Settlement of Shanghai; various publications of the *Chinese Government Bureau of Economic Information*, organised and edited by Mr W. H. Donald, Peking, also of the *Chinese Social and Political Science Association*; various expert articles in the *China Medical Journal*, the *China Journal of Science and Arts*, and the *North China Daily News*, especially in the *Sixtieth Anniversary Number*, July 14th, 1924. In many ways the most important document of all for China is the *Report of the Child Labour Commission, Shanghai*, published in the *Municipal Gazette*, July 1924, which was the first systematic, authentic enquiry into the question.¹ And of very great value are the Consular Reports gathered and laid before Parliament by the British Foreign Office, and Reports of the Department of Overseas Trade, all obtainable from H.M.'s Stationery Office.

The greater part of the evidence which the book records was, of course, obtained by direct observation and activities of the writer and her fellow-workers, whether as members of the Child Labour Commission or of the Industrial Committee of the N.C.C., or as private investigators.

The real opening of the story, running as a thread through the book, is in Chapter II. The Introduction was written after that, and the other chapters down to the close of Chapter VI.—written to please a competent critic who wanted clues of a historic and economic kind worked out to explain the *raison d'être* of the book. Any readers who do not care about such reasonings will find it best (after looking at the illustrations) to go through all the other chapters, especially VII., VIII. and IX. The last one shows that the main action, in the Settlement of Shanghai, was really—for the time at which it was undertaken—a forlorn hope. That does not lessen the human interest of the struggle, to attend first of all to the poignant needs of

¹ It was preceded, of course, by the valuable *Report of the Commission on Industrial Employment of Children in Hongkong*, 1921.

the child workers of China. There was indeed no forlorn feeling among the chief workers in the struggle.

“The one effort of Man’s personality,” says Tagore, “is to transform everything with which he has any true concern into the human.”

The women of every nation in the clubs of the Settlement, Chinese and Japanese as well as Western, set their minds—as they ought—on humanising the lives of the Chinese child workers. In the end they must win if they hold on to their cause, either through a beginning of regulation in the Settlement, which is International, or in a wider Chinese movement practically prepared for self-sacrifice, in a China which shall truly desire an honourable place among the nations.

Until steadfast effort is concentrated on the exclusion of very young children from modern industry, and those who remain in it are effectually protected from overwork, and from danger to life, health, and limb, Chinese adult workers generally are likely to be in an inferior position. The older industries call for parallel care of the children, but the practicable way is to begin with modern industry. The rest will then follow.

Adequate acknowledgments here to all the friends, hosts and hostesses, who have made the experiences in China, and consequently the writing of the record possible, are practically out of the question, for they are too numerous—Chinese, British and American. Their names and actions appear in many pages, although, even there, their help often has necessarily had to be recorded without personal identification.

My heartfelt thanks may, as representative of many others, be expressed in grateful mention of the names that follow: Miss Agatha Harrison, Miss Mary Dingman, Miss Zung Wei-Tsung (Mrs Chiu) and Miss A. S. Mayhew, of the Y.W.C.A.; Miss May-Ling Soong; Bishop Roots (of Hankow Diocese) and Mr M. T. Tchou, both of the Industrial Committee N.C.C.; Bishop Molony (Chékiang Diocese), and Dr MacGillivray, Shanghai; Mr Stirling

Fessenden, Chairman of the Municipal Council, and Major Hilton Johnson, Commissioner General, Foreign Settlement, Shanghai; Mr Lipson, Ward Chairman of the Child Labour Commission; Mr Fong F. Sec, Mr C. C. Nieh and Mr Z. T. K. Woo, among Chinese employers; Mr A. Brooke-Smith and Mr E. F. Mackay, among British employers, and the latter also as the ever-helpful head in Shanghai of Messrs Butterfield & Swire. To Dr W. W. Yen, Minister of Agriculture, Commerce and Labour, Peking, I am specially indebted for his interest and help, and would mention Mr S. T. Wen and Mr Hsu Yuan, Commissioners of Foreign Affairs respectively in Nanking and Shanghai in 1924.

I may be permitted to speak of the unfailing goodness and skilled official support shown by every member with whom I came in contact of the British Diplomatic and Consular Service. In particular I would record my gratitude to Sir Ronald Macleay, then British Minister, Peking; to Sir Sydney Barton, Consul-General, Shanghai, and Mr J. T. Pratt, Acting Consul-General, successively, at Nanking and Shanghai.¹ I would also express my thanks to Sir Gilbert Grindle, at the Colonial Office, Whitehall, and the Hon. E. R. Hallifax, Secretary for Chinese Affairs at Hongkong, for information and help regarding Hongkong.

One last word of thanks is due to my brother, Sir Alexander J. Anderson, for indispensable help given me in the final preparation of the book for the Press.

None of these persons, in spite of all that I owe them, can be held responsible for accuracy in my information or opinions—except just so far as they may agree with what I have written.

I hope that in spite of avoidance of political discussions, and my keeping close to matters for which I had preparatory experience at home, that I have not concealed unnecessarily a fundamental sympathy with Chinese national hopes and fears.

¹ Through Mr Pratt comes the fine Chinese quotation on the fly-leaf facing the title-page.

PREFACE

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One conviction, acquired on the spot, appears specially, I suppose, in Chapters IV. and IX.: that the need is incalculably great for a spirit of co-operation between Chinese and foreigners, above all in the International Settlement of Shanghai. In my way of thinking that Settlement is a glory to China, who first allowed it and then helped it, through the labour of her people. I see the Settlement as a great hope for mankind, not less indispensable for China and Asia than the centre of the infant League of Nations in Geneva is for Europe (with its organs for promoting Public Health, Welfare of Labour and other peaceful co-operation of the nations). There, in Shanghai, *joint* experimental work can be carried on that China, above all needs, in facing, too rapidly, with a minimum of technical preparation, the vast possibilities of modern industrial civilisation.

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HUMANITY AND LABOUR IN CHINA

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

ECONOMIC AND OTHER REVOLUTIONS

“The Revolution of 1911 has been a failure in all its constructive phases and China has not become a great modern state worthy of its potentialities. . . . What is needed is a completely revolutionised outlook on life, a new recognition of spiritual values and of the possibilities of modern civilisation.”
—DR HU SHIH.

THIS book has been written to tell the story, and give something of the setting, of a recent and passionate Far-Eastern episode in the world-wide movement to humanise conditions of labour. It is concerned with conditions which hitherto have arisen wherever a country, without protective laws for labour, first enters the industrialised system of production, and begins to pass out of the ancient domestic system.

In it I have written primarily of things of which I have knowledge, either from personal experience or through trustworthy witnesses and documents. Yet some brief preliminary observations and explanations are needed, so far as may be to light up the approach to the complex questions that are involved. In the attempt to throw light on some of the complexities, instances must be used that are more fully detailed in later chapters, and some facts, generally known, must be recapitulated.

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China, although, in consequence of her aloofness from other peoples, late in entering on industrialism, could not in the long run—any more than could Japan—be kept in seclusion from the new economic system. After her entry in the nineteenth century into expanding commercial relations with other peoples, the influence of the world-unifying process of the mechanical age began to have effect. China, following Japan and her Western fellows in the family of nations, was at last faced with some of the problems and responsibilities, as well as with the splendid potential opportunities, of the new economic order which confronts humanity. Problems, responsibilities and opportunities these are that never can be adequately met by any one nation or group of nations alone; all have contributions to make, and if these are withheld loss in some degree will follow, not only for the nation that withholds, but also for the others.

In bygone ages the Chinese probably passed as surely as many other peoples from the stone to the bronze and iron ages. In the era of the power-driven engine and highly specialised machinery, whatsoever the cause, her advance to the high degree of international-mindedness essential to full success has been slower.

In both China and Japan, though at a different pace, and in different ways, the first steps in setting up modern factories, alongside the old domestic workshop system, were taken on the initiative of some of their own people. Chinese cotton mills, the earliest of their factories, were set up some ten years before the founding of a foreign factory in Shanghai or China was permitted. And even when foreign factories were opened in Treaty Ports from 1895 to 1896 and onwards, these remained comparatively few in number. In some industries, naturally, individual foreign factories led, in size, hygiene and efficiency, as was reasonably to be expected from the longer experience of their industrialists in the field of modern industry. The earliest foreign factories in China were founded just before the new attempts were made in England to apply medical care to

factory workers, and ten years before the earliest European international conventions for protection of the workers. Until all these, and other essential factors, such as the excess of the supply of labour seeking employment over demand for it, the extreme poverty of the masses and the practically universal custom of early child labour, are grasped, only confusion arises in attempts to diagnose the condition of labour in the vast field of China, or to apportion responsibility for this condition.

The suggestions, so frequently made, that the factories of foreigners set the standard in China for wages, hours, and certain other conditions of labour, and that the factory system was brought into China against the desire of the people and leaders, fall to pieces after examination of the dates of foundation of the early Chinese cotton mills (1879, 1885, 1890 onwards) and of the earliest British (1896), or of the respective numbers of Chinese and British cotton mills, which, in 1926, were as three to seventy-three.¹ An account of the position, which needs revision in the light of the facts in the industrial cities of China, appears, for example, in *China and the Nations*,² by the Chairman of the governing Committee of the People's Government of China, Wong Chung Hui, in these words: "The Chinese, not carried away, as was the West, by the wonders of mass production in the factory . . . are strenuously resisting even now its introduction, except where it can be managed on the most humane principles." This is certainly contradicted by the dates, numbers, and conditions of large Chinese factories in purely Chinese cities of the Yangtse River and Delta; also by the rapid conversion, in some of these and in the north, of workshops into small factories by introduction of a modicum of engine-power, sometimes at the back of little shops. As I have passed along a narrow street of shops I have seen a tree-trunk being set

¹ *China Year Book*, 1926. Edited by H. G. W. Woodhead, C.B.E. Tientsien Press, pp. 153-70.

² *China and the Nations*, p. 27, footnote. London, 1927, Martin Hopkinson & Co., Ltd. The footnote is editorial but develops the argument of the author.

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up to support shafting, without safeguards, for the power that was to drive it in a small metal-working shop employing young boys. In China we see, all over again, much of the early story of the transition to modern methods of production that arose in all the industrialising countries.¹

The high repute and position of some of the leading Chinese founders of the earliest cotton mills, foremost of whom was the great Chang Chien of Nantungchow, as also the claims of Chinese writers that the first factories in Shanghai were founded under the initiative of the Viceroy, Li Hung Chang,—both confirm the evidence as to the dates of the founding and the numbers of the Chinese mills. Still more interesting and striking indications of the voluntary initiative, and the encouragement by leading Chinese of the entry of their people into the field and heritage of modern industry, may be seen in the utterances of living statesmen and social reformers. Two illustrations will suffice:—Dr C. C. Wu, ex-Mayor of Nationalist Canton, in a speech delivered in Shanghai, February 15th, 1927, follows the ideas of his leader, Sun Yat Sen. “The introduction of mechanical aids,” he says, “works hardships in individual cases . . . yet as to the general progress of humanity in the machine age, it is not possible to stem the tide.” A group of witnesses well acquainted with Chinese industry, including Mr M. T. Tchou, Mr Fong F. Sec, Mrs Sun Yat-Sen, and others, wrote, in a memorandum submitted to the British China Delegation on the Indemnity Fund, in 1926, that the industrial revolution is “playing a vital rôle in the regeneration of the nation,” and it may be turned into a “blessing to the world or a curse,” according to the way in which it is developed “while the situation is plastic.”²

In various places and in various ways Chinese leaders do acknowledge national responsibility for their industrial conditions of labour, and *this* is the beginning of real advance.

¹ For illustrations, see Chapter VII, below.

² See *Report of the Advisory Committee respecting the China Indemnity*, pp. 189-92. Published by H.M.'s Stationery Office, 1926. Cmd. 2766.

It is no help, nor is it even a friendly act towards China, for British people to speak, as some have done, as if our nationals or other foreigners were responsible for having introduced the factory system into China, and for the tragically low standards of labour, the insanitation, the excessive hours and the low wages which obtain. As well might they claim responsibility for the terrible general mortality and morbidity rates that grip the Chinese people. These are due to general ignorance of biological laws and to the absence in China of modern administration of Public Health. This fact was stressed by Chinese and foreign medical investigators in the Memorandum which they presented in 1926 at Peking to the British China Indemnity Delegation, with an appeal for grants from the Fund, to which they added: "Great Britain should give China that part of its culture in which it leads the world."¹ That very part in Great Britain itself was closely interwoven with conditions and measures which arose out of the industrial revolution. To the British people was allotted the task of first endeavours in hewing out certain new social measures which served to suggest practical remedies to other peoples. Chinese initiative in meeting their own special phases is equally called for.

The episode which is the main subject of this story, with all its unforeseen reactions and developments, grew out of an enterprise intended to remedy the grave ills of industrial labour, in which American and British efforts were united with Chinese; and the enterprise was explicitly Christian. Although springing from earlier initiatives it first began to take shape in 1922. Steadily it moved on from that point until interrupted by the wide-reaching political events of May to June, 1925, in Shanghai; events which fused with other political movements from the South in a manner that could not at the time, nor for some months following, be clearly perceived.

¹ See *Report of the Advisory Committee respecting the China Indemnity*, p. 130. Published by H.M.'s Stationery Office, 1926. Cmd. 2766. The Memorandum itself is obtainable from the Association for Advancement of Public Health, Peking.

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Before we pass to consideration of the opening stages of the labour reform movement, into which I personally was drawn, it would seem profitable, in this chapter on revolutions, to call attention to certain parallels between China and Europe that were apparent at the close of the first quarter of the present century.

In Europe, following more than 125 years of development of the factory system, the greatest wars arose during the first quarter of this century. Profound changes followed, among which were an increase in the number of small European states, and an intensification in them of the nationalist spirit. Yet there survived an underlying unity of Christian civilisation and human loyalties, from which predictions could be made and large international plans could be developed.

In China, possessing as it did the unique surviving civilisation of the ancient world, a single country about the size of Europe, with a homogeneous population, conservative and imperial for thousands of years, even greater apparent changes arose during the same first quarter of the present century. The factory system, or industrialising process, was in a state of very slow development by Chinese leaders during the last twenty years of the nineteenth century; foreigners were first allowed to take part in it by opening factories after the Japanese War; but its main development occurred in the years 1917 to 1921 while most of the foreigners were engaged in the world war and its aftermath. There was no such slowly-moving influence of a single religious faith prevalent in China as that which in Europe, in spite of all its sectarian divisions, had evolved, through hundreds of years, a new kind of social order out of the ruins of the ancient Græco-Roman civilisation. Thus far the manner of the changes was less cataclysmic than that of the events in Europe from 1914 to 1919. Young Chinese have stressed to me the view that the political revolution of 1911 to 1912, when the Manchu dynasty came to an end, followed so naturally on the entry of Western education, scientific ideas and political notions into China, that it hap-

pened, as it were, by "effluxion of time." Perhaps the relative quietness of the beginning of the political revolution came from the very characteristic of superficiality which was deplored by Dr Hu Shih.¹ The proclamation of a Republic, nevertheless, came after a series of wars which shook the preceding Empire. The political revolution, moreover, almost synchronised with the first stage in China of the economic revolution which in its beginning had so completely changed the face of England, which gradually spread over Western Europe, and which later came to America after the Civil War of 1860-64.

In all the countries that were to any appreciable extent industrialised during the nineteenth century, some time elapsed before it came home to their leaders that a completely new economic order of the world had opened up, changing the whole framework of labour and our very conception of the meaning of civilisation. Very few saw that the new order, based as it was in Science, in strengthened distributive facilities for developing world markets, and in application of power to complex machinery for multiplied production of things needed by all mankind, bore such marks of universality that all producers and consumers eventually would share in the benefits which accrued—in fact, that the old neighbourly spirit of a good village was the spirit which needed to be reproduced out in the world. At the beginning probably none dreamed of the emancipating possibilities of the new order, or how in Europe first children and then women stood to gain,—gains that have yet to be secured in China. The coming of the factory system in Britain brought in its train elementary school life and the freeing of all children from early labour. For women it brought early freedom from the obsession of the spinning-wheel, and, later, of the needle. Ultimately, through individual instead of family wage-earning, it entailed the recognition of women as responsible workers, with the consequent development of their social and political emancipation.

¹ See quotation at head of this chapter.

For centuries thinkers in Europe had speculated and planned for future cessation of war, and, far earlier, China's philosophers had preached universal peace. Little was it imagined, even by those who raised the monument to James Watt in Westminster Abbey (probably still less by Watt himself) that he, who had "enlarged the resources of his country, increased the power of man" and risen to "an eminent place among the meritorious followers of science and real benefactors of the world,"¹ had also opened up an age in which it was to be made clear that the nations of mankind absolutely have to choose between becoming neighbourly and brotherly, or of facing new certainties of destruction. And the climax of this issue is appearing in China.

Only lightly can I touch on points in the position of China in the twentieth century as regards things which may lead to national unity. It is not possible even to sketch the successive political and military phases that followed the Revolution of 1911 to 1912. I first entered the country at Canton in November 1923, when North and South were already completely divided and at war, and when the Northern militarists had become lost in their kaleidoscopic struggles, groupings, and re-groupings that eventually passed, early in 1926, into an obvious, unconcealable breakdown of the ostensible central government of China at Peking. I was there, then, on another mission to China, and my direct links with the labour reform movement were practically closed for the time being, with the happenings recorded in the last chapter of this book. In Chapter II (the real opening of my story) appears something of what I learned from the leader who, for the majority of his countrymen, is the idealised hero of the Revolution—Dr Sun Yat-Sen. It was in Canton, the unindustrialised great old city of trade, that about 1919 the social revolution began to appear. It continued with the student renaissance, which was then reaching out to help labour; but a pause in that phase had followed a

¹ See the epitaph on his monument.

period of strike activities, after the seamen's successful strike at Hongkong in 1922-3.

Notwithstanding the unity in the ancient civilisation, the scholarship, art and culture of the educated ranks in China, notwithstanding the unity in the written language, it appeared inevitable that certain great obstacles would bar the way to early constructive steps towards unity under the new political state. Most striking, in the vast extent of the Empire and in early steps of the succeeding Republic, are the unredeemed illiteracy of the greater part of the immensely poor and overburdened masses, their total exclusion from general political responsibility, the power of the family system to override individual enterprise, the isolating effect of the differing dialects, the lack of modern transport, and (almost most important of all) the separation of the huge unit of land and people from easy general intercourse with other nations. As Sun Yat-Sen first pre-eminently saw, these were some of the shackles that required loosening in order to give the Chinese people the liberation for which their natural endowments fit them.

If we regard only the pre-railway period, except along the noble waterways, the means of transport (and therefore of social intercourse) were far less unifying in China than were they in Europe—a Europe whose main arteries were bequeathed by Rome. And although a new activity in road building has certainly begun, this difference continues to-day after the factory system has got “in the saddle” in many places. Not far from some of the factory centres, agriculture still—where canals are not available—largely depends on wheelbarrows and human carriers for transport of its produce to markets. And I have found not far from so modern a city as Tientsin the approach to a group of large cotton mills, by a light motor-car, an adventurous and boneshaking experience.

Not only was there unexampled need of unselfishness and wisdom in the first republican rulers of China. Political institutions entirely new to the people of China, especially in local government and elementary public health

administration, needed to be worked out; first to link up rulers and ruled healthfully in the new kind of state, and secondly, to lay a stable foundation for the social re-organisation involved in passing from a mediæval to a modern industrial type of civilisation.

When I visited industries in the regions of the Wu dialects, my difficulties in gaining knowledge of the wants of the workers were hardly greater than those of a mandarin-speaking and European-educated official from Peking. For both of us an interpreter was indispensable if we were to investigate conditions with reference to the standpoint of the workers themselves. Fortunately, in places where some of the workers, in spite of all obstacles, had learned to read and write, the publicity given by the Chinese Press to my visit to their country brought them, of their own accord, into direct conference with me. Thus I was in some degree enlightened about their point of view.¹ The lessons then learned helped me to understand the capacity of widely separated, and mostly illiterate, Chinese workers to spring to unity when they were brought to believe that their national independence was in some way menaced by force or interference from foreign powers. Mr H. B. Morse very truly, in 1909, wrote that, "The Provinces of China should be thought of as kingdoms of an Empire, not counties of a Kingdom," and "the Cantonese is as much alien in Shanghai as the Portuguese in Spain." None the less, an underlying capacity in the people of China to unite under a common banner, if only they are steadfastly led, has lately been manifested for all the world to see. In certain essential matters even warring North and South can stand for common ideas. Even so it has been in earlier wars of Europe.

In spite of all the civil warfare, banditry, faction, and apparent lack of progress in political responsibility anywhere (before the first advance of the Cantonese), it is generally recognised that on the whole the people have made marked economic advance. This has been attested not only by the

¹ For illustrations see Chapter VII.

well-known increase until 1926 in Customs returns, but far more arrestingly by the personal observations of onlookers in a position to make valid comparisons over many years. The captain of a small passenger and cargo steamer, plying between Tientsin and Shanghai, in 1924 spoke eloquently to me of the manifest advance he himself had seen—and this not only in economic directions—in upwards of twenty years' work on the coasts of China.

It was surely always inherently probable that China would gain at least some of the solid national advantages that could be drawn from the increased commercial intercourse with various nations—intercourse which was first made possible in China through the "Settlements" formed during the past eighty years. The worth of a temporary institution sometimes appears when the time for its transformation has begun. The Hanseatic League (which in Europe laid the material basis for a later advance there in arts and sciences, in a disturbed age) affords, in some aspects, an enlightening historical parallel regarding the gifts that expanding foreign intercourse brought to China. And that expansion, humanly speaking, was possible in China in the nineteenth century only through special settlements.

Still more certain was it that the slowly entering tide of modern educational methods and aims, of science and the "humanities" of post Græco-Roman Europe, would in time leaven the minds and characters of many of the young potential leaders. Many of these leaders had been educated in America or Europe, and were conversant with constructive political ideals—ideals which, in spite of lapses, were the real life not only of Europe, but also of the overseas Dominions of the British Commonwealth of nations and of the United States of America. Hitherto these ideals have been largely theoretic and inoperative in China, yet a change is surely at hand.

Out of the midst of apparent political disintegration, and extremes of misery for the people, from the seemingly endless military adventures of Marshals and Tuchuns, overt signs of constructive aims began to appear from very

different quarters, in 1926; and they were so expressed as to receive careful foreign attention.

The first sign, from the Southern Kuomintang party of Canton, founding itself on the principal aims enunciated by Dr Sun Yat-Sen—namely, nationalism, democracy, and the livelihood of the people—was soon well spoken of in very varied directions.¹ When I passed Hongkong in the first week of March 1926, on the way to Shanghai to join the British China Indemnity Delegation, word was current generally in the Colony that a new kind of capacity was making itself felt in the government of Kwangtung Province and in Canton; in fact, it was the first real government, it was said, since the Revolution. Similar accounts filtered up at intervals in March and April to Shanghai, from missionary and other sources, and special articles about the portent began to appear in the *North China Daily News*. The testimony then was that a real endeavour was being made methodically to administer affairs in a modern sense, to cope with customary forms of “squeeze,” and to keep the army subordinate to the civil power. It was evident, moreover, and this is the important point for my story, that an entirely new attitude was maintained towards the aspirations of labour. With the development and outcome of the exercise of governing power for definitely modern political aims this book is not directly concerned, but it claims recognition as an essential part in the setting of the movement to humanise conditions of labour in industry. Certainly Canton first promoted political activity of labour, although the Peking Government first promulgated Factory Regulations—on paper.

The second distinct sign, pointing towards the application in the future of constructive methods in public affairs, appeared also in the spring of 1926, in Greater Shanghai, in Chinese territory administered by a recently arrived military chief of some intellectual endowments. The endeavour of Marshal Sun Chuan-Fang, then overlord of

¹ *North China Weekly Herald*, Oct. 16th, 1926. Article by Dr C. C. Wu, on “Aims of the Kuomintang,” and earlier articles by George Sokolsky.

the five provinces lying about the rich Delta of the Yangtse-kiang, to build up the urban local government of Greater Shanghai, so as to make it comparable in modern efficiency with the adjoining International Settlement, was the more remarkable because of his reasoning at the inauguration of his scheme.

“Whenever we pass,” he said, “from the concessions into Chinese territory we feel that we are crossing into a different world . . . for nothing in the Chinese territory—roads, buildings, or public health—can be compared with the concessions. . . . In recent years the people of China have gradually acquired a national consciousness and with one voice have demanded the rendition of concessions and the abolition of unequal treaties. But ‘empty mouthed’ demands are useless. If we want to have the concessions abolished we must make the necessary preparations; otherwise even if the Powers hand over the concessions to us at once we shall find ourselves utterly unprepared to receive them. One of the objects of establishing the Directorate of the Port of Shanghai and Woosung is to try to accomplish some real results to show our foreign friends and to start our general preparations for the eventual return of the concessions. . . . For the present only the provincial government can make such an experiment with any hope of success. . . . If we succeed in our endeavour we need not fear that the Settlement will not achieve international equality.”

When Marshal Sun Chuan-Fang, on April 7th, 1926, entertained the Willingdon Delegation on the China Indemnity Fund at a quiet dinner in Nanking, I was struck by his addressing questions to me on the development in Great Britain of Social Insurance laws. He showed an interest in methods for bringing some security into the physical and economic life of manual workers that have been tested in the West, a spontaneous interest not commonly shown among provincial rulers in China. His public announcement a few weeks later of his plans for a Directorate of Greater Shanghai showed his sense

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of the need for preparatory organisation of the conditions of modern life in the cities of China. Although his experiment was abruptly ended for the time being in March 1927, through his defeat by the Cantonese forces, which brought the Southern Government into control of Chinese Shanghai, the matter—in any event of a military kind—does not end there. This unique first endeavour to raise the level of local government in Chinese Shanghai and district to that of a modern city like the International Settlement within it, was of a nature, if it continued, to influence political ideas and actions of other leaders beyond the physical boundaries of the district of Shanghai.¹ The more surely was this so because a man of proven character, ability, and scientific attainment, Dr V. K. Ting—one of the members of the Advisory Committee on the British China Indemnity Fund—was chosen by the Marshal as his associate Director to carry out the plan and the great work involved. Although Dr Ting, being so closely associated with Sun Chuan-Fang, had to leave Shanghai on the defeat and retreat of his Chief, at least some of the departments he had set up remained. At the time of my writing these words, a letter from Shanghai tells me that the Health Department continues to function and is doing good work, still co-operating with voluntary social welfare workers.

If such vital work might have continued, as a whole, under its able Director, undisturbed for a year or two, signposts, even more important than the valuable experimental health stations under the Association for the Advancement of Public Health, seen by the Indemnity Delegation in June 1926, in Peking, would have been erected for the guidance of Chinese administrators in the

¹ This opinion found some confirmation, after the first upheaval of the Nationalist entry into Chinese Shanghai, in the installation, on July 7th, 1927, by General Chiang Kai-Shek, of a new Mayor of Greater Shanghai, in the person of General Huang Fu, former Regency Premier. The aims then declared were similar to those of Sun Chuan-Fang, but the tenure of the office by General Huang Fu was terminated (by military events) before the end of August. China evidently needs a permanent Civil Service!

commercial metropolis of China. They may yet be secured, permanently. In the present ever-changing scene one can only try to draw attention to factors that are fundamental for the welfare of humanity and labour in China.

Returning to the main purpose of this book, which was begun in spring, 1925, my first aim was promptly to record experiences met with while taking an invited part in the voluntary movement for the protection of labour in industry which was led by the National Christian Council of China. Next, my purpose was to declare emphatically that the new industrial situation in China (a critical one for the international movement to humanise industrial life) demands, in an exceptional degree, the support of scientific research, uninfluenced by interests of party, or faction, or nationalistic struggles. Much of the book was written during early quiet months of 1925, spent in England, after my first visit to China in 1923-24. The contemporary reporting of the industrial facts by an eye-witness who took a part in them, and who was familiar with the questions involved as they arose in other countries, may help to make the events, which took place during a period of transition, comprehensible to those who follow.

Already in 1925 some aspects of the labour situation were receiving considerable attention in the British Press, in Parliament, and in other directions. Questions addressed to the Government in the House of Commons appeared, in 1925 as in 1927, to be based sometimes on very inadequate or confused ideas of the realities behind them in China. Confusion of ideas, as well as sympathy for children, were patent in an invitation sent me (as an ex-member of the Child Labour Commission of Shanghai) to speak at a public meeting in London in the summer of 1925, against labour conditions in Shanghai. The organisers of the meeting appeared to believe that the Municipal Council of the International Settlement shared with the foreign manufacturers the responsibility for the scandal of the conditions of child labour in factories, which had become a

matter of common knowledge since the publication of the report of the Commission which that Council itself had appointed. Since the Council was in the forefront of the movement for protection of the children I could not be on that platform. In various ways and places I pressed the view that it was a barren line of mere controversy to arraign either foreigners or Chinese in China as being specially responsible for the labour evils that were disfiguring and impairing development of the factory system in China, as they had done long ago in other countries.¹ The difficulty in the way of conversion to better things in China lay not only, as formerly it had done in Western lands, in a natural inertia among the majority of the employers (necessarily Chinese), who still work under the assumptions and customs of an old order of economics and industry. Much greater obstacles to progress lay in the absence of stable government, in the uncertain and disturbed conditions of the country, and in the effects on the outlook of the Chinese employers of the tremendous poverty and the illiteracy of the mass of the people; it was they who naturally felt in the strongest possible way the difficulty of gaining the consent of the working parents (unable to support their children) to the exclusion of their children from the mills. It was equally natural that the foreign manufacturers in the the International Settlement should see—from Western experience—that a factory law, however simple, made binding on all employers of factory labour was the indispensable first step to reform, and that they should appeal—as they did in January 1923—to the Chinese cotton manufacturers and Chinese Chamber of Commerce to ask for such legislation from their own Government.

The following chapters, which were in a measure due in defence of the small body of British employers, who were exposed to unfair, unequal, and most unreasonable blame for labour conditions in China, were begun under the influence of a strong hope; for, until the end of the first quarter of

¹ See for example my letter to *The Times*, June 19th, 1925, and the *New Statesman*, August 29th, 1925.

1925, it seemed as if we were on the eve of attaining a step towards co-operation between foreigners and Chinese in a practicable measure of protection for child workers in the factories within the Settlement. No one there thought of it as more than a "lead" to the authorities outside, a promise that the foreigner would not fail to advance when China began to exclude the youngest children from overstrain, to protect workers from accidents, and to prevent injury to the health of those admitted into factories. The hope had been encouraged by the responsive way in which I had been officially and unofficially received, by provincial governors and employers, when I went to them as a representative of the Industrial Committee of the N.C.C. (being also a co-opted member of the Child Labour Commission), and when I urged them to translate into positive action the measure of protection indicated on paper in the Peking Provisional Regulations. The Ordinance of the Civil Governor of Kiangsu, dated May 20th, 1924 (considered in later chapters) was the strongest of the responses from any Provincial Authority.

And then, on the 30th May 1925, came the tragedy of the riots and shooting in Shanghai, which for a time defeated the practicable preliminary step towards active reform. The clearest and fullest accounts of the situation as yet attempted, after the Report of the Child Labour Commission,¹ July 1924, can be seen in the two Foreign Office Memoranda on Labour Conditions in China.² Yet the whole story of the origin and details of the campaign to get the Child Labour Bye-law passed, under conditions which were most complicated and are still most difficult to understand (apart altogether from the events of May 30th), has never fully appeared in the West. The happenings that rapidly followed were largely of a political kind, not, in the main, derived from labour troubles,

¹ Published in full with all its Appendices in the *Municipal Gazette*, and obtainable in a complete reprint from Messrs Kelly & Walsh, Shanghai.

² China No. 1 (1925), Cmd. 2442, and China No. 2 (1927), Cmd. 2846.

although drawn into close association with them. Among the saddest consequences of the disturbances was this sudden shutting down of the hopes, which had sprung up, of combined and cordial Chinese and foreign administrative action for amendment of the deplorable conditions of labour of young children in the industrial region of Greater Shanghai. For those who had eyes to see, moreover, it was already clear that such controlling power as there was in China at the time did not lie with the nominal Government at Peking.

It was often then reported that the aim of the strikers and students was to move industry to reform the ills that are unquestionable and deplorable in the life and work of Chinese labour. It is none the less incontrovertible that these ills are not truly attributable (as I show in the following chapters) to the presence of the few European manufacturers in modern industry in China. In China, as in other countries, when the indisputable existence of the evils in unregulated factory industry have been sufficiently advertised to gain the support of public opinion for their administrative redress, peace is above all necessary if the practical issues are to be dealt with by wisely applied laws. Still more is peace necessary in a place where two main streams of civilisation, with widely differing features and standards of living, have met and become closely involved in common economic interests.

An earlier halting point in this still recent movement towards the humanising of factory conditions must not be overlooked, for it is liable to recur anywhere in China, until political conditions become in some degree stabilised. That halting-place came, in the end of the summer of 1924, with the outbreak of civil warfare in the provinces of Chekiang and Kiangsu, round about Shanghai. Its effect on the steps taken by the Civil Governor of Kiangsu, Han Kuo-Chuen, to set up a joint Chinese and Foreign Commission on Child Labour for his province (the most industrialised as yet of the provinces), on lines comparable with that appointed by the Municipal Council of the

Foreign Settlement of Shanghai, needs to be considered, and an attempt is made to do so in later chapters.¹

The subsequent and more serious obstacle to the taking of first steps in applied regulation arrived with the sudden, violent opposition from a large number of Chinese to any co-operation whatever that might increase the powers of the foreign municipal council in the International Settlement. Even strictly limited action there for the greatly needed protection of the young children, vouched for by the assent of the Chinese equally with all other members of the Child Labour Commission, passed out of the region of practical politics until a less disturbed situation should arise. It should be recorded here, at the same time, that in a widely advertised statement of opposition to various draft bye-laws, from thirty-one Chinese commercial organisations, it was stated also that they "wholeheartedly," though conditionally, supported the child labour bye-law.² After the failure of two spirited attempts by the municipal council to obtain the passing by the foreign ratepayers of this bye-law, for subsequent ratification by the Powers concerned and by the Chinese authorities, on the lines recommended by the Commission, the question was tacitly shelved.³ Special complications arose out of the inclusion on the list of bye-laws submitted to the ratepayers of several—and particularly of a bye-law for registration of printers—to which there was intense and bitter opposition among the Chinese. If the time had been less critical, and if this measure regarding printed matter, so obnoxious to Chinese, had not been listed with the measure for the protection of the children, it ought to have been possible (at the stage which had been reached in the awakening of Chinese and foreign public opinion by the thorough canvassing, in April and May 1925, of the enfranchised ratepayers) to have achieved the passing of the child labour bye-law in

¹ See Chapters VII. and IX.

² See Chapter IX. for fuller account of this.

³ See Chapter VI. for an account of the antecedents, work, and immediate recommendation of the Commission.

June. In the long run, nevertheless, the real essential is the conversion of the Chinese people themselves, in industrial districts, to the policy of sustained application of practical rules for the safeguarding of the health and safety of labour, as in other industrialised countries. It is very sure that China's labourers need a spirit of help from their wisest friends, all over the world, for the revealing of the truth about their lives. The sudden surging up, in the spring of 1927, at Hankow and Wuchang, of extreme, impracticable, and absurd demands of newly set-up labour unions does not lessen this need.

In the summer of 1926 I met in Shanghai people, including leaders, in the movement which in 1923-24 was pressing for reform of labour conditions in the Settlement. They told me that they now deprecated foreign activities implying that China had more need than other countries of investigation in factories. They pointed out that there was great sensitiveness about adverse criticism, and that they had come to believe that any move of the kind must wait to be initiated by Chinese themselves. In so far as this meant that China must "depend on its own exertions" for improving the social and economic life of the people, while friendly Powers stand by; that China must evolve a stable government able to secure the necessary adaptation of the old customs and traditions, to meet the exacting demands of the modern industrialism, then one could only agree.

If it meant more, that China really had not entered (as members of Lord Elgin's Embassy in 1860 first believed she had)¹ into membership of the "family of nations"; if it meant that there ought to be an agreed silence on the part of China's friends as to the great danger of *laissez faire* in regard to injurious conditions in factories and small workshops, officially acknowledged by Chinese Ministers and Provincial Governors as much as by the International Municipal Council of Shanghai—one could only say that

¹ See *A Narrative of Events in China of Occurrences during Lord Elgin's Second Embassy to China in 1860*, by H. B. Loch, pp. 184-6.

such silence was too late to be worth while. There was too much evidence to be ignored, and particularly there was the world-wide publicity that accompanied the great effort to protect little children working in the Settlement, as a first step, from what is, notoriously, too heavy a physical and economic burden.¹ There was the existence since 1923 of the Peking Provisional Regulations (never applied, and only on paper). Finally, though more could be said on these lines, the fact was important that the Ministry of Commerce and Agriculture itself convened an Industrial Conference in Peking in September 1924, at which the Labour Department, under its jurisdiction, introduced a resolution regarding the enforcement of the said regulations.

After my second visit to China, and after wide travel there in 1926, when I renewed old friendships and made new ones, it seemed to me to be made perfectly clear that there was no general disposition among educated Chinese men and women (who are working and waiting for opportunities to serve in the rebuilding of China) to shun discussion of the facts in this field. On the contrary, there was a desire to open it up with me, and to appeal to the example of British methods for the solving of some of their political and social difficulties. The real hindrances to constructive action lie in the continuing state of political, social, and economic insecurity, a matter far wider and deeper than distaste for suggestions or criticism from outside. These are welcomed if they come from friends having administrative experience. Amongst the educated a very strong interest has grown up for research and practical training with a special bent towards questions of citizenship and public service.²

Peking is a capital without an organic public health

¹ See *Christian Industry*, a periodical issued by the Industrial Committee of the National Christian Council of China, May 20th, 1925, p. 5.

² For full illustration of this see *Report of the Advisory Committee to the Foreign Office on the China Indemnity Fund*, 1926, Cmd. 2766, pp. 21, 140-44, 175.

service for a normal population of 900,000. In June 1926 this capital was full of suffering refugees (said, at their height, to number 300,000) escaping from the violence of the various Chinese armies contending in the surrounding country. At this very time I was taken with some of my colleagues to see small but excellent demonstration centres for Public Health work. They were of a kind for normal times, under Chinese direction, with American and British medical support. In addition to the Medical Officer and his assistants, there were Chinese women Health Visitors, well trained and with joy in their work, who might have come from the training ground of a large English borough. The faith, scientific understanding, and zeal found at work in such experiments deserve all the frankness and sincerity equally with the goodwill that can be brought to meet them. In the field of hygiene and safety no doubt many nations, and especially America, with her Rockefeller and other funds, can decisively help China, and they are doing so in wonderful ways, of which one need only refer to the Peking Union Medical College. Yet opportune and steadfast testimony may well come from unofficial England, as well as from Geneva, to the undeniable need of reform in conditions of factory labour, some of which are survivals from the very different economic and social order of domestic industry. The new basis for industry is one without which China can hardly win her rightful place in the closely interwoven, modern industrialised world. Such testimony can appropriately continue to come (when military and political conditions permit) from citizens of the country whose destiny it was to be the pioneer in the factory system, and who first had to forge the necessary shield of factory law and the applied science of Public Health. It is the long history of the development of national standards for protection of labour in power-driven industry in Great Britain that testifies most fully to the real meaning of factory law. It shows that this was not only a matter of adjusting claims in industry between two contending parties, though inci-

dentally something of that kind was also attained. It was, substantially, a gradual growth and fuller recognition of a new phase of industrial life, that was not understood in its beginnings, and that needed its own kind of social legislation. Through a long struggle to get rid of conditions that were unsuited to a mechanically aided order of production—conditions first condemned by a few enlightened manufacturers and ultimately by all concerned—the nation learned that the new system required new methods. And ways and means were found to humanise the conditions and to apply science to the problems of health and safety, by specialised civil administration as well as by legislation. It is during the process of trying to solve such complex problems, necessitating a widened outlook and a new spirit, that many another human difficulty becomes simplified.

Still, a great gulf separates the poor masses of China—who lack the legal provisions that the West deems necessary to personal security, whether compensation for accidents, health insurance, or well-guarded machinery,—from those who have education, skill, or even small possessions in their country.¹ And in growing centres of modern industry the workers are losing the old hold on the anchor of family and gild life, which in a simpler state of society could give the most needful help. Without a humanising of the deadening conditions that are bound to come in an unreformed, industrialised state, there are explosive possibilities in the massing of power-aided and power-limited workers, in urban surroundings, where (without science or thought for planning of their housing) they live too often in ways most miserable and in most dangerously unhygienic places. Unquestionably a warning of the existence of such grave dangers lay, with other warnings, at the back of the situation that arose in Shanghai, in the end of May 1925.

The gulf between the overwhelming mass, who have nothing, and the relatively few, who are upheld by possessions, scholarship, or skill, began to be spanned a few years

¹ See the accounts of the Chinese workers' position, given by themselves, below, Chapter VII., pp. 169-178.

ago by a very slender bridge, capable of expansion, in the organised, popular education movement for illiterates. To the onlooker up to the end of 1924 it appeared as if each one of the truly "toiling" masses from their earliest years had learned one fundamental thing perfectly, that is, to press on without any relaxation to the point where food can be won by work. Those who seek to understand what at present lies enfolded in the labour situation of China may "out of the mouths of babes" catch words that give clues. I found a surprising proportion of very small children, spoken to at random in silk filatures, who daily came alone to and from their work. A sturdy little boy of 5½ years, to the question why he did so, merely replied, "I want to eat rice." His "home" was on a sampan in a creek that is rather like an open sewer.

Although there is this instinct in the labourer to get on with work—for is not all the infinite mass behind and ready to step into a vacant place?—and an ultimate reliance on the family in the country and what remains of gild help, there is also an instinctive capacity for association, though not fully developed into the kind that can be backed up by accumulated funds. "Even among those who have nothing," said Mr Clennel, writing in July 1924, nearly a year before the concerted strikes of 1925, "the instinct of class association asserts itself. . . . The trade-union spirit is undoubtedly widely spread among the Chinese. . . . Combination to keep up wages is universal. Strikes are also a perfectly well-known and understood means of exerting pressure and enforcing demands, as of course they have been in all countries ever since the Roman Plebs seceded to the sacred mount in 494 B.C., or however long before that human nature became what it is."¹ It is refreshing thus to be assured that even in the country where so many things seem to be done in the reverse way from the European way it is "human nature" that confronts us! Indeed, in China, Europe may see something of her own past still living in various things, some quite recent, some

¹ Cmd. 2442, already cited, pp. 64, 65.

quite far off, according to the kind of things and the parts of China that are under consideration. And when we are considering labour and industry, China is the one large country in which—in spite of all its “chaos”—before the recent Communist upheaval, one could see ancient and modern productive industry continuing, apparently effectively, side by side, without mutual interference or adverse economic effect.

As for modern organisation of labour, notwithstanding the many nominal trade unions, until recently there has been but one—the Seamen’s Union, with its headquarters in Canton and an important branch in Shanghai—which attained to something like a steady membership and funds and responsible officers. Many of the workmen’s societies whose names are given in Mr Moss’s list in the Consular Report¹ published 1925, might quickly develop on lines similar to those in the West if peace, law, and order could prevail in the land. Mr A. H. George reported in the summer of 1926² that the General Labour Union, which came to the front in the strikes of February 1925, played a great rôle in the general strike which followed. “Though to-day officially suppressed,” he says, “it still pursues a clandestine existence.” At present, apart from temporary peculiar advantages, as in Canton in 1925 and Hankow in 1926-27, it seems wellnigh impossible for true trades unions to develop. It is not so much that written law does not definitely legalise them, as it is that, under uncertain military rule, labour officials are liable to be put in prison when conditions are disturbed, and to be kept there as hostages, on the old Chinese principle of the responsibility of leaders or of communal headmen for the conduct of followers. It was practically impossible in the Foreign Settlement directly to create a liberty of trade unionism for Chinese labour while it was denied under Chinese rule. The

¹ Cmd. 2442, already cited, pp. 92, 93.

² Department of Overseas Trade. Report on the Commercial, Industrial, and Economic Situation in China to 30th June, 1926, by Mr A. H. George, Acting Commercial Secretary, Shanghai.

traditions and activities of the remarkable old craft guilds have, it seems, been unable to afford Chinese workers such preliminary training in self-governing methods as was possible in the English craft guilds and municipal life. Not only now, but also under a settled Empire, the application of law in China, says H. B. Morse, was so uncertain and so much "at the mercy of hidden influences," that the people preferred to settle their differences among themselves, wherever possible. The guild being in many ways the one bulwark against official oppression, the Chinese member was driven to increase the strength of his guild along lines that made him, as an individual, "helpless against the strength of his own creating."¹

New factors have been coming into being, even before the later phases of the Southern Kuomintang, which brought even women and labour to its aid. Women in China have asked for fuller realisation of the opportunities for higher education that in theory they are supposed to have, and for training in the fields of social service, on the plea that many young women are particularly qualified by interest and natural gifts to become helpful professional workers in social service. With means for such education and training, says Mrs Chindon Yui Tang, writing in *The Bulletin*, vol. ii., 1923, of the Chinese National Association for the Advancement of Education, women's "contribution in the world of thought and deed will be invaluable, in building up China's new social structure. Such problems as child labour . . . and poor working conditions should be analysed and, if possible, solved. In the community, the improvement of housing, diet, and public health should engage the most serious attention of social workers." Other leading women have begun to set their minds to these things. Medical women who had their professional training in America or Europe, in particular, have come in contact, through their hospitals and dispensaries in poor industrial quarters in Chinese cities, with the facts and consequences

¹ *The Guilds of China*, H. B. Morse, 1909, chapter i. Longmans, Green & Co.

of the industrial life that is growing up in the absence of any system of public health administration, or factory inspection, or town-planning. A medical Chinese woman who was a member of the Child Labour Commission had experience as a medical officer in a very large Anglo-American factory in Shanghai.

It has been said by those who look chiefly at the foundation of Chinese life on the broad base of agriculture that too much has been made by the industrial reform movement of the injurious conditions in which industrial labour is carried on. In a country where at least 80 per cent. of the vast population are dependent on agriculture, only a relatively small proportion can be factory workers or workers in allied industrial occupations. And yet, as we have seen, there are well-qualified thinkers and patriotic leaders who declare that industrialism is already an awakening force—doubtless by its capacity for good or for ill, according to the human use made of it. The subjects of industrialism and industrial welfare were pressed by Chinese witnesses on the attention of the British China Indemnity Delegation.

This is essentially a matter in connection with which it is advisable to look carefully at large scale maps, and to compare the real size of China with regions of the earth with which it is at all comparable in size and population, such as Europe, India, and the United States of America. It is the actual and the potential number of industrial workers, not only their ratio to agricultural workers within the population of China, that is the significant question, for all industrial countries as well as for the Chinese workers themselves. The existence of certain Chinese factories, under wholly Chinese management, which were first begun on a labour foundation of orphans, waifs, and strays from great famine regions, must not be overlooked. Those that I have seen were well conducted, according to good Chinese notions, but it is not a basis that makes for a strong, self-reliant labour side of the new factory system of industry, such as has been most certainly needed in the experience

of the West. The widely prevalent contract system for recruiting labour will probably diminish as illiteracy diminishes, but it has been a fruitful source of labour difficulties. Above all causes of weakness comes the extreme degree of poverty. "The curse of the poor is their poverty" might have been first written of Chinese labour.

No records are kept by which an even approximately accurate estimate can be made of China's industrial workers, for comparison with those of other industrial regions of the earth, whether the workers are in factories or in the old style workshops, which in many parts of China are being rapidly changed into factories by addition of small-power engines. Even if China's mineral resources prove to be less extensive than some have estimated them to be, there are almost boundless possibilities of expansion in factory industries that do not need great blast furnaces, within easy reach, to keep them in constant activity. It is not what they now exactly number that is so significant, but what in a state of incalculable transition they are about to become. And yet more under what economic, hygienic, and social conditions they are working, and going to work, if civil war diminishes, that is the serious question for China, Europe, Great Britain, India, and the United States. Although Chinese modern factory products have entered, so far, very little into world markets,¹ yet if political conditions should become more stable, there is every reason to believe that there would be a great increase in some important classes of factory production. Japanese industry, and its expansion in China, may become a highly important factor in the whole situation.

The world-wide importance of the general level of labour standards in any industrialised country was visualised by advanced thinkers in Europe long before 1919, when the European Peace Treaty gave opportunity for establishing the International Labour Organisations in Geneva. It was the industrialisation of Western Europe and America

¹ Silk products, of course, were exported from ancient times onward.

that eventually brought about the interdependence of the welfare of labour and industry in all the greater industrial countries. The recognition in Europe of this reality may be said politically to have first come into political reckoning when the International Conference on Labour Legislation was called to Berlin in 1890, by the Emperor William II. The next important Conference was called in 1908, by the Swiss Government, on the suggestion of the International Association for Labour Legislation, a society of which the foundation was laid at a very interesting pioneering congress in Brussels in 1897. There was a large voluntary element in the Conference in 1908, but Government representatives of departments concerned with labour in the chief industrial countries attended and took part in it officially, with results that appear in this book.

It was in order to pass on to Chinese people my experience of the methods and results of the administration of British—and in a lesser degree of other European—factory law that I was invited to China. My opportunities for seeing the conditions calling for remedy were multiplied by Chinese people, and it was my lot for eleven successive months to come into personal touch, in widely separate parts of China in 1924, with a stage of the extension of the industrial revolution that is beset with risks for all industrial countries. More basic international risks even than those are in question in China in the spring of 1927. Surely the industrial leap onwards of the world, which was begun in Europe in the nineteenth century and carried on in the twentieth into wide southern lands¹ (where domestic craft industry never obtained), ultimately will call China, with other countries, to a more human state of industrial brotherhood. "The French Revolution," says Fournier D'Albe, "came with its clarion call to a wider organisation of humanity—which was eventually brought about not by speeches and pamphlets, but by the harnessing of coal to inaugurate the mechanical age. . . . The adoption of mechanism was a turning-

¹ The Union of South Africa and the eastern states of Australia.

point in evolution. . . . Man, liberated from mechanical drudgery by the machine, has time to develop his intellectual and artistic powers." ¹ It has become a matter of international knowledge that the whole mass of the Chinese labouring people still travail to be delivered from the wasteful poverty, limitations, and cruel drudgery of unaided manual and muscular toil. Only within the last few years, mostly since Sun Yat-Sen published his *International Development of China*, have certain Chinese leaders seen what can be done for relieving the immense poverty, for promotion of Public Health and for financing the necessary education of the people, by opening out the locked-up, undeveloped wealth of their country.

The first effort to *apply* reform to the crude, non-humanised beginnings of industrialism in and around Shanghai (which is the principal theme of several of my chapters) does appear to have failed, and this happened just before the latest turmoil of political revolution. It is not for anyone belonging to England—where the earliest experimental governmental attempts were made and followed up, until, after seventy-six years, consolidation of the law was attained—to believe that this failure can be irremediable. Unless the economic development of China is so retarded by prolongation of the internal strife that any expansion of enlightened manufacture is rendered impossible, the question of regulation of the factory for securing the health and safety of the worker is bound to arise again. For that to succeed, popular preparation and publicity are necessary, on evolutionary human and scientific lines as distinct from violent revolutionary methods. It is the effective state of health of the body and mind of the delicate *human machine* that is in question. There violence brings only destruction.

The dependence of the efficiency of production in power industry on the prevention of fatigue and on a satisfactory state of labour is now known, and becoming realised in many countries, in a way unknown in any country

¹ *Hæphæstus, or the Soul of the Machine*. Kegan Paul, p. 70, etc.

before 1924. The development of China's resources has been taken up as a "cause" by her own young men of science. The workers and students have claimed that labour conditions shall be reformed. Young Chinese women were identified with the first appeals that a beginning should be made in the Foreign Settlement of Shanghai with the protection of child workers. And from various parts of China comes the appeal for higher technical training from women who desire to qualify for socially reconstructive service in their own country. It is only necessary to watch for the favourable opening, which is sure to come, for making a fresh start when confusing trails cannot be drawn across the pathway to reform, and when the help of information and experience from foreign countries cannot be regarded as tending to weaken the sovereign independence of China. Once this is clear it will not matter whether the greatest help is given internationally or by the experience and knowledge of any individual nation.

Happily for fundamental reform the first essential is the protection of the child. The present serious hindrance to attaining that lies in the extreme poverty of the parents, and possibly in a fear that not only their family income but also the prosperity of the factories they work in—which they specially told me they desire—might be lessened by the exclusion of young children. When the truth can be sufficiently brought to their knowledge that effective production, good family earnings and the best earning capacity of their children, at a proper age, are hampered, not helped, by very early work in factories, then Chinese working parents are not less likely than those of the West to agree to the necessary changes—above all, to systematic elementary education for children who must later work with their hands for their livelihood.

The first words of the traditional first lesson of any educated Chinese child have a bearing on this question. They are most unlikely to be repudiated by any Chinese parent who is made aware of the ancient sanctity of their usage. "The character of men at birth is naturally good

. . . yet if instruction be not given the character deteriorates.”¹ In the provision of regular, sound elementary education for all children who are within reach of any employment lies the root remedy for child labour in China. They certainly are born bright and clever, but they sadly fall off in the excessive and unhealthy toil to which they are exposed.

A foreign witness before the Child Labour Commission of Shanghai expressed the opinion, based on a long residence in China, that “Whereas a large proportion of the children are bright and intelligent, the monotonous routine of work and absence of education results in a considerable number of the adults being unintelligent and dull.”

It is an urgent matter in relation to the factory industries of China to get the full strength of the higher university leaders turned on, without delay, to research into their economic and social aspects. This should be not only local and national research, but should have an international outlook. It should be made comparatively, with an eye to developments in the same fields in other Eastern² and in Western countries. On the counts both of efficient production and of social welfare the disinterested acquisition of scientific knowledge leads to conclusions that are internationally unifying about the indispensable pre-requisites of healthy, vigorous modern industry. The patient spirit of industriousness hitherto so obvious in Chinese workers engenders in the onlooker hopefulness for the future. This hopefulness may be greatly strengthened by a wise response to the claims put forward by Chinese social reformers in favour of endowment by the British China Indemnity Fund for research in these fields.

¹ See title-page.

² Especially Japan and India.

CHAPTER II

THE ARRIVAL IN HONGKONG AND A VISIT TO CANTON

“The Emperor Wei treated labour with great kindness and so his failing dynasty was revived.”—*Book of Mencius*, B.C. 372.

COMING from Brisbane, on the N.Y.K. s.s. “Tango Maru,” during November 1923, I had passed through what is surely the loveliest sea-passage in the world; inside the Great Barrier Reef, up the Coast of Queensland and out by the Albany Passage, past Cape York and Thursday Island, past the Spice Islands of the Dutch East Indies. We had called in at Zamboanga in the Philippines for a few hours, come up to Manila Bay in the skirts of a typhoon and greatly enjoyed two days’ wandering about in Manila, with its blending of Western and Eastern life and architecture in a tropical setting. Finally, after passing through nearly the whole depth of the tropics from south to north of the Equator, we arrived at Hongkong—on the threshold of the ancient “flowery” land of CHINA.

Although I had seen Chinese people occasionally in our English seaports, and had had glimpses of them in Port Elizabeth, and in Australia and New Zealand, I had never seen them in any considerable numbers (except on this voyage in the streets of Manila) until I moved about in Hongkong. At once I knew I should like them, and this feeling soon strengthened in Canton and on the more crowded busy streets and bridges of Shanghai.

Until specially invited to come and help in the movement for reform of the conditions of the factory workers of China, I had planned only for a few weeks’ visit to some of the principal Chinese and Japanese ports and industrial cities, between more prolonged studies of the new and old

industrial communities of Australasia and India. The field of the British Empire—or British Commonwealth of Nations—had been the one I had chosen when my retirement from over twenty-seven years' service under the Home Office Factory Department was followed by the great gift of £1000 from very many friends and fellow-workers, which put it in my power to carry on researches and comparative study of conditions of industrial workers outside the United Kingdom. To the travelling expenses for that work I devoted this large-hearted gift, and eventually from it springs this book.

A special invitation from the Chief Inspector of Factories in the Union of South Africa took me first (early in 1922) to that relatively youthful industrial field—with special native and Asiatic labour problems. And it was at the Post Office, Cape Town, in June 1923, just while I was preparing for my departure to Australia, that a cable was handed to me, signed "Roots," from Shanghai, conveying an invitation from the National Christian Council of China to come and prolong my stay in order to investigate industrial conditions and to advise them on their programme.

Being ignorant about institutions and most personalities at work in China, and unaware either that the activities of Miss Agatha Harrison, as Industrial Secretary to the Young Women's Christian Association, had brought her over into the Industrial Cabinet of the National Christian Council centred in Shanghai,¹ or that the "Roots" who signed the cable was Bishop Roots of the American Episcopal Church, I consulted the Archbishop of Cape Town. He was able to give me valuable information, from which I inferred that I ought to agree to go, and said so. The reply of the Archbishop was "certainly." A cable favourable to the plan was despatched immediately, and this was followed later by one from Melbourne after receipt there of fuller information and after rapid planning-out of my movements in Australia and New Zealand.

It was consequently impossible for me to follow the

¹ See Chapter V. below.

plan which I had intended for industrial questions in these southern fields, namely, leisurely study while their conditions and prospects quietly unfolded themselves to my view—impossible because my presence and attendance at Commissions on Child Labour and Industrial Conditions, already in session in Shanghai, was urgently requested. It was good to be visiting Australia and New Zealand first, with their modern industrialised form of production and absence of any survivals of old forms of industry from the past. Enough was known, however, about the rapid incursion of modern methods of factory production into parts of China,—the still wide field of ancient and mediæval handicraft methods,—to enable one to infer that it was there that one could find clues to world problems of organisation of industry that could not be clearly grasped in Western countries, where the transition to industrialism has long since been practically complete. And, after my visit, it appeared to me unquestionable that it is in the Far East that, in spite of wars and political turmoil, a climax is being reached—possibly the critical turning-point—in the world process of development of the industry of mankind from the ancient hand tool form to that of the modern power-driven factory.

The prior opening up of world-wide markets which is the mainspring of the whole transition from domestic to factory industry—begun in Europe in the nineteenth century—is strikingly seen in China, the largest and most recently opened of great markets. There, too, the mutual interdependence of such world markets and the activities of modern labour may yet be most signally demonstrated.

I hoped, as I still hope, that there may ultimately be no definite break away from my original purpose of completing a British Empire study of industry and labour consequent on the unforeseen prolongation of my visit to China on my way from Australasia to India. And yet even before this industrial visit was completed, while I was at Hankow in June 1924, a communication reached me from England, from the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, inviting me

to serve on the British China Advisory Committee for the Indemnity Fund. After some consideration I accepted. While this led to interesting return visits, in 1926, to some of the centres first seen in 1923-24, it also occasioned unavoidable delay in completion of the later chapters on the outcome of my first mission to China.

I reached Australia while the Pan-Pacific Science Congress of 1923 was assembling in Melbourne and Sydney successively. Thereby my attention was definitely directed to a unity in human problems affecting the nations lying on the Pacific Ocean that had not been previously in my mind. Is it true that the Mediterranean Era, having long yielded pride of place to the Atlantic Era, in sea-power and economic factors, we may begin to look forward to a new phase and a yet greater Pacific Era? In that event may the very name be one of good omen for the whole world.

“The origins of all civilisation,” says Fenollosa truly in reference to Far Eastern Art, “are swallowed up in mystery.” Yet any normal human spirit, in newly approaching great living examples of the mystery of civilisation, does not fail to try to discover their meaning by the examination of outstanding features. Here, lying on the Pacific Ocean, we have the oldest surviving people and civilisation in the world, embracing, it is believed, the largest kindred population of any one nation. And this country, which in its greatest periods carried art into every industry, is the one that last of all has begun to enter on the modern international industrialised form of civilisation. Surely it cannot be without great significance that this Chinese people evolved “the only large form of world art that has combined in itself creative impulses” from the two ancient centres of world Art—Mesopotamian and Greek—on a substratum of archaic Pacific Art.¹ East and West may hitherto have found it difficult to meet and harmonise in the more mystical atmosphere of Hindustan. Chinese creative art, however, has shown the ancient power of this

¹ *Epochs of Chinese and Japanese Art*, by Ernest Fenollosa. Heinemann, 1921.

people to absorb and assimilate both—with original and beautiful results.

In China still may be seen the survival of mediæval economic and social conditions under which handicraft flowers into something akin to high art, even while, not far off, the factory system is growing and extending. In China only have I seen the intuitive skill of a craftsman at work, without plan or design before his eyes, carving a pattern (in wood) that, while decorative and conventionalised, yet grew under his hands. The power of the needle for decorative purposes in the hands of Chinese women is equally great. And in this country alone have I also seen a partially industrialised district—Nantungchow—where a coherent plan seems to have been at work for the development of secondary industry in relation to agriculture and land reclamation, aided by motor transport on modern roads.¹ This is an achievement that is the more noticeable in a land where even modern cotton mills are sometimes difficult of access by motor car, through lack of a properly constructed or well-kept road. In Nantungchow, where cotton is grown on reclaimed land, one can easily visit cotton seed oil mills, rice mills, cotton yarn-spinning and cotton cloth-weaving mills, conveniently adjacent to each other. And near by, also, handicraft training workshops may be seen, while the provision of schools and hospitals is accompanied by the development of charming gardens, a theatre, and a school of dramatic art.

The arrival at Hongkong, on November 23rd, rapidly led me on to varied surprises. Beauty I had heard would be found there, but had not realised the kind, nor the extent to which it is due to human activities transforming barren rocks and hills with homes and trees, and covering the indented sea with every kind of shipping that shone in a new beauty when nightfall brought out all their

¹ The author of this plan was Ex-minister Chang Chien, who died in 1926, all too soon, as many of China's leaders do. The average span of life is tragically short in China, owing (among other causes) to lack of national organisation of modern measures of scientific hygiene and safety.

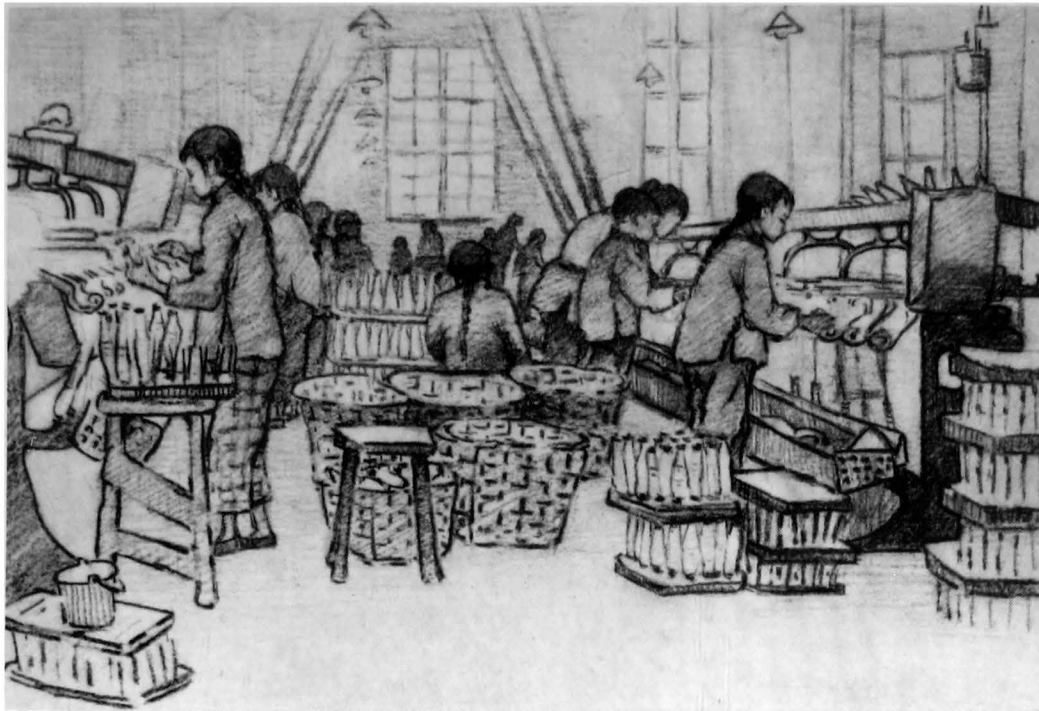
myriad twinkling lights. Nor did I know until after the s.s. "Tango Maru" had brought me up in the early morning light, past nearly barren islands, to the great port, how completely its foundation and development was due to its organisation by the Western nation which was the pioneer of the industrial revolution.¹ Before 1842 the island of Hongkong, I then learned, was, in its human activities as well as its physical features, much as are the neighbouring rocky islands at the present time. It was a matter of regret to me that circumstances hindered me, on both my visits to China, from visiting the Portuguese colony of Macao—another foreign port, historically interesting and of much earlier date, but which has ceased to play a significant part in the international contacts of China.

I might at first have found myself solitary amongst strangers, but help and friendship met me quicker than thought. I was in the hands of several persons, official and non-official, and of voluntary institutions, and there was much to show that things were moving in the Far East.

My opportunities for seeing what Hongkong was doing for child workers came from the Government through my host, the Hon. E. R. Halifax, Secretary for Chinese Affairs; the programme for disposal of my brief time before proceeding to Shanghai came from the representatives of the National Christian Council, including Miss K. Wu,² Local Secretary, Miss Elliott, Secretary to the Y.W.C.A. in Hongkong, and Miss Pitts, member of the Government Commission on Child Labour of 1921. I had to learn all that was possible before going on to Shanghai in time to attend the December meetings of the Child Labour Commission appointed by the Executive Council of the Foreign Settlement of Shanghai. On to this Municipal Commission I was co-opted as a member, with the goodwill of the National Christian Council who had called me to China; and for seven months the dates of its meetings punctuated

¹ In 1922-23 Hongkong was the largest port in the world in respect of tonnage of ships going in and out.

² Head of a fine secondary school for girls.



Original Drawing by

Miss A. M. Hotchkis

CHILDREN IN A COTTON SPINNING MILL—ANYWHERE IN CHINA

my movements and activities for the National Christian Council in visiting factories, lecturing on factory legislation and administration, and conferring with Chinese and foreign manufacturers, Chinese workers, and officials in widely scattered parts of China.

The first step necessary was to keep an engagement made for me by the N.C.C. to meet certain leaders in Canton. Canton, the great city at the head of the Delta, formed by the conjunction of the Sikiang, Peikiang, and Tungkiang (or West, North, and East Rivers), is the centre of the most thickly populated district of China, and the most fertile alluvial soil, yielding three crops a year and enormous quantities of raw silk. Here, too, is the largest Chinese centre of commerce and the one having the longest trading links with ports of the outside world; more ancient as a city than some of them and yet less ancient than great cities in the north of China.

“Before the age of machinery,” wrote Dr Sun Yat-Sen, “Canton for centuries was well known as an industrial centre of Eastern Asia.¹ The workmanship and handicraft of the people are still unequalled in many parts of the world. *If machinery be introduced in its industries*² under our international development scheme, Canton will soon regain its former grandeur as a great manufacturing centre. As a world port Canton is in a most advantageous position. . . . It is a pivot of inland water as well as ocean navigation in South China. . . . The landscape of the environment is exceptionally beautiful and charming. . . . It possesses three natural elements—deep water, high mountains, and vast extent of level land, which furnish facilities for an industrial centre, and provide, as well, natural scenery for the enjoyment of man.”

In spite of some misgivings expressed by the officials in Hongkong on account of unsettled conditions, I left for Canton, “according to plan,” by the night steamer

¹ See *The International Development of China*. G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1922, pp. 80 and 87.

² My italics.

up the Pearl River, on the very day of my arrival in Hongkong.

True, the army under General Chen Chiung-Ming, at that time investing Canton, had been just driven back some twenty miles by General Sun Yat-Sen's forces, and—so said rumour in Canton streets—was so far exhausted that they were not burying their dead. None the less, for a newcomer without a companion, there was a certain thrill in entering a beleaguered Chinese city—even though it was a Treaty-Port with a British Consul-General in residence to whom one had a personal letter of commendation—within twenty-four hours of arrival at Hongkong. The railway was cut, and the only approach was by (well-guarded) steamers. That entry should be made in such conditions into an ancient and great city like Canton, with all its historical memories, gave a fresh meaning to the reading of a book like the *Life of Sir Harry Parkes*. It also gave zest to the meeting, on my return three days later to Hongkong, with fellow passengers of the s.s. "Tango Maru" who had been warned off going to Canton and were eager for news of my visit. I could tell them that I had come and gone, and been round about the town and above and below it on the river in perfect peace and safety, never even having had to show my passport nor being asked to justify my entry or presence in any way. And yet, like them, I should not have gone but for the fact that a messenger of the National Christian Council had actually taken my ticket for the steamer to Canton.

Of course there were gunboats, and there were queer old ships with obsolete-looking cannon on the river, and opposite the Governor and Generalissimo Sun Yat-Sen's military residence there was an armoured cruiser. And there were small bodies of soldiers of his army and—so say my notes written at the time—of a Merchants' Guild self-defence force, much smarter. These latter moved about, mostly with fingers on the triggers of their revolvers. I saw no shooting, and except for these armed men and a few groups of impressed coolies waiting to be moved on, the

streets seemed as peaceful as the precincts of the British Consulate-General and other offices and residences on Shameen. These were in the foreign quarter, which was connected by bridge with the Bund or River front. Yet tragic events of the Civil War in Canton in the autumn of 1924 showed that quietness then reigned solely because the hour for the fighting and conflagration within the city had not yet struck.

My steamer arrived at the Bund about 6.30 a.m., and at 8 a.m. I was met there and taken up the river in a little motor-boat, flying the Stars and Stripes, to Paak Hok Tung by Miss Vaughn, an American citizen, Secretary to the Y.W.C.A. It took some time to reach the place, where, in a peaceful spot, in the residence of the Secretaries, in green country and within call of the Union Theological College and other Missionary institutions, the kindest hospitality was shown me. The landing stage was that of the Asiatic Petroleum Company. Other journeys on the river followed, first in a motor-boat flying the Union Jack, belonging to Messrs Butterfield & Swire, in which I was taken next day to the Generalissimo's residence to see Mrs Sun Yat-Sen; then in a native row-boat, moving in and out among junks, sampans, and malan tangs,¹ on the way to the Canton Christian College, which lies beyond the opposite end of Canton. Whatever the means of transport, the river seemed equally open and peaceable, and none were seen but friendly and often smiling faces. The Chinese boatman here, with his wife and children aboard, is among the most cheerful countenanced of persons I have met. The serried array of boats near the city, and the friendly, cheerful manner in which the boatman allowed passengers like ourselves to take our way across their boats between the steamer and the shore, was striking. Equally so was Miss Vaughn's confidence in moving about and communicating with these people.

And yet there was at that very time, except for the foreign-owned passenger steamers, a grave holding up of

¹ *I.e.*, broadly, the large, the medium, and the small watercraft.

river transport. It was difficult for an onlooker to see how many of the people were to live if the hold-up continued for very long; for ordinarily, the Delta is a hive of industry.

When, after breakfast, we returned to the city, I heard in a shop, babblers on the latest news of war which was being waged round the city, expressing views mutually contradictory on the net gain or loss of the two fighting forces. Some thought that Sun Yat-Sen was within a few days *at most* of having "run out his course"; others were clear that a decision was not yet in sight.¹ A year later (December 1924, a few months before these words were being written)—after wars and rumours of wars, between many war lords, in the Lower Yangtse regions and in the north, it was still credibly reported that General Chen Chiung-Ming had his advance guard not more than sixteen miles from Canton, at Sheklung, reputed to be the "key to Canton." In yet three months more Dr Sun Yat-Sen was resting ill in Tientsin on his way to a meeting with Marshal Tuan Chi-Jui at Peking, and Wen Shih-Tsen, a Chinese patriot, was also declaring that "only out of the masses can come the fundamental revolution which will end all the selfishness and chaos in China. . . . The people must come to realise that their apathy is responsible for it all. Even in China the people are not for ever dumb."

These later events and words are cited here at a point where they may seem irrelevant, because they may throw light on the bewildering surroundings and circumstances into which I was plunged. The flux of things in China (which was far less evident on the surface at that time in the Foreign Settlement of Shanghai) was immediately made manifest to me by this strange visit to Canton. So much so, that it began to dawn on me how gigantic was this affair into some of the folds of which I was being drawn. What did the recent political changes—which I supposed had been more or less settled by the Revolution of 1911-12

¹ For some account of the links between Sun Yat-Sen and his ex-General Chen Chiung-Ming, see *Western Civilisation and the Far East*, chapter v., "China in Travail," pp. 100, 105, and following, by S. King-Hall.

—amount to? How far had civil war subsided? Where was the real governing authority in China? In face of what I saw and heard, these were among the questions that necessarily presented themselves. There was as yet no possible reply; only a kind of echo, with another question to follow: The sleeping giant is awakening, what will come of it all?

After a pleasant visit to the Consul-General we called and saw Mr and Mrs Colin Forrest, at Messrs Butterfield & Swire's Office, who also gave me helpful information. Next came a visit to the Morrison Memorial Hall, the centre of Y.M.C.A. work, to confer with Mr Y. L. Lee of the N.C.C., who successfully organised our other movements and conferences.

Then came the lovely boating excursion along an arm of the river, past soft landscapes to a landing stage opposite a grey, picturesque village, close to the water's edge, where the people living in their homes in the malang tangs and sampans, on the river, and the people rooted in the soil seem to draw near to each other. Tiny as is the little home on the boat, it yet has its shrine; the household utensils are clean and neatly placed in a corner; and the look of contentment on the faces of the mother—who is assistant boatman as well as housewife—and of the children, may be traceable as much to the impossibility of giving house-room to many relatives as to the health-giving life in the open air, with shelter from the weather and the heat of the sun under the light, round arch of the roof of matting. It was a cheerful family such as this that brought us to the Canton Christian College landing-place, for lunch and a very brief review of the aims and curriculum of the College. Lychee trees fringe the river on the side of the College, and in the background on the other side is Paak Wen Shan—"White Cloud Mountain"—literally covered with graves, as Chinese mountains near towns often are.

I had very interesting talks with the American Dean and the Acting President, and with Mr George Hsu, Professor of Chinese and former Minister of Justice in

Dr Sun Yat-Sen's Cabinet of 1920, on the growth and aims of this College. Among its most active departments it included agriculture and horticulture, and it had recently opened another, of importance, for sericulture. A large proportion of the students in the College come from the secondary school, situated in the same wide grounds, and much is necessarily attempted that would find no place in college organisation in a country with more developed educational institutions. Model Chinese houses erected as residences for some of the Faculty were shown to me and struck me as both convenient and pleasant.

There was great liveliness on the Bund when we got back to the town. Streams of rickshas and motors with armed men and officers were flowing eastwards to the suburbs, and a sudden desire seized me to hasten for the night to the peace of Paak Hok Tung. On our arrival there, a note from Mr Lee met us to say that Mrs Sun Yat-Sen would like to receive me next day at 10 a.m., and that it was hoped that Dr Sun Yat-Sen would find it possible to be present. This was good news, for it was primarily the hope of a talk with this famous Chinese leader that brought me to Canton, and, as subsequent events proved, it was to be my only chance. When I came back this way from Shanghai to Hongkong on my way home to England, nearly a year later, it was impossible to revisit the place. And he died before I could return to China.

At eight o'clock in the morning of November 24th we came down the river from Paak Hok Tung, and in the midst of all the unfamiliar and picturesque sights that caught my eye on the way to Shameen, it was odd to notice the array of people, on junks and sampans and rafts, who were brushing their teeth! From Messrs Butterfield & Swire's, we went on in their launch, kindly lent for the occasion, farther down the Pearl River, to the Generalissimo's Residence, guarded in front by the armoured cruiser and supported in the rear by a large cement works.

The guards on the steps up from the river silently

passed us on to the guards in the outer court, who directed us to the house porter in his lodge, and he took our cards, asking in Chinese if Mrs Sun Yat-Sen knew we were coming. Miss Vaughn replied "Yes!" and that we came from the Y.W.C.A. He ejaculated—"Ah! Tsing Nin Ooi!" (interpreted to me as the "Green Year Association," which is its symbolic Chinese name) and ran off with our cards. When he returned, he took us across the court and we shortly found ourselves in a neat, plain and pleasant room on the second floor with palms, ferns, bookcases, periodicals and armchairs of European type, in fact, in a room that was not characteristically Chinese. Mrs Sun Yat-Sen came in with kindly welcoming words, a very dainty, brilliant and attractive person, small and young, in grey-blue Chinese silk coat and black silk skirt. "So glad you have come, we need you,"—and general talk followed. In a few minutes General Sun Yat-Sen, in khaki, came quickly with a light step and friendly looks into the room, and she said—"I want my husband to know you." Both spoke English very well.

About factory industry and conditions of labour he said presently, in reply to my enquiry, that nothing much in the way of reform could be attempted while disturbed conditions prevailed in the country.

A. M. A. "And when does Your Excellency hope that these will settle down?"

Dr Sun Yat-Sen. "As soon as England changes her foreign policy."

This surprised me very much, coming as I did into the country without any knowledge of its politics, and I asked: "What is that?"

Dr S. Y.-S. "They side always with the non-progressive element. I stand for progressive and good government, not Bolshevik nor extreme in any way. China cannot be extreme and is naturally conservative. England is really backing the corrupt old Mandarin Government in refusing to recognise anything but the Peking Government."

A. M. A. "How could England treat with any but the ostensible Central Government of the Republic of China?"

Dr S. Y.-S. "We have Civil War in China, and England should be neutral." He added that he would give an example in the Chinese Customs. After the Opium War, England, he said, had control of the Customs, the proceeds of which she gives to Peking; the present corrupt illegal Government there, he explained, uses it for the army which comes down to fight the South.¹ He further explained, in reply to my questions about the extent to which he desired control of the Customs, that what he wanted was the surplus of Customs from Kwangtung Province, after debts had been paid.

I pressed the question whether it would really be possible for any Power, a subject of which was administering the Customs, to divert part of the revenue locally to a Province, instead of the Central Government.

Dr S. Y.-S. "It is not a question of a Province but of a large part of China, probably more than half." His idea, he added, was that England's foreign policy was Lord Curzon's, not that of the British people as a whole; that "Chinese and English are alike, peace-loving, noble, fine."

I agreed that the British people are instinctively on the side of liberty, instancing their sympathy with America in the War of Independence, and asked if he had tried to get his case explained to British statesmen—could he mention any Englishman who understood his point of view?

Dr S. Y.-S. "One, Professor Giles of Cambridge." He then exclaimed that he did not and could not understand British policy, but he wondered "whether India had anything to do with it."

At this point, feeling nonplussed and very ignorant, I asked for literature, translated into English, to show me Chinese thoughts and point of view. Mrs Sun Yat-Sen here said there were articles published and she would try to get them for me. She rose, and offered me a copy of

¹ I was afterwards informed in Canton that General Chen Chiung-Ming, in command of the besieging army, had been appointed Governor of Kwangtung Province by Dr Sun Yat-Sen himself during the short time when he was President of the Republic of China.

her husband's book—*The International Development of China*—which I very gladly accepted, and he was so good as to write my name and his own in it.¹

Tea, made in the Chinese way and very delicious, had been brought in at the beginning, and Mrs Sun Yat-Sen a little later sent me a packet of it. After this friendly and very interesting visit it was the greater pleasure, in the following seven months, to learn to know (as one of my colleagues on the Child Labour Commission of Shanghai) her sister, Miss May-Ling Soong, another of those gifted Chinese women who have—with a Western education on which to build an intellectual bridge between us—the ability and power of character to do great things for their country, and a charm not surpassed by any women in the world that I have met. Although, in the circumstances of the time, the meeting did not lead to direct discussion of my special subject, labour conditions and industrial problems, it yet opened up trains of thought. Mrs Sun Yat-Sen accepted a copy, subsequently sent to her, of my book, *Women in the Factory*. She later wrote to me of the growth of the study of industrial welfare by the Kuomintang Party; and of work actually begun by them in that direction. Not even the wide-spread war which broke out in the end of August of the following year, spreading from Kiangsu and Chekiang Provinces—where contention was for the control of Shanghai—to Chihli and Manchuria, with issues that were largely obscure to Europeans, can damp my hopes for an ultimate spread of a movement for betterment of conditions of labour in China. The reasons for these hopes can only appear as this sketch proceeds. In Canton, in November 1923, I was only getting my first glimpses of some of the factors in a great drama, set on a stage almost as wide as that in Hardy's *Dynasts*.

The courteous and winning reception extended to me by the famous leader lost nothing of its personal effect through my lack of knowledge of China. In all the subsequent welter

¹ Some three years later came the publication of *China and the Nations*, by Wong Chung Hui, referred to above in my Introduction, page 3.

of fighting, that hardly seemed like civil war, one idea gained ground in my mind about him—the reality of the quality of sincerity that secured his sway over the minds of masses of his countrymen. His personality and his frankness convinced me of his disinterested aims for establishment of their liberty and well-being. One other point: I saw that he greatly desired understanding from the side of the British.

After these words were written came the news of his death on March 11th, 1925, and the certainty that he died a poor man. His hopeful and aspiring temperament can be seen in his book from which I have quoted, and also how far his plans outreached his own practical grasp. The new life given to his fundamental aims for his country by the Party basing themselves and their work upon them, “Nationalism, democracy and the livelihood of the people,” has been spoken of in my Introduction in Chapter I.

After the interview with the Generalissimo came my only opportunity, during this visit, for a slight personal excursion into the manufacturing side of one of the large export industries of Canton. We went, under guidance of Mr and Mrs Forrest, from one of the few broad streets, then recently opened out, up and down narrow unscavenged streets with open drains, past many small craft-shops, to the embroidery workshops of Messrs Hashim & Jackson. There, in an old Chinese house, decorated internally by interesting coloured reliefs, some three hundred women and girls were being instructed, under forewomen, in short courses of beautiful embroidery on lawn, crêpe de chine, satins and various silks—with the prospect of joining the considerable army of out-workers in the Delta.

Mrs Hashim, who directed this part of the business, told us that she had 10,000 out-workers on her list, and could still give work to as many more, when they had been sufficiently trained. Here, for the first time, I saw the many-coloured embroidering of crêpe de chine shawls, with long knotted fringes, which some fifteen years earlier I found largely in use in Spain. In that country no one of whom I

enquired could tell me where this embroidering was done, but here in Canton, said Mrs Hashim, the work began, and here it has held its own ground for generations. The love of the girls and women for their work, and for their kindly and beautiful mistress, was evident in their smiling welcome and affectionate looks and gestures towards her, as she moved through the rambling premises, explaining methods and processes to us. The workers are lodged and fed in the house while under tuition for about three weeks, and I caught glimpses of sleeping quarters, but was told that the women would not like us to go into them. Adults were in the majority, and young girls mostly over ten years of age, but there was a sprinkling of girls of eight or nine years, and one who could not have been older than six. All were unmistakably happy, and although the children were small and slight, they were a remarkable contrast in their eagerness to the children seen later in large numbers in the cotton factories and silk filatures of the industrialised districts in and around Shanghai. Earnings were said to average 35 to 40 silver cents a day. This seemed to me very low, but I learned in Shanghai that it was reckoned a fair wage for a young woman working twelve hours a day. Mrs Hashim warmly pressed me to return for fuller enquiry, and promised to help me in further study of Cantonese industries so soon as I should have time available.

After a restful luncheon with Mr and Mrs Forrest, Miss Vaughn took me to the Morrison Memorial Hall on the Bund for a meeting with a group of people, mostly Chinese, interested in social welfare, including employers and members of the N.C.C., and of both the two "Y's." All were anxious to hear of progress in Western factory regulation and to discuss plans for reform in factory conditions in China. It was an encouraging meeting with keen-minded people, and my first experience in the Far East of speaking through an interpreter, namely, Miss Yan Tsit Law, a teacher in the True Light Middle School for Girls, who was a member in 1921-2 of the China Educa-

tional Commission.¹ Provision for the education of children generally was acknowledged and stressed as the first and most pressing problem in connection with child workers in industry. And soon the difficulty of getting it provided in industrialised Greater Shanghai (Chinese and Foreign) loomed up before me as the main stumbling-block to reform of the evils of child labour in factories.²

A delightful sociable evening at Paak Hok Tung, when I met leaders of the Colleges and other Missionary Institutions, in the Y.W.C.A. Secretaries' residence, rounded off my too brief visit to Canton.

At 7 a.m. next day I left Paak Hok Tung, and the return voyage on the large river steamer "Heung Shan" began at 8 a.m. from the Bund below Shameen, ending at 3 p.m. at Hongkong. It was a lovely, dream-like progress,—even with armed guards and iron barriers on the upper deck—past exquisite landscapes that had been missed on the night journey up. It left with me an impression of Chinese pictures,—of hills, islands, trees, terraced fields,—lightly touched in with delicate yet firm strokes, showing how truly Chinese artists have interpreted their country.

Again on arrival I was welcomed by the three: Miss Wu, Miss Pitts and Miss Elliott, who had met me on the "Tango Maru" three days earlier. They took me for the lovely drive round the island, stopping for tea at Repulse Bay, and then handed me over to my host, who was not only Secretary for Chinese Affairs in Hongkong, but also the official "Protector of Juvenile Labour," under the Industrial Employment of Children Ordinance of January 1923. With him that evening I had a long instructive conference on the industrial conditions of the Colony and the progress made,

¹ That was an Educational Commission representing the Christian Mission Boards and Societies conducting work in China. Their Report was published in 1922 under the title *Christian Education in China* (Foreign Missions Conference of North America, N.Y., 1922). It appears to have had considerable effect in awakening Chinese educational leaders to the extent of foreign missionary education in China.

² See below, Chapters IV. and VI.

through regulations and inspection under the Ordinance, in securing protection for children industrially employed between the ages of ten and fifteen years.

Since this British Crown Colony is the only place within the sea and land confines of China where (1923-7) there is State protection in force for employed Chinese children, it is necessary in the following chapter to give particular attention to the scope of the Ordinance and Regulations which brought the protection into effect.

CHAPTER III

HONGKONG AND THE PROTECTION OF CHILD WORKERS IN INDUSTRY

“China should learn from the West their experience of Labour Legislation as well as keep her old virtues.”—*Letter of a Chinese Christian Priest.*

FROM the nature of its position as a British world port on the threshold of the Republic of China, having little ground for agriculture—the immemorial occupation of the majority of Chinese working people—Hongkong would appear to have been marked out for two great things in relation to China's entry into modern industrial development.

These I believe to be, first, sound and wise development of the secondary industries that naturally grow up in a centre of world commerce; and secondly, the establishment of the factories on sound lines giving full play to good conditions of labour which would at the same time serve as an illustration to the mainland of the essential part played by such conditions in mass production for world markets. The good conditions should include modern hygiene of the workplace, safety for the worker from accidental injury, protection by limitation of hours of the strength and welfare of the worker, and exclusion of young children from power-driven industry.

In the Western world it was discovered during the nineteenth century that the factory system, based on applied science and use of mechanical power with highly developed machinery, called for national regulation and trained inspection. Only in the twentieth century did the truth begin to be widely realised that the human element, not the power machine, is always the economic fundamental in manufacture.¹

¹ See *My Life and Work*, Henry Ford. Introduction.

The first legislative steps—British people may be thankful for it—actually taken in the Far East for protection of Chinese workers in factories were taken by the Government of Hongkong, not by the International Settlement of Shanghai.

Hongkong entered on its life as a British Crown Colony in 1842, on a desolate island with a few poor fishermen as inhabitants. It has grown through trade, steadily developed as China increasingly accepted foreign intercourse, into the place of scenic beauty that it is under British administration. The *China Year Book* of 1924-5 tells us that its trade "now stands at about 200 million pounds sterling per annum." This was before the great troublous strike and following boycott that began in 1925—the effect of which on the revenue, however, was declared by the Colonial Secretary at the introduction of the budget in October, 1926, to be under 10 per cent. The decennial census of 1921 showed that the population of the Colony was then 625,166, and that it was 36.87 per cent higher than in 1911. Nearly 98 per cent were Chinese.

The island is one of a group, closely clustered, and not the largest of them. The others remain largely uninhabited, whereas Hongkong has become densely populated since it came under British rule. The increasing prosperity of the town has drawn increasing immigration, and great difficulties of housing and very serious overcrowding have ensued.¹

The first overt step towards Governmental regulation of conditions of labour in industry was taken on 24th March 1921, when the Governor of Hongkong in Council appointed a Commission of Enquiry to report and make recommendations to him on the Industrial Employment of Children. This followed a public agitation on behalf of the young child workers, who were employed in factories, for long hours and on night shifts, and in various injurious ways—of which none were more arresting to European observers than the employment of boys in glass-making,

¹ See Report on Prevalence of Epidemic Diseases, etc., by Dr Norman White; League of Nations Health Committee, Geneva, 1923.

and of boys and girls in heavy weight-carrying on works of construction. In Hongkong, as in the larger industrial centre of Shanghai (in spite of all Western experience and knowledge of the dangers to child life inherent in modern industrial production), the "factory system" was seen to be growing up without provision for the protection of those who were totally unable to help themselves. This was inevitable until public opinion and the Government moved. For the employers in Hongkong were mainly Chinese, and were living under the same customs and traditions as were the workers and parents on the mainland with regard to child labour in the unregulated work of the domestic system of industry.

The dangers of non-intervention by Government were greater in the Far East than even in Great Britain over a century ago. This was so because the factory system, being fully grown and equipped, was certain to develop rapidly when once introduced into regions with practically inexhaustible supplies of labour; and because the labourers, so innumerable and so poor, offered their services in an island adjacent to a land of ancient customs where children were everywhere set to work at an early age in handicraft and in agriculture, and women were far more dependent than in the West. Young girls, moreover, were widely utilised in a system of domestic service barely distinguishable from slavery, even though slavery be in name contrary to Chinese law.¹ More rather than less control was really needed to protect them from dangerous exploitation when used as adjuncts to power-driven machinery and from risks (that were certain to arise) of injurious dusts, fumes and the strain of excessively long hours.

As in England, in 1784, when the Justices of Lancashire appointed a medical commission of enquiry into outbreaks of infectious illness among apprentices in mills, so in this outpost of China in 1921, when the first Governmental enquiry was made into this matter, the evils had again to be seen in actual operation before practical wisdom could be applied to measures for their prevention.

¹ See below, Chapter VI., pp. 146-7.

The Commission got rapidly to work, the members being representative of official life, the medical profession, and voluntary social welfare efforts, as well as of Chinese manufacturers. The terms of reference were, that enquiry should be conducted by the Commissioners into the conditions of the industrial employment of children in Hongkong and into the desirability and feasibility of legislation for the regulation of such employment. They were to report their findings and recommendations at as early a date as possible. At their first meeting the Commission took sixteen years of age by Chinese calculation (say, fifteen years by Western methods)¹ as the limit of childhood, and ruled out all enquiry with regard to agricultural or domestic labour, as being outside the scope of industrial and factory work. Evidence was taken from representatives of factories, and some twenty factories were inspected by the Commissioners. Through their personal visits they learned that the number of children employed was larger than was shown in the oral evidence, and that the casual nature of much employment of the children made accurate estimate of its real extent difficult.

Their general conclusions show the hours at that time to be universally excessive, seldom less than 70 hours a week, and that girls, who are largely employed in knitting, tobacco, food industries (*e.g.*, biscuit-making, and ginger and fruit preserving) and packing departments, were often working $13\frac{3}{4}$ hours for thirteen successive days followed by a day's rest. Thus in alternate weeks they worked $96\frac{1}{2}$ and $82\frac{1}{2}$ hours, and on night shifts alternately with day shifts where night work was practised. In the few cases where wages were paid by time, the earnings would be 12 cents a day, but piece rates would bring girls 30 cents a day or more,—sometimes, however, reduced by deductions for fines. Odd job work was given to children admitted on the request of their mothers, and many employers said that the employment of children was more in deference

¹ For explanation of the differing methods of calculation see page 134, footnote 1.

to wishes of parents than for economic benefit to themselves. The Commission remarked on the general absence of training by apprenticeship, and the entire lack of organisation to secure a flow of workers from one industry to another, while children on attaining sixteen years were liable to be replaced by younger workers. Since there was keen competition for places, there would be little chance for children whose health had been adversely affected by their work. The Commission showed the nearly universal absence of amenities for welfare, such as washing appliances, eating or rest rooms, and found only one factory in which a school for young children was organised to which mothers might bring them for safety during their own working hours. Arrangements for medical attention in case of accidents were "of the scantiest."

Labour conditions for the numerous boys employed in glassworks were pronounced "thoroughly bad." The proportion of boys to men was so high that they could not be regarded—as they were alleged to be—as apprentices to the trade, and from their general appearance "it seemed unlikely that they would all live long enough or be healthy enough to take men's work." The sanitary conditions were unhealthy, the temperature was raised by the heat of the furnaces to an injuriously high level, the air was vitiated by gases and filled with floating particles of glass. Naturally the physique of the workers was found to be poor. The remuneration of these unfortunate children, it appeared, was one dollar a month in addition to food and lodging, for hours that extended from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m. with three or four short pauses for meals. Happily the outcome of this part of the enquiry was the total exclusion of children up to fifteen years (European reckoning) from the occupation.

In the larger engineering works where boys were genuine apprentices, employed directly by the companies, they were of good physique, worked reasonable hours, and things were well with them, because they had every chance of becoming skilled workmen. In the rougher and unskilled

work the boys were recruited by sub-contractors, *e.g.* in boiler chipping; there the strain was pronounced too great for those under fifteen years, notwithstanding the plea of employers that adults were too large to enter the manholes. As in the case of little chimney-sweeps long ago in England, the final exclusion of the child from such usage had to be met by the adaptation of the apparatus to older workers, and we may believe that the change was sustained by the traders with equal benefit to the trade.

The sub-contracting system for recruitment of all classes of unskilled labour—in vogue in Hongkong (as it is also generally in Treaty Ports, the International Settlement of Shanghai and elsewhere in China)—was generally condemned by the Commission. They declared it to be “a potent influence in depressing the standard of living” of the workers, and they added that “while the system continues, the Colony’s labour cannot be expected to be in a satisfactory condition, but as it affects adults even more widely than children, we would exceed the terms of our reference if we made any recommendations in regard to it.”

Another observation of wide social and economic bearing in China was made by the Commission with reference to the immigration into the Colony of many children from the interior of China, at the instance of relatives already at work in the factories. They traced this movement to “the existence of considerable financial inducements,” remarking that “if the right kind of economic inducement is held out to the people in the interior a more desirable type of labourer could be secured.” The allusion seems somewhat cryptic. Probably it means that a wage which is attractive for children would need to be raised to attract young persons and adults.

The Commission gave much consideration to the question of education. They found it impossible to reach any unanimous conclusion on the feasibility of requiring compulsory education as an aid to the gradual exclusion of young workers from employment in factories. The difficulty of providing school accommodation and of securing

adequate teaching staff and inspection are, as they said, real. "At the same time the opinion may be hazarded that they are inherent in every scheme of compulsory education, and that as they have been overcome in other countries they could, if the community had the will to do so, be overcome in Hongkong."

The financial difficulties of making a beginning in the educational field no doubt grow inherently greater in such places as the Foreign Settlement of Shanghai and the British Crown Colony of Hongkong as the size of the problem grows. Growth of competition tends, in various parts of China, to reduce the initial high profits of manufacturers if one may judge from the history of individual factories. No doubt the new system of industry grew up, here as elsewhere, before the Colony was quite aware of it, and we should remember that the majority of the employers are Chinese. The longer a beginning is delayed the worse the conditions to be remedied, and the more unescapable becomes the social obligation on the manufacturers and the community for finding a solution. As one of the Commissioners, the Rev. H. R. Wells, suggested, in an interesting memorandum included as an appendix to the Report, the worst difficulties can be overcome by degrees. Even the task of training one thousand additional teachers, which it was estimated would be needed, could be accomplished, he said, through "patience and perseverance." "The work need not wait on this account, as teachers could be trained as they are at present, while doing their work, perhaps in evening classes." It might even be possible to "find trustworthy bodies willing to undertake the work under the control of the Education Department." An examination into the state of affairs in regard to the children certainly revealed, Mr H. R. Wells said, the fact that child labour was "being exploited far beyond what should be allowed in a modern city." Of this I personally still saw evidence when I came to Hongkong, eleven months after the enacting of the Ordinance and Regulations affecting employment of children, which

followed on the Report of the Commission, and after their application by capable administrators. Time is needed to overcome such evils when they have become established; and yet under modern industry, as Mr Wells said: "An educated people will progress, an uneducated people will deteriorate. It is very evident that there is not adequate provision for education . . . because children swarm in our streets." Although compulsory elementary education is not attained in Canton or elsewhere in China, he said, "many Chinese are ready for such a movement. . . . Hongkong cannot afford to be behindhand in such a matter."¹

All the definite recommendations of the Commission save one—that relating to provision by employers of welfare arrangements, first aid and approved sanitary conveniences—were covered by the new law. The Commission made it clear that their proposals as to age of entry and limitation of hours for children were put forward solely as a first step, to meet difficult circumstances and to open the way to gradual advance. So far as the difficult problem of regulating casual labour is concerned, they gave expression to the view that the conditions of the women, who came from the poorest people, with no fixed abode, was even worse than that of the children. The wasteful overstrain of human physique by muscular effort (of men and women as much as of young workers) in the lifting, dragging and carrying of great loads that is to be seen in any great industrial centre, in other parts on the mainland of China, as well as in Hongkong, can surely—as these Commissioners said—be met by steady development of mechanical transport. The presence of poverty-stricken multitudes seeking to avert starvation by blind effort is no defence of a failure of leadership in this matter. Those very willing workers are capable of far better economic service to their fellow-men, and the loss and waste affect the well-being of all, onlookers as well as the burden-bearers.

¹ See *Report of the Commission on Industrial Employment of Children in Hongkong*, 27th October 1921. Appendix 2, pp. 17 and 18.

The scope and effect of the Ordinance and Regulations may be summed up as a whole :—They cover only children up to the age of fifteen years (by Western reckoning), and they apply in the following instances and undertakings—any trade or occupation whatsoever, declared or to be declared in regulations as a dangerous trade ; factories which employ at least ten persons in manual labour ; industrial undertakings, such as mines and quarries and any extraction of minerals, shipbuilding, generation, transformation and transmission of electricity or other motive power ; works of construction, repair, demolition, etc., of buildings, railways, tramways, docks, harbours ; telegraphic and telephonic installation, electrical undertakings, gas and water works and other works of construction, including the laying of foundations of any such work or structure ; transport of persons, goods, materials and débris. They do not apply to any agricultural operation.

The Governor is empowered to appoint Inspectors and a Protector of Juvenile Labour for the purposes of the Ordinance. He is further empowered in Council to make regulations declaring trades to be dangerous, prescribing the age of entry for children in particular trades and occupations, and the conditions under which they may be employed ; imposing obligations upon employers of children under the law, defining the duties and powers of the Protector and Inspectors, and generally making provision for the carrying into effect of the Ordinance. The Ordinance gives to the Protector and any Inspector the right of entry and search into any place covered by the law, and imposes a co-relative obligation on the employer to furnish the necessary facilities and to supply all information in his possession with reference to the labour conditions and treatment of any children employed by him.

In various ways the law, within its restricted scope, appears to be ably and effectually planned. Thus the serious difficulty of establishing any proof of the age of a child, which arises owing to the absence of simple birth registration in China, is met by providing, in case of prose-

cution by the Inspector, that, until the contrary is proved, the person who is the subject of the charge is assumed to be a child, or under a particular age, if it so appears to the magistrate.

Boiler-chipping, manufacture of fireworks and glass-making are declared by the Regulations to be dangerous trades, and no person may employ any child in them. No person may employ any child under ten years in a factory, nor under twelve years in carrying coal, building material, or débris. The owner and manager of every factory is required to keep a running record, with prompt and accurate entries, of every child employed therein, with prescribed details as to name, age, sex, nature of employment, and actual hours of work on every day of employment, and the name and address of the parent or guardian of the child.

The hours and periods of employment are so regulated that no child may be employed in any industrial undertaking between 7 p.m. and 7 a.m., nor for more than nine hours in any period of twenty-four hours; no child may be employed for more than five hours continuously, and the interval between any such spell and the next shall be not less than one hour, while the interval after any spell of shorter duration shall be of reasonable length, having regard to all the circumstances; one day's rest in every seven shall be allowed to every child.

Finally, no child shall be allowed to carry any weight which is unreasonably heavy, having regard to the child's age and physical development; and no child whatever shall be allowed to carry any load exceeding 40 catties (53.20 lbs.) in weight.

No attempt was made to regulate general conditions of health and safety, such as proper lighting, ventilation, and periodical cleaning of the factories, use of exhaust or mechanical extraction for dust, gas or fumes generated in manufacture, provision of guards and fences for dangerous machinery and mill-gearing, requirement of sufficient and suitable sanitary conveniences. All these matters, which came within the scope of Western factory law in conse-

quence of the progressive application of science, are self-evidently needing attention in Hongkong factories, as in factories in any other part of the world where they are not already under full control by a technically trained Inspectorate. In Hongkong there is the good Inspectorate, but in this direction of health and safety appliances, legal provision was not yet made at the time of my visit, and much unfenced machinery, some excessive dust, and sanitary conveniences that were very insanitary, were by no means absent. Provision has now been made for notification of accidents and for their prevention by proper safeguards, in an Ordinance dated April 1, 1927, and Regulations thereunder, by the Governor in Council, dated 14th April 1927.¹

What had been attempted and was being well carried out in 1923 was the big, necessary, first step, in exclusion of the very young child from factory industry generally, and the total exclusion of children from dangerous processes—some absolutely, others to be added as their dangers appear; exclusion of the child under fifteen years from night work, and from excessively long periods and spells of work; protection of children from overloading with weight carrying.

Thus slowly, in a small community in the Far East—beginning, as in England over a century ago, with children alone—steps are taken to arrive at reasonable control of conditions of entry into, and work in, factories. In a British Crown Colony, with a trade of 200 million pounds sterling per annum, we might, indeed we must, expect and press for a steady advance onward—if without haste yet without rest—until there is full realisation in law and administration of the standards of the International Conventions first set up at Washington in 1919. These will include presumably at least the exclusion of all young workers under eighteen years from night-work, and their exclusion from dangerous or injurious processes; raising the age of entry for children into factories at least to twelve years, and the establishment of a daily and weekly

¹ See Appendix I, below, pp. 270-1.

period of employment no greater than is agreed to in Japan or India. We should also certainly expect that modern scientific requirements in matters of health, sanitation, dust extraction, and safety in structural conditions and fencing, should in due time be as fully applied in Hongkong factories as in British. Chinese workers, adult as well as children, are physically no less susceptible than Europeans to injury from impure air, dangerous dusts, and unguarded machinery; and industries as well as workers need these precautions for sound development. Advances were necessarily delayed by political troubles such as those of 1925-26; they have begun in 1927.

The position of the Government of Hongkong in legislating for and administering valuable preventive measures, such as these, is far simpler than the position of the industrialised foreign settlements and concessions on the mainland of China.¹ It is a matter of common-sense expediency that all communities in the Far East that are largely British, and, above all, those that are governed under the British Flag, should stand in every possible way for the principle of safeguarding human health and safety in factory production by requirements that are relatively no less stringent in these matters than are enforced in our home factories. The economic difficulty that stands in the way of requiring equal limits of hours—where the pace of the workers is slower as yet than the European pace—does not arise in the same degree with regard to sanitary and safety clauses. The gain of building up provision for education will accrue—just as the improved health of the worker will—to the manufacturers and industries no less than to the workers, in having available, in time, an adequately educated body of workers.

Not to speak more of the great value to China of having at hand an illustration of a good scheme of primary education for industrial Chinese child workers, can any gain come to Great Britain through production in this Colony by factories working for world markets, in competition

¹ See especially Chapters IV. and VI.

with Great Britain, unless these factories are built up on fundamentally similar expenditure for the human welfare of the workers? An answer to this question may be seen in the words of the Prime Minister and former Labour Minister of Canada, the Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King, C.M.G.: "The well-being of the workers in one part of the world is bound up with the well-being of workers everywhere, and the maintenance of labour standards in any one country comes sooner or later to depend upon their extension in some measure to all."¹

At the time of my visit, women were employed in 80, and children in 21 of the registered total of 243 factories. The number of women and young workers employed in them was over 10,200, the children being employed chiefly in knitting, tobacco and biscuit factories, in addition to those employed in carrying occupations. It is impossible to state exactly the number of children, owing to the casual nature of much of their employment, but certainly many more women than children were then employed. The average size of the factories is much smaller than in the more industrialised centres of Shanghai and Wusih.

I visited several hosiery knitting factories, of which the largest employed, in two buildings respectively, 600 and 400 persons; a large tobacco factory, with many young workers; a biscuit and sweet confectionery factory; a tin-foil factory; two ginger- and fruit-preserving works; and a feather-sorting works. Unguarded engines and dynamos, entirely unfenced underbench shafting, and largely unfenced machines were the general rule, even in a factory where artificial lighting was in parts necessary during hours of full daylight. In one factory I saw good attempts being made at the fencing of transmission machinery, showing that there is a possibility of some leadership by employers in this important direction, even while there is no encouragement except the persuasive advice of the Inspector of Factories. Dust was excessive in "teazle-

¹ See his *Industry and Humanity: a Study of the Principles underlying Industrial Reconstruction*.

brushing”¹ by power-machines that are not hooded and fitted with exhaust ventilation such as is required in Great Britain for these machines; in feather-sorting where nothing but installation of mechanical appliances for doing the work could adequately allay the injurious and obnoxious dust; and dust was present, though in a far less degree, in the beating out of tin-foil. I did not visit any glass factories, as employment in them of boys under fifteen years had ceased. Overcrowding of machinery and of the girl operators (to such a degree that there was practically no room for seating) was noticeable in a factory where there was also great heat from drying stoves. In such places not only is there no rest room where a girl unavoidably suffering from her work (done standing, and in heat) could get restoration by even a brief change of posture; there is, further, not even fairly suitable provision of sanitary arrangements, judged, not by Western, but by the best Chinese standards that I have seen in the Yangtse region.

It was decidedly interesting to see the manufacture of thick, woollen, machine-knitted coats, for use in the far north of China, making a very good substitute for the bulky padded cotton garments that are so widely used in Chinese winter-time by the poor masses. Also it was interesting to learn about the actual manufacture of the preserved ginger that is not the least useful and highly appreciated of Chinese products used in the West and the rest of the world.

All the factories I inspected—either with the capable factory inspectors working under direction of the Government Protector of Juvenile Labour, or with the voluntary workers mentioned above—were Chinese, and carried on under Chinese names and management. In one of the

¹ *I.e.* a finishing process in which the nap of worsted hosiery is raised and softened by teazles. It produces excessive dust of broken, powdery wool and cotton fibre, causing great discomfort in eyes and choking sensations in throat and chest. The application in England of exhaust ventilation removed the trouble and also saved useful material that can, in England, be re-sold as a by-product.

largest I specially observed that the Chinese manager (who had studied at Leeds and Manchester Universities) was an enthusiast for improved methods of production, and was introducing new American machinery for rapid drying and pressing processes. In the adjoining factory, under the same firm, a member, who had studied engineering at the University of Cambridge, was both able and willing to discuss industrial problems of safety and welfare with zest and interest. It is to be hoped that the still young University of Hongkong, with its important Faculty of Engineering, will in due time develop a large human outlook in its graduates who pass out from it into industrial life. Their help should become available for town planning and the improved housing needed in an overcrowded city with a serious prevalence of tubercular disease. The relationship, through the world-wide development of modern industry, of industrial welfare management to Government regulation of industry and to civilisation, should in some degree be made evident to University-trained engineers here, as it has begun to be in British Universities, *e.g.* in London, Manchester and Bristol.

It is certain that under normal conditions there is a good field in Hongkong, while rapidly expanding in its shipping and dockyard facilities, for a forward movement in industrial welfare. There are not a few Chinese, including employers and students, as well as Y.M.C.A. members and secretaries, who are ready for knowledge and encouragement in this direction. Following my factory visits, at a small meeting at the Y.W.C.A. office which I was invited to address on the Factory System and Factory Laws, I was impressed by the questions of a Chinese employer who had searchings of conscience about the fact that he employed women workers in his factory. He was manifestly relieved when I assured him of my own belief that, provided the conditions were sound and good, and the hours of employment reasonable, it was a good thing, socially and economically, to open up to Chinese women

new avenues of employment and opportunities for earning fair and just wages.

A great part has been played in China and Japan by the two "Y's"¹ in the awakening of social and moral ideas in relation to industrial developments. In this field their work has been carried on with greatly enhanced effect by the National Christian Council of China, which drew their support from 1922 and brought their representatives into its Industrial Committee, formed in 1923. There will be more to say later of that movement, and of the part played by the Y.W.C.A. secretaries, for years before 1923, in arousing public sympathy for the application of national remedies to the evils that accompany the absorption of women and children into unregulated factory industry.² The international scope of the Y.W.C.A. and the inter-racial sympathies of its secretaries were first made apparent to me in Hongkong and Canton. There, too, I began to see what their ready and whole-hearted support would mean in the work I was to attempt for the National Christian Council over this immense country.

In the evening next after my return to Hongkong from Canton came my first introduction, by my friend Miss Wu, to a large Chinese festivity: a golden wedding day celebration in her family—attended by over a thousand guests, including members of the family of all ages and several generations, with their family servants in the immediate background. It took place at a large Chinese restaurant and was a gay and brilliant gathering and supper party, drawing one right into it, no less by the courteous greetings and the lovely colouring of dress and decorations than by its human significance. With friendly hospitality I was first set down—with a plentiful supply of melon seeds—in front of a most interesting puppet-show, accompanied by ancient Chinese music. I felt I could have learnt much of the history of the peoples of China if I could have sat on for long watching that charming endless play, about stately ladies and stout warriors in wonderful dresses,

¹ Y.W.C.A. and Y.M.C.A.

² See Chapters IV. and V.

expressing the story largely by means of conventionalised movements. Supper began, it seemed, almost too soon, and yet in that began another phase of the picturesque story of China, in which my kind sponsor for entry was the eager interpreter of all its meaning.

Beginning one's acquaintance with the gentle art of eating by means of chopsticks, at a great feast of seemingly endless courses and delicacies, is really a good plan. It is at once evident that in spite of any failures to convey particular morsels to the mouth one will rise well satisfied before the end of the meal. This inspires confidence, and consequently yields some success in using the implements at a meal that to a novice seems a feast of titbits. A special beverage for the few foreigners was offered in a delicate sherry in lieu of the more potent rice wine. And this ceremony of offering wine was transformed into a thing of gracious significance by a visit, for that rite, to each of the many table groups, by the daughters-in-law of the family. A little later came the visit to each table of the golden-wedding pair. An extraordinary cannonade of fire-crackers went on for a very long time in the street below. Fire-crackers in England, however delightful to the children, seem to be associated chiefly with the defeat of a conspiracy; in China fire-crackers symbolise also joy, but chiefly in connection with family and social festivities, and greetings and farewells to guests.

Next day I met the higher officials of the Colony at the very pleasant luncheon party given by His Excellency the Governor, with whom I had a valued opportunity for discussing factory conditions and the objects of my visit to China. My last festivity in Hongkong was also British—a delightful dinner party given by Mr and Mrs Edkin, at Taikoo on the Peak, where, in order to help me make friends with the representative company present, the ladies of the party moved round the table between each course to the next seat but one. I began on the right hand of my host and ended on his left, at which moment a toast was proposed of success to my "Mission in China"

and carried heartily,—to my great encouragement. The Bishop of Victoria being present, and showing his knowledge of the purpose of that “Mission,” enabled me to see again how a new chapter in the history of Factory Reform might be opening in the Far East, quite different in its human significance from any that had gone before, for this reason that the Reformed Christian Churches in China were united in an effort to stir and enlighten public opinion on some of the fundamental questions for modern factory industry.

Some of these questions are:—How can it be secured that the conditions in Chinese factories shall be made fit and adequate for the human labourers, whose well-being, economically and socially, is even more indispensable to successful production than the most perfect machinery? How can they avert a further development of an unhumanised, morally unregulated condition of factory labour that eventually may, if it remains uncontrolled among the millions of China, lead to economic upheaval for the world? And, as a first step to these things, what can be done to remove young child workers out of the (for them) improper surroundings of the factories and into the schools, to train them for their future life as citizens in an industrialised world?

Next day I left Hongkong for the greatest industrial district in China—Shanghai.

CHAPTER IV

COMING UP TO THE FOREIGN SETTLEMENT OF SHANGHAI; EARLY EXPERIENCES

“*Jen* (love) means this: Go out as if you were ushering an honourable guest. . . . Do not give what you do not want yourself.”—CONFUCIUS.

THUS far was but the prologue, though a closely packed experience of altogether six days, in un-industrialised Canton and the great port of Hongkong.

The latest stage of my long voyage, on a fine C.P.R. “Empress” steamer, was a restful interlude of two and a half days before passing into the main field of work to which I had been drawn. It brought me straight to the real centre of Chinese modern power-driven industry, to a city so intimately allied to water that much of it is built upon piles—even at a distance from its wharves and jetties. There, in the very operation of driving the piles into the loosely knit soil (formed of river silt), one can see the on-coming of large-scale industry.

Of noisy, fast-repeated sounds in Shanghai—the city fronted by large buildings which may be well seen in the photograph reproduced in Plate III,¹—none are more overpowering than pile-driving by mechanical power. Each stroke of the great hammer seems to threaten the stability of the nearest buildings if one lives in one of them. More musical and less disturbing is the older, rhythmical, pile-driving by grouped man-power, raising and dropping a huge wooden pestle or stone by pulleys and bamboo ropes, to the accompaniment of enheartening chanties. And yet more musical sounds fall on the ear when, sometimes, the noise of the mechanical pile-drivers ceases at nightfall.

¹ Facing p. 70. Here published by kind permission of Mr O. M. Green, Editor of the *North China Daily News*.



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THE BUND, SHANGHAI

Among these survives my "after memory" of a street-vendor's appealing notes, produced in rhythmically alternating intervals by means of skilful strokes on a piece of metal of ancient form.

I left Hongkong in the morning of November 29th and reached the Customs Jetty, Shanghai, as evening closed in on December 1st, 1923. The temperature grew steadily colder as we came north-eastward, but the warmth of farewells at the former port and of the welcoming greetings at the latter port sustained the mood of wonder and expectancy aroused by the world wanderings so wide and varied as those faintly sketched in the second chapter. For they ranged between longitude 20° west and 180° east, and between latitude 40° south and 30° north of the equator.

Thoughts readily sprang up on this voyage, of personal and official experiences in the past (chiefly as a British factory inspector during twenty-seven years), which brought me onward to my present task. These thoughts blended with anticipations of issues to be disclosed when the new work began. Those experiences in their own day seemed somewhat adventurous to the women officers who, between 1893 and the Great War, lived through various stages of factory legislation, from its early preventive to its more constructive modern phase.

After all those years, a new and larger "adventure" was now opening in China—a land of age-old industrial habits broadly based on the main occupation, agriculture, and with a people nearly ten times as numerous as that of Great Britain. Already Chinese and foreign societies were bestirring themselves to try to solve a few of the complex issues opened by the transformation of a nation's productive industry from a handicraft to a power-machine basis, and an appeal was voluntarily made for the aid and counsel of trained administrators of Western experience. —

The impetus to the changed basis of industry, which first of all began in our island in North-West Europe with a few million inhabitants, towards the end of the

eighteenth century—after spreading over and transforming Europe and America, socially and economically—had at last “arrived” among the hundreds of millions of Chinese. The products of the system, as distinct from the system itself, had doubtless first entered as they had in India, thus already beginning the transformation of economic life.¹ In China not only political conditions but equally the universal distribution of highly capable, skilled and patient labour had kept the great change in mode of manufacture at bay until the beginning of the twentieth century. Beautiful handicraft (varying widely according to locality), and everywhere almost unimaginably laborious human toil in transport and works of construction, still are prevalent in every city and many villages of the immense land.

The health, safety and welfare of its own labouring people have always been a matter of infinite consequence to each country, although too little considered by governments of the past. These things for Chinese workers under the factory system, especially if the system should spread rapidly, are a question of infinite importance to the whole world, because of the enormous numbers and incalculable potential output involved. It seems a mercy for China and mankind—if the opportunity can be seized—that this change should arrive after much trial of the system, under various phases of regulation, in Western lands, and finally, since 1919, under the influence of International Conventions for “securing and maintaining fair and humane conditions of labour.” The formation of an International Labour Office which makes available the pooled experience and scientific knowledge of the industrialised countries opens for China potential advantages that none of these countries could command when their industrial revolution began in the last century.

It is open to a unified China, for example, to learn

¹ For confirmation of this surmise, see *China Year Book for 1924*, pp. 670 and following. Edited by H. G. W. Woodhead, C.B.E. Tientsin Press.

without trying-out in ignorance, through bitter lessons, the effect in power-driven industry of indiscriminating employment of children at the power-driven machines; of excessive hours of employment at mechanical work, especially for young workers and women; of dangerous dusts and fumes and use of poisonous materials, without control, and of use of dangerous unguarded machinery. And they can know, in advance of driving necessity, the value of medical care of physical fitness in the workers who are admitted into the factories. Yet in the absence of all political unity little indeed has been grasped, in practice as distinct from paper theory.

Before my arrival I had read accounts by Chinese observers with European experience, *e.g.* Miss Zung Wei-Tsung and Mr M. T. Tchou, of serious evils going unchecked, and of individual and group endeavours to bring about better conditions. I had gathered, what was also confirmed more strongly after my arrival, that many Chinese greatly desired the introduction, and now desire the growth of, the factory system for the lifting of a load of poverty from the masses that is too heavy and extended to be borne. Indeed, Miss Zung Wei-Tsung wrote in 1922 of the origin of the factories in Shanghai, that when Li Hung Chang, with other high officials, visited Western countries in the later times of the rule of the Tsing Dynasty, he "was so impressed when he saw that machines could do so much work in the factories that on his return he succeeded in persuading two of his friends to erect modern factories. Those first-built factories are still standing in Shanghai, only greatly improved and enlarged." Of the complicated machines she added: "It did not take very long to convince the people that they could manage the monsters, instead of fearing to be devoured by them. . . . The number and kinds of works increase from year to year. To-day . . . women and girls are to be found in soap, candle, cotton, silk, biscuit, tobacco, match, egg-packing, electric bulb-making and hosiery factories." And to this list she might have added highly successful Chinese letter-

press printing works. Perhaps, however, Miss Zung remembered that among Chinese printed books are some of the oldest printed books in the world, and therefore thought that the mechanical novelties of power-press machinery were not so important after all. Unquestionably, there are no more efficiently conducted modern Chinese industries than we see in some of their printing works. When Dr V. K. Ting, first organiser, and then Hon. Director, of the Geological Survey of China, wrote in 1924 of the "phenomenal growth" in his country of "industrialisation based on modern science"—exemplified in cotton spinning-mills, silk filatures, flour-mills, cement-works, and over 200 cities lighted with electricity—he gave special and honourable mention to the way in which that purely Chinese concern, the Shanghai Commercial Press, met the needs of the remarkable increase in the reading public. "When Professor J. A. Thompson's *Outline of Science* reached this country, a very good translation in Chinese, with all the original illustrations, was published by the Commercial Press within a few months, the work of translation being undertaken by the Professors of the South-Eastern University. The entire edition was sold out as soon as the book came out of the press. Fifteen years ago there would be hardly enough competent men in China to do the translation; certainly no publisher could have been found to undertake its publication. . . . In short, we have not only learned to open up railways, factories and mines, but we have gradually acquired the spirit which has made all these things possible. It is a far more significant thing than the obvious progress in industrialisation. . . . And all these things have been accomplished in the face of repeated political revolution. . . . Everything has progressed except the political State."¹

In emphasising the facts and the significance of the material progress—the results of which indeed strike the imagination of the Westerner on arrival at this industrial

¹ "Science and Progress in China." Article by V. K. Ting, in the *North China Daily News*, Sixtieth Anniversary Number, July 14th, 1924.

centre—one must not omit to stress also the depth and the breadth of the poverty and suffering to be overcome in China. Was there not also in England and Western Europe before the “Industrial Revolution” (in spite of the greater publicity given to the evils of the unregulated early “factory system”), something that could be compared with the state of the workers in China under their ancient régime, and that made the stepping onward to power-aided industrial toil on the whole an immense gain for the workers, when factory acts were developed and applied? Undoubtedly there were in Europe, before and during the period of political revolutions at the passing of the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, conditions for the poor that make descriptions of those in China at the passing of the nineteenth to the twentieth century different rather in degree than in kind. As this is a sketch of a visit to China I must confine my account to the conditions in the later of these periods. And I will quote from the description by one authoritatively described as a “seer and statesman”—“Timothy Richard of China”—regarding things observed by himself at Hsiakwan, Nanking, just after the China-Japanese War, towards the close of the nineteenth century. This I select because before reading it I had myself seen the place, in February 1924, and can realise in part the stern truthfulness of the account. He was there, entering the Viceregal City also in February, the bitterest month on the Yangtze-Kiang.¹

“The day was wet, rain and snow in turns, with strong wind. The roads were covered with deep slush which splashed about with each step. . . . There was no wheel conveyance of any kind, but a chair had to be fetched . . . it must be left where the ancestors kept it and the chair must be the very one used by the ancestors, even to the split boards and ragged calico. . . . After some half hour’s delay in hunting for the chair-bearers, we started.

“There are many tumble-down houses on both sides

¹ See *Timothy Richard of China*, by Professor William E. Soothill, M.A. London: Seeley Service & Co., 1924, pp. 184-6.

of the streets through which we passed, but what is most striking to the stranger is the mat sheds on each side. They are about four feet high, seven feet long, and four feet wide. They contain neither table, chair, nor bed; the only furniture is a cooking-pot with a fire under it, and some ragged covering which was once a quilt. The old men and women cannot resist the cold long, and the scanty food of the young lads brings on disease in their starved frames. Their sisters were more fortunate, for they were sold long ago to a life of comparative luxury—shame, some will call it—in order to ward off the day of starvation for their families a few months longer.¹ . . .

“Look at the chair-bearers; they are better off, but . . . their legs are bare to the knees. They tie on some straw sandals with straw strings and trudge along most happily because they have something to do.

“We arrive at one of the vice-regal inns where high mandarins stay. . . . The central part of the hotel has its front and back doors open day and night. The whole of the front is made up of paper window-frames with wide slits between each frame; and the rooms are partitioned off with boards, also with wide fissures between each. As the wind is high it goes through our bedroom like water through a sieve. . . . To crown matters, the landlady with a little girl of six years in her arms comes to the door to give instructions to her husband about the bedding, and the child in her arms has measles. They do not see any impropriety in bringing bedding from a house where there is measles. . . .

“And this is the condition of society under one of the greatest Viceroyes in the Empire. . . . Such misery of tens of thousands in these mat sheds should melt hearts of stone to do something to save them.”

Timothy Richard came to Nanking, by invitation of the Viceroy Chang Chih-Tung, to discuss remedies for the position in which China stood after defeat, and his own

¹ My readers may turn to the authority quoted for the more terrible facts that there follow.

thesis that "God was breaking down the barriers between all nations by railways, steamers and telegraphs, in order that all should live in peace and happiness as brethren of one family; but that the Manchus by continual obstruction determined from the first to prevent this intercourse."

I came thirty years later, in the same month of the year, with introductions from the Chinese members of a voluntary and Christian Society, to represent to the Civil Governor Han Kuo-Chuen, of the Province of Kiangsu under the Republic of China, the urgent need of protection for child workers in his Province, and of administrative action to apply the Peking Provisional Regulations for Factories promulgated nearly a year before my visit. Of the conference with him my account will be given in due sequence. It is mentioned here only to punctuate the changes that came with lapse of time. Very great changes—real advances—in many directions have been made, and workers who gain entry into factories can count at least on regular, though small, earnings, and regular, though scanty, food and clothing. Yet the mat sheds of Hsiakwan and other places and the ricksha coolies with their bare legs, that I saw in the winter slush and cold of 1924, seemed to answer very much to the description of the mat sheds and the chair-bearers of so many years ago. In the absence of either Public Health regulation, or popular knowledge of causes of disease, risks of infection, even more flagrant than those met in 1895-6 by Timothy Richard, were described to me by medical witnesses in 1926.

It is not until one with experience of factories and of administration of factory law in the West arrives, and sees what is in progress in the way of industrialisation, that the magnitude of the new risks and dangers, or the immensity of the field already awaiting the reformer, can be grasped. Within two months of my arrival I was impelled to assure a gathering of foreign and Chinese manufacturers that, in the matter of overstrain, I never saw in the United Kingdom, and never imagined, anything so bad as the conditions that I was finding in the factories of China; such as the

monotonous toil that the children suffer, the night-work for all in cotton mills, the long, indeed the excessive, hours in the silk filatures, the exposure to great risk of sudden fire in match factories, without protection of the kind we think absolutely necessary in Europe.

A suggestion sometimes made by Chinese themselves, that China has so many children that she can spare them, runs counter, of course, to the things taught by Public Health administration in the West. Moreover, the greater the population, the worse the burden of every maimed or injured producer. And this is all fully recognised in 1926 by the Reports of the Chinese Association for Advancement of Public Health, Peking, which was presented to the British China Indemnity Delegation.

On arrival (December 1st, 1923) I was met at Woosung, where we anchored at the mouth of the Whangpoo River, fifteen miles from Shanghai,¹ by Miss Agatha Harrison, a well-known leader in the welfare movement in England, at this time Executive Industrial Secretary of the Y.W.C.A. of China and member of the Industrial Committee of the N.C.C., and Miss Zung Wei-Tsung, then literary and publicity officer to both these societies. They came on board and escorted me in the tender to Shanghai, making a "home-coming" of the chilly passage up the muddy river to the great city, which was to be my centre for many months.

The physical contrast between the entry to Hong-kong, or even to Canton, and the approach to Shanghai is striking, although one allows for the wintry atmosphere in a more northerly latitude. There, romantically picturesque outlines; here low, flat country, yellowish river, and muddy shores. There, generally, bright clear skies and well-defined colouring; here, the steady approach to regions of factory chimneys and the misty or smoky aura that human inertia permits to surround them. And still, let no one imagine such darkness as that of Tyne- or Clyde-

¹ A few months later great "Ocean Liners" were berthing regularly up at Shanghai between Pootung and the Customs Jetty.

side. Among my clearest memories are those of the gaiety and surging human life of the Bund, whether seen from the water or from the broad river front, the immediate background of stately buildings, banks, newspaper offices, clubs, shipping and commercial buildings, the brilliant mingling of all races of East and West, and the incredible variety of water-craft, converging here from many ports of China. And, more intimate and lovely experience, of a sunset picnic in May on the river embankment outside the beautiful walled town of Paoshan near Woosung—"embowered in green with rich cultivation all around; high-tiered roofs rising inside the walls, against the setting sun. Poetry and romance and peace."¹ I need these notes, written the same night, to assure myself that I am not dreaming these things of a place so near as fifteen miles to the Yangtzepoo district of Shanghai, the region that first concerned me and that I saw dimly on our right as we came up in the tender to the landing-place. On this voyage and river passage I had my first meeting with a Commissioner of the famous Chinese Maritime Customs organisation which arose out of provisions in the Treaty of Nanking.²

The daylight was nearly gone when we came to the Customs' jetty, where we were met by Dr Henry Hodgkin, one of the secretaries of the N.C.C., and Miss Ting Shu-Ching, then acting, now fully-appointed General Secretary of the Y.W.C.A. of China. In these two (who brought me further joint welcome to China) the height and fairness of the Englishman and the height of the dark-haired and charming Manchu lady, in vivid contrast, intensified the impression received of the harmonious meeting of West and Far East on an enterprise of international concern.³

¹ Woosung was first thrown open to foreign trade and residence in 1898, not by treaty with any Power, but by direct initiative of the Chinese Government. (See *China Year Book 1924*, edited by H. G. W. Woodhead, C.B.E.)

² Mr Charlton Thorne with his wife, both of whom I had the pleasure of meeting again in the great summer meeting ground at Kuling.

³ These words, "enterprise of international concern," were written before the troubles in Shanghai, which began May 30th, 1925.

In an incredibly short time, as it seemed to me, my luggage was all collected, swiftly tied together, slung on to a bamboo pole across the shoulders of coolies and, somehow, safely conveyed to my destination: that is, the residence of the "foreign" (American, British, Canadian and Australian) Y.W.C.A. Secretaries, on the northern outskirts of the International Settlement. That became my home and the centre of activities that radiated towards various parts of China until the middle of October 1924. In a taxi-cab we quickly passed from the broad street and the big buildings of the central part of the Settlement, across the famous, muddy and congested Soochow Creek, into the immensely long North Szechuan Road, where Chinese and (farther up) Japanese shopkeepers cater for international as well as Chinese wants, and where at intervals missionary institutions attracted my attention. Of these, the building (towards the boundary limit of the Settlement) of the Christian Literature Society (which has numbered names such as those of Sir Robert Hart and Sir Charles Addis among its Presidents and Honorary Secretaries, and missionary founders such as Dr Alexander Williamson and Dr Timothy Richard) has the most widespread meaning for China.

Yet it was the dominantly Chinese humanity of the North Szechuan Road, not the foreign buildings, that made the first, the daily, and the final appeal to those to whose lot it fell to come to "seek the welfare" of Chinese labour. And along this road, with its varied, picturesque, occasionally intimate, scenes of Chinese life—with frequent items of European *provenance*—and up and down streets and "lis"¹ to the right and to the left of it, from end to end, almost daily one had to go in order to reach factories, offices, workers' dwellings, committee meetings, social welfare centres and other things leading to the clues that had to be sought. A remark of visitors is often heard that Shanghai is not a Far Eastern but a European city. This is a view to which, speaking from the standpoint of those

¹ A "li" is as nearly as possible what we call an alley in England.

who venture into the regions under its surface aspects, and at the back of the Bund, I cannot subscribe. I agree with Mrs Ayscough that Shanghai as a whole is "a purely Chinese part of the country."¹

Here I tend to outrun my immediate purpose of arriving at my destination preparatory to getting to work. I was settled-in, on that night of December 1st, 1923, at 201 North Szechuan Road, the house being in China proper and the road being under the delegated governance of the Executive Council of the International Settlement (more shortly, Municipal Council). This, in retrospect, seemed a particularly appropriate position, in view of the two-sided nature of the work that had to be done—something for China, as a whole, and something for the Council, in particular!

There was a study-bedroom ready for me, fire alight, and various attractive properties in it which later I realised were lent by fellow inmates of the house. I may say in belated response that I never ceased to enjoy the companionship of this "family" of varying size, in the spacious home, near by a pleasant public park. Many letters and visiting cards awaited me from residents of Shanghai and from leaders in the joint Chinese and foreign industrial reform movement. They informed me here, as I had learned in Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, that the world was awakening to the common cause of establishing fair and just conditions for workers in industry. Of foremost importance were an invitation to a luncheon party from the British Consul-General, Mr (now Sir) Sydney Barton, to meet leading industrialists, and an invitation from Miss Mayhew, the accomplished hostess of the hospitality centre of the Y.W.C.A. near the Consulate-General, to meet the Chairman of the Child Labour Commission of Shanghai.

Only a few doors distant at that time lived my friends and helpers, and sometimes, in the Hankow Diocese, hosts,

¹ See *A Chinese Mirror, being Reflexions on the Reality behind Appearance*, by Florence Ayscough. Jonathan Cape, Ltd., p. 12.

Bishop and Mrs Roots. He—a Bishop of the American Episcopal Church—was then, with Dr C. Y. Cheng, Joint Honorary Secretary of the N.C.C.

In the same quarter of Shanghai lived other helpers and fellow-workers in matters concerning the Industrial Committee. Mr Fong Sec, one of the Directors of the Shanghai Commercial Press, was there with his attractive family circle. Not far off was the famous printing works and its clubhouse or Welfare Institute, which I visited during the first week of my arrival. Of the Institute and his family I am privileged to give illustrations (Plates IV. and V., facing pages 98 and 124). As editor of the English section of this enlightened Chinese industrial enterprise, Mr Fong Sec's unflinching interest in ideas for the welfare of industrial workers was invaluable for the reform movement. Mr M. T. Tchou, another near neighbour, was at that time the head of the industrial department of the Y.M.C.A., a fellow-worker not only on the Industrial Committee, but in other ways, as appears in these pages. I cannot omit mention also of another leading industrialist and neighbour, Mr C. C. Nieh, and his family. Through his ancestor the Marquis Tseng he is associated with historical events of particular interest to British people. That ancestor was the chief, during the Taiping war, of our "Chinese Gordon." The family is one of the most distinguished in China, and Mr Nieh, not only a philosophic thinker but also a leading manufacturer, who helped me in several ways.

Some of the main conditions in and around Shanghai, affecting the work that had to be attempted, now call for brief notice. What, first, was this Shanghai into which I had come by invitation of Chinese and foreign reformers? What was its political status and what its factory industries?

I cannot attempt to give a systematic account of the historical, commercial and industrial growth of the great place, comprising an international and a French Settlement and the large old Chinese city and district of Greater Shanghai, all adjacent and immediately communicating with each

other by their roads. At the same time there are certain main features which, if borne in mind, can form a helpful background to the sketch which follows.

The increasingly unsettled political conditions of China, since the Revolution of 1911-12, have emphasised the peculiar position of Shanghai—the greatest trading centre of the country with a large floating element among its inhabitants. It is impossible, however, apart from certain sign-post figures of the Maritime Customs, to express material facts of the environment statistically. Much guessing at many factors of social and economic significance is inevitable in trying to investigate labour conditions and their effects. Those who can actually see the most numerous, living pictures of the conditions and activities of the people themselves, with friendly human perception and sympathy, are likeliest to attain most knowledge. Anyone to whose lot it falls to attempt description can barely succeed, if at all, by the unstinted aid of many willing helpers, in societies and institutions of all kinds. In China and in Foreign Settlements the manifold missionary activities, educational, medical, social and humanitarian which have filled an immense rôle, are gradually being surrounded and supplemented by new phases of Chinese associated effort that should eventually take over most of the pioneering social branches of missionary work.

“It is a great thing,” said the late Right Hon. Sir John Jordan, P.C., G.C.M.G., formerly His Majesty’s Minister Plenipotentiary at Peking, at a public meeting of the Y.W.C.A. World’s Industrial Committee in London, on February 3rd, 1925, “that this (industrial reform) movement has started in Shanghai, the centre of enlightenment and improvement.” There are many who would have made the statement without the qualifying account of Shanghai, but in that lies truth.¹ And it is necessary to see something of the Foreign Settlement, apart from its factories and factory workers, if we are to understand what

¹ See the letter of Mr M. T. Tchou in 1925, quoted below in Chap. IX, page 239.

may be achieved there, and not only—important as they are—by its “pillars of finance,” the great banks. Thoughts of some of those who have worked for the commercial prosperity of the Settlement have to be taken into the reckoning.

“A kindly providence has here directed the steps of kindly souls from all nations of the earth to make up our glorious miscegenation, so that one of our chief attractions is the fact that in Shanghai’s Settlement you find fellow-creatures from far across the seven seas. . . . Our water supply is steady, far better than that of more than one city in India and incomparably better than much that is consumed in southern European countries. Our weather—rarely above a hundred in August, and never unbearably cold in January—is pre-eminently superior to that of New York or Bombay and several other great world cities. . . . Immediately one rounded the bend at Woosung he saw unmistakable tokens that the industrialisation of China is at hand. . . . The harbour seems to have expanded. Hugé ocean liners now all berth alongside, and one could see the flags of all the nations of the world that count to-day. . . . Despite internal unrest and political dissension . . . the tremendous possibilities inherent to Shanghai’s geographical position are being realised day by day, and destine her for a higher position in history. . . . Take a launch, a sampan, anything so that you will get a glimpse of the Bund from the middle of the river, you will be proud of your city’s growth; the scene is an inspiration and a panacea for anyone who has civic paralysis. . . . Shanghai as the chief entrepôt of China offers a remarkable field for correct endeavour, all men who think what life means . . . not only for taking in from others but also for giving out, have a sphere in which they may turn on the fire of their imagination and accomplish something. . . . But Shanghai is not only commercial, she has a soul.”¹

The writer probably did not know it, but yet (dependent

¹ From an article by “Scrutator” in the *North China Daily News*, 15th May 1924: “Shanghai—the Wonder City of all Asia.”

on all these and other factors) came a small event only a few weeks after the publication of his article, that reveals much of what this city means in material and social security for Chinese and foreign economic experiments—the opening of a Chinese bank, staffed entirely by Chinese women, with a special view to the needs of Chinese women. I was an invited guest at its opening reception, and wondered whether other women of the West would be as astonished as I was (even with all the experience of power in Chinese women I had had by that time) at the vital eagerness of the enterprise and the look of good-humoured interest on the face of Chinese men, who were guests at the reception. Whether it succeeded or not, the mere attempt seemed something of a portent.

These things were in an International Settlement which, in 1843, began its foreign trade under British merchant settlers, on a closely defined portion of the naturally muddy shores, set apart for them after negotiations between the first British Consul and the Chinese authorities, under treaty with the Chinese Imperial Government. It got a scheduled tariff of import and export duties drawn up in 1858; doubled its trade after opening of the Yangtze ports between 1860 and 1863; amalgamated with the American-occupied district north of the Soochow Creek in the latter year, thus commencing its municipal life on an international basis. It steadily developed modern municipal government under conditions strictly limited by the code of "Land Regulations" which was first promulgated for British merchants in 1846. This was revised in 1854 to cover all foreigners; when it was agreed to by the Governments of the Powers concerned, and accepted by the Chinese Government in an edict issued by the Taotai.¹

¹ Again the code was revised in 1869 and 1898, when the Chinese officials treated it as primarily a matter for arrangement between the Municipal Council and the Consular body, with the object of being advantageous to the people and the merchants. The practical importance of the limitations imposed by the code appeared when it became necessary to add to the governing powers of the Council; e.g. in the regulation, by Bye-law, of Child Labour.

Ultimately the Settlement ranks municipally as one of the best-governed places in the world, under an Executive Council consisting of nine members, of whom six were British during my first visit. In the year preceding that visit the Chairman was British, Mr H. G. Simms, and during the years of my visits of 1924 and 1926 he was American, Mr Stirling Fessenden.

I suppose one may take these two men as typical of the heads of the International Settlement, and nowhere in the world have I found (as I did in co-operating with those who sought for the protection of children and workers in Shanghai) men more accessible to representations touching human welfare—of the covenanted and uncovenanted members of the community. With Mr Simms I have conferred in England, and in Shanghai I was at once brought in touch with his actual achievements. The very nature and objects of the Settlement: the establishment (within unfenced borders on Chinese territory) of trade with the great world of China, on peaceable, mutually accepted conditions, has in the past necessarily entailed a certain compromise and adaptation (that will have to go much further) between the ideas and customs of Far East and Far West. Even though each has much to give to the other, substantial administrative advance could practically only be made by common consent. For into the Settlement there came at least 810,279 Chinese; greater Shanghai comprises a Chinese population of more than a million and a half; and the whole district five and a half million, from whose midst come the mass of the workers (not only manual)—from coolie to compradore. And within the Settlement, in 1926, there were 29,947 foreigners (the number varying from year to year), apart from the French who have their own settlement, with 6919 foreigners and 289,261 Chinese in 1926. Besides these there are perhaps 5250 living just outside the Settlements. The total number of those of the ratepayers who form the first foundations of the International municipality's governing powers is also a varying quantity and was

2743 in 1924, of whom perhaps 832 were British and 509 Japanese, and the remainder American, Italian, Portuguese, etc. Probably 90 per cent of the total number of rate-payers are Chinese and these pay, perhaps, at a rough guess of those most likely to know, 70 per cent. of the rates. The economic factors that have grown up are such as to create a political situation liable at any moment to call for the wisest and most liberal handling. The subject comes up again for brief notice in my last chapter.

The adjustments that had been so far administratively made, step by step, sometimes seemed to me as wonderful as any that I had seen in the management of human affairs. Could such arrangements have worked thus peaceably, for so long, in any other country than China or among any other people than the Chinese? I think not among any other people of such capacity. A large and essential part in political relations is of course played by the Consuls-General of the foreign nations concerned, and by the Chinese Commissioner for Foreign Affairs.

And this is in the country and here are the people, where and among whom, it is said, 2500 years ago their own philosophers travelled up and down, "seeking to unite men through an ardent love in universal brotherhood. To fight against lusts and evil desires was their chief endeavour. When they were reviled they did not consider it a shame; they were intent on nothing but the redemption of men from quarrelling. They forbade aggression and preached disarmament in order to redeem men from war. This teaching they carried throughout the world. They admonished princes and instructed subjects. The world was not ready to accept their teaching, but they held to it all the more firmly. It was said that high and low tried to avoid meeting them but that they forced themselves upon people."¹

¹ This is quoted from *Christianity and the Religions of the World*, by Dr Albert Schweitzer of Strasbourg, 1924, pp. 56-7. He states that these words have come down to our own times with the writings of the philosopher *Chuang Tsz.*

These preachers may have met opposition and been reviled, but one does not read anywhere that the Chinese stoned their prophets nor made them drink hemlock. To their philosopher most honoured in his lifetime there are still stately shrines without images, in every great city, where twice a year sacrificial rites are still officially celebrated. And yet it is true that while Confucianism "produces many individuals possessing high moral character," as might be "expected from so excellent a system of morals" as that of Confucius (Kung Fu Tsz, 560 to 480 B.C.), it does not do so with any uniformity. "The answer to Confucianism," said Dr Arthur Smith, "is China."¹ China twenty-five years later, in upheaval and struggling to attain unity in the name of a Republic, without a literate general population on which to stabilise herself, might perhaps say: "and the answer to Christianity is Europe during the greatest war that the world has ever known." The more profitable, the really inspiring thought, is, that ultimately, after two millennia of the working of the leaven of Christian ideals, from Europe, on an American statesman's initiative, and through the League of Nations, came the first united effort of many governments to translate into reality the age-old idea of China, "to redeem mankind from war." And not only to do it (though it does that, too) by "forbidding aggression and preaching disarmament," but by world-wide measures for international promotion of public health, fair and just and humane conditions of labour, the protection and welfare of children, and other constructive social measures which, since the industrialisation of the civilised world, cannot be securely attained by any country in isolation. Europe has what is practically her International Sanctuary in Geneva, where the nations large and small meet and take counsel together.

And here in China, tardily consenting to intercourse with nations whom she deemed less civilised than herself,

¹ *Chinese Characteristics*, by Arthur H. Smith, D.D., 1894. See Chapter XXVII., "The Real Condition of China."

holding in the nineteenth century their traders as it were at arms' length in separate settlements, within eighty years grew up this unique International Settlement. Therein some degree of peace could be maintained when China was in the throes of civil war.¹ Therein experiments could be made in social administration, in public health work, and yet may be experimentally made in factory regulation; all things that China must sooner or later have nationally if her people are to survive industrialisation uninjured. And their value was directly acknowledged in the appointment of Dr V. K. Ting, by the Military Governor of the Delta Provinces, to the Directorate of Greater Shanghai. And, again, in the appointment of his successor by the Nationalist Military Chief, Chiang Kai-Shek.²

Well might the Commissioner of Public Health of the Settlement say, as he did in his Annual Report for 1922,³ that "the needs and problems of this great Port of Shanghai call for the highest qualities of foresight and statesmanship." Difficult indeed must be the position of a Western-trained Medical Officer of Public Health, in a city of the size and position of International Shanghai, surrounded by and communicating immediately with a densely populated and insanitary Chinese city (the whole having an aggregate population of over 1,500,000), in neither of which is there virtually any education for the mass of the people.⁴ He has to work without compulsory notification of communic-

¹ As it was in the unions of merchant cities, formed in Northern Europe in the troubled thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, for the "benefit of the common merchant."

² See Chapter I., Introduction, pp. 13-14.

³ This report was specially chosen for its weighty observations. The later figures in 1926 belong to an abnormally disturbed period, and throw no fresh light on the history and purpose of the Settlement.

⁴ I do not forget that there are excellent municipal schools in the Settlement giving secondary education to Chinese boys, but the statement is true as regards industrial (and other manual) child workers. See below, Chapter VI., pp. 132-3, for indications of Chinese plans for developing elementary education. Compare the *Report on Prevalence of Epidemic Disease, etc., in the Far East*, by Dr Norman White; League of Nations Health Committee, Geneva, 1923.

able disease and without registration of qualified medical practitioners in a country where the danger of epidemic disease is always present, where tuberculosis and venereal disease are appallingly prevalent and trachoma has been estimated as accounting for 37½ per cent of the hundreds of thousands of blind persons. The milk supply comes partly from dairies outside the Settlement, dairies which are unlicensed and entirely beyond municipal control. The surrounding, low-lying country contains many stagnant ponds and creeks that breed myriads of mosquitoes, and there is a large migratory element in the population that includes considerable numbers of refugees—poor, ignorant and least of all disciplined. And yet, with their system of Food and Health Inspection, their active Publicity Department, their Municipal Hospitals, and their growing pathological and chemical laboratories—the Health Authority were able to state that the death-rate of the whole population, Chinese and foreign, within the Settlement in 1922, was 15.0 per thousand, and that the “death-rates compare very favourably with those of other great cities in the Far East.”

There is a well-organised and equipped municipal fire brigade, Chinese, staffed by British officers but, so far as industrial buildings containing numerous manual workers are concerned, it is without powers for maintaining safety in them by regulation after the Chief Officer of the Fire Brigade has once examined and approved plans of construction. “Fire escapes, staircases and other means of egress are frequently kept blocked with material, and doors are barred. Many old buildings are in a very unsafe condition. Officers of the Fire Brigade make tours of inspection, and attention is called to dangerous conditions, but very little notice is taken.”¹

Early in March 1924, at night, a small Chinese silk filature was burned to the ground in Chinese Shanghai. The workers were locked in at the time and it was reported in the daily Press that a hundred women were killed by

¹ See the *Municipal Gazette*, Shanghai, Saturday, July 19th, 1924, p. 263.

burning or by jumping from windows. No apparent action was taken by Chinese authorities, but the occurrence of such tragedies ought to prepare the way for future joint action, for public safety in these matters, by the Directorate of Greater Shanghai and the Municipal Council of the Settlement.

My visits to industries and factories were effected through various channels and introductions: through individual friends and members of associations, fire brigade and police officers of the Municipal Council, by arrangement of the Secretary of the Child Labour Commission appointed by the Municipal Council, and by direct invitation of employers themselves. Entry and facilities for inspection were generally as freely granted as at home, in British factories. Much was also learned of conditions and effects of employment through visits to mission and other hospitals, and by voluntary appeals made to me or my fellow-workers by the factory workers on their own initiative. In Chinese industries outside Shanghai the initiative in approach was frequently through Chinese members of the Y.W.C.A. and the Y.M.C.A. or the N.C.C. but quite as often through the employers themselves, especially after public meetings in the various centres, at Chambers of Commerce, University or Club Halls, etc., where addresses were given on the growth and the value in Europe of factory law and its trained administration.

The modern factory industries of Shanghai stretch far outside the borders of the eight-and-two-thirds square miles of the International Settlement and the adjoining French Settlement.¹ No precise list of factories, industries, firms, numbers, age and sex of persons employed, or any other statistical information about industries was available during my visits. It was only possible in the *Report of the Child Labour Commission* to include, in an Appendix, an

¹ The French Settlement lies between the International Settlement and the Chinese city in a long strip with narrow river frontage, which was extended at various intervals after 1849. One of the perplexities for a newcomer trying to master the topography lies in the way in which residents live and work in each others' settlements.

incomplete list of the main industries and firms, with approximate, and in some cases inaccurate figures, as regards the Foreign Settlement, Chapei and Pootung districts, indicating the nationality of the employers, and in some cases the numbers of male and female workers over and under twelve years of age. A warning given at the head of the list was not always heeded by persons desiring figures; percentages were based on those that appeared in the list and freely quoted with misleading effect.¹ No definite conclusions could be drawn as to ratios of young children employed, for the basis of computation of age differs in the Chinese from the foreign basis, apart from other discrepancies.

An admittedly incomplete and merely approximate list of modern manufactures, classified broadly into industries and set out under names of Provinces and chief cities of China, appears in the *China Year Book* for 1924, and later issues.² Among other large old industries (some of them being at least partially developed on a factory basis) which are expressly not included in the *China Year Book*, are earthenware- and porcelain-making, lacquer- and enamel-making, rug- and carpet-making, matting, fireworks, and tinsel-paper for spirit-money making.³ Of these even the last alone has been estimated to employ in its various branches probably 900,000 persons.

A great deal of sectional information about growing and new industries, occasionally of an exceedingly interesting and illuminating nature, appears from time to time in the *Chinese Economic Monthly* (now the *Chinese Economic Journal*), issued by the Chinese Government Bureau of Economic Information, with its head office in Peking and a Shanghai office in the heart of the Foreign Settlement.

¹ The Memorandum by Mr J. T. Pratt shows the very small direct share of the British in the industrialising of China. No. 2 (1927), 1 Cmd. 2846.

² The Editor explains that "it has been compiled under considerable difficulties," and that they "will welcome any additions or corrections."

³ That is, paper money covered with tin-foil, which is burnt as part of funeral ceremonies with a view, probably, to helping the departed in the spirit world.

Development of purely Chinese industries, when I visited them, was coming on rapidly, especially in some places outside the Settlement, and unless one could see leading citizens, of an important place such as Wusih (with numerous large cotton and silk mills), before going, it was simplest to gather information on the spot. The *China Year Book* at the same time is most helpful for giving a *coup d'œil* for the whole country of the extent and localisation of the main modern industries: cotton spinning-mills, silk filatures, tobacco- and cigarette-making works, lucifer match factories, albumen and egg-preserving factories, flour, rice and oil mills, cement works, letterpress printing and lithographic printing works, sugar refineries, besides electric light and power works.

Kiangsu Province, adjoining Shanghai, contains many large cities, in some of which the factory system has begun. In others it was growing steadily before the recrudescence of Civil War in 1924. It was after the China-Japan Treaty of Shimonoseki, in 1895, that Japanese, and consequently other foreigners, obtained freedom both to purchase goods in the interior and to set up factories in the Treaty Ports, and the real beginning of the modern industrial development of China has been ascribed by Mr G. F. Sokolsky to that date.¹ The Japanese share in foreign trade (which had risen markedly after 1879) became far greater from 1899 onwards. And the textile trades in the Shanghai district were those that illustrated the early stage of the change to factory production, and that first arrested public attention on account of the rapid concentration of employment of young children. Children are also present from babyhood upwards in large numbers in the semi-industrialised Chinese lucifer match factories. Further, they are employed in tobacco and cigarette factories, but there chiefly when they reach eleven years of age. According to the evidence given to the Child Labour Commission, 20,000 young boys are employed as apprentices to the building trade in the Shanghai district, usually under the contract system. The real reason for all this employment of children in factories

¹ *China Year Book*, 1924, p. 670.

was declared by the Child Labour Commission to be economic—the poverty of the parents. Yet the natural desire of the mothers to keep their children under their own eye in the factories doubtless plays a significant part; this desire was referred to as a fact, officially, by Mr Tang Tsai-fu, at the Seventh International Labour Conference in 1925.¹

The admittedly incomplete list of factories in Shanghai and the adjacent districts of Chapei and Pootung (that is, including parts outside the Foreign Settlement) given in the *Child Labour Report* in Appendix I., related to 273 factories. From this we thought we might very roughly gauge the relative strength in numbers of the chief industries in the districts indicated, and the proportion of undertakings under Chinese and Foreign occupation respectively. The responsibility for the conditions in the silk filatures appeared to be shared by Chinese, British (a very small proportion), American, French and Italians, and the responsibility for those in the cotton mills by Chinese, British and Japanese. There were sixty-eight silk filatures on the list, forty-nine cotton mills, a large number of small-sized engineering works and iron foundries which employ mainly adults, ten tobacco and cigarette factories, nine lace and hosiery; and the somewhat miscellaneous remaining number enter very little into the considerations that we have here to take into account. Only one lucifer match factory, an important indigenous one, appeared on the list in the *Child Labour Report*, but the *China Year Book*, 1926, dealing with a wider area, gave eleven match factories in the district of Shanghai.

The *China Year Book* for 1926 also gives enlightening figures regarding the important cotton industry. The Chinese-owned mills numbered 73, and the foreign-owned 49, of which 4 were British and 45 were Japanese. The approximate total of labourers in all the cotton mills (some employers did not make returns), was 209,759, of whom 76,088 were in foreign-owned mills. Of the latter only 16,500 were in British mills (all in Shanghai), the remainder

¹ *China Year Book*, 1926, p. 896.

being Japanese. It also appears that in Chinese cotton mills the spindles in operation numbered 1,881,822, and the looms operating, 16,381 (apart altogether from the countless treadle looms in domestic industry). In Japanese cotton mills the spindles numbered 1,326,920, and the looms 7205. In British cotton mills (all in Shanghai) the spindles numbered 205,320, and the looms 2348. In Greater Shanghai alone the Chinese cotton mills number 22 and the labourers in them 44,934, besides which, in adjoining Kiangsu, there are 19 Chinese cotton mills with labourers in them numbering 27,580.

With these various items rapidly collected out of the mass of possibly relevant facts that lay around the thousands of Chinese factory workers of Shanghai—above all, around the helpless children drawn in by forces as blind as those that drew the little children of England into Lancashire cotton mills in the nineteenth century—we may turn again to the circumstances in which I was first drawn into contact with the conditions.

In Western countries, when the factory system began, there were effective national governments in some degree sensitive to the workings of public sentiment. In China itself, in 1924, as more obviously in 1927, there was no effective national government for administrative purposes able to work throughout the country, and the people themselves cannot work with a reconstructive aim until far more can be made plain to them of what is happening industrially. Neither was, nor is, there any settled and real freedom for modern labour organisation.¹

In Shanghai there are well-informed, active and well-led Manufacturers' Associations (foreign and Chinese), an alert and able Executive Council of the International Community, besides Consuls-General of the various nations concerned, who in 1924-25 were helping in one way or another towards protection of Chinese child workers. The sympathetic reception accorded to me, as an adviser called

¹ See *Report*, by Mr Moss, on *Trade Unionism in Shanghai*, in Cmd. 2442, China No. 1 (1925), pp. 83 and following.

in by the N.C.C. by many Chinese and foreigners, and the widely supported desire of finding a good way out of the tangle of difficulties that lay in the general economic and political situation, were such as to encourage one, while seeking a remedy, to bear the burden of realising the terrible conditions for the children.

My first introduction to some of the actual conditions was on the day after my arrival, when I was taken out on Sunday evening by Miss Harrison to see the change of shifts, at about 5 o'clock, in the Yangtsepoo district where many large cotton mills stand. We went in rickshas—(my first experience of being drawn along roads by a fellow-man, other than a largely-built Zulu, in Durban). There we wandered about on foot, keeping our rickshas within call, and mingling with the eddies and surges of the converging streams of workers of whom so large a proportion were little children. Many had long distances to traverse between their poor homes and the factories. Some live in boats on the creeks and some in mat-sheds of the type that in years gone by so stirred the mind of Timothy Richard at Hsiakwan, and some (perhaps the most fortunate) in the much sub-divided houses that appeared to me internally more like bee-hives than houses. The really wintry weather had not begun at this time, and my first experience was but a shadow of what was to be learned. I doubt whether word-pictures can ever suffice to tell the tale. One had just to go through it all and see it with one's own eyes in order to understand and perhaps be able to help those who had been working for years to find out a practicable way of beginning the improvement of labour conditions in this "Foreign" Settlement whose manual workers were all Chinese, linked by every natural tie with their own immediately surrounding country and people and institutions. Although foreign employers are far less numerous than Chinese employers, it did not lighten the subject of study that many nations are represented among them—Japanese (most numerous), British, American, and various European countries.

It was all very different from the factory precincts in Hongkong, and far further forward on the road towards industrialisation. But for the padded cotton garments of the workers, the type of face (as yet unfamiliar to me), the unknown tongue, and the pressing intensity of expression and attitude in the workers, the Yangtsepoo region might have been in a Lancashire cotton town—perhaps in a part of Bolton or Burnley in the days I can remember in the late nineties, when diminutive eleven-year-old children were legally employed in mills. There in those days, at that hour—5.30. to 6 p.m.—the long day's work of ten hours for adults—with half-time for children under thirteen years—was closing in accordance with law, and every face was homeward-turned, the younger workers not all too tired to think of games. Here they were mostly coming off a twelve-hours' day, children and all, having no fixed pauses for meals, and on the first evening of a new week that, for the most, would be seven days long. And all coming out had to dodge or buffet their way through the in-coming stream of those who would take their places at the whirring machines until the dawn of a new December morning.

In one of the greater mills (British) the managers, so I was told by my guide, were aiming (as also were some Japanese mills) at exclusion of workers under eleven years, but ways of testing age are hard to find where there is neither birth registration nor compulsory school-attendance. And just over the border of the Settlement, quite near by, there are mills with "no questions asked" about age, and literally numberless parents who are unable to imagine economic conditions in which children do not begin to help seriously with bread-winning at five years of age. It was necessary to hold these things firmly in remembrance, otherwise it would have been difficult indeed to understand how all the cotton spinning-mills alike, whether under British or Japanese or Chinese management, could possibly run on under this dreadful tyranny of the night and day shift system for seven days a week. Further,

the Western ideas of "the day for toil" is given, and "for rest the night," do not appear in any kind of manual work, domestic or other, to have yet gained control of the Chinese worker's mind. This I learned only by degrees, but in estimating the whole industrial situation of Shanghai it must not be forgotten. Sleep is still commonly, whether in hotels or workshops, or even in private houses, taken in snatches or brief spells rather than in the long, quieter times of darkness.

We did not go inside any of the mills that evening, only looked into the mill-yards beyond the large gates, and on our way home stepped across the threshold of shockingly dusty cotton-waste sorting and small engineering shops, where our passing by seemed to cause no surprise to their Chinese occupants. It was not possible, in the evening light, fairly to judge of the physical condition of the young workers. The chief impression received was the one just touched on, of a driving intensity in movement and aspect of all the workers. That impression is wrought-over and ultimately woven into the general fabric of my mental picture of China and her people, and at this point I must resist temptation to follow out reflections on the subject.

Monday, December 3rd, brought the real entry into the main pathway of my work. First came conversation with leading fellow-countrymen, including the British Consul-General, and attendance at a meeting of the Industrial Committee of the N.C.C. and the Child Labour Commission of Shanghai. The week filled up fast, with visits to factories in various industries, receptions and hospitality well planned to introduce me to those who could help. Not least important was my first talk with Mr Lipson Ward, Chairman of the Child Labour Commission, in order to gather up leading threads of the evidence they had already obtained in five and a half months' session.

After first seeing Mr E. F. Mackay, Chairman of the Employers' Federation,¹ and realising how I might count

¹ This Federation was formed in 1923 to keep its members supplied with facts and guidance about conditions of labour in factory industry.



Photo from

Mr Fong Sec

LIBRARY AND CLUB HOUSE FOR WORKERS' WELFARE,
THE SHANGHAI COMMERCIAL PRESS

on the help of both in gaining access to the manufacturers, after going on from his views of the prospects of the industrial reformers to those of Mr Lipson Ward, and after a conference with Sir Sydney (then Mr) Barton, British Consul-General, I could fairly begin to look into the industrial facts for myself.

The reception given by all three men, from their widely varying high positions, to the purpose for which I had been brought here—the application of official experience of factory law and inspection in Great Britain to factory problems of the Far East—could not have been more friendly and helpful. Yet they certainly did not minimise the difficulties, nor did they hold out definite hopes of early success in getting factory law applied, in the European sense, in China. It was an invaluable introduction to the meeting later in the day with those who had first invited me to their counsels—the Industrial Committee of the N.C.C. There I met with Chinese, as well as foreign, ideas of what was most needed, and therefore in their view at that time to be persistently worked for until obtained. Briefly, they held that, before mechanical growth of industry had gone much further, a new humanising of the conditions of labour by legislation, administration and voluntary reforms could and should be obtained. The working out of ideas and activities that led up to this resolve needs separate handling in another chapter.¹ Here a few more reminiscences of my first week in Shanghai may shed some rays of light both on the things that went before and those that, ultimately, may follow the work of the unified body of reformers.

The next was another full day, opening with a visit to the headquarters of the National Committee of the Y.W.C.A. of China during a morning session of the Secretarial Council. The personal introduction to and individual greeting from each officer, six out of eleven present being Chinese, and their beautiful words of encouragement and hope, came as a melting experience. In

¹ See Chapter V.

the Chinese way of looking at things names count for something, and it was explained to me that my family name, beginning with "An," opens with "peace" and closes with "life." It certainly did seem to have a good meaning for a problematical enterprise, and such poetic thoughts have the effect of music in enhancing courage. They had more material grounds for their belief that what factory inspectors had done for industry in Great Britain could also be done for industry in China.

A splendidly representative luncheon followed at the British Consulate-General, given by Mr Barton to link up the industrialists and the reformers in a social function, which was both stately and friendly. The Chairman of the Municipal Council, Mr Stirling Fessenden, was there; there were present three leading Chinese manufacturers, including Mr C. C. Nieh, the leading Japanese manufacturer, Mr Okada, and British industrialists such as Mr Brooke-Smith and Mr Archibald Rose, leaders in things that tend towards the humanising of industry. Dr H. T. Hodgkin, one of the secretaries of the N.C.C., and Miss Agatha Harrison, a member of its Industrial Committee, represented the Reformers. It was a fine "round table" in more senses than one, and the individual introductions by our host enabled me to open communications with Chinese and Japanese manufacturers in the most satisfactory of ways, as having the full support of my own countrymen.

Later in the afternoon some of us had a frank confidential talk with representatives of the English-speaking Press, inviting and obtaining their support and help in the skilled and discreet publicity work needed. In due course, the secretaries of the Shanghai Y.W.C.A. invited me to meet at their office and give an address to the representatives of the Chinese Press, through an interpreter, on leading ideas and history of factory law in relation particularly to the labour movement. The meeting seemed to have excellent results in a series of articles which soon appeared in the chief local Chinese newspapers.

The things seen in the factories (silk, cotton, printing,

albumen and egg-preserving, lucifer match, etc.), and the material information gathered in documents supplied by the Secretary of the Child Labour Commission, and by the voluntary societies—which called for considerable study—must follow in other chapters. Here one event more of an influential nature, though social and sociable, may be recalled. On Friday evening, after my first attendance at a sitting of the Child Labour Commission in the Municipal Council Chamber, I was entertained at a delightful Chinese and foreign dinner by members of the N.C.C. and national councils of the two “Y’s.” Miss Y. J. Fan (one of the secretaries at that time of the N.C.C. and a speaker of power and charm) was in the chair.¹

We agreed that it was a surprising experience to travel so far and find the organisation of public opinion in support of exclusion of infants and young children from factory life, and other reforms for Chinese industrial workers, pressed forward by voluntary societies, who proceeded much as they did in England for many years from the beginning of the factory system. It was Dr Hodgkin, however, who made the somewhat prophetic remark that “delicate international relations were involved in handling a problem like this one in Shanghai.” From a Chinese reporter came a much appreciated reminder that help would be forthcoming from delicate differences in matters of courtesy. He had enquired of me what was my age just before we sat down to dinner, and, although surprised, I had realised that it was an enquiry of a courteous kind, and replied that I had attained my sixtieth year. This fact he announced, as an auspicious circumstance, before the after-dinner speeches were ended, with hilarious consequences for the English-speaking part of his hearers. Thus it was shown me that it is nearly as important for reformers in China to have become elderly as it is in our dear country for them to remain young.

¹ Her all too early death in 1926 emphasises the precariousness of health and life, and the handicap thereby to leadership in reform movements and other constructive work in China.

CHAPTER V

THE REFORM MOVEMENT, CHINESE AND FOREIGN: THE NATIONAL CHRISTIAN COUNCIL OF CHINA AND THE TWO "Y's"

"China is much less a political entity than a civilisation—the only one which has survived from ancient times. Since the days of Confucius, the Egyptian, Babylonian, Persian, Macedonian and Roman Empires have perished, but China has persisted through a continuous evolution. There have been foreign influences—first Buddhism and now Western science. But Buddhism did not turn the Chinese into Indians and Western science will not turn them into Europeans."¹

THIS last sentence is true, for religion transcends race distinctions and science knows no national boundaries. China has her own share to bring to both, and the world needs her share. And yet China will be fundamentally affected, as other nations have been, by the fruits of the application of science to industry, even if it be with a difference. First, by its application to problems of production, and later undoubtedly also by the application of science to the human problems of conserving the life and health of the manual workers in mechanical, power-driven industry. The first stage has indeed gone a considerable way, but the second has barely begun.

In this chapter we are concerned with the early beginnings of a joint Chinese and foreign movement for adding due care of the humanity of manual workers to the earlier activities for speeding production by means of applied science. Because of the non-political character of the masses of the people, and the slowly changing civilisation of China, it is improbable that we should yet have heard much, beyond the limits of the Foreign Settlement of Shanghai, of legal protection of child workers, or have

¹ *The Problem of China*, by Bertrand Russell. Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1922, p. 208.

heard the new insistent call for more humanised conditions in factories, had not two fresh influences arisen. These are the International Labour Organisations of the League of Nations—to which China adhered by her signature of the Treaty of Peace in 1919; and the movement towards unity among the Reformed Christian Churches which specially affected Christian life in China.

The International Labour Organisations, centred in Geneva, by repeated reminders, in 1920 and in 1921, kept the Government at Peking aware of the generally admitted need for legislative regulation of modern mechanical industry.¹ Earlier it was agreed at the Conference of 1919 at Washington, where China was represented by Government delegates, that the East and the Far East at first needed certain exemptions, and that China in particular needed a postponement (which let us hope is temporary) of legal and administrative measures.

The movement of unity and of co-ordination of Christian communities, on the other hand, led to an entirely new assumption of responsibility on the part of Chinese Christians (of the Reformed Churches) for developing their own community and social life in the land. By bringing together, in one Council, the representatives, not only of the evangelistic work of missions and churches, but also of their many-sided educational, medical and social work, the way was opened to a wider vision among Christian Chinese of the needs of their country, and of their own power to influence and lead in socially constructive ways.

The Chinese student movement of 1919-20, which began in Canton, preceded some attempts of labour to effect its own organisation in a modern sense. These attempts and the various strikes which followed awakened a new public attention to the needs of labour, to the grave present lack of health and safety, and the miserable economic position of workers. The old guilds, belonging, as they did, to the pre-industrialised system of production, were generally joint organisations of masters and men.

¹ See *International Labour Review*, Dec. 1924.

Tending as they did to be largely under the guiding hand of the masters, they could not easily be so modified as to represent the growing numbers of factory workers, widely recruited as these were for employers by contractors; and thus trade unionism began, with some help from students. Already in July 1923, Miss Zung Wei-Tsung and Professor J. B. Tayler in an article on Industry and Labour in China¹ were explaining the influence of certain leaders in the intellectual Renaissance on the infant labour movement of China:

They showed how an aptitude in the Chinese scholar for social theory very naturally grew out of the wide scope of social ethics in the Chinese classics, which led on, through the popular language movement, to a certain amount of teaching of socialist and communist ideas, in night schools for factory workers. The traditional reverence of the people for the scholar strengthened the links between students and factory workers.²

The year 1922 in China was in various directions a year of significant social turning-points. In May 1922, in Shanghai, the National Christian Conference of China—including Anglicans, Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians and other smaller bodies, to the total number of over 1200 delegates—sembled. That Conference itself sprang from an earlier, International Committee, and it brought into being the N.C.C.—from which issued the main stream of voluntary social endeavours towards reform in conditions of labour that are touched on in this and the following chapters.

The Council was formed, not as a governing or ecclesiastical body, but simply to carry out certain unifying functions and duties committed to it, until the next decennial meeting of the Conference. Over half of the members in 1924-25 were Chinese and one-fourth were women. Nearly a year (between May 1922 and May 1923)

¹ See *International Labour Review*, July 1923.

² See also Chapters I. and IX. for references to the southern nationalist view.

was spent by the Council in thinking out its objects and policies in relation both to the nurture of spiritual life and the most fundamental difficulties and needs of social life in China. For example, in relation to control of opium and drug habits; harmonising old Chinese ways of home life and marriage relations with modern, changing ideas and aims; educational work for rural communities, and so on. Their active work began in May 1923, and from the outset the danger for China of the rapid increase of the unregulated factory industry stood in the front rank of pressing social questions on their programme. The labour question, first raised before the Council by the Y.W.C.A. of China, was accepted as one of the points in the programme and considered at the Conference in 1922, in connection with agriculture, handicrafts and modern industry. That Conference recommended that the Church should "equip itself with all possible knowledge on the development of industry in China and on the experience of the West, upon which we should draw for meeting the situation here." And further, it accepted as its goal the aims adopted by the International Labour Organisation, under the League of Nations, which recognised (and made provision to meet) the need of the international promotion of "fair and humane conditions of labour." As the first practicable step in that direction the Chinese Christian Conference of 1922 recommended adoption in China generally, and above all, by Christian employers, of the three following projects for factory industry:—

- (1) No employment of children under twelve full years of age;
- (2) One day's rest in seven;
- (3) The safeguarding of the health of workers by limiting working hours, improvement of sanitary conditions, and installation of safety devices in works and factories.

These fundamental recommendations were passed in May 1922 by the Conference as a whole. In October they

were endorsed by the Chinese Chambers of Commerce of Chefoo and Peking. All this preceded the dangerous political phase of the aid given by the Student Movement to the greatly needed organisation of labour.

The National Christian Council, under its Chairman, Dr David Yui, immediately appointed its Commission on Church and Industry which later became known as the Industrial Committee of the National Christian Council of China, and began its study of the application of Christian principles to the industrial situation. So great was the work involved—in the preparation of literature and adoption of the right Chinese terms to be used for ideas and things in relation to modern industry; in the organising of publicity so as to help to form public opinion through use of the vernacular Press and through meetings and lectures; in the guiding of groups for study of the problems and so on—that the Industrial Committee found it necessary to appoint a “Cabinet” of five members, meeting three times a week, to deal with the Executive work. Local investigations into conditions in particular industries were made, experiments in establishing social centres and industries on co-operative lines were encouraged, and in a few instances strikes were investigated and suggestions offered leading to adjustment. Visitors from abroad having special knowledge and experience were called into counsel and were entertained.

How widely afield such visitors might be drawn the writer of these words has good reason to realise. Her own early list of invitations in the winter of 1923-24 included requests to deliver courses of lectures on “Factory Law and its Administration in the West” at Yenching University, Peking, and at Boone University, Wuchang; to give an address on Labour Legislation and its Relation to the Labour Movement to the Chinese Social and Political Science Association at Peking; to make visits of research to places so wide apart as Changsha, in the Province of Hunan, King-te-chen, in Kiangsi, and Seoul in Korea; not to speak of the wide programme of study and meetings

in the chief industrial centres of the Yangtse Delta, or of service on the Child Labour Commission appointed by the Municipal Council of the Foreign Settlement of Shanghai.

Much of this programme was carried out, but some of it was yet to be accomplished when my homeward journey to England began in the middle of October 1924. Yet much was already learned, of fields "white already unto harvest" in this great land, and among this generous-hearted people—eager for the commerce of mind and spirit that needs neither charter nor treaty to commend it.¹ The partial eclipse in 1925-26 of the efforts towards industrial reform, I believe, cannot but be temporary.

The urgency of the claims of industrial labour in regard to general conditions of health and safety, so evident in the factories and hospitals of a great city like Shanghai, had for some years much light thrown on it by the efforts of forerunners who were working for girls and women, young men and boys, in the Y.W.C.A. and the Y.M.C.A. During fourteen years the Y.W.C.A. Secretaries had learned much of the sufferings of women and children in the factories. Their earliest Association work was among mill women in Shanghai, a house being taken for a centre in the Yangtsepoo Road, in 1906. Their contacts with the conditions of labour were developed by Miss Grace Coppock, National General Secretary of the Y.W.C.A. for China, a woman of remarkable character and understanding, from America. Among her achievements was the one of securing a place for the industrial question, as just seen, in the preparation for the National Christian Conference of 1922. As a result of her insistence on this, she was appointed chairman of a preparatory committee to inquire into the future task of the Church in view of the changing economic and industrial situation. Under her guidance a decision had been taken at the headquarters of the Association, in the winter of 1920-21, to appoint a National Industrial Secretary, funds being found in America—and to bring her from Great Britain, thus securing experience of the industrial law and labour movement in our country. To this

¹ See illustrations in Chapters VII. and VIII.

office Miss Agatha Harrison—a former factory welfare superintendent in England, a leader in the Welfare Workers' Institute, and an organiser of studies in social economics at the London School of Economics—was appointed. In June 1921, the Y.W.C.A. Secretariat decided to concentrate their limited forces rather on acquiring knowledge of the general industrial conditions than on the detailed welfare work in a few individual factories that if not otherwise reinforced would tend to leave the widespread evils unreformed. Their object was to equip the Association with the knowledge that might “enable it to serve both employers and employed in the most constructive ways and to help to create the public opinion which must precede legislation.” On Miss Harrison's departure for England in February 1924, Miss Dingman, from the World's Y.W.C.A., ably succeeded her.

Departments for industrial service were also organised in the Young Men's Christian Associations at Shanghai, Hangchow, Hankow, Tientsin, Wusih, and other industrial centres, where much admirable and indispensable service has been rendered, especially in encouraging individual Chinese employers to improve conditions for the welfare of their workers.

My own experience of the worth of the work of the two “Y's,” in their challenge to the ills they saw in the new industrialism in China, is supported and confirmed by the opinions of Bishop Francis J. M'Connell of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States, who came to the country in 1921-22 as a member of the China Educational Commission sent by leading Mission Boards of the United States, Canada, and Great Britain. He found that “so far as the direct action of Christian forces on the Chinese industrial situation is concerned,” the leaders of the Y.W.C.A. “seem to know the facts at first hand, especially as they affect the women and child workers; they seem also to be planning ahead for changes not yet at hand. . . . And there appears also a note of boldness in their utterances which is unmistakable in its implications. The Y.M.C.A.

is not quite so thoroughgoing. - It keeps the emphasis more on the remedial efficacy of welfare work. The Association, however, is encouraging free discussion of the whole problem. . . . Laying stress as it does upon native Chinese leadership, it seems to stand higher in the regard of the non-Christian Chinese than does the Church." On this latter point, nevertheless, I heard of and saw a noteworthy readiness on the part of non-Christian Chinese to call in the aid of the Y.W.C.A. secretaries when special trained help was needed in providing recreational classes for refugee children during the severe fighting in the civil warfare around Shanghai in the autumn of 1924.

It is certain that the two "Y's" have both entered, and taken a high place, in a wonderful field for socially reconstructive endeavour with, and on behalf of, Chinese youth in times of very great need for China. The adventurous spirit that is the "note" of a truly Christian Society expresses itself, fortunately, along varying lines in these two associations—both valuable far beyond need of comparative measurement. Perhaps, in these present times, the Y.W.C.A. is peculiarly called to be adventurous when everywhere in the world, to a hitherto unknown degree, young women are being impelled, by pressing circumstance, to the opening of new pathways and the testing of new methods. Yet, surely nowhere has the searching test of profound change come so fast for women as in China, bringing them almost direct from ancient seclusion to public service. It was only in October 1923 that the National Y.W.C.A. of China was formally constituted, at its first national convention of women in China, attended by 108 voting delegates, at a hotel in Hangchow; and at that time there were in the Association 85 foreign to 65 Chinese secretaries. The Convention fully carried out the intention of the pre-Convention Committee, in the steady taking over by Chinese of responsibility for the Y.W.C.A. in China. The new National Board elected at the Convention had only seven foreign members in a total membership of forty-six. In spite of their secluded home life, Dr Alfred

Sze has claimed that Chinese women have always been the best educated women of the Orient. The new problems are largely of social reconstruction, and, as a reporter in the Year Book of the National Y.W.C.A. of China for 1924 holds, all the traditions of the Chinese woman's "authority in the management of the home are, quite naturally, carrying her over into the extension of the home into the community." It is one of the many surprises one experiences on coming for the first time to China to realise that, in spite of all the great hardships for countless women in certain features of the still surviving old social order, there is a composed self-respect, dignity and confidence in the bearing of China women of all degrees, not often matched and seldom surpassed elsewhere. It does not, after a few months in the country, surprise one to learn that historians claim that "Chinese womanhood is one of the pillars of strength that have made it possible for the Chinese civilisation to endure the ravages of time." That being so (and such views are decidedly upheld by evidence given to the British China Indemnity Delegation), it is not wonderful that the first professional field, together with modern teaching, entered, with signal success, by women of China, was that of medicine. With true comradeship, Chinese women of university education have worked with an international group of women, including representatives of the Y.W.C.A., to try to solve the new industrial problems of labour conditions. In 1925 the General Secretaryship of the National Y.W.C.A. of China was filled by a Chinese lady, Miss Ting Shu-ching, of university education and admirable experience, and with the best results.

The policy deliberately adopted by the foreign organisers of the Y.W.C.A., in pressing onwards, in advance of obvious need, towards devolution of responsibility on Chinese women secretaries, has been abundantly justified in the politically disturbed times of 1926 to 1927. Stirring chronicles remain to be gathered of the ways in which the foreign secretaries lingered on at their posts until the last moment possible, under direction of the Chinese secretaries ;

and of how on the inevitable recall of the foreign women by their Consuls, to places of safety, the Chinese secretaries nobly carried on the work.

The merging of all the aims in industrial welfare work in 1922 under the leadership of the National Christian Council, through its Industrial Committee, meant that a turning-point had been reached in the movement for reform. This definitely Christian leadership in a socially constructive effort of great importance, at a critical time, meant that China was offered a new motive power towards the care of humanity in industry. It was the self-same motive power that in a more diffused way, in the nineteenth century, had been the life of the initial attempts in Great Britain to prevent the flagrant abuses of childhood that were associated with the mechanical revolution in industry. Let us not forget that supporters of the (then) "orthodox" economic doctrine of *laissez faire* were in a measure able to tolerate those abuses, as if they were an unavoidable incident of the new way of producing wealth!

The menace of rapid disintegration of the ancient conservative power of Chinese family life by large-scale employment in factory districts, and of decay of the old gild life before another basis of association for workers could grow up in its place, was strongly present to the mind of the Industrial Committee of the N.C.C. These dangers appealed to the members of the Committee as did the total lack of administrative measures (to be applied in all factories alike) to secure hygiene and safety from accidents and to prevent excessive hours of mechanical labour; the systematic night-work in the cotton industry; and, above all, the evils of young child labour automatically transplanted from the domestic system of production to the factory system. The appeal of all these things gained in intensity by the apparent absence at that time of any organised agency other than the Industrial Committee of the N.C.C. through which collective action of a nation-wide character, to move public opinion, could be taken. It was urgently necessary—as they realised from the history of the Western factory

system—to arouse the Chinese people to the danger they would incur, if the progress of industrialisation continued much longer without protection (of national scope and application) for the human needs of the worker. The system was already spreading far beyond the immediate precincts of Treaty Ports (where the earlier establishment of mechanical transport had first made the development practicable), and was independent of Foreign Concessions. And unquestionably this was bound to go on because of the authoritatively expressed Chinese view that industrialisation of their production is necessary, both to lighten the immense poverty of the people and to strengthen the nation through many-sided applications of modern science. No modern Chinese has had greater sway over the minds of masses of his countrymen than Sun Yat-Sen. In his book, which I have quoted in an earlier chapter, *The International Development of China*, 1922—far-reaching in its plans for applying foreign capital to development of China's resources—we read ¹ of his particular desire to introduce modern machinery into Cantonese industries in order to enable Canton to regain “its former grandeur as a great manufacturing centre.”

In an article on “China Striving to Rebuild Herself,” Dr W. W. Yen, holder successively of several of the highest offices in the Government, says :

“It is a source of gratification that China's industries have steadily developed, and that the volume of trade . . . has more than doubled during the last ten years. At the same time the development of the mines, etc., deserve to be equally noted.”

In an article on “Science and Progress in China,” in the same publication as the just quoted article,² Dr V. K. Ting, organiser of the Geological Survey of China and author of the *Geology of the Yangtze Delta*, says :

“Industrialisation based on modern science enables us

¹ See Chapter II. above.

² See Sixtieth Anniversary Number of the *North China Daily News*, July 14th, 1924.

to develop and utilise our natural resources on a large scale. . . . Even to a casual observer the phenomenal growth of the cotton mills must attract his attention . . . silk filatures have a similar story. . . . They represent only one phase of the general tendency of industrialisation. . . . The development of the coal mining industry deserves special mention. Unlike the cotton and silk factories it has nothing to do with Treaty Ports. In 1911 there was not a single mine financed with Chinese capital and operated by Chinese engineers. . . . At present there are more than a dozen prosperous companies owned and operated by Chinese with an aggregate capital of 60 million dollars, and a capacity of producing 8 million tons per annum out of the 14 million tons produced by all the modern mines in China. . . . Every new mine organised by the Chinese means a fresh training ground for mining students, and every little lighting plant requires at least a skilled electrician. The result is that a nucleus of professional men has been created who will form the backbone of the future Chinese Republic."

So much to illustrate the desire of Chinese statesmen and men of science for progress in the application of science to industry. What of the attitude of employed and employers to the regulation of conditions of labour ?

When Chinese workers appealed to me in 1923-24 to advise and help them to obtain improved conditions of their work in factories, some of them expressly asked that nothing should be done to impede or interfere with production. The labour question—though beset with unseen risks for manufacturers—was still then in a manner simple, in view of the superabundant supplies of willing, nay, eager labour—illiterate, demanding little and wholly Chinese. On the other hand, the problem of choice of method in making a human appeal on behalf of the workers to the employers, in the absence of any effective central Chinese Government since the revolution, was naturally complicated by the presence, among the rapidly growing ranks of Chinese manufacturers, of a certain, relatively

small, number of foreign manufacturers—the Japanese being far the most numerous. This factor, only cursorily noticed above, has been part of the whole problem, and demanded increasing attention after the Revolution. There were, foremost, the Japanese, next British, American, and in a few industries, French and Italian employers, carrying on their industries chiefly, though not wholly, in concessions and settlements, in Hankow, at Nanking and Tientsin, as well as in the Foreign and French Settlements of Shanghai. And in such mixed ranks, inclusive of a great majority of Chinese, time alone could evolve a unified public opinion for particular reforms. In the minds of the best Chinese manufacturers there was responsiveness to ideas of a paternal character towards the workers, but in technical experience and realisation of the need of legislation for health and safety the foreign employers had the leadership.

In recent years foreign employers in Shanghai, through the Employers' Federation, have—rightly—emphasised the view,¹ that nothing but Chinese legislation and inspection can, in the long run, effectually and fairly cover the whole ground or hold the balance between employers in factories lying both outside and inside the Foreign Settlement. Yet, manifestly, it was bound to be extremely difficult for a Central Government (which was the fruit of comparatively recent revolution and with its ancient Civil Service more or less dissolved) to begin effectually on such delicate and highly technical work of administration as is the inspection of modern factories; and all the time there were unresolved causes of governmental instability which only gradually became apparent. We may remind ourselves that old, firmly-established governments of Europe, securely and steadily evolving modern administrative departments, needed the best part of a century to get a real grasp of such administration of labour laws.

It is not intended in this sketch of an industrial visit

¹ See *Municipal Gazette*, Shanghai, Jan. 25th, 1923. Correspondence under "Child Labour," and below, pp. 128 and ff.

to China to touch, except where it is unavoidable, on political questions or political history. At the same time, the effect, in such complex administrative affairs as application of labour laws, of the continued lack of any central government having power to enforce its Regulations steadily throughout any substantial part of the country, even when "civil war" (or the war of military rulers) was not actively going on, must be continually remembered. To do so can only make one misjudge the obstacles to effectually carrying out the "principle" (internationally accepted) of governmental regulation of human conditions within the factory system. The very capacity of this ancient, industrious, habitually peaceable people quietly to rule itself locally, under its elders, without definite organs of local government, can by itself—if there were no other causes—offer an obstacle to uniform, centrally enacted law.

Although we were engaged in absorbing efforts to pass over to Chinese people knowledge and experience of the benefits of scientifically applied standards for health and safety of workers in modern factories in the West, it was impossible for me not to wonder, many times, whether China, when she settles down to fuller control of her resources and develops stable government, may not evolve something like a new industrial order. After seeing something of their handicrafts one began to speculate as to whether the Chinese people will see the mechanical conquer and drive out the ancient system even so far as England has done. England itself has, as was pointed out in his *Fields, Factories and Workshops* by Prince Kropotkin, something left of the old human relationships, underlying the more rigid separation between the manual worker and the organiser of production in the factory system. That is certainly true and accounts for much that is socially precious, for example, in the way that our premier industry, cotton, on the whole peaceably evolved its high degree of parallel organisation of employers and workers, and led the way in much of the evolution of Factory Law. It accounts for

absence of much bitterness in the struggle of British labour for its liberties under the modern power-driven order of industry. It accounts for the special character of our later industrial welfare movement, which is legal and State-administered as much as voluntary. And it explains the fairly considerable extent of the Joint Industrial Council movement, first "tried out" for a long time in the cotton and boot and shoe industries and then popularised in idea by the Whitley Reconstruction Reports.

In the strongly democratic spirit of much of their national life, the endurance of their customs, the vastness of their land, and the profit-sharing spirit of many of their old workshop industries, the Chinese may yet find some way of reconciling and harmonising the methods of domestic and industrialised production.

The problem of finding a way out of the abuses of the industrialised system nevertheless was already there, present in China, at the very time when central government was declining to its weakest. It stands alongside of terrible evils in the unindustrialised old workshops, of which the rug-making workshops of Peking and Tientsin afford outstanding illustrations, and alongside the appalling overstrain of bodily powers of workers in haulage, transport, construction, daily and hourly before one's eyes in any great city. Not in horse-power but in man-power should men in China reckon the motor force of their mechanical engines. In Tientsin (in 1923) "six coolies are cheaper to hire than a man and his mule."¹

As to the possibilities of uniform factory law, the mind seeks comparison with other countries. If in the United States of America, comparable in area with China, in population far less, and with much less extreme contrasts within its borders in the material development of its resources and conditions—if there, factory law widely varies from State to State, and unregulated child labour still exists in a few States, what can reasonably be expected at present

¹ *International Labour Review*, July 1923, article on "Industry and Labour in China." See also below, page 211 and Plate VI.

in China? Here the political revolution of 1911-12, with all its unresolved inner sources of later division, followed hard upon the beginnings of the "industrial revolution." The latter, so long as it grew up mainly in or near Shanghai (Chinese and Foreign), was very little seen in its social implications by the Chinese Government. There was no organised or literate factory labour seriously to disturb or draw attention to its changing conditions, even when the European War hastened the pace of industrial changes. And thus: "Among the so-called civilised nations of the world, China stands practically alone in the position of being without labour legislation that is actually under enforcement."¹

"Probably China has got the worst working conditions, not only as compared with Europe and America, but even with India and Japan. In these latter countries there are laws which give a certain amount of protection to the workers. The hours of work are limited, child labour restricted, night work for women and children prohibited, special care given to working mothers, compensation provided for accidents, etc. But *in China there is as yet no effective law whatsoever for the protection of the workers.*"²

The italics are mine but the words are the words of Mr M. T. Tchou, a Chinese scholar, and, at the time of my first visit to China, a member of the "Cabinet" of the Industrial Committee of the N.C.C. as well as head of the industrial department of the Y.M.C.A. He goes on to say:

"Industrial legislation has now become an integral part of the tasks of modern governments. The Government in China has as yet only begun to realise this. A set of regulations was promulgated in March 1923, by the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce. . . Very little has been done to put these regulations into effect, inade-

¹ Sixtieth Anniversary Number of the *North China Daily News*, July 14th, 1924, p. 3, article on "Industrialism and the Chinese Woman," by Miss May-Ling Soong.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 33 and 35.

quate as they are in themselves. . . . It is the task of all who are interested in the welfare of the country to do their utmost to stir up further interest for the enactment of suitable laws. It is of equal importance to see that laws are enforced; the inspection of factories is absolutely necessary to give effect to the law."

Is it not plain from such utterances as these—in spite of all the very great difficulties in the way of securing early regulation of industry—that something living and likely to be influential in that direction had been attained by the formation of the N.C.C. and by the investigations and studies of its Industrial Committee? The fact that Chinese employers of labour were members of that Council and convinced supporters of welfare in their own works, in various centres of industry, was extremely important. The new ideas about care of the workers were being disseminated in widely separate parts of China, and not only from Shanghai, by meetings and addresses in many places and in all manner of publications, from Canton to Hankow, and Chefoo to Peking—even further afield. A strong impression of a widely diffused movement to secure both legislative and voluntary reforms in conditions of labour met me in the first few days of my entry into China, in Canton and Hong-Kong. No doubt this impression was somewhat disproportionate because, however numerous and energetic the adherents, they had a tremendous untouched field yet to cover.

Two matters linked with this field of humanity in industry, of fundamental national and international consequence to which my earliest attention was drawn at meetings of the Industrial Committee, were: The exceptional need in China (*a*) for providing university and practical training for social and industrial welfare workers and public health workers; and (*b*) for well grounded social and economic surveys and for trustworthy statistical records, both essential to any solid advance in social legislation and administration.

The National Christian Council reiterated and followed

up a recommendation from the Conference of May 1922: that the training of leaders of social work be given as strong consideration as was already being given to medicine and education, and that schools of social science be developed in connection with existing universities. They also fully acted on the advice that steps should be taken to secure the services of any visitors to China who have specialised knowledge and experience of the industrial situation in other countries. The Cabinet of the Industrial Committee took a leading part in bringing the two questions (of professional training for social welfare work, and of the development of social science at the universities) before an Educational Conference of Christian Colleges and Universities at Nanking, in February 1924, which included a section on Sociology and Economics. A special meeting was arranged, at which leading speakers brought home to this educational body of people the seriousness of the industrialisation of China and the urgent need of close co-operation between the Christian educational forces and the Industrial Committee in grappling with the problems of human welfare involved. They were able to call to witness the testimony of the important International, Missionary, Educational Commission of 1921-22 (under the chairmanship of the late Professor E. D. Burton, of the university of Chicago), to the need for a central Institute of Economics and Sociological Research in connection with the universities; and to the insistence of the Conference of 1922 on the urgent need to attack the technical problems of changing China "by investigation and research on the field." They definitely recognised that "the day will come when most of the research and investigation will be undertaken by the Chinese Government."

The Nanking Conference of Christian Colleges and Universities of February 1924 was more especially appealed to on the ground of urgent need in the Christian movement in China for trained men and women to take up social and industrial service. The need, they were told, is not only for pastors, parish and institutional church workers under-

standing the new social issues, but for civic administrators, hospital social service, trained Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A. secretaries. One might surely add to this list some preparation for higher civil servants and inspectors of industry and factories, as well as factory welfare superintendents or "personnel" workers. The Conference recommended the preparation of special courses in one or two universities, in connection with departments of sociology and economics, for the professional training of these specialised social workers; the providing of general courses on economic and social questions and methods of dealing with them; the arranging of summer school courses, for giving some knowledge of present-day activities in the work, social service, and the organising of co-ordinating links between the colleges providing these educational courses and the bodies employing social workers. The means for attracting the best type of candidates, and the correlation and standardising of training courses for social work, were also considered.

There seemed then to be an element of romance in the very idea that this latest method of the West, for meeting the complex needs of modern industrialised civilisation—that is, the organised professional training of the social welfare supervisor—might early be transplanted in China, when one thought how very recently it was accorded theoretic and university rank in the much older industrialised communities of the West. And yet how far the possibility appears to have receded within three years, 1925 to 1927! The colleges and universities which prepared for it have been themselves largely driven into inactivity, except within the sphere of influence of the Northern Government. They were ahead of time in China, but their plan may yet be taken up by Chinese Nationalist universities. The Recommendations of the British China Indemnity Delegation would favour such a move.

No doubt in Great Britain the idea of organised industrial welfare had been growing up in a practical sense since the days when Robert Owen assured his brother

manufacturers, in the beginning of the nineteenth century, that factory workers needed and responded to detailed personal care as much as did the intricate new machinery. Yet it was only in the beginning of the twentieth century that manufacturers joined together in development of welfare superintendence;¹ and in the year 1917 that the first official Conference was held under the Government Department concerned, the Home Office, on professional training for industrial welfare supervisors. There the universities who had been experimenting in this field were represented, as well as employers, employed, and the factory inspectorate. A good foundation was then laid for adding properly trained employment-management to the great system of factory law and inspection long since developed for the protection of the workers.

In China the greatness of the need and the lateness of the movement for factory reform has made it desirable to consider both measures together—State (or Provincial) factory regulation, and trained employment-management—as remedies for the excesses of mechanical production. It is of great interest in this connection that under the auspices of the Y.W.C.A., early in 1923, a Chinese woman graduate of Hongkong University was chosen and sent to England for a year's course in sociology at the London School of Economics. She returned at its conclusion to the position of an Industrial Secretary of the Y.W.C.A., where fields of work can be found and experience can be gained, of the real needs of factory workers, while waiting for the opening up of Chinese Government initiative in this matter.

The urgency in China for organised research into its social and industrial life was equally strongly recognised by the Nanking Educational Conference. Without ample "illustrative *Chinese* material," to begin with, little practical progress could be made in training for social welfare work. The Conference recommended that a committee be formed

¹ In the year 1909 the first general conference of welfare manageresses and supervisors was convened at Messrs Cadbury's works, at Bourneville, to consider the aims and results of their work.

to take all possible steps towards establishment of the proposed Institute of Economic and Sociological Research, and, pending its establishment, they called for co-ordination of existing college work. The Industrial Committee, thus encouraged, pushed forward with plans, and the work of reconnaissance was passed over to a special Commission. Good studies were made during 1924 of actual industrial conditions in various centres. Noteworthy among these is the survey made by Mr C. C. Chu and Mr Blaisdell of the Rug industry of Peking. This was published as a special Supplement of the *Chinese Social and Political Science Review*, April 1924, thus opening up an important new channel for access to Chinese consideration of these industrial questions.

Even more fundamental than the professional training of social welfare workers, important though that be, is the steady application of medical and other scientific knowledge to the appropriate hygiene of the industrial life and environment of the manual worker. So far, in China this is forthcoming chiefly in the very few large industrial undertakings, British and American, where a medical officer is appointed by the individual company, and in a still smaller number of Chinese works. The welfare supervisor can work most effectually where supported by a law administered by an inspectorate, medical and general, alike in every workplace, and applying principles that are universal in their scope. For example, unless injurious or poisonous dusts, fumes, gases, etc., are effectually evacuated immediately from the point where they arise during work, and unless there is good lighting and general ventilation, other measures for the welfare of the average worker, such as good messing arrangements, good washing conveniences, lose their value—for an injured worker needs a hospital, not factory conditions at all.

The relations of the National Christian Council with the medical groups in the missionary field began with its own beginnings. A resolution that "immediate steps be taken to secure a full-time physician for industrial research,

to serve either in connection with the Council on Health Education or the N.C.C., which was presented to the sub-committee on Public Health of the China Medical Missionary Association, was endorsed by the Industrial Committee. In May 1924 some definite action was taken in this direction, and in the autumn the temporary appointment of Mr C. T. Maitland, M.D. (London), M.R.C.P., D.P.H., for such research, and particularly to make inquiry into the conditions of labour and the extent of phosphorus poisoning in lucifer match-making factories, was accomplished under the auspices of the Industrial Committee. It appeared to be a specially opportune moment to gather "illustrative Chinese material" in some of the numerous semi-industrialised match factories of China, since a Chinese Ministerial order prohibiting the use of the dangerous white phosphorus in lucifer match-making (in conformity with International Conventions) was due to come into force in 1925. It was hoped that the collecting of such definite illustrative material about the ravages and suffering entailed by use of the dangerous substance would be a strong spur to observance of the law, and perhaps also would demonstrate the usefulness of modern skilled medical and public health research in industry. The inquiry was made, and the resulting report was published in the *China Journal of Science and Arts*, February and March 1925. We were extremely fortunate in finding Dr Maitland free at the "psychological moment"; just released from university work in an International Missionary University, with the requisite scientific attainments, some knowledge of the Chinese language, and willing to be detained for a few months on his way homeward to England.

All through the first six months of 1924 my own active work for the National Christian Council was closely associated with that of, first, Miss Harrison, secondly, Miss Dingman who succeeded her (as representative of the World's Industrial Y.W.C.A.) on the Industrial Committee and on the internationally-better-known Child Labour Commission of Shanghai. We were associated in the pursuit of know-

ledge and the accumulation of illustrative instances of the actual conditions of Chinese factory workers. Even more did the work develop in "making contacts" of a friendly kind with officials of every degree, Chinese and foreign, and in spreading knowledge of the factory laws of other countries. In my own case long official experience in the administration of the oldest body of factory law naturally determined the scope of my share in meetings and conferences. The wonderfully sympathetic nature of the reception accorded to us wherever we went led to delightful experiences that enter best into the fabric of other chapters.¹

The next immediate business, however, is to give, so far as may be, a clear account of the inception and work of the Child Labour Commission of Shanghai. This certainly owed its rise to the ideas and activities of the secretaries of the Y.W.C.A. and to the subsequent shaping power given to the movement for industrial reform by the new initiative of the N.C.C. In the train of events that accompanied the inquiries, and the thinking-out of a policy, by the Child Labour Commission, and the historical events that ensued when the Foreign Municipal Commission tried to give effect to the recommendations of this Commission, one may find a measure of the importance of the work to which the N.C.C. had set its hand. And with these and other kindred considerations we are concerned in our next chapter.

¹ See Chapters VII. and VIII.



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Mr Fong Sec

MR FONG SEC (OF SHANGHAI COMMERCIAL PRESS) AND HIS FAMILY

CHAPTER VI
THE CHILD LABOUR COMMISSION OF
SHANGHAI, 1923-24: ITS ORIGIN AND
ITS CONCLUSIONS

Still, all day, the iron wheels go onward,
Grinding life down from its mark ;
And the children's souls, which God is calling sunward,
Spin on blindly in the dark.

E. B. BROWNING

The children are holy people.

LAO TZ

IT is already clear from the foregoing chapters that many persons, in face of all the difficulties, had worked hopefully together to discover practicable ways whereby China might begin to attain some degree of health and safety for the workers—to add to the speed in production which is the foremost feature of the new industrial system.

In all the history of British factory legislation, since 1802, with its "Health and Morals of Apprentices Act" for the cotton industry of Lancashire, the first step has always been to protect the children. Originally, owing to the nearly absolute sway of economic doctrines that are now derelict, it was the only legislative action that was possible in the way of "interference" with human conditions in industry. Although it is no longer necessary to suppose that individual adults in factories can by their own unaided efforts take care of their health and safety, and secure the conditions requisite for this, it is still, practically, an urgent matter to begin with legislation for the children—for the sake of the adults as well as for the children !

Those who have not yet seen little children at work in

the cotton mills, silk filatures and lucifer match factories of China, whether Treaty ports or elsewhere, may not fully grasp this point. They will acquire some certainty about it if they will run through the summary of evidence about the sights in the factories contained in Part I. of the *Report of the Child Labour Commission of Shanghai*.¹ Some of the half-industrialised factories appear to be at least as much a rough kind of crèches or nurseries as they are places of work. It would seem almost odd, if it were not so grievous and deplorable, that the factory system was running in Shanghai (with some foreigners—although many more Chinese—among the industrialists) during more than a quarter of a century without a strong, *self-defensive* move from the manufacturers to build up their factory industry on a saner, more mature basis as regards labour. It might perhaps have taken longer to get large mills filled with workers, yet probably again it would not, if from the first a notice had been affixed on all the biggest factory gateways of the Settlement: "Children under fourteen years not admitted," and if this had been firmly maintained by agreement among the leading foreign manufacturers, the Chinese manufacturers would have dissented, but the persistent followers in the footsteps of Robert Owen would have won the day in the end.

The omission of the manufacturers, as a whole, to take sufficiently long views on the question of labour, or to take account of the new scientific ideas that were being unfolded by Factory Inspectors' reports in Great Britain since 1895-96, led to the building up of their industry on a labour foundation that in fact is unstable. It matters not at all that the foundations were uncriticised by Chinese themselves—workers or others—for many years. The resultant evils of young child labour, night-work and exceedingly long hours, were bound in the long run, in an Inter-

¹ Published in the *Municipal Gazette*, July 9th, 1924, of which copies were reprinted in full with appendices by Messrs Kelly & Walsh, Ltd., Shanghai. Also to be seen, though without its appendices, in Cmd. 2442, China No. 1 (1925), pp. 113-30.

national Settlement, to draw forth disturbed reflections and observations from onlookers. And as to the position of the child workers, this, from the Anglo-Saxon woman's point of view, was largely a woman's business.

Thus there arose the position, touched on in the preceding chapter, that secretaries of the Y.W.C.A., from about 1906 onwards, came into personal contact with the conditions through their work for girls. They were in no way unreasonable or out of touch with reality in their aspirations for the women and girls, far from it. There leaps to my memory a question I put to a young Chinese assistant secretary in the Y.W.C.A. office in Hangchow, and her reply: "Which do you think the more important when you visit the girls in a factory, the work that they are doing, or the conditions under which they work?" She consulted with an equally youthful Chinese colleague for a moment and then replied: "Both are important!"

It was about the year 1920 that the Y.W.C.A. leaders began to gather strength for deliberate action. First an American, and then an Englishwoman, as we have seen, pre-eminently led in stirring the far from clear waters. From the former, Miss Coppock, came the new outlook on the need for experience and knowledge, guided by belief in the possibility of reform. From the latter, Miss Harrison, came a three years' effort in China to attract many people concerned to the facts, and to arouse discussion of the methods by which amendment might begin. She was fortunate in coming early in the movement of the Reformed Churches towards Christian unity, and in being able to throw her strength into the support of its leaders in a united effort for industrial reform. The whole movement, being young, was free from the trammels and prepossessions that are so apt to beset a Church which has been long established, and is perhaps unconsciously influenced by the existing economic and social order.

The sequence of events that directly led up to the appointment of the Child Labour Commission has great significance in view of the disturbances in 1925-26. The

responsibility for the protection of the child workers within the growing Chinese factory system unquestionably, in the long run, belonged to the Chinese Government; but, failing their ability at the time to shoulder it, appeal was made to the International Municipal Council of Shanghai to attempt a beginning within the Settlement. And this appeal came from Chinese as much as from foreigners.

Out of the work of the Y.W.C.A. that was led by the new Industrial Secretary grew the study of industrial conditions by an international group of women residents of Shanghai, and the formation there, in the late autumn of 1921, of the Joint Committee of the American, British and Chinese Women's Clubs, with the Y.W.C.A. included as a constituent group. Miss May-Ling Soong, afterwards a member of the Child Labour Commission, was Secretary to this Joint Committee.¹

In November 1922, after many months' work in investigation of the facts, and in discussions with leading manufacturers and officials in the Foreign Settlement, besides conferences with Chinese in various parts of China, Miss Harrison had a conference with Mr H. G. Simms, Chairman of the Municipal Council. This opened a new phase of the efforts for reform in labour conditions.

Of these last two steps, Miss Harrison said at a public meeting in London in February 1925: "The Joint Committee of Women's Clubs . . . focused attention until we brought the matter before the Municipal Council, of which Mr Simms was Chairman, and on which there are seven British men. We knew that they would make things move. And they did."

An official correspondence followed the conference, and it makes the new starting-point clear. The letters were rightly held to be of sufficient importance for publication in the *Municipal Gazette*.² Until their content is understood it is impossible fairly to estimate the factors in the campaign for the Child Labour by-law. In the first letter,

¹ See above, Chapter II., p. 47.

² There they can be seen in full, in the issue for January 25th, 1923.

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dated November 23rd, 1922, the purport of the conference with Miss Harrison chiefly touching child labour—and of the following meeting of the Chairman with the Council—was conveyed by their Secretary and Commissioner-General to Mr E. F. Mackay, Chairman of the Employers' Federation, in substance as follows: The Chairman of the Municipal Council had pointed out to Miss Harrison "some of the difficulties with which this question is beset," owing to the existence of unregulated factories in Chinese Shanghai immediately outside the limits of the Settlement; and he had gone on to express to the Council the view that they "should give a lead in the matter by adopting a sympathetic attitude towards action to limit some of the abuses with which the employment of child labour is fraught." Although the members of the Council had agreed in this, their opinion was that no "good result could be achieved except by bringing together foreign and Chinese mill and factory owners *inside and outside the Settlement*, and securing unanimity amongst them as to the action to be taken."¹ They were not optimistic of early results because they believed that the employment of the children was due not to any preference of the employers for employing them rather than adult workers, but to the parents in sending out their children—"often through force of circumstances"—to earn their own livelihood and so contribute to the family expenditure. "It seemed to them that this practice could only be eradicated in course of time by education."

The outcome of this letter was a meeting, on December 5th, 1922, of the committees of the Employers' Federation and the Cotton Mill Owners' Association of China, both foreign societies, and the second letter of the correspondence, dated January 8th, 1923, conveyed to the Municipal Council their conclusions and action: "The consensus of opinion was that legislation must come in the first instance from the Chinese," and that it might be suggested to them "that, from the point of view of the foreign employer,

¹ Italics mine.

legislation was indicated, and that educational facilities for the children of mill operatives should be considered in conjunction with their non-employment." Their action was to send letters to the Chinese Chamber of Commerce and to the Cotton Mill Owners' Association regarding the abolition of child labour in Factories, and giving their own view that the only practicable solution would be legislation that would prohibit the children working under a specified age, and the provision of schools for them during the hours that their parents are engaged at work. They added: "It was realised, however, that the appeal for this legislation must come in the first instance from such organisations as the Chinese Chamber of Commerce and the Chinese Cotton Mill Owners' Association; and in asking you to take the necessary steps we assure you of our most cordial support."

A few days later, Mr Mackay forwarded to the Municipal Council the noteworthy replies of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Cotton Mill Owners' Association. The latter was signed by the Vice-President of the Association, Mr C. C. Niéh. It was declared that the matter had engaged the attention of the Association for many years, and that there had been no conclusion on account of the many difficulties involved in the question. It added:

"In connection with your appeal to the Government for a legislation prohibiting the children working under a specified age, we wish to inform you that, as far as we understand, such a legislation is now being drawn up by the Government and we hope will be published before long. We have recently been asked to present our views on this subject, and we shall be glad to receive any suggestions from you in respect of said questions."

The letter from the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, dated January 11th, 1923, signed by the Chairman, Mr. H. C. Sung, is so significant that it should be read in full. It is as follows:

"It is with sentiments of deep appreciation that I

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acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 2nd inst. on the subject of child labour in the factories. The contention of your organisations that children under a specified age should be prohibited from working, and that during the hours within which the parents are engaged at work the children should be taught in schools specially provided for them, is one to which this Chamber gives its warm endorsement.

“ We fully agree with you that legislation on the part of the Chinese Government is essential to the improvement of the conditions of child labour in the factories. In this connection we have the pleasure of drawing your attention to the fact that already two bills have been introduced into the House of Representatives in Peking, covering the two points you have raised, namely (a) the age limit as applied to child labour, and (b) the question of providing educational facilities for the children of the labouring classes. Details of these bills will be found in the Parliamentary Record issued for the month of October last year, and there is good ground for the belief that the question of child labour has been carefully investigated.

“ We have already dispatched a telegram to the House of Representatives, urging that immediate steps be taken for the early passage of the bills in question in order that the new legislative measures affecting child labour may be enacted in the near future.

“ . . . We have also telegraphed in a similar sense to the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce.

“ Be assured, dear Sirs, of our warm appreciation and earnest co-operation in the noble work you are doing for improving the conditions of child labour in this country.”

This correspondence closed on January 24th, 1923, with a letter of acknowledgment to Mr Mackay from the Secretary and Commissioner General of the Municipal Council, appreciative of the “ very earnest and sympathetic consideration ” that had been given to the matter by the Federation, the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, and the

Mill Owners' Associations. It expressed the gratification of the Council on learning that the Chinese Government actually had under consideration legislation prohibiting the employment of children under a certain age and making provision for their education whilst their parents are at work.

Evidently it had not then been brought formally to the knowledge of any of these bodies, Chinese or foreign, that the Chinese Education Authorities of the adjoining Province, Kiangsu, were still in the stage of training large numbers of teachers before it was possible to increase provision for schools to any great extent, not to speak of so gigantic an undertaking as the serious adoption of primary education for the mass of the children of China. At a conference, in December 1923, with Mr Yuan Shih-tao, President of the Provincial Educational Association under the Government, for Kiangsu Province (to which I was taken by a small group of educational leaders, Chinese and foreign), some extremely enlightening facts and figures bearing on this matter were mentioned.

The estimated population of Kiangsu Province in 1922 was not far short of 34,000,000 and Mr Yuan calculated that taking the four years from 7 to 11 (or from 6 to 10) years of age, there would be 3,000,000 children of primary school age. Already, he said, they had got into schools, on the whole, about 18 per cent. of those who should be there, and each year they were trying to increase the number. They had already 20,000 teachers in the Province, but they needed at least 40,000 more. Normal Training Schools are the first need, as "teachers cannot be made out of nothing." At least two years' training is indispensable, but five years are really needed. If they opened schools before they had the teachers, there would be blame from the public. They expected soon to reap a supply of additional teachers from the forty normal training schools already established. It should be borne in mind—although this was not mentioned at that conference—that allowance must be made in all training schemes for wastage of those

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trained through the high mortality and sickness rates prevalent in China.¹

As regards factory children, Mr Yuan made two suggestions. The first was merely provisional, to give these children a popular educational course in the thousand-character method for the elements of reading. Unfortunately this would only add to the present overstrain of the children. The second suggestion was for the building up of a half-time system and for its administration, so far as the Foreign Settlement was concerned, by a Joint Committee from the Municipal Council and the Provincial Government. Such discussions are worthy of remembrance when one is trying to follow closely the course of the endeavours that were made in the Foreign Settlement to control the evils of child labour in the factories. In every country it has been found that in a suitable provision of elementary school education lies the key to the remedy. In Great Britain, indeed, it was the coming of the new industrial order that first ushered in the possibility of child education as a birthright for all. In an industrialised country an illiterate people became an impossibility.

The next move in Shanghai came on March 1st, 1923, from the Joint Committee of the American, British, and Chinese Women's Clubs, and of the National Committee of the Y.W.C.A. The formation of this Joint Committee had preceded the important official correspondence reported above, and they addressed a letter to the Chairman of the Municipal Council—Mr Simms—signed by, among others, Mrs Gull, Chairman of the British Women's Association; Dr Fearn, President of the American Women's Club; Mrs Siao, President of the Shanghai Women's Club, and Mrs Mei, Chairman of the National Committee of the Y.W.C.A.

“While fully recognising the many practical difficulties

¹ See *Report of the British China Indemnity Delegation*—Appendix IIIA. See also Memorandum on *Need of a Public Health Organisation*, published in April 1926 by the Association for the Advancement of Public Health, Peking, China; see especially p. 12.

which bar the way to any change of the present conditions," these ladies none the less urged the Council to consider taking such steps as may be necessary to ensure the abolition of night-work for children under twelve years of age (foreign count),¹ to bring to the consideration of the Municipal Education Commission, then sitting, "the provision of part-time schools, in such factory districts as come within the Council's jurisdiction, whereby the number of working hours for children would be automatically regulated, and to extend the powers of the Health Department to include the supervision of factories in matters relating to ventilation, sanitation, and safety."

The Municipal Council a few weeks later informed the Women's Joint Committee of their intention to appoint the Commission on Child Labour,² and invited them to submit names of those whom they would suggest to serve on the Commission. Six out of the fourteen names submitted in response to this invitation appeared on the list of appointments made to the Commission. Three members were Chinese and one Japanese. At that stage, evidently, it had not occurred to any of the responsible Chinese who were co-operating in the movement for reform with the Municipal Council and the foreign Mill Owners' Associations that the Council were attempting anything that was not well within the scope of their power and beneficial to the Chinese. Later developments in Shanghai, in 1925, give special interest to this point.

The Women's Joint Committee had been at pains to point out to the Municipal Council in their letter of March 1st how the Chinese themselves were "showing an active interest in the problems presented by the development of industrial labour"; how the National Christian

¹ According to Chinese reckoning ante-natal life of a child is included, and if that extends over New Year's Day each part of a year counts as a whole. Thus a child twelve years old by Chinese count may be a year or more younger by foreign count.

² The intention to appoint the Commission was announced in the *Municipal Gazette* of April 5th, 1923.

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Conference in 1922 had introduced and endorsed the threefold labour standards set out in the last Chapter, and how "the Chefoo Chamber of Commerce, the Peking Chamber of Commerce, and various other Chinese organisations have endorsed the standards and are seeking the best methods of putting them into practical effect."

Meanwhile, between the dates of the appeal of the Women's Committee to the Council and the decision of the Council to appoint the Child Labour Commission, the Government at Peking promulgated on March 29th, 1923, the Provisional Factory Regulations which had been introduced into, but not passed by, the House of Representatives. These had no legal force, and have remained without legal force in any part of China. They simply indicated certain standards that the Government Department concerned held desirable in factories employing over a hundred workers and other extra-hazardous factories in respect of the following matters: In regard to age of entry, hours of work, and care of children and their exclusion from night-work; rest pauses for all workers and precautions against dangers to their life and health, besides exclusion of children from cleaning or repairing machinery in motion; rest and maternity benefit for women at childbirth; certain protective clauses in regard to wages; free medical attendance for persons falling sick or being injured "while employed in the factory"; and for "suitable educational facilities" which "owners of factories shall provide at their own expense" for "their juvenile employees and also for any of their adult employees who have been thrown out of work." Since the country is without a national or general provincial provision for elementary education, and only a small fraction of the people can have secondary education, it is difficult to enter into the mind of legislators who expected factory owners, at their own expense, to provide education for employees under 18 years and for their own unemployed workers. There are several clauses which appear to have little relation to reality. Still, the standards are evidence of the acceptance, in some degree, by the

Chinese Republic of its responsibility in regard to labour conditions for carrying out its obligations as a member of the International Labour Organisations under the League of Nations.

The Regulations contain no provision for enforcement by penalties, nor even for their introduction to employers of labour in factories by an inspectorate. And yet they have had good effect in various directions. Their relatively small scope, set out in twenty-eight articles, is no drawback, indeed the contrary. In view of all the difficulties of making a good beginning, factory regulations in China should have the simplest possible structure and contents. It would be futile to begin with large and complex demands in a factory law for a country where the conditions are in many ways so adverse, and to try to apply them over widely varying provinces. It must be remembered that the indispensable inspector is not yet available, and the immense and extremely poor population is not only inured to long hours and hard conditions, but the parents are convinced as to their own dependence on the aid of their children's labour. They have been unable to realise the power of sweated child workers to drag down the family breadwinner's earnings. Although the Regulations need considerable modifications and redrafting to make it possible to apply them, they have spread the idea of control of industrial conditions on ethical lines. They also proved a valuable introduction for, myself and other N.C.C. workers to the conferences on labour conditions with central and local officials as well as with manufacturers. And—a very important point—they were taken as the foundation of the work and recommendations of the Child Labour Commission, appointed by the Foreign Municipal Council (it may be recalled again) in response to an appeal that was as much Chinese as foreign.

The list of members was complete, and the Commission was appointed and began its work in June 1923. It was directed: To inquire into the conditions of Child Labour in Shanghai and the vicinity and to make recommendations

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to the Council as to what regulations, if any, should be applied to Child Labour in the Foreign Settlement of Shanghai, having regard to practical considerations and to local conditions generally." Thus the inquiry was not limited to the employment of the children in factories.

The original members included, in addition to the Chairman, who was a leading Barrister-at-Law, Mr H. Lipson Ward, four manufacturers or factory managers and a merchant, three British, one Chinese, one Japanese, and four women. The women included a Missionary with wide social experience in China; the Industrial Secretary of the Y.W.C.A.; a Chinese medical woman, employed as medical officer of one of the largest of the Anglo-American factories, and the Chinese Secretary of the Joint Committee, whose letters to the Council had definitely raised the question. I was co-opted as an additional member of the Child Labour Commission within five-and-a-half months of its appointment, and began to take part in its deliberations on and from December 7th, 1923. The first Industrial Secretary of the Y.W.C.A. (Miss Harrison) had to return to England in the end of February 1924, and was replaced on the Commission by her successor in the office of Industrial Secretary to the Y.W.C.A. (Miss Mary Dingman). The latter not only remained to the close of this inquiry by the Commission on Child Labour, but also played an essential part in the later campaign of publicity in support of its recommendations which were adopted by the Municipal Council.¹

The necessary technical knowledge of the processes and conditions of the manufactures concerned was supplied by the highly representative men members of the Commission; the necessary personal experience of the modern industrial welfare movement and of the historical development of factory law and its administration and the medical knowledge of the health of the Chinese workers came chiefly from the side of the women members. This gives additional meaning and value to the fact that the conclusions and recommendations of the Commission were unanimous.

¹ See below, Chapter IX.

The international significance of the inquiry on which the Commission was engaged only became fully apparent to its members as their acquaintance with the relevant factors, and their discussion of the problems, advanced and deepened. In attaining unanimity in the recommendations a special part was played by the Chairman, by his entering with very great thoroughness, at each stage, into the very distinct points of approach of the members to the facts and the problems. I agree heartily with the statements of Mr J. S. S. Cooper, a fellow-member of the Commission, that, "thanks chiefly to the skill of the Chairman, Mr Lipson Ward, a unanimous report was eventually produced," and that, "economic and practical difficulties provoked the most prolonged and searching discussion between members of the Commission."¹ The matters under consideration were linked up more closely than could be imagined at the time with unseen risks of political complications. This appeared only when the endeavours were made, in 1925, to translate the recommendations into a bye-law for the Settlement. That factor lends enhanced interest to the opening words of welcome and advice, given to the Commission at its inauguration on June 22nd, 1923, by the Chairman of the Municipal Council, Mr Simms. In any case they were words of prudence and wisdom, as can clearly be seen in the light of the later events. The material passages were as follows :

"The Council endorsed the view that it should take a lead in bringing about certain reforms in conditions applying to child labour in factories and mills in the Settlement. Since then the Chinese Government has evinced a desire to improve conditions in mills and factories under its jurisdiction, and it appears to the Council an opportune time to work in co-operation with the Chinese Government, and rather than apply separate rules to factories in the Settlement it would be much more advisable to take as a basis to work on, the laws recently promulgated by the Chinese Government, and deal with them in the light of

¹ See Mr Cooper's letter to the *North China Daily News*, April 2nd, 1925.

your experience and knowledge with a view to persuading the Chinese Government to add to or modify their laws, so that we could adopt them here, thus securing uniform legislation both in and out of the Settlement. I feel sure we can rely on the French Council co-operating with us when the time comes to submit proposals to them."

"There are economic difficulties to contend with, and while we can see the ultimate advantage which the children will reap both mentally and physically as a result of these reforms, the parents naturally are more concerned with the immediate financial gain resulting from their children's labour under present conditions. The gentlemen who . . . sit upon the Commission have practical experience of conditions in mills and factories and are just as anxious to arrive at a proper solution of the child labour problem as those who approach the subject chiefly from the point of view of social reform. Evidence of this is to be seen from the lead taken by Messrs Jardine Matheson & Co. in limiting the age at which children can be employed in Ewo Mills. The suitable education of these children thus put out from work is a question which it will be for you to discuss, but it must be borne in mind that many of them doubtless reside outside our jurisdiction, and this is where there should be co-operation with the Chinese authorities. . . . Under Mr Lipson Ward's Chairmanship I feel sure you will enter on your labours fully determined to try and overcome the difficulties you are bound to encounter, bearing in mind that reforms are very necessary. . . . No good administration can afford to ignore its responsibility for the social welfare of the children who live under its jurisdiction. The Council will await the result of your deliberations with the greatest interest."

A fundamental condition of any remedy for child labour in factories was indicated by Mr Simms when he referred to the "suitable education" of the children who would be "put out from work" by limitation of their age of entry. His reference to the need of co-operation between the Chinese and the foreign authorities is closely relevant to

the suggestion of Mr Yuan Shih-tao for a Joint Committee of the two authorities to deal with the problem of education for children who work in the Settlement but have their dwelling-place in Chinese Shanghai.

The Child Labour Commission were unable, within their terms of reference, to investigate the question of organisation of education outside the Settlement. Since there is no Director of Education for the Settlement and no Chinese national organisation of elementary education, it was in any case impossible for the Commission to take up the question of organisation of such a joint committee. The suggestion remains, however, and the hopeful endeavour of Marshal Sun Chuan-Fang, with his co-Director Dr V. K. Ting, towards unity in public control of Greater Shanghai,¹ suggested that something may yet be jointly organised for child labour and education within the whole of Shanghai.

The other question put forward by Mr Simms which involved co-operation between the authorities—relating to regulation of conditions for child workers on lines drafted by the Peking Government—was fully considered by the Commission and dealt with in their recommendations.

The tenure by Mr Simms of the office of Chairman of the Municipal Council terminated before the work of the Child Labour Commission was concluded, and it fell to his successor, Mr Stirling Fessenden, an American citizen, to lead in the plans for acting upon the recommendations of the Commission. The policy of single-minded pursuit of measures for the protection and well-being of the child workers continued, without intermission, under the yearly re-elected Councils, and the change of Chairman. Although the scope of the responsibilities of the government of Shanghai is necessarily wider than is normal for a municipality (*e.g.* through the responsibility of the Council under the Consular body for maintaining order and security) it is still municipal, and continuity in policy is possible without the delays or changes liable to arise under government by changing political parties.

¹ See above, Chapter I., p. 13.

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Vis-à-vis of the numerous Chinese living and trading under the security afforded by the international and neutral Settlement, the governing body is, in fact, strictly oligarchical; by general admission it stands in need of revision of its partially representative basis of election, and the first step towards reform has been taken by the Council and Ratepayers at their annual meeting in April 1926. Nevertheless—setting aside the existence for a brief period (1921-25) of a tentative advisory Chinese Committee (of five) for giving advice to the Council on matters affecting Chinese residents—there has been, from the nature of the circumstances and the international publicity of the affairs of the Settlement, some protection of their interests for Chinese residents pending the development of something more adequate. Without the tacit consent of Chinese residents, the peace and order of the Settlement could not have been maintained at all—as it generally has been, although civil warfare was going on in the adjacent provinces.¹ Efficiency in governing, especially so far as probity, order, and public health are concerned, has on the whole been well sustained, for without these things the vast international trade centred in Shanghai would have been impossible. And this view has been confirmed by the speeches of Marshal Sun Chuan-Fang at the inauguration of his plan for establishing the Directorate of the Port of Shanghai and Woosung.

The foregoing story of the events leading up to the appointment of the Child Labour Commission suggests that there has been something still more important than simple efficiency at work on the Executive Council of the Foreign Settlement. It suggests that there has been a vein of sympathy, a regard in general for the well-being of the people of China resident in the Settlement. At least it was ready to express itself in prompt action when an appeal was made by the inhabitants of Shanghai—Chinese and foreign—for some endeavour by the Council to remedy the worst evils of employment of child workers in factories.

¹ See below, Chapter IX., p. 233.

In spite of their increasingly arduous work and responsibilities in administering a densely populated area with very limited powers, the Council took up the challenge.

If, under the governing political conditions, any measures for protecting the children were possible, there were certain clear advantages on the side of the Municipal Council. There was already in being a modern Public Health Service, and there was ready access to supplies of trained and experienced officers from countries familiar with problems of inspection. In a country not cognisant of the dangers, and the safeguards needed, in the new factory system, the International Settlement appeared to offer a favourable experimental ground for making a practical beginning in the way of regulation and inspection. There was another good factor in a considerable and compact section of public support and sympathy for the experiment. Large textile modern factories cannot be hidden away, in a city, and it was to the great cotton-spinning mills and large silk filatures that the attention of casual observers had been increasingly turned, by reason of their growth and the recurrent streams of young and adult workers, evident in the streets morning and evening, at the change of shifts. The work of modern Public Health administration and the Fire Brigade work in the foreign city (regularly reported to the public), and the development of Mission and other hospitals, brought about an increase in general and scientific knowledge, of accidents (and their consequences), and of the increase of tubercular disease. Difficulties and defects of the housing and the transport of such numerous bodies of workers had become striking, even to casual observers.

An examination of the Report of the Commission (which was promptly published by the Council in July 1924), viewing it in the light of conditions in China, is now necessary. Within its own scope the Report made accessible to all who, in any part of the world, are anxious to help to humanise the mechanical order of industry, some necessary knowledge of conditions in the Far East; yet it calls for a commentary. Any experience one may have

of service on official Committees in England certainly adds zest and piquancy to service on such an International Commission as this, in a far-off International City, where East and West sometimes do meet and understand and enjoy each other's company passing well. There are touches of nature that reveal the kinship of all the human world, and when men and women are gathered together in a common effort to break through difficulties and hindrances that stand in the way of securing a child's life for little children, those touches of nature are very ready to appear. For those who have not lived in Treaty Ports nor elsewhere in China, and desire a clue to help them in the study of the details of this Report, I would propose the following sentences in the Summary of evidence :

“ In many mills the conditions during the night-shift are, according to Western ideas, most unusual. Rows of baskets containing babies and children, sleeping or awake as the case may be, lie placed between the rapidly moving and noisy machinery. Young children who are supposed to be working, but who have been overcome by fatigue or who have taken advantage of the absence of adequate supervision, lie asleep in every corner, some in the open, others hidden in baskets under a covering of raw cotton. The Commission noticed that on its advent a warning whistle was given and many of the children were awakened by their immediate neighbours and hurried back to the machines ”

Let the reader suppose that these sentences have been placed before the members of an international committee, by the draftsman, as a description of things seen by the whole committee, and that they instantly recognise its vivid accuracy although even worse things had to be told. What does he then suppose will be the mental and moral reaction of the members, including both Far Westerners and Far Easterners ? Surely complete unanimity in search for a remedy. And one may be excused for believing that in such joint research for human remedies in the face of very unhuman conditions, lies a potential solvent for many

differences that may otherwise lead to conflict. Twice within two years—on the Child Labour Commission 1924, and the British China Indemnity Delegation 1926—it has fallen to the lot of the writer to serve on inquiries where the Chinese and foreign members came to unanimous conclusions on the problems set before them.

The first discovery of the Commission was that there were few records available “of observations by individuals or bodies, whether native or foreign, and no reliable statistics upon any of the matters germane to this inquiry. The ground broken was virgin soil.” The next significant discovery of a general kind was that amongst the people of Shanghai (apart from the activities of the reformers touched upon in the last chapter) there was a lack of ordinary diffused public interest in the subject matter. How different was the position as regards records and popular interest when the British China Indemnity Delegation arrived to prosecute its inquiries in any part of China! Then witnesses presented themselves and poured out their plans for the wisest ways of spending the Indemnity Fund. Education is a matter in which the Chinese have a spontaneous interest—regulation of the condition of labour is to them a new and difficult matter. Most of the evidence before the Child Labour Commission had to be gathered in through its own efforts—by calling its witnesses and by personal study of actual conditions, and they expressly disclaimed finality or completeness in their tentative conclusions on the changing industrial order.

“Modern conditions of mass production,” they say, “involving as they do the use of power-driven machinery and the employment of large numbers of workpeople in the confined space of a mill or factory are, comparatively speaking, new to China. They exist to-day only in a few areas, the most important of which is Shanghai and its vicinity where the industrial development in recent years has been very rapid. The general standard of living throughout the whole country compared with other and, from a modern industrial point of view, older parts of the

world is extremely low. There are no facilities for the education of the vast majority of the people. Circumstances such as these, coupled with a large birth-rate, result, as is the case, in the population ever tending to outstrip the means of subsistence. The industrial workers are, generally speaking, unorganised, and Trade Unions with the power lent by large accumulated funds are entirely unknown."

There are under older economic conditions other ways and methods than the specialised ones of trade unionism for drawing attention to deep-seated desires and needs of a people—and probably in some of those ways the Chinese have excelled most other peoples of the earth. They seem, for example, rarely through their long history to have lacked power to terminate the sway of undesired rulers. And now they are engaged in trying to develop trade unions, and are seeking to remove illiteracy by popular intensive instruction in reading the spoken language. And who now can question their purpose, when it is possible, to attain to fully organised national powers?

Consideration of these factors in relation to recent political events gives a new meaning to the reminder in the last words of the Report of the Commission—which really governed the whole of its proposals. They are: "Reform of present industrial conditions and the consequent amelioration of the lot of the Chinese child worker cannot be achieved unless it receives the moral and active support not only of the foreign residents but of the vastly greater body of the Chinese public."

From its earliest starting-point to its closing words, the Commission on Child Labour of the Foreign Settlement acted only in the hope of "giving a lead," or making a practicable beginning, on behalf of Chinese people, for the protection of the child worker. The wish of the foreigners concerned was that factory legislation should be fully worked out by *the Chinese Government* for all factories on Chinese soil, including those in the Settlements. In the Report itself this aim is shown most clearly in Part II,

which contains the main idea of the Commission for a basic reform.

Amongst the witnesses called were medical men and women, officers of the Municipal Services, social welfare workers, employers, contractors, and a woman who had worked for many years in silk filatures. A notice was inserted in the native and foreign press, informing the public of the appointment and purpose of the Commission and inviting the attendance and evidence of all who might desire to offer themselves as witnesses. One of the only two persons who came forward, a foreigner, gave testimony as to the deadening effects on the natural intelligence of the general absence of education coupled with the prevalence of monotonous toil. He lent some support to the conclusion arrived at in other countries that the factory system makes education of the people a moral and social necessity.

Two statements bearing on customary conditions affecting children throughout China are made by the Commission in the summary of evidence, in Part I. of the Report. Unless these are realised definitely, and borne in mind, it is difficult for any one, not having lived in China, fairly to estimate the influences that are likely to determine the life of children employed in factories. The first is that :

“There is no doubt that it is the general practice for the vast majority of Chinese children to be made by their parents or others having authority over them to commence to work at the earliest age possible, having regard to the nature of the work available. . . . This general practice obtains in the Shanghai district equally with the rest of China. The causes of its existence are economic, social, and absence of educational facilities, but in the opinion of the Commission, the first named is the primary cause.”

The second statement, relating to domestic service (a wide field of occupation for female children), is that :

“Young female children are commonly purchased and employed as domestic servants. They probably begin to work as soon as it is possible for them physically to do so. This practice is general throughout the country. It

obviously lends itself to great abuse, and the Commission has little doubt that, like other forms of slavery, it is the source of much human misery. The Commission has reason to believe, from the evidence given before it, that many slave children are employed in native brothels and trained to prostitution. Such sale of female children, although undoubtedly contrary to Chinese law, does not appear to be interfered with in any way by those charged with the administration of justice. It is, however, true that in cases where actual cruelty is proved, the International Mixed Court at Shanghai will order children to be taken away from the custody of the persons concerned."

The custom that is certainly widespread of taking young girl children from outside a family into its household life undoubtedly also has its kindly side. This fact makes any national interference (except in instances of wrong and cruelty) almost impossible. Only two, concurrent, developments can really remedy the situation: the provision of compulsory general elementary school education for girls under efficient inspection, and the increase of well-regulated factory and other employment for girls. The present relative deficiency in provision of the means for education of girls and women as compared with that for boys and men, in China, is recognised by enlightened Chinese educational leaders. It has been stressed also in the First Report of the China Foundation for Promotion of Education and Culture (American Boxer Indemnity) and in the Reports of the British China Indemnity Delegation and the China Advisory Indemnity Committee, all published in 1926. A new impetus should be given to the education of girls by these Reports and by the grants, when they follow, from the Boards of Trustees.

The medical evidence taken by the Commission may be gathered in a sentence: "It was agreed by all the medical witnesses that the existing industrial conditions in Shanghai are extremely adverse to the bodily and mental welfare of the Chinese child employee." Much in the whole unhygienic field of work and living conditions of the

industrious Chinese worker is unveiled by three leading statements in the medical evidence: (a) "Tuberculosis is particularly prevalent in the towns"; (b) "The crowded living conditions are to a great extent responsible for the poor physique observed;" (c) "Industrial accidents were largely attributed to fatigue and carelessness following on long hours of monotonous work."

The history of outwork subsidiary to factory industry in Western countries gives special value to comparative records of modern parallels in China, as shown in the first slight official reference (made in the Report of the Commission) to this matter—relative to the lucifer match-making industry.

The children engaged in helping their mothers to make the match boxes at home were said to be mostly from five to ten years of age. Probably from the higher age more could be earned by a child in a factory. The materials for the boxes (exclusive of starch which is supplied by the woman herself) is given out by the factory through a middleman to the outworker. "Payment is made at the rate of nine coppers per thousand for the inside part of the boxes, and seven coppers per thousand for the outside part.¹ It was stated that a woman with two children can finish from two to three thousand parts a day, and it was also stated that the earnings of the husbands in the particular cases inquired into, who were a carpenter, sailor, ricksha coolie and messenger respectively, were not otherwise sufficient to maintain the family." How familiar all this inevitably seems to those who in Great Britain followed the long campaign against "sweated trades," particularly in London and Glasgow and among the Cradley Heath nail and chain workers during the twenty years from about 1892!

¹ An extremely fluctuating value owing to the chaotic state of China's coinage. The copper was intended to be a 1 cent piece, of which 100 should represent 1 dollar. Actually the value has fluctuated greatly, and in June 1922 it stood at about 171 to the dollar, since when it has depreciated much further. Apart from this the Mexican dollar which is current in Shanghai is also subject to ordinary exchange fluctuations.

Happier are the children, nevertheless, who work at this box-making out-of-doors, on the family threshold, than were the small boxers seen in the match factories in 1923-24, who were boxing matches tipped with the white phosphorus paste so liable to get on to the hands and food of the small people, especially when the food lay, as I saw it, uncovered, on the boxing bench by the child, ready to be eaten at will. Only one lucifer match factory was found to be within the Settlement, and this, like the ten or more match factories in the Shanghai district, is a wholly Chinese undertaking. In Tientsin, in various cities in the Shantung Province, and in Manchuria there are Japanese match factories; but nowhere did I come across a foreign match factory run by Europeans, whether within the Settlement or in Hangchow or elsewhere. It is evident in the streets near lucifer match factories that out-work is extensive. The conditions in the match factories are similar over widely separated parts of China, and generally they are only semi-industrialised. Although the industry is not an important one for Shanghai Foreign Settlement, the evidence recorded of it in the Report is true of other places.

“Certain operations, such as boxing the matches and making up parcels of boxes, can be and are performed by quite young children. As little as nine copper cents is sometimes paid to a child for a day's work. . . . Young children certainly not more than five years of age were to be seen working with almost incredible rapidity. Many babies and infants, who could hardly stand, slept or played on the floor whilst their mothers worked. White phosphorus is used in some of these factories, and cases of phosphorus poisoning have been observed. It was stated that the native authorities are making regulations, which are to come into force next year, forbidding the use of white phosphorus, and that there is a possibility that they will be observed. . . . While special risk of fire undoubtedly attaches to this industry no precautions, such as the provision of fire-prevention screens between the individual workers, mostly very young, engaged in working, or ample

space between boxing stands were observed in the factory visited." ¹

The laundry trade is even less industrialised than the lucifer match-making trade. There is but one power laundry in Shanghai as against seventy small hand laundries. Only boys are employed and others have been found at work as young as ten years. All appear to be undersized and much younger than the age given. Some look weakly and stunted, and this is perhaps partly attributable to the heavy weight-carrying of which the Report speaks.

The evidence about the boys employed in the Building Trade, to the number of about 20,000 apprentices, in the Shanghai district, is much less definite than in the case of the small laundries, but sufficient to show that regulation is needed not only in the large newer works but also in the old trades :—

“The apprentice system is universal, the term of apprenticeship being three to five years. It was stated that the commencement age was eleven.” Yet, “as in other industries, many of these children start work at a younger age than this. . . . Most live with sub-contractors away from parents. It was also stated that the food given to the apprentices by the contractors is frequently poor, and that it is worse when they are not being employed.”

In the large factory industries the contract system for recruiting and management of labour reaches far larger dimensions, and is the insidious cause of many kinds of trouble for employers and employed. It stands condemned by its fruits, as it should have been, at the outset, by its inherent power to create separation and division between the two groups in industry.

“The contract system of employment,” say the Commissioners, “is common. Under this system the native contractor supplies the requisite labour and is paid on

¹ A fuller account of Match Factories in China can be studied in a Report by Dr C. T. Maitland, M.D., M.R.C.P., D.P.H., in articles on “Phosphorus Poisoning,” published in *The China Journal of Science and Arts*, Vol. III., Feb. and March 1925. See also below, Chap. VII., pp. 164-5, 188-90.

production. This system is obviously open to grave abuse. The Commission heard evidence to the effect that in some instances contractors obtain young children from the country districts, paying the parents two dollars a month for the services of each child. By employing such children in the mills and factories the contractor is able to make a profit of about four dollars a month in respect of each child. The children are frequently most miserably housed and fed. They receive no money and their conditions are practically those of slavery."

Other conditions, more or less general in large factory industry, are, the very early age of entry for children, varying to some extent with the nature of the employment, but commencing as a rule as soon as the child is of any economic use to the employer. The average earnings of a young child are usually not more than twenty silver cents a day. In very many factories atmospheric and dust conditions are bad, and sanitary arrangements "leave very much to be desired." Children, it was found, frequently have to stand the whole time they are at work. In many industries day and night work is the rule, with two shifts of twelve hours each. In most instances the mill or factory stops for one shift at week-ends.

The Report states, without analysis of causes, that endeavours are made by the employers, but without much success, to ensure that their work-people take one day off from work every two weeks. Apart from interruptions and the customary holidays at China New Year, work is continuous. Wages are paid only for working days.

In the total absence of any regulation of hours, rest-pauses, or periodical holidays, the presence of a vast hungry people competing for employment without either established collective bargaining for wages, or regulated minimum wage rates how, I would ask, could it be possible to persuade the workers to take one day off from work every two weeks?

By far the most important industries (employing a high proportion of women and young workers) are the cotton

and the silk. And in the last few years the cotton mills and the silk filatures have, with reason, borne the brunt of outside observation whether on the spot or internationally or (on the reports) in Great Britain. The number of the factories and the nationality of their occupiers, so far as these points can be gathered from information voluntarily supplied and necessarily incomplete, have already been touched on. The question has been repeatedly raised: "What is the amount of capital invested?" The only answer is that of the British Consul-General of Shanghai to the British Minister at Peking, that, "in the absence of authoritative statistics and in the face of the disinclination of companies to disclose the requisite information . . . it has proved impossible to form an even approximately accurate estimate of the capital invested in industrial enterprises other than those conducted by British incorporated companies."¹ Mr J. T. Pratt, Consul-General, adds the information that no British capital is invested in Chinese factories, whereas, in the few British factories, "the capital is generally largely subscribed by Chinese."²

In cotton mills the children are chiefly employed in the spinning department, and there took place the remarkable scenes, witnessed by the Commissioners at night, in which babies and very young children sustained the chief rôle. The Report gives a good general idea of conditions, but, undoubtedly, improvements are growing up in some places, the consequence of agitations and unrest:—

"It is difficult to state definitely the lowest age at which the children commence work. Some children are not on the pay-roll but are allowed to be brought by their mothers in order that they may be under their care. . . . Many children, however, come with their parents and some come independently. . . . The Commission is satisfied that the general standard of living amongst the class of persons employed in the cotton mills, including the children, has

¹ See letter, Aug. 16th, 1924, from Consul-General Barton to Sir R. Macleay in Cmd. 2442, p. 83.

² China, No. 2 (1927), Cmd. 2846, p. 13.

risen greatly by reason of the employment provided. It was stated by one witness that twelve years ago 75 per cent. of these people had little clothing and were without footwear. . . . Efforts are being made in some mills to prevent admission of very young children, and are, at least, partially successful. There is a great difference to be observed as regards the age of children employed between mills where these efforts are being made and mills where they are not."

"Generally speaking, there is little to complain of in the conditions as to space, but sometimes the ventilation is inadequate. In some instances the temperature was found to be higher and the dust conditions worse than was justifiable. The sanitary conditions are not satisfactory. . . . In normal times night work is the rule. There are two twelve-hour shifts. In some mills there is a cessation from work for one shift at week-ends, but in such cases the last shift is longer than twelve hours. In one instance the length of the shift was given as thirteen and a half hours, and in another fifteen hours. On occasions where there is no night shift the length of the day's work is frequently thirteen hours or even more. In some mills there is a regular one-hour interval for meals, whilst in others the employees take their meals as best they can."

The worst conditions as to long daily hours and unhygienic environment disclosed by the Commission were in the silk filatures, in which the great majority of the employees are women and children and only a few are boys. As a rule one child is employed for every two adults.

"The children brush the cocoons and prepare them for the reelers by removing the waste and so exposing the silk thread. This operation is performed over basins containing nearly boiling water, with which the fingers of the children frequently and necessarily come in contact, thereby becoming roughened and unsightly.

"Many of the children are very young, being not more than six years of age. . . . In the Shanghai district the children almost invariably stand . . . at work, five or six hours at a stretch. . . . Seats are provided in a few filatures,

but are rarely used, probably either because the seats are unadjustable, or because it is easier to perform the work standing. Owing to the presence of the hot water in the basins the temperature of the workroom is always considerably above the normal and the atmosphere is very humid. It was stated that fainting in hot weather is not uncommon. The children earn from twenty to twenty-five silver cents a day. In the main they present a pitiable sight. Their physical condition is poor, and their faces are devoid of any expression of happiness or well-being. They appear to be miserable, both physically and mentally . . . the Commission is satisfied that the conditions under which these children are employed are indefensible."

"Evidence was heard that in one well-run and apparently prosperous native filature at Hangchow the boiling-room is separate from the reeling-room, each boiler being managed by four boys of about sixteen years of age. Under this system the softened cocoons after boiling are placed in small wooden containers half full of cold water and then removed to the reeling-room. Evidence was also heard that a similar system prevails in Japan."

Not only does the "similar system" prevail in Japan. I saw there a silk filature in which technical improvements were being progressively introduced, although the Company running the filature had to pay a considerably higher rate of wages than are paid in China, and were voluntarily introducing at least some provisions for the comfort and welfare of their workers. In the Far East, just as in the Far West, it is, economically and socially, sounder to take at least as good care of your workers as you do of your technical appliances. It is sometimes stated on behalf of Japan that the lower standard in factories in China acts as a deterrent to rapid improvements in Japanese factories. Yet the evident zeal and capability of the trained Japanese inspectorate, something of whose good work I saw in 1924, does not lend much support to this view.¹

¹ I attended a gathering of Japanese factory dormitory matrons in Osaka, to which the Chief Inspector of the district also came with his medical and

Some information was also gathered by the Commission about conditions for young workers in cigarette and tobacco factories, engineering and shipbuilding, and in a large "model" Chinese printing works. In all three groups, hours and other conditions were reported to be better than those already recounted, and relatively few young workers are employed (less than 10 per cent. under twelve years), even in the light work of the tobacco factories. In engineering and shipbuilding, apart from a certain number of boys, aged between fourteen and sixteen who are employed in cleaning the interior of boilers (an occupation now prohibited for them in Hongkong, as we have seen),¹ the boys begin at sixteen years in the large foreign-managed works. The apprentice system is the rule. "Conditions in the smaller native shops are different. As in other industries, the boys are no doubt apprenticed at the earliest age possible, having regard to the nature of the work."

"Having taken all available evidence, the Commission entered upon the most difficult part of its task, namely, the consideration of the question as to what recommendations it should make to the Council."

In Part II. we find, not only in its position but still more in its meaning, the centre of the whole Report of the Commission. This fact has not generally been understood by students of the Report. The aim of Part II. certainly takes precedence over the restricted minimum recommendations in Part III., which were proposed expressly only to make a beginning, while the Chinese Government continued to be unable to give legal effect (even in the adjoining Province, Kiangsu), to its own Provisional Regulations for Factories. In Part II. we find the statement of the standards which ought to be recognised throughout China as desirable and ultimately as realisable. The fundamental position of the Commission is that the standard to be aimed

other colleagues. We had an enlightening conference, which he said was helpful to their administration of the law, and opened up new possibilities for promotion of hygiene.

¹ See Chapter III., pp. 57, 61.

at, whether in the Foreign Settlement or any part of China, and "to be adopted at the earliest practicable moment, is that set up by the Washington Conference" of 1919, as modified by the subsequent Conferences of the International Labour Organisation. The Commission recommends that any regulations to this end which are really enforced nationally should be at once provided and enforced within the Settlement. In that event, this would involve the disappearance of the injurious night work and excessively long hours, and would secure the exclusion of child labour under twelve years and other real gains. If even one Chinese province adjoining the Settlement should strictly enforce the Peking Regulations (after alterations in form that would make them practically enforceable), it is strongly recommended that the Settlement should do the same. The Provincial Governments, equally with any Central Government having power to carry and enforce a Factory Law, if doing all that is in their power to carry out the aims set out in the Peking Regulations, might count on the loyal co-operation both of Manufacturers' Associations within the Settlement, and of the Municipal Council. Thus the real meaning of the recommendations in Part III. is, *not* that regulations of a limited nature in the Settlement should take the place of the Peking Provisional Regulations. It is that while no regulations are enforced in China, in any factories outside the Foreign Settlement, such minimum regulation as is practicable should begin in factories inside the Settlement for protection of the Chinese child workers, and so lead the way to enforcement by the Government of the Republic of China of better standards in all factories on Chinese soil.

In February 1924 I had my first interview with the Civil Governor of Kiangsu Province, to whom I represented the great need of protection for child workers in his province by application of the Peking Provincial Regulations. Almost his first question was: What would be done in Shanghai if China began to apply the regulations in factories outside the Settlement? International public

opinion I said would make it impossible for the foreign manufacturers in the Settlement to lag behind improved standards imposed by China, even if there were a disposition (which I did not believe existed) to do so. That confidence was justified by the willingness and the sustained action of the Municipal Council, to give effect in 1925, by a bye-law, to the recommendations in Part III. of the Report of the Commission, even though nothing was done by the Chinese Government to apply its own Provisional Regulations.

In their "regard for practical considerations and local conditions," when framing their recommendation, the Commission carefully examined the International labour conventions of 1919 as modified for India and Japan, and studied the Industrial Employment of Children Ordinance of Hong-Kong, 1922.¹ After pointing out that the International Conference of 1919 "recognised that circumstances made it impossible for China immediately to conform to Western standards," and that in fact the country had not so far adopted any of them (although it had promulgated the Provisional Regulations), the Commission set out the special difficulties in the way of regulations of child labour by the Foreign Settlement. In the forefront and "most serious of all" stood: "The absence of a Central Government with power to enforce its decrees throughout the country." Next stood "the circumstance that Shanghai is a treaty port, and that the foreign settlement is managed and controlled by a municipal council, whose powers are strictly limited by the terms of the Land Regulations and the bye-laws made thereunder."

On the first of these difficulties, the Commission invited the opinion of the Cotton Mill Owners' Associations, foreign and Chinese. Both extended a welcome to regulations limiting the employment of children to those above a reasonable age, provided the regulations were applicable to and rigidly enforced in the two adjoining provinces (Chêkiang and Kiangsu). The foreign association was

¹ Cmd. 2442, China, No. 1 (1925), pp. 120-21.

willing further to accept the regulations even if only the Province of Kiangsu conformed, and they gave an assurance that, in the event of no regulations applicable to the surrounding districts being possible, they would not oppose the fixing of the age of entry at nine years (foreign count). The Chinese Association deprecated these further concessions and expressed their own view that "the employment of children by mills is a matter of a charitable nature towards the parent workers." The Commission also took note of a resolution passed by a number of labour groups at a meeting held on May 1st, 1924, that there should be no employment of children under fourteen years of age (presumably Chinese count), and that an eight-hours' system should be worked for.¹

On the second of these difficulties the Commission, after reviewing the legal position as presented by the legal advisors to the Council, came to the conclusion that it could obtain the necessary power to regulate child labour by means of a new bye-law, under the Land Regulations, which would involve the approval of the majority of the Council and Magistrates of the Foreign Powers having Treaties with China, and the ratepayers in special meeting assembled.

Four other difficulties were considered by the Commission. They decided that two, the absence of systematic birth registration, and the absolute need of a trained inspectorate, could be met as they have been elsewhere.²

The two difficulties for which an immediate solution was not available, are the absence of educational facilities, and the circumstances that, owing to the present social and economic condition of China, children are sent to work by their parents at the earliest age possible.

As for the former, "Before compulsory education was adopted in England, this difficulty was met by the half-time system, and by requiring the employer to see and prove that any child he desired to employ did in fact attend

¹ Cmd. 2442, China, No. 1 (1925), pp. 121-22.

² See above, Chapter III., p. 60.

school, but the Commission is of opinion that the establishment of this system is at present impracticable in the Foreign Settlement." Effective solution of the difficulty can only come through development of full co-operation between the Foreign Municipal Council and Chinese Educational Authorities.¹

As for the difficulty of parental pressure for the employment of their children, this was present in all countries in the earliest stages of their industrialisation, and it is "one which must necessarily become less as China progresses industrially. The problem of the protection of child labour has arisen in a concentrated form in the Foreign Settlement of Shanghai . . . in a place where . . . special and peculiar difficulties in the way of regulation dominate the situation, but in spite of these difficulties, the Commission is of opinion that the problem is one which must be faced and dealt with as far as is possible."²

The Commission then proceeded to analyse the Peking Provisional Regulations in the spirit of the advice given by Mr Simms at the inauguration of this work. They came absolutely to the conclusion that, in the event of their being enforced at any time outside the Settlement, even in the adjoining Province of Kiangsu alone, this would be sufficient for the purpose of their enforcement in the Settlement.³ The modifications considered necessary by the Commission were intended to make them simpler and more effective in operation, by clear definition and by exclusion of vagueness or impracticability in the requirements. A good illustration lies in Section 5: "Juveniles shall be given tasks of an easy and light nature." Of this the Commission said that it "is too vague." The employment of children under fourteen years of age they held "should be forbidden in any dangerous or hazardous place or at any work likely seriously to injure body or health. In the case of dangerous or hazardous premises there should be power to close the same until made safe." The sole

¹ See above, pp. 133 and 140 in this chapter.

² Cmd. 2442, China, No. 1 (1925), p. 123.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 123-25.

object here was, out of the long practical experience of the West in administration of factory laws, to aid the Chinese Authorities in the effectual application of principles laid down in their own provisional regulations, already promulgated and in factories inside as well as outside the Foreign Settlement.

The education of the child was outside the scope of the Commission's inquiry, yet it was decided to put on record their agreement with the suggestion made by a recent General Education Commission (appointed likewise by the Municipal Council), namely, "that the co-operation of Mill and Factory Owners should be sought by the Council for the establishment of educational facilities for:—

"(a) Children who are too young to go to work in the Mills where the parents themselves are at work.

"(b) And, if possible, children employed in the Mills; which might be accomplished either by means of night schools, or in the event of the half-time system being introduced as regards children, schools to which this class of children would go as half-timers, that is work in the morning and school in the afternoon, or vice versa, or such other system as may be found practicable."

Finally, under Part II., the Commission was of opinion that any real and effective step towards amelioration of the existing conditions of child labour, which may be made by the Chinese authorities in the adjoining province should, if the necessary power can be obtained, forthwith be met by similar action on the part of the Council.

In Part III. of the Report we seem to come down from a hill-top view over a promised land, where internationally minded co-operation can prevail, in a common human endeavour not merely to protect the very young from burdens that are too heavy for them, but rather, to reconstruct conditions according to their needs. We come down to a workaday scrutiny of ways of making a very small beginning in safeguarding child employment in the Foreign

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Settlement while there is no such regulation in any other part of China. In Part III. the Commission "passed to the consideration of the extremely difficult question, as to how far, if at all, the Council ought to attempt to prohibit or regulate child labour within the limits of the Foreign Settlement" alone. They pointed to the uniqueness of the situation in that the Foreign Settlement did not even comprise the whole of the industrial area of Shanghai, and that one industrial concern might have mills and factories both inside and outside the Settlement; to the risk of driving children and their parents into the employment of entirely uncontrolled industries outside, and to the risk of impoverishing the homes by any immediate drastic prohibition of the employment of children. They decided that some minimum regulation was both necessary and practicable. The five essential regulations recommended by them were as follows:—

1. Prohibition of the employment of children under ten years of age—rising to twelve years within a period of four years.
2. Prohibition of children under fourteen years from working longer than twelve hours out of twenty-four, including a compulsory rest for one hour in the day.
3. A twenty-four hour rest day to be given at least every fourteen days to every child under fourteen years of age.
4. Prohibition of children under fourteen years of age from working at dangerous, unguarded machines, in dangerous places, or at work likely to injure their health.
5. Appointment of trained factory inspectors to enforce these regulations.

The Commission made no immediate specific recommendations regulating night work for children, feeling that it was impracticable to prohibit night work for children within the limits of the Foreign Settlement while there

is no limitation outside. At the close of four years, when, if the proposals were carried out, every child under twelve years would be excluded from working in a factory, they recommended a reconsideration of the question of the regulation of night work.

They further recommended that (*a*) the expression "factory" should be defined so as to cover premises in which ten or more persons are employed in manual work, and that (*b*) the expression "industrial undertaking" should be defined so as to cover out-of-door occupations such as building, construction work, and transport, but should not include any agricultural undertaking; and they made stringent recommendations for inspection and penalties, as being absolutely indispensable to the successful enforcement of any regulations.

The whole Report when signed was immediately presented to the Council and was by the Council issued to the public as soon as it could be got through the Press. The account of the decision of the Council to act upon the recommendations belongs to a later stage of the story told in this book and has to be dealt with in the last chapter. Those later things happened after the writer's individual investigation of the actual conditions in industries in many parts of China had for the time being closed, and the account of things seen by herself comes first, in Chapters VII. and VIII.

CHAPTER VII

THINGS INDUSTRIAL SEEN IN CHINA

"This man is a Son also. You should treat him well."—*See a letter from TAO YUAN-MING, A.D. 265-317, to his son when sending him a servant.*

THE approach in these pages to acquaintance with the actual conditions of Chinese labour in industry has been so far mainly through gateways or channels that were already partly open when I arrived in China. Before clear ideas could form in my own mind about the possible steps towards remedial action—in face of all the political difficulties—opportunities for direct contact with things and persons had to multiply. Day by day and for months in succession (occasionally in surprising ways) the desired opportunities arose. And my reflections came up, formed, dissolved, and re-formed.

As I pointed out in an early chapter, I was launched into a strange world in which new experiences and impressions crowded upon me in rapid succession. From notes in my diary, I see how successively there unfolded before me a people struggling to awaken under the influence of Western ideas. Thoughts were turning to the study of political and social sciences, and in 1926 I was brought into touch with a movement, which had actually started in one of its activities, under the name of the National Institute of Political Science, for training young men and women in citizenship.

The national and patriotic appeal has increasing power with the youth of China, and already in 1924 I learned that the spirit expressed itself not only in legislative and political aspirations, but in economic enterprises. Examples were found of young men of Western university education endeavouring, by means of working up small semi-industrial-

ised enterprises, to acquire sufficient capital to build larger modern industries. With the growth of industry, therefore, it was not surprising to find that the general attitude was far from unreceptive to the idea of the need for labour regulation.

What impressed me most, however, from my meetings and conversations, was the vastness of the problems with which China is faced.

The further one goes in China "the deeper grows the sea" of its life. Although one must select, yet the less one generalises about characteristics the safer one's position. Without a particular quest, during times of the country's transition from the old to the new order of industry one would seem to be lost, but fortunately I had such a quest in the subject of my industrial visit. Aided by steady pursuit of some such enquiry, a way can be steered if one has interpreters. The immensity of the scale of things lifts the enquirer out of minor perturbations. There is even inspiration from the idea of its magnitude as one moves onward to the ever new surprises that come up out of the "vasty deep."

The heart-sickness which I felt in the early weeks of the visit by actually seeing examples of the cumulative overstrain that is the lot of myriads of manual labourers of all ages, including children from five to six years, or even younger, not only in factories but in far more widely spread old-world industries, could only be allayed by determined search for fundamental remedies. Picture such examples as the following :—

A drooping little girl of seven or eight years of age in the steaming atmosphere of a semi-industrialised silk filature, with swollen body and mask-like face of helpless suffering, whom I found standing during a long day, making the monotonous movements needed for stirring cocoons in nearly boiling water, to moisten them for the reelers ; a small boy of not more than eleven years discovered in a rambling old match factory boxing white phosphorus-tipped matches, face swollen with a suppurating wound

at the cheek-bone under the left eye and the expression of one who endures great suffering; a large ill-lighted cotton-spinning room, dusty and extremely hot, where numerous children, streaming with perspiration, work strenuously (on the night and day shift system) under Chinese foremen amid inadequately guarded machinery; ill-lit, stuffy, dusty, rug-making workshops (that are also sleeping and mess-rooms), where rows of closely-perched boys, who work together seated on narrow planks slung up to the rising level of the hand-made rugs, with bowed shoulders and inflamed eyes, infect each other with the trachoma that is so widespread in China; a densely covered floor-space in a semi-industrialised lucifer match factory (in one of the most beautiful of ancient cities), where many little children box the matches with incredible speed at tables piled with overflowing matches, and others thread their way in and out between the closely set tables carrying fresh supplies and taking away the packed boxes—all destitute of the precautions against sudden conflagrations that are enforced in the West. Or, in another similar match factory in a yet more important town, one can see the children keeping their uncovered food close by them at the bench for boxing the poison-tipped matches and eating it with hands soiled by the dangerous paste.

The array of instances of such kinds need not at this moment be extended. Yet one cannot forget the small boy seen hopping on one leg, with stick in hand, about the wards of a small hospital in a mill district, whose life had only been saved by the long, devoted care of the American surgeon. The child had been injured at night in a spinning mill by being drawn into the unguarded machinery where he had dropped asleep with exhaustion under the machine, and sepsis had followed, necessitating amputation of one leg at the thigh. He was apparently without parent or guardian to look after him, and that meant a problem for the surgeon who saved his life. Another little boy suffering from the dread old industrial disease of "phossy-jaw" was also saved by an American

surgeon, to whose care I was happily able to commend him in the Peking Union Medical Hospital and the Y.M.C.A. Secretary arranged with the child's guardian for his transport hither.

The onlooker (where unempowered to apply any remedy to such things) is tempted to echo the strong words of Guy de Maupassant as he watched the gangs of children, aged from ten to twelve years, who were formerly employed as carriers of material at the sulphur mines of Sicily, climbing up the rude staircase from the mine, weighed down by their basket loads, panting and gasping as they came up into the open: "This revolting exploitation of childhood is one of the most painful things that one could see."¹

Never let it be imagined that it was the factory system that introduced "exploitation of childhood." The continuance till this day of the domestic system of industry in China tells us plainly (what we only knew partially from survivals in Europe) that it is the extreme poverty of parents, combined with ignorance and the isolation of the unorganised, that is the occasion of such exploitation. The factory system did but make the evil plainer, and it disclosed the pathway to reform.

It was only when shadowy ideas of practicable action began to take definite shape in one's mind, and evidence was accumulated of a desire for better things among workers, employers, scholars and officials of China, that hope could grow of coming possibilities of improvement. And then the heart-sick stage passed. The ready help and sympathy of my fellow-workers for reform, already schooled in this experience of the evils, could but imperfectly relieve the feeling that there was too much that was unendurable.

The strongest reassurance in the early stages of my quest came with an appealing set of letters from a group of semi-skilled men workers, and a request for a conference from a small union of women workers, to both of which appeals I will presently return. Another

¹ *La Vie Errante*, by Guy de Maupassant, p. 66. Paris: Conard, 1909. (Œuvre complètes edition, 29 vols., 1908-10.)

encouraging experience came at a night visit with fifty young men and women students (from a college in Greater Shanghai) to a large cotton spinning mill of entirely Chinese foundation and management. There we saw scenes that are ordinary and apparently inevitable in mills that are unregulated, in a country that is just emerging from domestic industry and that is only beginning to remedy the illiteracy of the people. There were the worn and drooping children, many asleep in cotton baskets, and babies brought by the mothers, asleep in improvised cradles—even (in such a cradle) asleep in the shelter of a very primitive and mal-odorous latrine, near which the mother worked. The students showed that they grasped the meaning of the large-scale transmission of power to the machinery and the utter impropriety of subjecting little creatures to the perils and strain of work in such an environment, the more so where the night and day shift is the rule. One young woman student said to me, "Tell us what we can do!" And the only ready answer at that time was: "Factory law, faithfully applied, is as yet the sole remedy of which we have experience, and that is attained only through the influence of public opinion brought to bear on Governments."

Another kind of encouragement was given at the close of a course of four lectures delivered to Yenching University students at Peking, on the history of the development of British Factory Law and its Administration. On my departure one of the audience came to tell me at the railway station, that the story of this development from past conditions of industry which had been equally threatening, brought the light of a new hope to bear on the existing Chinese industrial conditions, hitherto so dark. The precise pathway to law and its administration in the confused political conditions of the country was (and is) still hidden, and the conditions were to grow much more confused. At that time it seemed that even the certainty that a way had been opened up in the first untried beginnings of the factory system in another country, in itself gave rise

to a hope that something could be done here also, however difficult the circumstances.

The whole movement towards something like effectual action in those days seemed to quicken and grow when Mandarins began to attend meetings, and encourage addresses on the subject. When governors of Provinces and members of a Provincial Assembly saw me as a representative from the Industrial Committee of the N.C.C. and asked for memoranda on the factory system and factory law of Great Britain and the West; when instructions were given by the Governors to their Commissioners of Industry and of Foreign Affairs to meet and confer with me on the action to be taken; then, indeed, doubts vanished as to the ultimate success of the movement to obtain measures for protection of labour.

So quickly did these stages succeed one another that it was perhaps excusable that we began to believe that the time was close at hand when the foreigner and the Chinese Provincial Authorities would begin to co-operate in securing observance of the Peking Provisional Factory Regulations—at least so far as the children were concerned—in some of the greatest industrial centres.

When civil warfare in the Provinces of Chêkiang and Kiangsu broke out in the end of the summer of 1924, and inevitably interrupted these activities, one thought of the interruption as simply a postponement of such promising international efforts. Who knew whether, perhaps, the delay might not give the Foreign Settlement time to begin to demonstrate the concern of its Municipal Council for the health and safety of the child worker? And an opportunity perhaps might be afforded within the, then peaceful, precincts of the municipality to exercise Western-trained experience in applying initial minimum regulations, as an earnest of goodwill, as a pledge that they would keep pace with Chinese regulations when China was ready to begin. It was this very point that was put to me by the Civil Governor of Kiangsu Province at my second conference with him at Nanking, shortly before he decided—

as the Foreign Municipal Council had done—to begin by appointing a Commission for the Province of Kiangsu on Child Labour. In May 1924 he issued his Ordinance for setting up his Provincial Child Labour Commission.¹

Some of the partly organised workers of the Greater Shanghai district pre-eminently led the way in bringing me to an optimistic outlook on the possibilities of reform. Within a few weeks of my first arrival in the Foreign Settlement, a letter reached me, as if to someone able to secure improvements, from a group of semi-skilled factory workers, all men, dated December 13th, “Twelfth year of the Republic,” appealing for consideration of their conditions. It reminded me of vivid letters of confident appeal to Factory Inspectors from British factory women in 1894 and following years. Moreover, it struck a poignant key-note, very like that recorded of the British cotton operatives in the early years of the nineteenth century, when they strove for a ten hours’ day and protested against the invasion of human rights and capacity by the then unlimited hours of factory work.

Two letters, in fact, came from this group of Chinese factory workers the translations of which lie before me. Leaving out a few unimportant details, they ran as follows :

“We saw in the newspapers that you came to our country to investigate conditions concerning the treatment of Chinese workers, so we wish to say a few words to you with frankness. . . . Among us are copper-smiths, machinists, electricians, stokers and other kinds of workers, totalling over one thousand people. We work day in and day out with no rest days. . . . We have never enjoyed the happiness of having holidays such as Sundays, national Anniversary Day, Dragon Boat Festival Day, Harvest Moon Festival Day, or Labour Day. We work twelve-hour shifts—day and night. But including the time coming to and going from the factory we spend fourteen hours a day for our work. When we change from day to night shift we have to work sixteen hours—four hours more than usual.

¹ See Appendix III.

We have no seats while we work. Should we human beings receive such treatment? . . . What's humanity, what's universal education, what's health, what's all that to us? Among our number the majority is illiterate. . . . Because of earning a poor mouthful of rice we are unable to observe the holy commands, neither are we able to enjoy those rights which are inherent to human beings. We have not any time to do anything that is beneficial to the public. We feel that we can get along fairly well with our day shift, but during the night shift, especially during the hours between two and half-past five in the morning, we feel extremely tired. Our physical strength cannot obey our mental will. In fine we are treated as prisoners, animals and machines. . . . We are peaceful workers. We do not want to do anything that is beyond us. But we are pressed by circumstances, so we plead you, Dame, to say a word for us. Ah! when shall we be treated as the European workers? We may be called the factory animals of the world of darkness. When shall we see the daylight? We wish that you fulfil God's will. We wish you peace. God be with you. . . . This letter contains conditions only in general. If you wish to know them in detail you can send over people. If you wish to investigate our conditions clearly you may come to see our workers' leader, Mr ——."

This letter was promptly acknowledged, an early visit to the factory foreshadowed, and the group were encouraged to come and see me at the office of the N.C.C. of the Y.W.C.A. The answer came very soon.

"Your very kind letter gave us great comfort. We intended to come and see you by New Year-time but we poor labourers did not have holidays. Even though we were willing not to get any wages . . . it was not granted to us. We were very sorry indeed. . . .

"We learned that you had been very enthusiastic in discussing the industrial regulations. The present temporary rules are not satisfactory at all. In comparison with the rules in the European factories they are nothing. The factory owners in China cannot even keep these rules. . . .

We sincerely wish that you can do something for us. We don't have any extravagant desires, but we do wish that we could have a proper living. If you will kindly grant us a visit we will be very grateful indeed. There is so much that I want to say but time does not allow me to do it. May God be with you all the time."

An introduction was obtained from a Chinese friend to the managers of the spacious modern factory in question—Chinese-owned and employing male labour—and study of the conditions and processes followed. Here, as in some other places, the higher skilled workers are individually employed by the occupiers of the factory and they have eight-hour shifts and various amenities in their conditions. The lot of the unskilled labourer, who works under the contract system, is on the ordinary level that appears to obtain throughout China.

One has to keep in mind in weighing their position the non-existence of legal rights, at the time, for the whole mass of manual workers to combine for the purpose of collective bargaining; the absence of recognised standards for the hours, health, safety of labouring people; the lack of public health administration outside the Foreign Settlements. Beyond all these things, and of still greater appeal to a Western onlooker, were the confused national conditions which allowed of no legal redress for coolies who are liable everywhere (outside the Foreign Settlements) to sudden impressment by rival military leaders as porters for their armies. And that total absence of personal rights was made strikingly apparent to me on my first entry into China, on the Bund at Canton, on November 24th, 1923, where I saw the gangs of impressed coolies waiting to be moved on. The position was undoubtedly much better in some respects in Canton after the establishment there of a more substantial and modern kind of Government from about the end of 1925.

The urgency and the difficulty of securing general reform in China of working conditions for labourers was evident from what I saw at this fine modern factory equipped

with the newest German machines. Close outside its great spaces lay the squalor of the immediate approach, through lanes fringed with mat-sheds, contrasting with the pleasant country-paths across the fields we had left behind us. Only from ordered, stable government, capable of carrying through simple yet fundamental laws for the freedom of the "forgotten"—nay, unremembered—men and women of China, the coolies and labouring people, can the well-being of great industry begin. And it can only go forward securely on the basis of an educated common people. The exceptionally high quality of mind discoverable in the ranks of this people appears to me self-evident from the samples I have met.

Following this visit I received a paper of many questions from the writer of the letters. Early in February, 1924, we had a conference with him and his associates, a group of allied workers from several factories, and we took these questions as the subject of discussion. Through the sympathetic interpretation of Miss Zung Wei-Tsung and the support of Miss Dingman and other co-workers on the Industrial Committee of the N.C.C. we were able, in a session of three hours, to give tentative replies to most of the twenty-nine questions classified by the leader under seven main heads, interpreted as :

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Development. | 5. Combination. |
| 2. Warfare. | 6. Personnel. |
| 3. Legislation. | 7. Miscellaneous. |
| 4. Civilisation. | |

Certainly it appeared that a good deal more study of the lives of Chinese workers was needed to attain full understanding of the original ideas towards which this leader was feeling his way. Yet how absorbing was this conference! The ideas expressed there mark the beginning of a popular movement away from the position indicated in Morse's *Gilds of China* when he wrote (in 1909) that "in her gilds, as in so many of her institutions, China illustrates for us Europe as it was in the Middle Ages."

Under the first head, the leader enquired whether agricultural, industrial or commercial development is best suited to China, and whether Chinese manual workers can secure rights as human beings? Under the second, he wanted to know whether without bloodshed Chinese workers and capitalists can come together? Under the third, he asked why it is that Chinese workers are not treated as other members of society, and are denied rights—for example, the right of association, freedom of speech and the right to strike. Under the fourth head, “Civilisation,” he wanted guidance as to the kind of education that the Chinese “common” labourer ought to receive, what chance there was for him to study under existing conditions, and whether a workers’ revolution is necessary?

Under the fifth head, “Combination,” came wide and penetrating questions, some of which a “foreigner” could hardly be expected completely to answer without very considerable study of China, such as, “Why do Chinese labour unions fail to be self-governing and why do real unions fail to appear?” Others showed considerable reading in trade union history—beyond what might be expected from a Chinese worker speaking only his own language—such as, “What is the best way for Chinese workers to start organisation, whether by trades or by industrial unions or by mixed territorial unions, and whether it is yet possible for Chinese workers to unite with those of other countries?”

Under the sixth and seventh heads came various searching questions. If they could be steadily followed up by experienced trade unionists and economists, told off to ascertain their significance and to help Chinese workers to avoid the many pitfalls and dangers surrounding them, blessings might be the outcome not only for China and her industries but eventually for the whole world of modern industry. For example: Is it necessary to have experts for organising labour? How many in China at the present time care about the hardships and the organisation of the workers? How can the old-fashioned work-places be

improved and old-fashioned apprenticeship be reformed? This last is an illustration of the normally balanced and practical mind of the Chinese worker. There is a perception of the truth that much of the present suffering grows out of unadapted earlier conditions and standards.

With so comprehensive an "examination-paper" before me, it was necessary to explain that if I was to speak from direct knowledge it must be from my experience of official administration of the standard conditions of health and safety for the factory-worker provided by British law; which has been to a great extent voluntarily developed by the co-operation of practical-minded industrial people. For such, in the main, the manufacturers and manual workers of Great Britain certainly are. It was a matter of common knowledge, I explained, that British trade unionists, doggedly working for the best part of a century, had most materially contributed to the working out of factory law and its administration, with the recent co-operation of hygienists, chemists and engineers. And I suggested that Chinese workers might gain much by consulting British trade union leaders, by avoiding violent and revolutionary methods, and by developing from their own old gild organisations certain ideas as to the goal of co-operation between trade unions and employers' associations. I urged them to study the growth and development of Workers' Educational Associations in Great Britain and Australia.

The summary of the proceedings by our own reporter is helpful:

"The questions were extremely comprehensive, covering the ground not only of the theoretic status of labour, but its practical application to the position of the Chinese industrial worker to-day and his prospects in the future. Dame Adelaide Anderson, through the medium of Miss Zung, carried on a long discussion on the basis of these questions with the three principal spokesmen of the workers, and it was found that the main theme that was returned to again and again from all the points raised, was labour organisation and the growth of trade unionism. . . . It was

apparent from the remarks of the workers' representatives that trade unionism as known in the West cannot be said to exist in China, but that labour is just beginning to emerge into group consciousness—the meeting itself was indeed a sign of a move in this direction—and is in the sorest need of instruction in the aims and method of successful organisation. It was pointed out that the prime requisite is education among the mass of the workers. . . . This most interesting and suggestive meeting closed with discussion as to the possibility of forming a tutorial class for study on the lines indicated by the list of questions, which might be the nucleus of a national workers' educational association forming an invaluable means of hastening the coming of industrial democracy."

My own vivid impressions remain—of a remarkable vigour and acuteness of mind in these Chinese workers. Here is a great field for adult education, and for introduction to sane, fruitful methods of trade union organisation. The appalling length of hours of work presented a grave obstacle, and the problem was to know where to concentrate in the attempt to break the chain of ignorance, helplessness, and oppressive conditions. No doubt attack must be made at various points. The existence of the present contract system of recruitment and supervision of the workers seems calculated to lead to periodic trouble and to the extensive, violent outbursts that in themselves are an obstacle to reform. The underlying conditions of *malaise*, "dis-ease," added to the lack of any clear law regulating combination, would go some way to explain some of the sudden executions of labour leaders by Chinese Provincial Authorities. And these very conditions, combined with the ignorance and helplessness, must have made a regular hot-bed for the beginnings of the labour troubles in 1925 which rapidly passed from an industrial to a political and racial phase. At this meeting there was not the least suggestion that foreign employers were in any way specially concerned. These workers certainly dealt with, and primarily had Chinese employers in their thoughts.

The moderateness of the aspirations of the associated workers was illustrated by another deputation, a few days later, from women silk workers; they came chiefly on behalf of child workers in silk filatures. More reasonable hours of work, not more than ten daily, with a fortnightly rest day, kinder treatment and education for the children and their supervision by forewomen were the chief desires. They, too, made their protest that they are human beings not animals. In view of the extreme heat and steam that pervade the majority of reeling rooms in the silk filatures, I put a question to them about the possibility of good ventilation to moderate these ills. Swiftly came the reply that they wanted nothing that could interfere with production. And indeed in almost any country such problems of hygiene can only fairly and effectually be handled by expert and skilled engineers, under equal State regulations for all manufacture.

The one large gathering of workers whom I met was on May Day, 1924, the first Labour Day on which, by permission of the Chinese authorities of Shanghai outside the Settlement, a great meeting of labour associations was organised. It assembled in the open Court of the Heavenly Queen Temple, and it was estimated by the organisers that about 2000 attended—a cheerful and eager crowd. To this I was invited by the Central Labour Group of Shanghai, composed, so I was informed, of twenty-eight Labour Unions, the first rise of which in Shanghai is dated, says Mr Moss in his valuable memorandum,¹ from the growth of factory production during the European War. The invitation, as translated for me, ran as follows :

“ANDERSON TEACHER,

“Our Labour Union will unite with all the other labour unions to celebrate the World’s Labour Day on May 1st, beginning at one o’clock at North Honan Road in a Temple.

¹ Included in the *Papers respecting Labour Conditions in China*, presented by the Foreign Office (China No. 1 (1925)) to Parliament, 1925. Cmd. 2442.

“ We always respect your zeal in social work and desire to promote improved conditions among the working people. We write you specially to ask you to come to the meeting and talk to us. We shall be very glad to have you.”

After ascertaining that the meeting was authorised, and likely to be free from disturbance, I consented to go and to speak a few words. This was my very first attendance at a Labour Day Meeting anywhere, and it was a strange though enjoyable experience. That it should be in the Court of the Heavenly Queen Temple, in Chinese Shanghai, seemed to be one of those happenings in real life that sometimes outstrip the flights of fiction. For those who have never seen a Chinese temple it should be explained that in the outer court there is a large balustraded dais or theatre stage, facing towards the main altar. There the speakers were grouped with their friends and called to the front of the stage as their turn arrived for speaking. And there we looked down on and spoke briefly to those we could see of the 2000. The friendly faces looking up seemed determined to be pleased. Yet I found as I stood there that there was a new kind of flutter in the sudden realisation of the significance of such a gathering, the adoption by Chinese workers of the forms of Western labour organisation, and the tremendous need they have for help from all who know of the immense potentialities for good, as well as of the risks. My few words to them through an interpreter were about the new realisation by Western nations that the international promotion of “fair and humane conditions of labour” makes for the peace of nations. I bade them be of good cheer in peaceful working for steady improvement of conditions of labour; and pointed to the great possibility of lightening human toil by industrialised production, if accompanied by good conditions and scientific methods of caring for labour. I reminded them that in England at least eighty years were spent in building up factory law before a good code for health and safety in factories had been attained, and even longer in developing

trade union organisation, before a Labour Government came into office—the advent of which at the time of speaking seemed to be a source of new hope to the workers of China. Thus thoughts of patience and hopeful organisation were my only contribution.

The other speakers spoke chiefly in Chinese and Japanese, not interpreted for English listeners, and my friends and I descended from the dais to meet the little group of silk filature workers whom we had seen with their banners and flags below. After warm greetings from them, we passed into the inner court of the temple and waited for a later translation of the recommendations and resolutions passed at the meeting.

The foremost aim in these was: “To unite the workers of the world for promoting the happiness of all people, and destroying all that hinders the cause of humanity.” Among the conditions demanded were: Establishment of an eight hours’ day; no employment of children under fourteen years of age; if injury, sickness or death are caused by work in the factory, employers should give proper aid; women workers should be given eight weeks’ rest during confinement, with regular wage-payment. Workers were exhorted to pay attention to insurance and savings, to report their conditions of labour to their union, and the opinion was recorded that “all labour unions should open free schools and hold moral talks.” Features of special interest were the giving of a brief history of Labour Day, by Mr Zia, a speech from Mr Shastre, a Hindu, and the attendance of Mr Suzuki, President of the Japanese Federation of Labour, on his way to attend the Sixth International Labour Conference at Geneva. Our friends from the conference of February 8th on the twenty-nine questions must have found an answer to several of their questions at this May Day meeting.

Orderly animation was the key-note of the whole proceedings: cognisance evidently was taken of the meeting by the Police of the Foreign Settlement, for in the road outside the temple tranquillity was safeguarded by the

presence of their Sikh policemen, and inside the temple were the police from Chinese Shanghai.

The access we had to foreign and Chinese employers in Shanghai, both individually and in their associations, has already appeared in these pages.¹ The readiness of Chinese manufacturers in Chinese cities, far less affected than Shanghai by foreign activities and influences, to meet and greet us as reformers of labour conditions now calls for some notice. Particularly the initiative that they sometimes took in seeking us out gave us encouragement.

Early in January 1924, after several weeks spent in seeing factories and manufacturers of Shanghai, inside and outside the International Settlement, our first invitation of an official character came from the great seaport of Ningpo in Chêkiang. They wished my colleagues and myself of the Industrial Committee, N.C.C., to see the industries and speak of their regulation for the health and safety of the workers.

This impressive old walled city of over 400,000 inhabitants, inclusive of suburbs, which was opened as a Treaty Port in 1842, has no defined foreign concession or separate settlement. It is a trading and commercial rather than a modern manufacturing centre, yet there are textile factories, one being large and well equipped with modern machinery, there are various smaller busy and growing factories, and it has features and inhabitants of a character to make it specially interesting to factory reformers. From the Ningpo Guildhouse at Shanghai and the frequency with which the words "men of the Ningpo Guild" are heard one infers that the city must have played a part of some consequence in Chinese history. And that indeed its inhabitants have done.

The character of its houses, many of them with beautiful and interesting exterior carvings—and its great wall, which on one of its sides faces the tidal Yung River, up

¹ Not only through the British Consul-General, and through the Federation of Employers and Cotton Manufacturers' Associations, but also through voluntary societies and individual employers. See Chapters IV. and VI.

which the steamers come fifteen miles from the sea, stirred the imagination. In this city glimpses of numerous small workplaces, which had just begun to instal motor power in aid of parts of their processes, showed that the earliest steps have been taken towards transformation of its industries from the ancient to the modern basis. The very words "Ningpo varnish," so familiar to foreign sojourners in China for its staying properties on wood floors and furniture, points to the existence of a considerable furniture industry. This, however, I had no time to explore. It was its position as the commercial centre of Chêkiang Province, and as a seaport, and the virility of its people, that made Ningpo significant for me. The many old-time Chinese ice-houses for cooling the "harvest of the sea," show how important the fisheries have always been. First impressions were strengthened by subsequent visits and particularly in 1926.

The manufacturers to whom we had to speak at the Chamber of Commerce were all Chinese, and the foreign community also asked for a meeting under the chairmanship of the British Consul, which took place at the house of the Anglican Bishop of the Diocese of Chêkiang, the Right Rev. H. J. Molony, where I stayed. There was also an educational meeting at a large girls' school where Miss Dingman gave an historical account of the modern movement for labour legislation. And there was a "gala" visit to the largest textile factory.

We arrived by night steamer from Shanghai early in the morning one day in January 1924, and began our inspection of factories without delay. At 2.30 p.m. we were due for the crowded and interesting meeting at the Chamber of Commerce, where among the many Chinese employers present the two most impressive, picturesque figures with persuasive gifts to win adherents to our cause were the very "benevolent" chief district Mandarin, the Tao-Yin, who presided, and the Anglican Bishop, who also spoke. The Tao-Yin gave the address of welcome on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce and the Employers, saying that he "zealously endorsed" our mission. He went on to say :

“Ningpo, with its large volume of business, is a well-known commercial centre. As a rule, commercial prosperity depends mostly on the development of industry, which always stands at the back of the former. Industrially, Ningpo is still in her infancy. . . . But in course of time and with the rapid growth of production, the commerce of this city will no doubt attain gigantic proportions. As the Tao-Yin of Ningpo, I ever hope to see the realisation of this prospect.”

He expressed the belief that my own official experience would benefit them and their city at large, and concluded by saying that he had called together the directors of all factories and the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce to meet us, and “We all feel certain that she will spare us nothing in her speech.”

This address was given, naturally, in Chinese, for the Tao-Yin spoke no English, but he courteously handed me a typed copy of the English version, before asking me to begin. The audience seemed eager, and I retain an impression of the keen and friendly faces of the Chinese employers attentively leaning forward, first to listen and then to ask lively questions and finally to present a series of friendly individual invitations for a personal visit to their factories, small and large.

Here, as in a succession of such meetings, the main purport of my address was :

- (a) To express briefly the great change for the better that had been wrought in British factory industry through national legislation as applied by trained Inspectors, first in a humanitarian spirit and secondly with the aid of all the growing scientific knowledge that had become available in the past forty or more years ;
- (b) To unfold some idea of the underlying differences between domestic or hand industry and mechanical or factory industry as regards risks for the workers, especially for the children ;

- (c) To point to the practical certainty that—in China as much as in Western lands—no working people will ever remain quiet or satisfied as mere appendages to machines or if the physiological and psychological capacities of the human body are neglected, or the social instincts starved; in organising production under a power-driven system of industry;
- (d) To show that in industrial countries of Europe all concerned with industry, employers, workers, the general public and governments had been pledged to international co-operation in this matter—for no State could stand alone in it without loss—and that now the co-operation of China was needed both for her own sake and for the general cause of humanity.

Miss Agatha Harrison followed with warm, enlightening testimony, from personal experience, to the dependence of good welfare work in individual factories on the establishment and enforcement of national, legal standards for maintaining the general conditions for health and safety of the labourers.

Even through the barriers of differing languages the message was evidently understood, and our promise was given to visit as many factories as possible in our stay of two and a half working days. One very attractive function, to our regret, could not be attended, as it was planned for a time when we had to be on our way back to our base for other engagements. The crimson sheet lies before me containing an invitation to dinner from four Chinese gentlemen, engaged in various commercial enterprises, who desire “to promote friendship with foreigners”—“At the Ningpo Commercial Bank, second story, first month, fifteenth day, afternoon, 6 o'clock, set-out dinner awaits you.” Their honourable names subscribed, were deciphered to me as: Chu Ch'ang-Huan, Ch'ien Hsien-K'ai, Yü Yün, Shen T'ai-Yung, and a crimson cover was addressed to me at the Bishop's House, “An,

Lady Scholar." All in the terse, expressive and courteous Chinese manner.

The directors of the really big cotton mill invited us to lunch as well as to see the factory, on the day before we left Ningpo. It was so stately a function that it ought to have been graced by guests who had not already spent a long morning in various inspections at a distance, and who had not had to break off from these in haste in order not to arrive all too late. The courtesy of our hosts was proof against any delay on our part. We were taken across the river to the function at the mill, in a stately barge set out with chairs, and were met at the landing steps by a band in uniform with wind and other instruments, which headed us on the way to the mill, playing tunes that were chiefly of Western origin. It was alleged afterwards by Miss Harrison that a lady of the party was overheard to murmur, "And I have not even got on my best shoes"—but she did not herself definitely admit it.

Both coming and going to the mill the procession passed up and down the ways between the settlement houses that had been built by the firm for a considerable proportion of the workers. Although this was not a settlement of the garden-village type known at some famous French or English model works, the houses would have been fairly good if strictly kept (as probably planned) for one or at most two families apiece; they were two-storied with a stair leading from the ground floor two rooms to the two rooms above, the rooms being not less than fifteen feet square. For some reason which we were unable then to explore, sub-letting evidently is general. There is apparently overcrowding, and I heard that there had been some serious epidemics. In spite of a medical dispensary and other institutions for the benefit of the workers, provided by profits of the undertaking, the looks of the inhabitants of the settlement did not cheer us. It must be remembered that the hours and other conditions of work were those customary in the Chinese and foreign cotton spinning mills of the whole country; that is to say, they work in two

shifts of twelve hours each, without defined pauses for meals and rest, either by day or night. The recent experience on a large scale of day and night shifts, which has been gained in Western factories as a result of war time emergencies, demonstrated afresh to Europeans that the system cannot be carried on, even temporarily, without grave injury to workers, unless stringent provision is made for fixed meal-time pauses, accompanied by good arrangements for rest. The meals must be of nourishing quality and priced with proper regard to the earnings of the workers. None of such conditions were to be found in Chinese textile mills, and even the unquestioned, if small, benefits of steady work and wages, were too dearly bought by the worker. We heard of the usual accidents from power-driven machinery, some being treated at the local mission hospital. We also heard of the early morning patter of children's feet going to the mill for the day shift and of the tired children leaving at the evening change of shift,—for the greater part of the large number of employed live outside the mill settlement. In all there are well over 2000, sometimes nearer 2500, employed at this mill.¹ Of these approximately two-thirds were women and children, and there were two women to every child.

When we reached the mill, work had ceased for the day, a special holiday having been given for the afternoon ; thus before we left we were only able to examine the fine modern machinery and exceptionally clean and garnished spinning and preparing sheds. This, it should be noted, was the solitary occurrence of that kind in our many inspections of Chinese mills. The entertainment prepared for us was also unique. A similar display of flags and other decorations and even the attendance of directors and managers occurred in a couple of other formally prepared visits to factories up the Yangtse, but never such a feast nor so long a confabulation on the ways of bettering the conditions of the

¹ The earnings of the women were said to be \$5 to \$6 Mex. a month and of the children \$2 to \$3 a month, but much has to be taken into consideration in estimating the relative value of nominal earnings.

manual workers or on how, in China, it is possible to exclude young children from factory work. Photographs taken by the managers, and presented later, gave an idea of the party, as it arrived and as it was at lunch, but not of the bright colour of the silken embroideries inside or the fine array of bunting outside in which the Union Jack and the Chinese Flag were together predominant. We invited the directors to join us at a conference which was to take place in a few days with the Employers' Federation at the Shanghai General Chamber of Commerce, between representatives of the Federation, of the Millowners' Associations and the N.C.C., on the question of how to secure protection of child labour both in the International Settlement and the Provinces of China; yet although their interest in the question did seem to be aroused, I am afraid they were not able to be present. Only by continual following up of clues to actual conditions and their results, by multiplying discussions and by persistent propaganda, could one hope to arouse the public feeling needed in China—as earlier in our own country—if the desired reforms are ultimately to be secured.

When the entertainment was over our hosts and the musical band took us back to our barge, and as we pushed off an explosion of fireworks burst forth. It was impossible to imagine more pains being taken to show appreciation and courtesy to visitors than was shown us here. Yet a few days later the British engineering adviser, who had given us the requisite introduction and who had properly thanked the managing director for our entertainment, forwarded the latter's reply; with characteristic Chinese courtesy it expressed regret that he "did not give proper attention to the ladies," and added that the appreciation expressed by us did but increase his sense of inadequacy. Although we would gladly have seen more of the workers at their work, we both saw and learnt much through this visit.

That evening, at the house of the Bishop and Mrs Molony, we met a large gathering of the local foreign

community, over which the British Consul, Mr Handley-Derry, presided. His welcome and sympathy with the object of our visit, his insistence on the truth that the assets of a nation, of which perhaps labour is the most important part, should be carefully preserved in the interest of all peoples, was more than an encouragement to us; it aroused the enthusiasm of the meeting. And the able support of the District Commissioner for Chinese Maritime Customs, Mr Carey, made abundantly clear the fact that the foreigner, and not least the foreign official living and working in China, is very ready to work for things that belong to the welfare of this wonderful old land. My own text was simply the need for aiding, by all available means, in the creation of enlightened public opinion in favour of a humane, basic general law for the protection of labour in modern power industry.

Miss Dingman, after pointing out how the Chinese seemed to be waiting for the foreign manufacturers to act, and the foreigners in concessions and settlements seemed to be waiting for the Chinese to act, suggested, as a useful beginning of the long road towards improvement, that co-operative groups of investigators and propagandists—medical, statistical, and educational, should be formed; and that these should all work together towards the mobilising of public opinion until a practical solution of the political difficulties should appear. Her hearers acted on her advice.

Our last morning in Ningpo was given to study of the rapidly-changing, smaller industries; such as hosiery (excellent silk stockings and woollen underwear), in work-places growing up behind the shops lining the narrow, flagged streets, in poorly lighted rooms and in space too dangerously cramped for the unguarded machinery that is being driven to a certain extent by engine power.

In the Bulletin of the Government Economic Bureau for February 1924 it was stated that the hosiery machine-knitting establishments were numerous in Ningpo, and yet more so in Changsha, Hunan; that in the latter there were 300 hosiery knitting establishments employing not less than

3000 women and girls and perhaps 200 men, hours being eleven daily with additional overtime, and holidays allowed only on the national festivals and at New Year. A worker, it was said, can turn out five or six dozen hose a day, earning twelve coppers per dozen. The work can be learnt in six months' apprenticeship for a fee of six dollars Mex. In one of the Ningpo hosiery shops we found 150 workers, chiefly young women, of whom a few live on the premises when their homes are at a considerable distance in the country. With a working week of seven days they can earn about ten dollars a month and they looked fairly bright and cheerful. In another hosiery factory, badly lighted, we found 200 employed, with some overcrowding, but the number is said to be doubled in seasonal pressure. The comparatively simple nature of the machinery required for the making of hosiery, and the relatively small bulk of even large supplies when made, gives the industry a special opportunity for developing in many parts of China—where a great obstacle to bulky production lies in the undeveloped state of transport. The danger that crude forms of factory work may arrive all too fast for the well-being of the workers came clearly before me, later, in a small "singlet" factory in Shanghai. It resembled a rabbit-warren in some respects, backed on to an old filled-in creek, and all its back windows were barred. The exit was to the front only, by a narrow wooden staircase and on to a narrow crowded lane. Upwards of two hundred persons worked on these premises, consisting of old dwelling-houses. Most of the power machinery, being heavy, was installed on the ground floor, and the majority of the hand workers on the upper floor. In case of a serious fire arising, the place could be only a death-trap, but the International Municipal Council has no power under the "Land Regulations" to apply safety regulations.¹ My visit to this place was with an officer of the fire brigade, who had already pointed out the risk to the Chinese occupier, and we repeated the warning, I fear in vain.

¹ See the sample of such a death-trap in Chapter IV., p. 90.

There are various other busy industries in Ningpo, but I need only refer to two, because they pointed to the appearance of the tendency towards "outwork" which has accompanied the growth of the factory system in some industries in other countries, and has there almost invariably been associated with the depressed conditions known in Europe as "sweated." To a foreigner the more attractive of the two was a truly indigenous one, with a good deal of its production for export—the making of matting, blinds, cushions, hats, shoes, and other articles from palm and other fibre. The owner, himself an inventor engaged in working out new methods, is opening training centres in various parts of the provinces, beginning with Chêkiang. In one section, the most important, there was fine weaving of palm-fibre matting on large looms. In another, similar fibre was being worked up into hats by girls with a crochet-hook. Conditions on these premises are markedly superior to the average of the country. The other industry was the manufacture of lucifer matches, employing 1300 workers of which 1000 were women, and nearly two-thirds outworkers, engaged in box-making. This factory, where the manufacture is carried on under Catholic influences, is but little developed on the mechanical side, and was the only one I saw in China in 1924 where the yellow poisonous phosphorus was not then used.

In this industry in an exceptional degree one can see in China some of the positive gains for the people obtainable by sound industrialisation for well-selected manufactures. Setting aside the dangerous mixing of white phosphorus paste and the dipping therein of the match heads, the merely manual processes are very simple and the requisite skill or dexterity for most of them is easily acquired even by the youngest. From the nature of the case only very small earnings can be obtained by workers who are not controlling modern highly developed machinery. Both the product and the workers have had to be cheap, and the industry was essentially one for the poor unskilled workers. It was almost startling to find the resemblance between the stage

reached by the industry in China and the phases I first saw in England about the year 1895. The most obvious difference lay in the class of workers. In England the requisite cheapness then meant that girl labour was largely employed. In China, in 1924, extremely young child workers, surprisingly rapid and dexterous in their movements, and unskilled boy labour, filled the place that formerly was held by girls in England in the semi-industrialised state of the industry. In England the small work-places—half factory, half workshop—lay scattered about the country, all then used some white phosphorus paste for the match heads. Disfigured, spent victims and sufferers from the active stage of the dread “phossy-jaw” had to be searched out in the by-ways and slums of the cities and county towns where the factories lay. Insistence on medical reporting of the cases from 1896 onwards, and the persistent tracking down of clues by trained inspectors, brought out into public knowledge some of the worst features and led progressively to stringent regulations for the dangerous processes. Phosphorous necrosis proved to be really unpreventable by mere regulation. The use of the dangerous chemical in lucifer matches (in the manufacture and in imported matches) was prohibited in various countries of Europe; international congresses led eventually to international conventions on this among other industrial safeguards. And the prohibition came into force in Great Britain so lately as 1910. After the International Conventions framed at Washington in 1919, India and Japan followed suit, and in December, 1923, China’s adherence, in principle, was registered. Notice was promulgated foreshadowing compliance as from January 1925. The disturbed political time was not, however, propitious for so fundamental a change in the industry.

The important change towards industrialisation had already begun in British lucifer match-making when public attention was drawn to the dangers in its processes, and the economic change undoubtedly was then greatly accelerated by the special regulations. The effects are world-wide;

in both Australia and South Africa, in technically modern, hygienic match factories, large numbers of well-protected workers are now safely employed. The increasing use of efficient, costly machinery raised the status of the workers, and the age at which it was profitable to employ them. In 1924 I saw match factories in China where it seemed a standing marvel that a whole crowded shedful of young children boxing the matches was not, at any moment, enveloped in flames. In 1896 in some of the old British works it was impossible not to feel uneasy when one watched swift, small outbreaks of flames about the groups of young girls; but in the boxing-rooms of the Chêkiang and Chihli match factories, thirty years later, it seemed as though natural laws were held mystically in abeyance for the prevention of appalling disaster. In one shed, in addition to the little children carrying piled-up and overflowing trays of matches to and from the child workers "boxing" the matches, there were infants crawling about the floor. One had to thread one's own way warily through the crowd, so as not to cause any unnecessary spilling, and to plant one's feet cautiously so as not to ignite a single match. At this place no person could be found to take responsibility for receiving representations about the dangers, and the owner seemed to be an absentee. The reply of the Civil Governor of the Province where it lay, to a Chinese request on my behalf for an interview, was, that his state of health at the time was not sufficiently good for him to see the foreign lady. He would let me know later, when he was fit to do so, but that time never came, and confused civil warfare was in progress when I had to leave the country for England.

Very different was the response of the Military Governor of another industrial province, Hupeh. This "Tuchun," H. E. Yao Hsiao-Nan, on request promptly arranged a convenient time for a conference, and discussed with interest and sympathy my mission for the welfare of labour, and the outcome of my study of the large textile and other factories lying in his Province. The conference was at his

Yamen at Wuchang, Miss Catherine Mackinnon, Secretary of the Y.W.C.A., being present, and a Chinese friend, Mr Liu, to interpret for us. The Governor subsequently sent his Commissioner of Industry to go over the main points with us. His own refined bearing and alert friendliness gave no apparent support to statements on the other side of the river that he was an addict to opium. Certainly I saw no one on my revisit to Wuchang with the China Indemnity Delegation, nearly two years later, who showed greater courtesy to the foreigner or more acute power to grasp the questions put before him. To my regret I learnt on my return of his untimely death.

This Province, it may be noted, was the chief seat of some governmental attempts before the Revolution—and it probably influenced subsequent administrative ideas—to encourage the planting of modern factories. It was difficult to get any exact information as to how far those experiments had proceeded, but there was reason to believe that two of the cotton mills seen in Wuchang were the inheritors of those experiments. They were entirely worked by man and boy labour and were partly supervised by soldiers. The Chinese lady who took us there knew remarkably little about the work and conditions, and the rapid pace of our soldier-guide through the plant made the visit one of vivid "impressionism" rather than one of close study. Yet it was easy to see that the greater part of the Lancashire-made machinery was old and out of date (bearing dates 1891-1895), that the dust was excessive, and that the carding engines were worn out. In spite of being much more numerous, relatively to the machines, than in Lancashire, the male workers as a body looked harassed and roughened. There were tragic legends, current outside, of the terrible accidents that happened in the days when the early workers wore pigtails, and worked for hours that sometimes lasted from 6 a.m. to 11.30 p.m. The period of employment was now less exacting, but everything in this factory was in extraordinary contrast to the very large modern cotton mills under Chinese management at the

other end of the town outside the old city wall. There the ratio of male to female workers was similar to that in most cotton mills in the Shanghai district and the West. There were, as usual, too many young children, but structural conditions and light were good, the machinery of the best (from Oldham and dated 1922), and some attention was paid to the welfare of the workers, for there was friendly visiting from clergy of the American Episcopal Church, permitted or encouraged, in the factory. One could not but realise the value of the presence across the river, at Hankow, of some excellently managed foreign factories, where the British managers had devoted help from Chinese assistants (men and women) in welfare work. There, too, are textile factories of wholly Chinese foundation in which the management aspires to modern ideas of welfare for the workers; in these a friendly reception awaited me. At the Hanyang Iron and Steel Works I met a well-known leader in industrial betterment, Dr H. J. Shu, Medical Officer to the works, who has also given valuable voluntary help in other industrial plants.

The personal welcome and Chinese help forthcoming in the three Wuhan cities, Wuchang, Hanyang and Hankow (the last being the city of modern growth), was assured me by the kind and helpful introductions of Mr Z. T. K. Woo of the Han Yeh-Ping Iron and Coal Company, and it was encouraging to find managers and their assistants, from factories, giving time to come to my conference in Hankow, on Industrial Law and Inspection, which was arranged by the secretaries of the Y.M.C.A. Here was one of the heartiest and best-attended discussions, of the questions involved, that I experienced in China. In my stay of eleven days, of which eight were spent in Wuchang, it would have been impossible to overtake the work, as planned, without the great assistance rendered by the use of a steam launch belonging to Messrs Butterfield & Swire, which their manager, Mr Galloway, thoughtfully put at my disposal for the frequently necessary crossing of the great river between the cities.

The conference with the Military Governor of Hupeh Province, Yao Hsiao-Nan, towards the close of my visit to the district, was well linked up with the parallel reform movement in the Province of Kiangsu. These two are more industrial than the other provinces of China, and it may be mentioned that, together, their total population numbers over 55½ million. They contain the two greatest trading and industrial centres of China—Shanghai (International and Chinese) and the Wuhan group of cities. And the Military Governor, Yao Hsiao-Nan, like Civil Governor Han Kuo-Chuen, asked for a memorandum on factory law and inspection. This I sent him.

Both governors received the Chinese version, which contains substantially the same material as the Memorandum in Appendix II of the complete *Report of the Child Labour Commission*.¹ The Military Governor told me that in principle he accepted the Peking Provisional Factory Regulations, that he was determined to follow the lead given (a few weeks earlier) by Governor Han in his Ordinance² on a Child Labour Commission, and that when it became possible definitely to apply labour regulations they should be firmly administered in his Province. He perfectly understood, as did Governor Han, that the whole object of the work of the Industrial Committee of the N.C.C. was to help the Government of China, Local and Central, itself to give effect to its own factory laws in the sense of the International Labour Conventions, in all factories in China, that it was in no way to suggest separate arrangements for factories occupied by foreigners, and that I had already seen the Minister concerned, Dr W. W. Yen, at Peking, with favourable results.

The encouraging response of the late H. E. Yao Hsiao-Nan at my interview with him happened to be only a few days before I was driven by the summer heat away from Wuchang and Hankow and to the heights of Kuling,

¹ This was published in the *Municipal Gazette of Shanghai*, July 19th, 1924, and is obtainable in a reprint from Messrs Kelly & Walsh, Shanghai.

² See Appendix III. below, p. 274.

3500 feet higher, above Kiukiang in Kiangsi Province. His attitude to the question sent me there in a hopeful holiday mood about the progress of the work of the Industrial Committee. Yet, before the summer holiday had quite finished, civil warfare had broken out in the Eastern Provinces, the Kuling Estate could furnish no coolies to carry luggage or chairs down to the river for the steamer passage to Shanghai, since all had been commandeered by a local military authority. Had it not been for the friendly resourcefulness of my hostess's cook, who produced, as it were from nowhere, four luggage-bearers and four chair-bearers, who took me down the beautiful descent, in the company of American friends, similarly supplied, the mood of confidence might have been then seriously dissipated.

My companions were going up stream to Hankow, while I was hastening down to Shanghai in order to be sure that I could move and act in spite of surrounding warfare. Friendly and helpful as the Chinese people and officials were in 1924, it was not to be expected that fighting operations should be interrupted to let me pass, as strange to say they were, from Tientsin to Taku in March 1926, to let the Chairman and Chinese members of the British China Indemnity Delegation pass through on their voyage to Shanghai.¹

My thoughts nevertheless turned back to the Wuhan group of cities in the bend of the great river, concerning which so much of deep human interest must always remain to be said. I had been fortunate in spending the larger part of my stay in June in the historical city of Wuchang—the capital of an ancient kingdom so long ago as 300 B.C., and in a mission compound from which a short scramble brought one out on to a high part of the old city wall. From there I could look westward in the direction of the narrow streets of the poorest handicraft workers, umbrella makers and chopstick makers, past small weaving sheds where only hand and treadle devices are in use, to big Chinese cotton mills equipped with the latest machinery

¹ See the *Report of the Advisory Committee*, cited. Cmd. 2766, p. 51.

and motor plant; here, where there is most of the old type of industry, some of the textile factories seemed newer and more modern than Shanghai textile factories. And yet the general condition of the labouring people is poorer and far grimmer than in the great seaport. It showed, in 1926 as in 1924, more of the densely packed life of China and more of the immense poverty of the masses than I had yet seen elsewhere. There was none of the gay carving of house fronts so general in Ningpo, and less of the soft beauty of the old eastern cities, such as Soochow. Yet turn northward as you stand on the high wall and the three cities are seen, with something of majesty upon them, lining the great river banks eroded by the swiftly rolling ochre-coloured waters that, when seen nearer in morning sunlight, reflect myriad broken wavelets of sky-blue. Look eastward, and there are beautiful green fields, irrigating water channels, and trees; southward, and there are lakes and the mountains beyond. Right through the depth of the city runs the dividing long, rocky, Serpent Hill that, advancing into the river, makes an escarpment and defence against the force of the currents and floods that without its opposition might long since have overwhelmed the city.

On this rugged old wall I thought of the standing marvel of the industrious endurance of the Chinese people and their capacity to live something resembling a human life in crowded quarters, in some places closely packed by sectional wooden partitions, horizontal and vertical.

The mission compound below was a small oasis, with fine trees and shrubs (Pride of Asia and Heavenly Bamboo) and delicious birds, including golden orioles, but the neighbours' houses and their roofs cling close to it, and from outside more heartrending cries of dogs were heard in eight days than ever were heard by my ears in all my previous life. "Curs" they were, no doubt, but the gatekeeper carried a message from the ladies that they were made unhappy by the cries, and for a while the dogs quieted down a little. In this city, as in others, my eye has been caught by a "madonna-like" mother, in

humble quarters, holding her child close, and swiftly yielding "a smile-giving" response¹ to the foreign person's passing friendly glance.

From the atmosphere and setting of an ancient Chinese centre, such as this, where the feudal or military type of overlord was ready to discuss principles and ideas of modern industrial civilisation, I must turn backward a little in time, measured by the calendar, to the reception given at Peking, in March 1924, to those ideas by the Minister of Agriculture, Commerce and (in a separate department) Industry.

To Peking I travelled from Shanghai by the Blue Express, Nanking-Pukow to Tientsin, a wonderfully interesting journey, in the congenial companionship of two fine Chinese women. I was sent by the Industrial Committee, N.C.C., with all the necessary introductions, for two main purposes. First, for the giving of a short course of University Lectures on Western Factory Law and Administration; secondly, for a conference with the Minister concerned, on my impressions of factory and other industrial conditions (after several months' service with the Shanghai Municipal Council's Child Labour Commission), and to learn what he was ready to explain to me of the plans and activities of his office. The British Professor of Economics at Yenching University, Professor J. B. Tayler, introduced me on both of these occasions. The outstanding characteristic of each experience lay in the attentive and friendly courtesy that prevailed throughout. The exchange of ideas was most complete at the memorable conference with the eminent minister, Dr W. W. Yen, who at that time held the office. Had it been possible (and had political conditions of the time been more favourable) to move towards practical application of the Peking Provisional Regulations for Factories, progress under his guidance would have been made. He had knowledge and understanding of the question, and sympathy with reform of the conditions

¹ This is a descriptive expression I found in the *Diary* of the Lady Murasaki Shikibu (A.D. 1007-10), a Japanese court lady of Old Japan, which exactly fits the expression of the Chinese mother here.

of the workers. The outcome of the conference was summarised by Professor Tayler, and after the summary was submitted first, for any needed revision, to myself, and then to the Minister for approval, it was sent to the press for publication. It truly told that I "was able to report an awakening interest on the part of officials and employers in the subject of industrial welfare, so that although the conditions, notwithstanding some notable exceptions, are generally speaking very terrible," the outlook was "hopeful." The great difficulty was the securing of co-ordinated action, and "the great desideratum a wider public appreciation of the issues involved." Emphasis was placed upon "the need for the regulation of child labour, its exclusion from night work, and the provision of education; and upon the shortening of the hours of labour in view of the greater strain of work in factories using power-driven machinery." A hope was expressed that before I left the country "definite progress may be made towards improving the conditions of factory labour" in China, "which competent observers believe" (the reporter added) "to be in greater need of improvement than those in any other civilised nation." Dr W. W. Yen showed strong interest in my plea for more accurate statistics in relation to the study of health and safety, for means whereby the workers could really voice their needs, and for travelling Inspectors of Factories; the preparations for sending a Chinese delegation to the International Labour Conference in Geneva, were also discussed.

The feeling of confidence inspired by the Minister's knowledge and evident sympathy was confirmed, some weeks later, when a travelling inspector from the Department of Industry at Peking, a mining engineer with high university degrees, from France, came to Shanghai in the course of an official tour of inspection of factories. We discussed questions of administration of the Peking Regulations with him from the standpoint of the Industrial Committee of the N.C.C., showed him the address of the Chairman of the Municipal Council to the Child Labour Commission, which put in the forefront the prin-

ciple of co-operation with the Chinese Government, introduced him to the Chairman of the Commission, and visited several factories with him.

Enough has already been said of the effect of personal conferences with high Chinese officials to show that, invariably, the next step practicable was taken by each official seen, so far as any hope could be held out of action to follow. It has always seemed to me that nowhere in the world could I have expected to be met with greater willingness to co-operate or swiftness to perceive the meaning of the cause presented than I found in Chinese officials. The obstacle which intervened in every case to "following-up" the promises could only be described as arising out of *force majeure*; i.e. the large scale political or military conditions and adventures were fatal, so long as they lasted—as they have continued to do—to the practical progress of measures for the protection of children and the welfare of labour. A train of thought nevertheless had been started about the young workers, and when I returned to China in 1926 evidence of it met me in unexpected ways among devoted Chinese workers for University education.

My first visit to China had been opened by a memorable conference with Dr Sun Yat-Sen at Canton which, though not directly concerned with industrial conditions (then awaiting my study) yet put into my mind thoughts and clues that helped to some understanding of much that followed. A little later, in a letter from Mrs Sun Yat-Sen, I learned that fresh attention was being given by the Kuomintang party to questions of industrial welfare.

The two interviews that I had with the civil governor of Kiangsu, Han Kuo-Chuen, in Nanking, on February 26th and May 13th, 1924, introduced me for the first time to a Provincial Chinese Governor in his Yamen. "A princely man in the Confucian sense" was the description of him given me by a Chinese scholar, and certainly my own experience showed him in that light. On the first occasion I had two interpreters, Mr Shen, Chinese Assistant Priest at the American Episcopal Church in Hsiakwan, and Mr Mcloy, Secretary

in Nanking of the Y.M.C.A. The Governor listened attentively, asking helpful questions, both to my case on behalf of Chinese children in factories in and around Greater Shanghai, and to a rapid sketch of factory laws in the West. The copies that I took to the interview, of Redgrave's stout volume of the highly developed British Factory Acts, and of the Peking Regulations, so brief that they were printed on two sides of a sheet of paper and with *no provision* for administration, in striking contrast, seemed to make a deep impression. This perhaps may be seen reflected in the second paragraph of his Ordinance of May 20th, in Appendix III.¹ He explained the difficulties, political and economic, and asked me for a Memorandum on Factory Law and Administration. This I brought to the second interview with him in May, after my conference in Peking with Dr W. W. Yen. On that occasion my interpreter was Miss Zung Wei-Tsung of the Y.W.C.A., who was much impressed with the cordial appreciation shown by the Governor of the document presented and of our concern for the children. In her account of the conference, she said, "Seeing the difficulty of carrying out his orders because of the complicated political situation in the Province, especially in Shanghai, he wisely proposed that a Child Labour Commission be appointed for the Province to work on similar lines to those of the Commission appointed by the Municipal Council of the Foreign Settlement of Shanghai. . . . He said that he would introduce Dame Adelaide to Mr Hsu Yuan, Commissioner of Foreign Affairs in Shanghai." The Ordinance was issued within a week, and my meeting with the Commissioner of Foreign Affairs in Shanghai followed. The Industrial Committee of the N.C.C. were invited to co-operate with the Provincial Commissioner of Industry by suggesting names of suitable people to serve on the proposed Commission.

During the second visit to Nanking in May, 1924—when I was the guest of the British Consul-General and Mrs

¹ See p. 274.

Pratt—an interesting opportunity was given me for meeting a few influential members of the Kiangsu Provincial Assembly about factory reform, at a luncheon party arranged by the Hon. S. T. Wen, Commissioner of Foreign Affairs in the Province. Miss Zung Wei-Tsung was once more the interpreter, although our host helped greatly in explaining the subject, and Mr P. C. Wang, head of a law school, made the legal position clear to the members, who, as Miss Zung Wei-Tsung said, “were not yet aware of the importance of the question.” After the explanation “they began to show interest and even enthusiasm” for action in the Assembly that should help the Civil Governor in the matter. Again I was asked for a guiding memorandum on factory legislation—which was supplied.

A small group was formed during this visit to Nanking, of university and other officials, Y.M.C.A secretaries and Mr P. C. Wang, a group which undertook to be ready to give constructive advice in such matters of social reform as opportunity arose.

Early in June I wrote to Mr S. T. Wen, when I forwarded the Memorandum desired by the members of the Provincial Assembly, pointing out how very important the setting up of the new Child Labour Commission by the Civil Governor would be for the protection of the children. In his kind reply he said: “It is sincerely hoped that this preventive work against immature child labour will penetrate very deeply into our hearts and that the evils might be prevented with your co-operation throughout China in times to come.” This work in Nanking was a little later taken up and carried a stage further, by M. Pierre Henry from the International Labour Office at Geneva; he also saw the Civil Governor shortly before the outbreak of warfare in the autumn which proved so devastating to our peaceful plans for Chinese constructive work towards the reform.

The further interruption at Shanghai, in May and June 1925, of the efforts of the Municipal Council (which were backed by the Child Labour Reform Movement and

supported by the advice and help of the British Consul-General)¹ to secure the passing of an interim Child Labour By-law for the International Settlement, received wide international notice, not least in Great Britain. Far greater attention was there given to it than to the earlier interruption, by civil war, of the wider labour reform movement for China as a whole. None the less, the real cause of the failure in the Settlement lay in the unpreparedness of the Chinese people for the reform. This was not generally realised, and in some quarters the real position was badly misrepresented in Great Britain. For this reason it is necessary to lay particular emphasis on the concluding words of the Report of the Shanghai Child Labour Commission: "Reform of present industrial conditions and the consequent amelioration of the lot of the Chinese child worker cannot be achieved unless it receives the moral and active support not only of the foreign residents but of the vastly greater body of the Chinese public." Chinese as much as foreign members of the Commission signed these words.

Perhaps the heartiest of all the invitations that reached me to come and help in labour matters was from King-techen, described by the Rev. B. Y. Tsen, Priest-in-Charge of the American Episcopal Mission in the district, as the "biggest, oldest and most completely Chinese (original) industrial centre in all China, a complete whole by itself." It is the only one that is "entirely devoted to one industry, the manufacture of porcelain." Of the population of 300,000 the great bulk, over 250,000 he said, are pouring the ability of their heads and hands, in one form or another, into the making of china, and the annual export amounts in value to about \$800,000,000. Even in this simply organised "rather crude manner of industry" the same chasm, he added, exists between labour and capital as in modern forms. He wrote to the secretaries of the National Christian Council that they should not fail to put a visit

¹ See China No. 1 (1925), *Papers respecting Labour Conditions in China*. Cmd. 2442, p. 108. Consult also China No. 2 (1927), Cmd. 2846.

to King-te-Chen on my programme, and that I should decide the length of my stay *after* seeing, on the spot, the scope of the work to be done. Owing to the very friendly relation between the community and their "infant Church" they were able to form the Society for the Promotion of Virtues, which included gentry, general merchants, students, capitalist porcelain manufacturers, and higher and common class of workers on porcelain. He believed that a visit might call forth sympathy "which is so badly needed between labour and capital." He added, in a letter to myself, his agreement with the line of action I had attempted, with a view to "enlisting the sympathy in China of those leaders and capitalists who have the power to reform." He believed that advice and suggestions concerning the welfare of the tens of thousands of manual workers would come at a favourable time, for recent strikes had caused "sufferings to labourers and small capitalists in a degree which is appalling."

The writer of these words showed thoughtful care in planning for my journey under pleasant escort and companionship. There was nothing one could more have wished than to achieve this visit to an absorbingly interesting industry of China. The Shanghai Child Labour Commission, however, finished its work only in June, and the essential visit to the Wu-Han cities left no time after the period of "great heat" had fully arrived, when by common consent the journey was impossible. It had to be made across Lake Poyang and up the Jaochou River and in a shallow draught boat, up a tributary, to the great porcelain-making centre fifty miles or more distant from Jaochou. In the autumn I had to pass down to the coast in order to be ready to begin my journey home to England, for official reasons.

A brief visit to Japan of three weeks had been promised, and in September and October it was accomplished, for the very necessary purpose of a comparative industrial reconnaissance in the country of the Far East that is the most notably industrialised.

CHAPTER VIII

SOME OTHER THINGS SEEN BY THE WAY

"The Kiang is the largest river in the world . . . indebted for its great size to the vast number of other navigable rivers that empty their waters into it, which have their sources in distant countries. A great number of cities and large towns are situated upon its banks. . . . Sixteen provinces partake of the advantages of its navigation. . . . When we consider the length of its course and the multitude of rivers that communicate with it, it is not surprising that the quantity and value of its articles for the supply of so many places should be incalculable"—(*The Travels of Marco Polo, about A.D. 1295*).

THE Yangtse, known to Chinese over a large part of its course as the "Great River" (Ta Kiang) has been estimated to be adding to its length, where it meets the sea, a mile of alluvial land in every sixty years. By means of completer geographical and commercial exploration than was possible for the great Marco Polo, six centuries ago, it is now known to be surpassed in length by other rivers. The river Amazon, with its 4000 miles, and the Nile, with its 3600 miles, are longer. Yet the Yang-tse-Kiang, in the majestic proportions of its trade and commerce, throughout historical time, surely hitherto has surpassed all rivers in its importance for immense numbers of mankind. And with its main source in far-off Thibet, near the "Roof of the World," it appeals to the mystical imagination no less than the Nile, the great river that was the cradle of the first historical Western civilisation.

Not to speak of the succession of varied features of natural beauty, the Yangtse, with its unbroken human interests of thousands of years down to the present day, has endless islands, towns and reaches that are full of intense historical appeal to the Chinese people. That indeed was a factor that became most evident to the British members of the China Indemnity Delegation, in 1926, on

their voyage between Shanghai and the Wu-Han cities. In the intervals of their study of the educational and other problems, committed to their consideration, opportunities arose easily on the quiet steamer life for listening to enthralling historical reminiscences of recent years, to allusions to long-past events in history, from the Chinese members; and for the interchange of questions and answers about the most striking natural features on the voyages. Wherever, in the long succession of river scenes, a beautiful temple, monastery or pagoda can complete the distinction or heighten the meaning of a place or eminence, there that building has grown into its place. Downwards from Kiukiang, where the influence of the tides begins to be felt, the name Yang-tse-kiang, "Son of the Sea," has been given to the lower part of this main artery of China.¹ Kiukiang, seen in flood time, especially at sunset below the fine heights of the Lu-shan, sits amongst the shipping like a queen on the waters.

The chief regions in which lie the modern productive and trading industries of this country, near some of its richest agricultural land, and its busiest urban life, are on the Great River, or within reach of the Delta by canals and tributaries. It was in these active regions that the larger part of my time in China was spent both in 1924 and 1926. I have repeatedly visited Hangchow, the capital of Chékiang Province, and have seen it in all its beauty of mountains, lake and river, and in flowering springtime, while study of industrial and educational problems was the main concern. Ningpo, in the same Province, has vied in hospitality with the provincial capital. Both cities are on navigable rivers not far from the sea, with a network of canals around them. And in Kiangsu Province, the famous literary centre, Soochow, was also seen, south of the Great River,—a lovely city which was old when Rome was being built. Wusih, another old city, growing into a modern Chinese manufacturing city, with a great development of silk filatures, equally appealed to

¹ *Travels of Marco Polo*, in Everyman Edition of 1921, pp. 235 and 283.

me as a region of many waters and numerous exquisite bridges. At Canton, where I first entered China in 1923, the waters are broader and greater, and are the impressive support of life in its marvellous river-boat population. Modern industry as distinct from trade and commerce had hardly begun there, and I noticed no special beauty of bridges. The individuality of the river-craft sufficed, and attention was arrested by the manifest capacity of the boatwomen, who seem to work at least equally with the boatmen in their carrying, fishing and piloting occupations. According to a writer in the *Chinese Economic Journal* these people have lived entirely in boats since their ancestors were driven off their land by northern invaders of the Province in bygone dynastic struggles.

What we know best generally speaks most to us of things that we prize and think beautiful. To a high proportion of the Chinese people the well-watered regions of China must appear to be the most characteristic parts in which foreigners may approach to a true acquaintance with their country. A modern English writer says: "If there is one thing more than another that the Chinese lay stress on it is the importance of water. It represents the earth principle, and its presence in every scene is considered necessary to make beauty absolute. . . . No garden is complete without water! and the very word for landscape painting is *Shan Shui*—Hills and Waters."¹ In such places also, have the tombs of the great ones in the past been placed in China. This can be seen pre-eminently in the sites of the tombs of the Ming Emperors (of the last Chinese Dynasty) at Nanking and, of later date, in the hill country at Nankow, near Peking. The Gateway or *P'ailou*, opening on to the "sacred way" that goes up the valley to the tombs (which are placed in the amphitheatre of hills above the river) is so uniquely magnificent that an illustration is here included (Plate I., Frontispiece). This gives some idea of the grandeur of old Imperial China. The earliest of these tombs is that of the Emperor Yung Loh, who died in 1424.

¹ *A Chinese Mirror*, by Florence Ayscough, Cape, p. 12.

Much of China's early civilisation seems to be historically traceable to the abundance of waterway transport and of irrigation of her fields. Although I have tasted, breathed in, and seen through, the thick veil of dust on windy days in majestic Peking, dust said to be from the Gobi Desert, my own chief outlook on the life of China has been from those regions of many waters. And that is the reason why for me the typical Chinese beings, that linger as "memory pictures," are as often persons looking down from, or passing over, bridges, as they are persons working in, or propelling, the varied beautiful boats.

Thus I offer as an illustration of a kind of window through which one must look out upon China, a few from my own photographs taken of the bridges of which there are so many in the most industrialised provinces of the well-watered regions—bridges on which I have stood as well as those under which I have passed. And when one speaks of "windows" metaphorically, let passing reference be made to an old type of material window, of which a fine illustration may be seen from a bridge, in an official mansion in one of those most easterly cities—of mother-o'-pearl panes framed in fretted woodwork. Imagination in the reader can fill in the soft brightness of such windows both within and without. The quality of "within-ness" in old Chinese home and temple life (as contrasted with the outward glancing life that sees through clear glass windows in Western homes) may be realised also, behind the paper, of an old-ivory tint, that lines the fretwork frames of windows in the majority of northern Chinese houses, and in many temples. These windows cannot be reproduced here.

Not far from the landing-stage of a palatial house, the family residence of one of the "gentry" in one of the eastern towns referred to above, in the Province of Kiangsu, I took the snapshot of the lovely bridge reproduced in selection from these characteristic masterpieces of China (Plate VII., page 230). From the same landing-stage my fellow-worker, Miss Dingman, and I set out on a memorable

afternoon in May, 1924, to visit large, wholly Chinese, factories : cotton spinning mills, silk filatures, flour and rice mills. We went to them by waterways, under the guidance and the congenial companionship of a widowed daughter of the house, her father being owner of some of these factories as well as descendant of a high official family. It is unusual but it does sometimes happen that a widowed daughter returns to her father's home, taking his name again. She herself, although living the usual home life of a great man's daughter, showed us her sympathy for the well-being of the factory workers. We found that she was engaged in making a translation into Chinese—authoritatively described to us later as “admirable”—of a book on Industrial Welfare and the Labour Movement. She was also educating her little daughter, whose intelligence made us think hopefully of what she, too, might one day do for education and social welfare in her country. After inspection of the factories and a delightful visit for tea with the ladies of the family (of three generations) in the innermost part of the beautiful house, we were taken by house-boat, drawn by a small motor-launch, a lovely excursion, by canal, to a village interesting for its image-making industry. Of these we were, with sweet kindness and courtesy, given small specimens, to carry away as souvenirs. In the evening light, from the carved and gilded house-boat, out in the wide canal, we could enjoy the great beauty of the mountains behind the village as we came and went. Above all, the quiet talk with our thoughtful guide left an abiding impression.

In spite of the decay, and even ruin, of many things, little or no sign is yet to be seen—up to midsummer, 1926—in industrial towns in China, of direct injury through the growth of the factory system to the traditional beauties of dwelling-houses and monumental buildings. That, one trusts, may not be a later outcome of the increasing desire for revolutionary and rapid change in economic and social conditions. In going through Chinese cities there is often a suggestion of certain aspects of a truly mediaeval town of

Europe (such as Toledo), where high white walls in narrow streets completely enclose most of the homes of the "gentry" and propertied people. The charm and the decoration that are an outcome of hereditary wealth are mainly within, and only simple stateliness can be seen without—or at the carefully screened main gateways. An illustration to the contrary, in a modern Chinese home in Shanghai, springs to mind, but of that we must speak a little later.

The examples of desolation and the ruin now visible, especially in certain strategic parts, must always in this immense old land have had parallels, as the result of the recurring periods of widespread disturbance and rebellions against dynasties. Of this, in modern times, the Taiping rebellion is directly illustrative, with its results in destruction that still strike awe into the mind of a Western observer. This truly it does in the area which *was* the Tartar city of Nanking. There, still, lie the big tumbled stones, scattered as if by earthquakes. These one must pass, on the route to the earliest tombs of the Ming Emperors, before one goes through the gateway in the magnificent old outer wall of Nanking (more than twenty-one miles in circumference)¹ and out into the open country, away from the Great River, to the place where the tombs lie under the shelter of the Purple Mountain.

Of the decay that comes through softening time there has surely always been plenty, among a people with a peculiar tendency to prefer the building of new monuments and bridges to the less adventurous work of repair and maintenance of the old ones. Did traits such as these, perhaps, help to save China through thousands of years from the senility and dissolution that, in the far-off past, overtook the other ancient empires of East and West?

¹ For those who cannot hope to see it may be added the following: That it is probably the most beautiful city-wall in the world, varying in height from 40 to 60 ft., much of it 40 ft. wide; that it encloses lovely bamboo thickets and fields and villages, and a small hill with pagoda and temple on top, also a drum tower, impressive by day and a marvel of twinkling lights when lit up at night.

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One of the main sources of China's unique, continuous, civilised life through the ages has been attributed by Dr Alfred Sze to the character of the women of the whole country. Evidence in support of this view met me, by the way, in my journeys, and of that more must be said presently. It was, naturally, to a considerable extent (though by no means predominantly) through Chinese women, educated in the West, with their power of speaking English, that I was enabled to penetrate below the surface of things. In probing conditions in the new China that is feeling its way, in a "search for national equilibrium in the condition of the modern world,"¹ with a unity that is partly subconscious, one felt very near to a vivid and dynamic human life. This struck perhaps the deepest notes when one went through a hospital, or a school, struggling to fulfil its objects in an ancestral temple, or in an old family mansion, where the heads and superintendents sometimes provide a part of the very necessary funds for repairs and maintenance by their own extra practice, or, as the case may be, by teaching extra private pupils outside the institution. Where such modern efforts for education, or for healing of the sick, are concerned, the individual instances of heroic and unselfish work often surpass anything avowedly required in modern times in the West; for comparable examples one would there need almost to go back to the constructive work done by early founders of the missionary orders, when rebuilding civilisation in the Dark Ages. But, undoubtedly, the initial inspiration and guidance in the fields of medicine and education, whether realised or not, largely springs from the spirit that sent, and accompanied, the Western Christian missions to China.

The efforts towards reconstruction to meet the needs of the modern world are not always so evidently handicapped as they are in these directions of healing and education. Certainly they are not in the field of modern

¹ See the *Report of the China Indemnity Delegation* cited above, p. 133, where this sentence is quoted from a leading article in the *Times*.

industry. In the town of Wusih, for example, with its large mills employing from 1000 to 4000 workers, many of them far too young (in one of the largest mills four-tenths of the workers were under fourteen years of age), we came upon several very modern features.

One of the chief factory owners in that town had organised a telephone system with 800 subscribers. The exchange was worked by capable young girls, working in three reasonable shifts, mainly during the daytime, and closing-down from one to six o'clock in the morning. The girls looked well and happy, having profited by their good fortune in having a thorough middle school education. This is seldom within the reach of Chinese girls, as we have already seen in Chapter VI. They worked in a spacious operating room. In a cotton-weaving and dyeing factory we were shown over the very interesting modern plant and processes by an English engineer, who was engaged by the Chinese owners to advise and set them going on a sound technical footing. He told us that the girls and women were supervised by a Chinese forewoman, who was successful and well liked by her charges. Here we did not see the bound feet that still painfully strike the eye in some of the factories in the Wuhan cities nearer the centre of China. Some very simple, improved workers' dwellings not far from the factory gave evidence of new thoughts of the planning of a factory-village.

Digression is unavoidable in writing on any social question in China. New and old institutions are linked in the main trading centres, to a degree unparalleled in my experience elsewhere. One may qualify this, perhaps, as regards the Philippines. Especially in Manila is attention arrested by the efficient American machinery of everyday life in a blended setting of old Spain and the Orient. The contrasts run deeper in the ancient "flowery" land. How can one present any picture even of the beauty of the bridges without reference to the life of the people who use them? Hangchow may not be a main trading centre, but it is an old manufacturing city, growing in prosperity.



Photos by

A. M. Anderson

AT THE HAULOVER

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In 1924, and still more in 1926, it was very evidently working towards its own modernisation in widened, well-laid streets, reconstruction of houses and excellent system of police. Some of the survivors of the myriad ancient bridges (estimated by Marco Polo in the thirteenth century as numbering twelve thousand) lie in the parts of the city where semi-modern industrialism is growing. These may be still very much as Marco Polo saw them, although holding together with difficulty. Hurrying by in a ricksha, in efforts to reach silk filatures or a match factory, I could see the graceful forms but not study the details. A few were falling into ruin.

One bridge near Ningpo which I cannot illustrate by photographs (as it was seen in the twilight) is abidingly associated in my mind with heavy use of man-power, and with a young boy of about 13 years of age. It stood, plain and severe in its lines, without beautiful curves, at the junction of a canal and the navigable river, just below a "haulover," over which fairly large rivercraft and house-boats are hauled up or let down by man-power, between the river and the much higher level of the canal. On either side of the canal the men wind or unwind a capstan, attached by bamboo ropes to the vessels that have to be raised or lowered. The nature of the work can be here illustrated by snapshots, taken during hours of sunlight, both in 1924 and 1926. (See Plate VI., page 210.) The endurance and the heavy toil have nothing to do with a modernised world of industry, or with the applied mechanical power which is capable of lifting from the shoulders of humanity burdens such as may have been borne by the pyramid builders of ancient Egypt or by labourers on Roman works of construction. Some secrets are still held by these Far-Eastern labourers who work on ancient lines, for I have heard an Englishman relate how, after the failure of an engineering contractor to lift a heavy tank to the top of a high hill, a Chinese foreman and his gang accomplished the task with no appliance but their bamboo ropes.

Of the lad I have no picture. He appeared to be going

home from school, had a most speaking countenance and showed an insistent desire to exchange ideas with the little group of foreigners. There was not a soul at hand to interpret for us, as our host and guardian (the British Consul) was away, above the haulway, seeing to it that our just rights in the matter of a fair turn on the descent were not missed. My hope was that the boy carried away as happy an impression of us as I did of his intelligent face and perseverance. Again and again he tried to explain his questions in varying words, with an evident confidence in our friendliness that made us sorry to lose him, when, at last, he moved away. Was he perhaps inquiring how such raising and lowering of river craft was managed in our country? He could hardly have guessed that even the quality of the ropes, being of bamboo, not hemp or steel, was a matter of interest to Western travellers.

Higher up that canal views were taken of side-walks and bridges that give a hint of the profoundly peaceful character of those stretches of country as they appeared, on two canal routes, in 1924 and 1926, respectively. On the farther side of one of the finely worked bridges across the canal, of our later excursion, there was a dear little shrine, "Wen Ching Ting," that is, according to our interpreter, "The Shrine at which one asks for Things of the Spirit." Later came a shrine, "Tu Ti Mao," "To the Gods of the Land." Beyond that a very small bridge was passed on the right hand, across a tributary canal—the "Peaceful Enjoyment Bridge of the Chow Family," so exquisite that in enjoying it I forgot to use my kodak; and there were wild roses as well as prosperous rice fields and clover fields for the family to enjoy. I had no doubt that they would agree that the low gradient steps, leading down to the water in a village we passed, and the curves of the house roofs are as much a pleasure to artistic perceptions as the quietly flourishing countryside itself. The buffalo-driven pumps for irrigation of the fields, and the small, wooden, balance-crank drive, worked by one man, seemed to me to be some compensation

for the massive human toil we had seen at the haulover. They wholly belonged to the landscape.

We were then (in 1926) on our way to the Yü Wang Buddhist Temple and Monastery, lying in a valley protected by well-wooded hills. There are two sacred mountain monasteries, of which this is one, in the Province of Chêkiang, enumerated by Mr R. F. Johnston in a supplementary list of those that are much frequented by Chinese pilgrims, given by him in his *Buddhist China* after the "Four Famous Hills" and the "Eight Small Famous Hills." Although the picturesque old pagoda near-by was crumbling from the top, the interior of the temple itself was the best cared-for of any I saw in the country. This, if I may judge from my limited exploration of temples, was official Buddhist worship in its most polished form. During our (unhurried) visit devout chanting of the monks was steadily proceeding in the brightly-lit and gilded shrines. At the more beautiful and more famous Lin Ying Temple near Hangchow, that feature of devout chanting (during the time of thronging spring pilgrims) was also admirable. The shelters provided for the pilgrims at both places were interesting.

My outlook on shrines, temples and pagodas is that of one who sees them by chance, or "by the way." The most exceptional of the chances came in my glimpses of the great Thunder Pagoda at Hangchow, in February 1924; first by a view across the lake from the grounds of the Villa Liu and next by examination of it on the site itself, moving round about it and scrambling up into its decayed and crumbling lowest story. Here was an example, *in excelsis*, of a great old monument, unprotected, unrepaired and even assisted to decay by relic-seeking pilgrims who scraped particles from the bricks of its base. When will this splendid monument suddenly crumble to dust by force of its own massive weight on a gradually shrinking lowest story? That question inevitably suggested itself, and we did not linger there long. A few months later, actually, it had fallen. Thus the view I took from the ground of the Villa Liu has a special value.

Two years later, when looking across from one of the islands on the lake to the desolated site, I was told that each of its bricks had been found to contain a copy of an ancient Sutra of historical value in relation to Buddhism; that most of them had disappeared quickly, but that copies had been secured (before it was too late) for some of the libraries of the West, including the British Museum. I tell this simply as a traveller's tale, lacking opportunity at present for further enquiry in the matter.

Of stronger appeal to me than official temple services, in part because they were better understood without words, were the various services, or other religious acts, of humble labouring people and their gilds; although it must be admitted that, in their devotions, deprecation appeared to be a larger element than worship. The close association of callings and crafts with places dedicated to religious use can be seen in a finely-placed temple on a lake in the hills above Ningpo. There, in country where the seamen and fishermen of that port come home periodically, up the canals and over the haulways to their villages, they put their votive offerings in the shrine.

The energetic gild service of a group of coolie workers, before the main altar in a small temple, in Soochow, fortunately had just begun as I entered one day, with some friends. Their rapid prostrations, lighting of tapers, musical shouting and occasional rhythmical rushings to and fro, between the altar and the outer court, were all very evidently enjoyed by the participants. Another kind of "appeal," needing no language to express or explain it, I have seen in city temples—the devotions of country-women telling their beads, or of mothers taking their sons from shrine to shrine, instructing them how to show reverence and say their short prayers.

More moving was the single-roomed temporary home of a young married pair of workers, in a Chinese-owned cotton mill, where a number of the workers were housed by the firm, in serried rows of small tenements, within a kind of high-walled compound. In this tiny home the shy

fragile wife and her husband received us; there were only two features or furnishings to be observed. These were the bedding on the low platform between the window and the wall, on which they slept, and the ancestral altar or shrine that faced one on crossing the threshold. Only in poor, bare tenement rooms of Catholic Dublin workers have I seen anything outwardly comparable. Such shrines are general in humble homes of China, but in no other place visited did they seem so affecting in influence as here, and this was within the precincts of a large cotton spinning mill equipped with the most modern machinery, on the outskirts of Tientsin. Implicit there, I thought, was something akin to the spirit that pervades the Altar of Heaven in its deserted greatness at Peking. Unique and apart is that altar, among all places (that are not in ruins) of monotheistic worship. It was always empty of images and open to the sky. One hesitates to add even a word to the many already written about this unmatched central place of a nation's former worship. Yet one thing—for its significance in relation to the religious ideas of the humblest workers of China—calls for mention here. On one of my three visits to it I was led, by the cultured old missionary who was my guide on that occasion, through a seldom-used gateway (stiff to open), down a covered walk to a prehistoric group of large dark stones, in an open grassy place. This, he said, was the natural original of the Altar of Heaven. The stones were believed to be meteoric, and were far less definite in form and grouping than other stones on ancient sites of worship, such as Avebury and Stonehenge. The architectural linking up of their site with the sacred enclosure of the historical altar marks the place as an essential part of the whole. Even so, ancient, traditional, and vague in form, seem to be the religious beliefs of the working people.

The truth is that, although the extraordinarily industrious people of China no longer have their ancient Head (in the dynastic chief agriculturist, the Emperor, who prayed and sacrificed for his own people twice a year

at the Altar of Heaven), the overwhelming majority of them are still men and women of the countryside—agriculturists, or fishermen, or seamen. In spite of age-long skill in fine handwork, they are only secondarily craftsmen and town labourers. Few of them have yet travelled far from the ancient beliefs in the gods of the land, sea, river and home or clan. A truly urban class of the European kind is not yet established in China, not even in Shanghai, although beginning to be so there. Of this Mr J. T. Pratt says: "Most of the workers come from the country. They are farmers and fishermen and can support themselves at home in the old-fashioned manner. They are attracted to Shanghai not necessarily because they are starving, but because they can increase their earnings and perhaps their savings by working in factories. . . . Though the floods and famines which are of such constant occurrence in China are an important factor, generally speaking the mobility of the labouring classes is different from that of the European proletariat," yet "there are many who from preference, or of necessity, have lost their direct contacts with the village."¹ To this section, rather than to those with a rural foothold, the workers whom I specially saw by their own wish, of whose letters and questions we spoke in the last chapter, appeared to belong. And in the International Settlement I have seen how happily the ricksha coolies can welcome the paternal kind of mission for their physical, social and religious welfare, that was established, and is carried on, by Mr George Matheson. When one day, in 1926, in order to speak to Mr Matheson passing by, I stopped my ricksha coolie, I learned instantly by his beaming looks that acquaintance with the ricksha men's friend was more than a passport. It was a personal introduction to the man himself.

Among many captivating experiences in China one perhaps more readily than another comes back to me in happy remembrance, for it touches on all manner of

¹ *Memorandum on Labour Conditions in China*. Foreign Office, Feb. 25th, 1927 (Cmd. 2845), p. 4.

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associated links with questions that have filled a large part of my working life. It is also linked, as others are, with the lilies of China, which, by their beauty, multitude and variety, call, as the bridges did, for some consideration in this chapter.

It was the central event of an afternoon spent in a completely Chinese part of Greater Shanghai; in full spring-time, under the guidance of a friend who was wont to spend her infrequent leisure in friendly contacts with Chinese folk who speak no language but their own. On that afternoon we were visiting markets, shops and little workshops, for refreshment, not for industrial research. And by mutual consent we included the pauses for rest and reflection that were put in our way by the proximity of small market and gild temples.

In one of these, the Merchants' Gild Temple in old Shanghai city, there is a long entrance alley from the outer gate to the first court of the temple. Along either side of this alleyway, at intervals, stood raised earthenware pots or vases filled with growing flowers. There a friendly custodian-priest—who came forward to welcome us and showed us the fine fretwood carvings of the temple—tended the spring lilies which grew and multiplied in congenial soil. Reserves of later-flowering lilies, half grown and ready for transplanting in other parts of China, were waiting in flat cases, under the covered colonnades that extended inside the enclosing walls, on both sides of the alleyway. An exquisite place of peace it was in the sunshine, yet not far off lay the Pearl and Jade Markets, where alas! the parched grey faces of merchants carrying on their business provided open illustration of the result of relying on a subtle drug rather than on spiritual aids to inner quietude of mind.

We were in that temple garden in May 1924, and, on the day of writing these words, in 1927 in English winter, an excerpt from an old Sacramentary of Spain, of date earlier than A.D. 700, came under my eyes. It included these words: "Make us, O Lord, to flourish like pure lilies in

the courts of Thine House, and to shew forth to the faithful the fragrance of good works." By that occurrence was the writer of this volume aroused to record the episode linked with the Merchants' Guild Temple of Shanghai. The words called up another and far distant place of worship, seen in the heart of old Spain, at Toledo, where lovely borders of the *fleur-de-lis* were seen, also in spring-time, inside the enclosing walls of Santa Maria la Blanca, of the fourteenth century. That had been at first a synagogue of the Jews, with a ceiling believed to be made of beams from cedars of Lebanon and with soil brought from Mount Sion under its pavement. Under its later Catholic name it had become an empty shrine. Yet, whether in the Far East or the West, *lilies*, for a large part of mankind, speak of sanctuary and good works.

The custodian of the Chinese temple, so friendly to "foreign" visitors and the only apparent worshipper there, was not unmindful of the welfare of his poorest fellow countrymen, as was shown to us a little later. My friend who guided me could converse with him in his own language, and she found his thoughts so much to her mind that she returned again, soon, to follow them out by further talk. Among other things he told her, how that when playing music within the precincts of sacred places, musicians would raise a stringed instrument above the level of the heart, for they believed that in such places they should express only thoughts springing from the higher faculties. He asked her some questions, and this was one she reported to me: "Whether she had ever met the English lady of whom he had been hearing in the city, who had come to look after the children and other workers in Chinese factories?" She had replied to this effect: "You yourself have met her, for it was she who came with me at my last visit and who so much admired your lilies. She will be glad to know that you, too, care for the children and other factory workers. It is her belief that, in taking care of them, all nations and people should be one."

There are (as I realised in the summer of 1924) many

kinds of lilies in China. Abundant varieties were seen in the mountains (in altitudes of from 3000 feet to over 4000 feet), when the months of July and August were spent at Kuling in the Lu-shan, above Kiukiang. After the day lilies, and little low-growing lilies, that had flowers resembling the bloom of a hardy azalea, the statelier, taller lilies arrived. Tall trumpet lilies were there, the flowers spreading out in a whorl, and growing even occasionally over 7 feet high, so that one could see the magnificent streaks of copper colour on the outside of the flower, where it springs from the stem. Sometimes they were shorter so that, without tiptoeing, a woman of "Victorian" height could look into the creamy inner side of the flower. So far as one could learn, these lilies, scattered often in nearly inaccessible places (apart from a few by chance enclosed in gardens), were quite wild, growing under Nature's hand alone, without human co-operation of any direct or conscious kind. It was impossible not to wonder, then, whether the trumpet form had in some way influenced the evolution of the wind instruments of orchestras.

The effect on the human spirit of the noble flower in these heights, amid magnificent rocks and chasms of a mountain mass—that is believed to have been the earliest part of China to rise out of the primeval sea—was like that of "the sound of a trumpet"; and it seemed as though the sight of them should be the prelude to the hearing of a new choral symphony, in which "all the sons of God" would "shout for joy."

One may pass within occasional sight of clumps of these lilies, and various shrines and mountain temples, along an ancient stone-flagged path, which is the immemorial way across the heights, down the steps and steep of the far-vistaed Nankang Pass. In its short level parts, the path is not unlike some surviving pack-horse routes in byeways of rural England. Whether one descends, to cross a most turbulent torrent, far down, by the Goddess of Mercy Bridge (as beautiful as its name), or whether one remains at the top of the Pass, looking on the far-stretching,

shimmering, boat-flecked and indented Lake Poyang, the stones worn by innumerable padding footsteps of men—these stones speak to those who can hear. They speak of the men who have been crossing the Pass for thousands of years, or who, for perhaps 1400 years of Buddhism, have been linked, as hermits, monks, abbots and their friends, or as pilgrims, with these sanctuaries in the clouds.

Until the "foreigner"—trader, missionary or consular or customs officer—needed and obtained a foothold in one of the high valleys, for escape for his family and himself from the torrid summer heat of the Yangtse valley, where his work lay, there were no other residents, and the monks and hermits were alone with the lilies beloved of them, and with the stars. Formerly there must have been magnificent forests, if one may judge from the noble remaining trees in a few places, such as the three—a ginko or maiden-hair tree, and two giant cedars, over 1000 years old—in front of the Yellow Dragon Temple, beyond Kuling. The story ran that the others had at some time been unscrupulously felled for money by a monk. For me a far more urgent subject of enquiry, which I could not then make, was linked with the great banks of *kaolin* that were indicated as lying below the Pass and within the region of the Lake Poyang. The vast deposits of this fundamental in the manufacture of porcelain, lying there, gave the basis for the immense development of the porcelain industry at King-te-chen, on a tributary of the River Jaochou flowing into the lake. For there is the largest and oldest of Chinese original manufactures, quite unindustrialised, for home consumption and for export—on purely native lines—with over 250,000 people engaged in it in this one place, more than all the labourers in all the cotton mills of China. And there, as we saw in Chapter VII., great unrest and strikes of labour had sprung from, and increased, the sufferings of workers and small employers to a degree that to my Chinese correspondents seemed "appalling," in 1924.

In the "Lily Valley," more solitary and stately than Kuling and true to its name, on another side of the Lu-

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shan the Chinese National Y.M.C.A. secretaries had recently founded a summer residence where "summer schools" could be held. There (while a conference for the revival of Chinese Buddhism was in session in another valley) a dozen or so of Chinese students of economics conferred with me one day, hopefully, on the prospects of the movement for the reform of labour conditions under the growing factory system of China. We studied together the (then) recently issued Report of the Child Labour Commission of Shanghai, and their attention was given to the co-operation promised by Governors of two of the most industrialised Provinces in dealing with the evils of employment of young children in power-driven industry. I described to them conditions, which some of them had never seen, in silk filatures, match factories and cotton mills, in purely Chinese regions as well as in the more fully industrialised Shanghai.

Many months earlier, I had seen in silk filatures the pale-faced and bright-eyed babies lying under the winding frames, behind their mothers, with perhaps a small elder sister or brother hovering around. Family life manages to "carry on" in wonderfully unlikely places in that strenuous and, in parts, closely peopled land. On the unswept floors lay plenty of dust and dirt, and in the heavy atmosphere floated wisps and cloudlets of steam. The business in hand was to study the little girls and (in lesser numbers) boys, some evidently ill, at the benches, where they were stirring the cocoons in nearly boiling water for the mothers and other young women winders; but the pale faces of the bright-eyed babies, behind in the dust, kept appearing through rifts in the steam. Even there they seemed the emblems and the hope of a fine and long-enduring people. And like a bird alighting from the sky came a thought of our English Henry Vaughan, in a place where probably it never alighted before :

And here, in dust and dirt, Oh ! here
The lilies of His love appear.

There are signs multiplying that it is the educated women of China who are going to shoulder much of the responsibility for the amending of conditions so inimical to health as those in the silk filatures and in the workers' poorest dwellings. Miss M. I. Ting, the present medical superintendent of a charitable hospitable for women and children in Tientsin City (which was founded under the influence of Yuan Shih-Kai more than twenty-five years ago), declared to the China Indemnity Delegation: "Ignorance of right living is seen everywhere. . . . We Chinese have violated biological laws, therefore we are in extreme poverty." To that also she attributes "the physical, mental and moral diseases" which, she says, "are shaking the foundation-stone of our civilisation." The beautiful order, efficiency and the practical character of the arrangements maintained by her, under circumstances of very great difficulty (in the adapted buildings of an ancestral memorial temple) filled one with admiration; the more so, as the work is accomplished with a high personal blending of the power lent by distinguished professional attainments with things that belong to the nation's best old ideals of refinement in womanhood. Chinese women of to-day in general have discarded many hampering conventions in dress. By those practising professions on a foundation of Western education it has been brought to a simplicity of line suitable for the work without any sacrifice of its national character. And it harmonises with the convictions they express about measures "to meet the growing needs of China's social reforms." For this, said Mrs C. Y. Tang, "the scope of women's education must be widened. . . . No woman can be suffered to remain ignorant without affecting the experience and lives of China's millions. Such problems as child labour, women's employment, long hours, low wages, and poor working conditions should be . . . if possible, solved." To meet such needs, schools, colleges, universities should offer girls and women "courses in theoretical and applied . . . technique of social service."

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These utterances, published in 1923 in the *Bulletin of the National Association for the Advancement of Education*, are forerunners of the *Handbill of the Woman's Movement of Hupeh*, which was issued at the time that the Southern officials entered Hankow, in December 1926. "Set up a new constitution! Spread the laws against foot-binding! Widen the movement for the education of the country women! Set up penalties for selling women and taking secondary wives! Away with old proprieties, ethics, and social customs that bind women! Let all organisations as far as possible take in social service workers! Cheers for the people of China! Cheers for the officials of China!"

Far earlier did China have a literary precursor of ideas of such an order. In a paper read by Dr Hu Shih (at a Rotary Club meeting in February 1924) we learned of the publication, in 1825, of a popular novel called *Flowers in the Forest*, written by Li Ju-Chen, who lived from 1760 to 1830, in which criticism and even ridicule of Chinese social institutions and customs are carried so far as to reverse the relative status of men and women. The novel was written primarily for the preservation and popularisation of his plan for a phonetic simplification of written Chinese, but it had a deeply humanitarian motive. And it was described by Dr Hu Shih as "A monumental work of social criticism and propaganda." The customs of foot-binding, fortune-telling, for deciding marriage, belief in *feng-shui*—a kind of divination of suitable dwelling sites—and extravagance in dinner parties, are among the social usages that are condemned. "It is the inequality of the sexes and consequent injustice to women that most deeply interest the author, especially the double standard in sexual morality." Universal education (including education for all women) was among his constructive proposals. Those should be accounted idle ones who have not passed any examination! In form, the manner of the story resembles *Gulliver's Travels*, but among its unlikenesses to that work is its enormous length.

Running through much of the fabric of social life in

China, I found strands that appeared to be discordant, or not yet harmonised. That would be true certainly of other countries, but the contrasts are much more extreme in China than they are in the West. Customs from the past that cramp and injure the life of the young, and particularly the women—who are subject to arbitrary, irresponsible personal rule in the home, in matters such as marriage, where freedom is essential for a human kind of life—have continued to a degree that is deplored by enlightened Chinese. These customs exist along with bold, simple acceptances of human equality in the work of daily life that are as advanced as they are in any country. I have no doubt that these unharmonised strands are going to be wrought into a finer pattern. The recent violent upheavals will send new ideas into remote regions that might have heard nothing about tranquil changes, or in consequence of milder revolutions. In the most easterly cities of China there have long been many examples of the happiness of the middle way between extremes.

In striking contrast with the life of seclusion that remained in many homes—at least until midsummer 1926—of the old cultured families, was the atmosphere in a home in Chinese Shanghai, which a fortunate chance threw open to two American friends and myself, in 1924. We were waiting near a tram route for a tram-car to transport us home, from an expedition, to Yuen Ming Yuen Road in the International Settlement. Close-by I noticed, through a large open gateway, a brightly lit-up courtyard and a building at the back, which to foreign eyes looked like a gild house, or possibly a temple; and we instantly agreed to find out whether an entry was permissible. With a promptitude which surprised us, the gateman brought us to the door of the house, and it proved to be the home of a prosperous, well-known merchant, on the eve of the marriage of his eldest daughter—which explained the brightness. The master of the house received us as honourable guests, showed us the decorations for the festival, pressed us to

stay for tea, and presently, after we learned that he had visited Europe, he asked, "And now would you, ladies, like to see the beautiful bride?" Of course we wished to meet her, and were happy also to meet her mother, her sister, sister-in-law, and the sister of the sister-in-law. Tea, which is perfection in such a house in China, was served at a round table, with confitures that were partly in the Western manner and partly Chinese. "When I am in England," he said, "I am just 'that Chinaman,' but here, within the four seas, we are all brethren!" We praised the Chinese way, and I regretted, inwardly, that I could not at the moment think of any satisfactory way to defend what I knew probably would have been my countrymen's manner of aloofness, if in such a position as that of our host. Since the ladies of the family spoke but few words of English and the conversation was mainly with the father, I ventured boldly to remark that the beautiful bride (who was 19 years old) was the daughter of a still more beautiful mother. He readily agreed. "Yes, I have a beautiful wife." She was, I thought, moreover, happy-looking, in the way that the women in some of Rembrandt's greatest portraits look happy. There was little of the delicate, transparent look about the ladies of this household that, widely, is seen in the homes where active and free open-air life for women is almost unknown. The old puritanical Chinese ideals in relation to the home life of women were already giving ground in some places to ideals of the higher kind of hygiene; and the change will grow rapidly, not only under the influence of such revolutionary utterances as those of the women of Hupeh, but better far, under the training for public service inaugurated in schools set up by Mrs Sun Yat-Sen for that purpose.

The contact in Shanghai with Western ideas, some of which we discussed at that bright tea-party, seemed to have been all for good, and without any loss of the natural Chinese ways and customs of a social character. This mother was evidently head of her own home and children. The age of the bride was above the average for marriage,

and we could feel that she had before her a chance of happiness. The visit only came to an end when the father cheerfully remarked that now we "must stay for dinner." We all had engagements, which, by our enjoyment of the generous way in which we had been welcomed, we were in danger of fulfilling too late. Shortly afterwards I met this genial merchant at the reception that was given by the newly opened Chinese Women's Bank, in the Foreign Settlement, and we met there like friends.

That Bank had really existed for over two years, but in 1924 it was formally opened in an extended form, with some well organised and settled business, and with a capital of \$500,000 Mex. authorised and \$250,000 paid up. For instance, it managed the financial affairs of a large school for girls and collected the girls' savings; thus the girls could open an account. It was chiefly for affluent Chinese women, and possessed safety vaults for their jewels, on which loans could be raised. The head woman accountant does a good deal of house-to-house visiting, and she believes it to be very important for Chinese women to learn to become financially self-supporting and independent. She herself had learnt about banking as manager for ten years of the ladies' department of another bank, and she had read a great deal about the principles and practice of banking. The chief initiator of this bank and its real founder was a Chinese widow, Mrs O'Ben, who had died in 1923. Because no other woman was quite equal to succeeding her as general manager, the General Secretary of the Chinese Municipal Council was now filling the place. Some six girls were in training in the bank, hoping to become bankers themselves. There are other women's banks, for example, two in Peking, but they are really run by men, and women working in them are quite subordinate.

Probably this most interesting enterprise can be traced back to two things intimately concerning the women of China. Over large regions of China, and in indescribable ways, they suffer, not only from the violence and dislocations of a country at war within itself, and without its

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settled central government; they suffer also from the moral, social and economic difficulties which beset a people rapidly coming out of an ancient civilisation into integral relations with a new world order. About the consequences in the urban areas that follow the coming of the new form of industry enough has been said, as also about the worsened conditions of housing and insanitation, before modern science and hygiene can pave the way for increased concentration of workers in towns. In more leisured ranks than those of manual labourers the changes in the important sphere of the family that arise out of Western education, and the inevitable aspirations that follow for some personal choice in marriage, do not simplify relations of children to their parents. It is, above all, in strength of character that among the women of the East the women of China seem to lead. Ability amongst them (as already remarked in Chapter V.) has found an opening, in the past, that has often been wanting in other countries, in any part of the world—in the considerable position of responsibility and authority assigned to them when they attain to the headship of the large family households which abound. It is accordingly not wonderful that this fundamental need, of monetary security, should specially interest Chinese women of sense and ability.

As regards criminal disorder from banditry, I have not seen, but have had vividly related to me, by an eye-witness of it, the horrifying state of a Chinese gentleman's family residence, in a country district in the centre of China where a raid by bandits had occurred. Destruction and violence had been perpetrated there among innocent persons, in the bandits' search for the hidden belongings of their victims. No punishment or redress followed, although the district was nominally under a magistrate and the province was nominally at peace. Of an admittedly disturbed district I have been told (also by an eye-witness) about a typical victim among the farmers, who was then being treated in a foreign hospital for injuries due to torture by those who sought to rob them. And I saw in Peking,

in the early summer of 1926, a residuum of the avalanche of refugees from the neighbouring villages, who had escaped from the ravages of successive Chinese armies. The loss of settled government in the capital city had left much to be added to Chinese efforts by foreign societies (American and British) for the shelter and relief of those refugees. The largest camp I saw was the women's camp, of shattered, forlorn women and children, established under the care of the Salvation Army, in a court of the P'ai Lin Sze Temple. They had numbered nearly 800 in this camp at the height of the influx (which was estimated as 300,000 for Peking as a whole), and there were still about 300 in the women's camp. This sufficed to show me the work that had been involved in organising some elementary preventive sanitation, in addition to the feeding of all, and the nursing of the sick. The young women (from Kent and from London) officers of the army, who were in charge of this work, were carrying it out with notable efficiency and great kindness, and were admirably supported by the help of the men officers. The spirit of this aid was comparable in various aspects with that given, during an earlier stage of civil warfare, in the Chinese organised refuges in Shanghai, in October of 1924. The organisers in each instance were equally devoted, but the Chinese, naturally, could do more for the education and recreation in the camps of their own people. What may we not expect from the nation when the people turn from war and war relief to the constructive arts of peace!

It was possible for me to see a few of the many organised benevolent institutions of Chinese origin. By far the most interesting of these was the Orphanage instituted, on modern lines, in the Western Hills near Peking. It was initiated by, and in 1926 was still under the direction of, the ex-Premier Hsiung Hsi-Ling, who in 1924 had shown me over the houses and grounds. These had formed an old hunting seat of the emperors. The type of education given was good and practical, the hygiene of dormitories, beds, etc., well provided for, and the whole management seemed to

me attractive. The very young children in the kindergarten were evidently happy in their games and exercises, under a qualified teacher. Half-time in school was the general rule. Large workshops for the boys included: pottery, engineering, sculpture, photography, care of farm animals, and gardening. The girls had their quarters in an entirely separate part of the grounds enclosed by walls, and at each gateway was a soldier on guard, which made one remember both the surviving custom of domestic slavery for girls in China, and the disturbed state of the country. These girls would have been often in special danger, in that hill country—even in the relatively quiet springtime of 1924—if not specially guarded. Their manual instruction was in spinning, weaving and embroidery. I did not hear what was done for them during the fighting of 1926.

Such fine charitable works of relief and training seem generally to owe their origin to the individual initiative of a leading person, sometimes strongly supported by his family. The foremost example I saw of work for the economic and social well-being of Chinese country people, unquestionably, was that of the brothers of the Chang family at Nantungchow, already indicated in Chapter II. Of this family the late Hon. Chang Chien was the leader in the organising of the big industrial and reclamation schemes; and the parents, who themselves had farmed on a large scale, were well known for their benevolence. This great man was a scholar under the old *régime* and a moderate reformer. His first cotton mill was opened in 1899, but it was after the first revolution, of 1911, that he developed his larger schemes for industry, and also did very much for reform in education, especially agricultural and commercial, and in the handicrafts. He was a leader, moreover, in the development of normal school education. An orphanage for 1700 children and other benevolent schemes are natural adjuncts to his works (on a heroic scale) for his people. The whole visit—in spite of the backwardness of the factory hygiene (which was most natural)—was a stirring episode.

After the difficult arrival at the quay (by being dropped into a crowded open Chinese boat to bring us ashore from the foreign steamer, which was slowed down for passengers, in the Yangtse, near its mouth) we saw immediately the splendidly-laid country roads, and the look of prosperity and the crops on the reclaimed land. Education and development were the keynotes of the whole. And education in the Chang family, in general, evidently was as much prized for the women as for all the others. At a meeting we held in a mission school-house (in order to speak on measures for health and safety in factories), a daughter of the eldest brother, aged at most 17 years, took the chair, better than some people twice her age might do; and she did this in the presence of her mother and other members of the family. She had been at the M^cTyiere School for Girls in Shanghai, and was about to go on to study at Ginling College, Nanking. We were received in audience (as one well may express it) by both the eldest brother and by Mr Chang Chien. The latter, seated in the main entrance of his house, which had an outlook that one can never forget, on to a courtyard of simple beauty, was, it was evident, more distinguished himself than all the big things that he had worked for and there evolved. Because he had thought and acted in a great manner about those things, there are many Chinese who now believe in industrial development for their country. He showed that he realised its integral relation to agriculture, reclamation of land, development of roads and waterways, and conservancy work—and that education and art should support and pervade the whole. This was the one place in China where the child workers in the mills came out and cheered us as we left.

A few weeks before this visit to Nantungchow, which revealed much about practical idealism in Chinese work for China's welfare, I had the good fortune to hear Rabindranath Tagore address (in beautiful English) a large audience of Chinese. His address was one of many given by him in China, on invitation, and it was delivered in the auditorium at the Welfare Clubhouse or Institute of the



Photo by

A. M. Anderson

A BEAUTIFUL BRIDGE IN CHINA

Shanghai Commercial Press. Many young Chinese men were there listening eagerly, and, I thought, in a keenly critical way. Those of them who were near to me seemed to have views that were quite distinct from Tagore's of the real needs of their country. The address was a lofty appeal to China not to lose her spiritual heritage, not blindly to take over mechanical and material civilisation from Western peoples. He laid stress on the gift of Buddhism from India to China, and, with it, the power for "self-renunciation and love of all creatures." On the platform beside the famous speaker sat Mr C. C. Nieh, the philosophic thinker and cotton manufacturer—both refined and able leaders. My impression was that in spite of perfect courtesy and deference from the Chinese audience to the venerable Indian, the ideas of the young Chinese leaders include a considerable measure of the material gifts of modern civilisation for their country.

Many other "things seen in China" remain untold. Nothing has been said of the consummate actor Mei Lan-fang, in the plays which have power to move even those who cannot understand the spoken words. Nothing has been said of the people's pageant-like plays, seen in the Temple Courts, nothing of the blind strolling minstrels. I have said little of enchanting glimpses of interiors caught, as one passes through narrow streets: such glimpses as that of a boy in an open doorway, playing on a small stringed instrument while he gently sings to himself, or, close by, of a little child on a shop counter, seated and feeding his father while the mother stands by. These are memories such as fill Chinese poems.

The last memory of that year—of a parting on board the P. & O. steamer as I left Hongkong, homeward bound *via* Suez, in October 1924—must be told. Two small flags, the Chinese national and the Union Jack, were put in my hands at the gangway by Miss Wu—a British subject as well as a faithful Chinese. "Keep these waving 'good-bye,'" she said, "until you can see us no longer." And this I did very heartily.

CHAPTER IX

A CAMPAIGN OF PUBLICITY; THE TASK THAT REMAINS

Proclamation. Declaration of a State of Emergency

Whereas, a State of War exists between the armed forces of the Provinces of Chekiang and Kiangsu.

And Whereas, Hostilities between the opposing forces have taken place in the neighbourhood of the Foreign Settlement of Shanghai.

Therefore, It has become necessary for the Council for the Foreign Settlement to take action to preserve the Peace, Good Order and Security of the Foreign Settlement and to protect Peaceful Residents therein.

Notice is therefore given that in view of the possibility of attempts at encroachment by the Forces of Either Party upon the Foreign Settlement, the Council, by virtue of the power and authority in it vested, hereby makes Proclamation that a STATE OF EMERGENCY exists, and authorises adoption of the requisite measures accordingly.

By order,

E. S. B. ROWE,
Acting Secretary.

COUNCIL CHAMBER,
SHANGHAI, *September 9, 1924.*

The "requisite measures," mentioned in the Declaration quoted above (which were set out in another Proclamation), were directed to the following matters: The exclusion from the Foreign Settlement and the roads maintained by it, of Chinese troops, soldiers and police; the appearing in any street or public place therein, in

uniform or wearing a distinct dress or badge, of any persons, other than a consular officer, or member of naval or military forces landing in aid of the civil power or other authorised person; and the carrying in any street or public place by any person of any flag, banner, sash, or other device, bearing any inscription in Chinese or in any foreign language.

Until the circumstances that led up to, attended, and followed the publication of that declaration are understood, it is difficult for anyone to realise the state of tension in the Settlement, which, in the autumn of 1924, preceded the campaign of publicity for the care of children employed in industry. And the preparation, of an active kind, for that campaign began in January 1925, as soon as the militarist forces had (towards the close of 1925) passed away to other parts of China, distant from the Settlement. It is important also that the intensity—which was quite new—of the fighting in the adjoining provinces between the armies, provided with very real munitions of war, should be realised. Without appreciation of that factor, it will be impossible to understand the severe strain that was imposed on inhabitants of the Settlement, and particularly on those who were responsible for maintaining order and safety, and for securing freedom from disturbing entanglements in the International Settlement.

The measures taken were effective and peaceable. It should be remembered also that, although fighting armies were excluded, the Chinese people were able, in Shanghai, to receive, feed, house and give every care to numerous refugees from villages in the fighting areas. The recreation and school classes, which were organised by Chinese for child refugees, were helped by foreigners resident within the Settlement—at the request of the organisers. At the close of the military campaign bodies of Chinese soldiers from the defeated army did take flight into the Settlement, where they were disarmed, fed, and temporarily sheltered. Up to the time, on October 14th, when I left Shanghai, on the way to England, the anxiety

and strain for the Council and inhabitants from the proximity of fighting armies, and from the inward rush of refugees, was at its height. It was in every sense a *city of refuge*, and of safety—so far as that depended on the watchfulness of the Council, and on the efficient international volunteer force of the Settlement for the defence of the city. The character of the Settlement, as a city of refuge, appeared to me to be evident in the faces and bearing of the strikingly numerous Chinese people in the streets near the Bund, when I arrived from Kuling. That aspect was still more evident when I returned there after three weeks in Japan.

When I sat at dinner with friends, in the house of a member of the Council near the boundary of the Settlement, on the evening of September 8th (that is, on the eve of the posting up of the Proclamation declaring the State of Emergency), steadily we heard the big guns booming. The Chairman of the Council was there, and frequently there were telephone calls, for claims on his attention, naturally, were many at such a time. Strongly it was made apparent to us that this was a time of incalculable issues of life into which no one could see very far, and that it might be "the imponderables" that would most affect the outcome for the International Settlement.

That declaration, and the emergency measures believed by the Municipal Council to be necessary, strike the keynote of the situation as it began to unfold itself when I had to leave the summer quarters at Kuling, and to come down the Yangtse, from Kiukiang to Shanghai.¹

The contrasts of the few days' journey are inexpressible for the most part—profound peace, great helpfulness and kindness (from residents, foreign and Chinese alike), and sudden emergence of what appeared to be inextricable difficulties, alternating day by day. Up in the mountains the perfect summer weather had begun to break in the last days of August. There were storms and gorgeous sunsets, and, during farewell visits to view-points looking out on to

¹ See Chapter VII., p. 194.

the river plains, one had increasingly serious apprehension of the cost to the farmers of the immense floods below.

The journey down the mountain began on September 1st, just as a very wet morning was clearing off. Through the vivid green growths of fern, great grasses, etc., the uptilted, sometimes nearly vertical, strata of the mountain rock were more than usually impressive. Flowers became more brilliant as we came lower, and the white lotus in full bloom, near the foot, outshone them all. After visits at Kiukiang to such good friends as the local manager of the steamship company (Messrs Butterfield & Swire) and the British Consul, the hot night was spent in comfort, and in refined surroundings, at the Hospital under the French Sisters of St Vincent. Early next morning, before the s.s. *Luen Yi* left at noon, there was time for me to go with the Commissioner of Customs, Mr Thorne, by boat (the team of boatmen in the bright Customs' livery), to the local match factory.

It was a spacious yet old-style factory.¹ We were shown *every* process, including the dangerous mixing of white phosphorus paste, and were informed of the employment of 2000 outworkers in box-making. Flags, refreshments, speeches, etc., rounded off a frank and friendly inspection; at which the managers begged for, and received, advice on the methods and the merits of taking care of the workers.

Another lively incident of Chinese everyday life was seen next morning; after steaming past pitiful sights, of huts and farm buildings submerged to the roofs in the floods—when one thought of the destroyed rice-fields and the famine to follow. Whilst writing in my cabin, at Wuhu, I heard a commotion and hubbub, looked out, and saw an exciting scene on the quay. The coolies loading rice on to the steamer had been caught stealing by the Chinese police. The manner of disposing of the stolen rice revealed the thefts and the thieves—when they went

¹ There we were met by the Directors, the Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce, and the Japanese Consul.

too far. The legs of their loose trousers were tied in at the ankles, and some of them were much swollen. From these basketsful were disgorged, under blows that were not at all too hard, from the police. One coolie, after much disgorging, drew back a little way, swept up some of the scattered rice, coolly tied it up in a cloth at his waist, then quietly and innocently "got away with it." No one but myself among saloon passengers seemed to notice this little incident.

At Nanking we took on board a number of disturbed and anxious passengers, with through tickets by rail from the north to Shanghai, some of whom had not money with them to pay for fares by steamer. The railway from Nanking to Shanghai was closed by the military. The numerous additional Chinese passengers were refugees from the war area, and the excellent captain, a fine-profiled Irishman, remarked that "anti-foreignism was going out for the time, while everyone was glad to lean on the foreigner." I was interested in the view expressed by an American missionary who came on board there, that now (at last!) we might begin to hope for a settlement of the Chinese troubles, for the 'strong man,' Marshal Wu Pei-Fu, was coming to the fore, and probably, for a time at least, nothing could settle affairs but force. At that time the forecast was a not infrequent one. In the next two years I could not but recall it occasionally. I thought of it particularly in March 1926, at Hankow, when sitting opposite Marshal Wu Pei-Fu at a dinner, courteously given by him, to welcome the British China Indemnity Delegation. At that time it was impossible for us officially to proceed further, even to Changsha, for local study of Chinese needs in relation to the purposes of the Indemnity Fund. The Marshal could not assure the safety of the Delegation beyond a narrow range, and news of dangerous and fatal firing on steamers was brought by some of our witnesses who came from Changsha. Within the narrow limits of a year from that time Nationalist governments have risen and waned—at Hankow and Nanking.

After all such experiences, and after some insight in Peking (in the summer of 1926) into the sufferings of the refugees, in the trampling over their villages by the Chinese armies, I think of a symbol that I saw from s.s. *Luen Yi* at Nanking, on the voyage down to Shanghai in 1924, of what the ceaseless military struggle involves for the *People*, the hapless poor people of China. On a Chinese steamer, quite close to s.s. *Luen Yi*, on the lading-deck and seen through the large opening, there was a young child sitting on its mother's lap. Both looked miserable, the mother evidently anxious, but the expression of settled woe on the child's face surpassed anything imaginable. It may be that my Chinese friends would tell me that I saw more than lay behind the expression, but still it remains in memory as a fit sign of the woes that actually are endured by the helpless ones of China.

On arrival in Shanghai, after the inactive time of the summer heat, there was, naturally, much to be arranged with the Industrial Committee, N.C.C. I was anxious to know about the main plans before my voyage to England. At that date I hoped to be absent only a few months and to be able further to work with them in the labour reform movement.

The chief subjects we had for immediate discussion were: first, the arrangements to be made for Dr Maitland's enquiry into the health of the workers in factories, and particularly as to the extent of phosphorus necrosis among those working in white phosphorus processes in match factories.¹ Secondly (after a fresh review of our material, and of the strength of the prevailing military obstacles to negotiations with Chinese officials about joint action) we had to consider plans for following up the problem that was, above all, pressing for action—the protection of young child workers in industry. The Commission's Report, which had been received and published

¹ See Report made by Dr C. T. Maitland on Phosphorus Poisoning in Match Factories in China; published in *China Journal of Arts and Sciences*, Vol. III., Feb. and March 1925.

by the Foreign Municipal Council in July, still awaited public discussion with a view to some decision on its recommendations; yet how unfavourable to thought upon the matter was the general Chinese situation!

It was realised by members of the Industrial Committee, as never before—the very real fighting between the adjoining provinces compelled it—that any practicable joint action with the Chinese local authorities, to apply the Peking Provisional Regulations for Factories, on the lines indicated in the important Part II. of the Commission's Report, was indefinitely postponed. Nothing could be done for the children, administratively, except within the narrow limits of the Foreign Settlement. And, there, action on behalf of the children, in the absence of any parallel Chinese action, could not go beyond the limits the Commission had so long and anxiously weighed; which are laid down in Part III. of the Report. The administrative obstacles, combined with the economic difficulties of the Chinese parents, barred the way to a larger advance at that time.

A warning reminder is here needed. The Commission did *not* (as has been sometimes suggested) make the limited proposals in Part III. because they had, indeed, found the Peking Provisional Regulations impracticable as they stood, but because there was extreme uncertainty as to whether the Chinese authorities were in a position to apply them, even in a practicable and amended form. At the moment of our signing the Report we had some hope of action by the provincial authorities of Kiangsu (see Appendix III.). Our limited proposals in Part III. were solely to fill the gap, and, as an interim measure, to start reform in the Settlement. Our whole aim was that the Settlement should follow on, to any higher practicable standards, as soon as the Chinese authorities could really and effectively apply them in the two adjoining Provinces, Chékiang and Kiangsu, or even in Kiangsu alone. This we explicitly stated.

Much argument from objectors to the bye-law, as sub-

sequently drafted and laid before the ratepayers on April 2nd, 1925,¹ turned on the small amount of protection therein proposed; while, of course, there were objectors (as there had been in England long ago), on the different ground that the children would suffer intolerably from being deprived of their only means of subsistence. Also much was said by some Chinese ratepayers about the superior nature of the standards laid down in the Peking Regulations of March 29th, 1923. About these and other arguments which fluttered around in the daily press in April and May it was futile to say much, in reply, during the political crisis that arose after May 30th. Yet early in 1925 there were representative Chinese who could voice the saner consideration: that it would be better for a practicable beginning to be made in releasing the children in the Settlement under ten years of age from heavy strain, than it would be to wait for the highly uncertain time when it might be possible to apply the theory (still in a Peking regulation which is only on paper), that children under fourteen years should be excluded from such strain.

In reference to the recommendations, in Part III., that are so narrowly limited, Mr M. T. Tchou wrote to the *North China Daily News*, on April 14th, 1925, "Far-sighted people cannot doubt the wisdom of the present recommendations," and their "adoption . . . though moderate, will be appreciated by thinking and patriotic Chinese. . . . The effect of that adoption on future efforts to regulate child labour in the Chinese territory in and around Shanghai will probably be more appreciated" than it is now. "The Special Administration Area now being formed, will very likely be urged to adopt similar, or more advanced . . . steps, if the International Settlement takes this step now." In another part of his thoughtful letter, Mr Tchou wrote of the influence of Shanghai on Chinese life on lines which supported a belief expressed by the late Sir John Jordan, earlier in the same year (see above, p. 83): "People should not forget that what is done

¹ See the *Municipal Gazette* of that date.

here has its influence, sooner or later, throughout the country. By liberating a few thousand children here, the people in Shanghai are doing a thing that will mean the eventual liberation of hundreds of thousands of children in the whole country." He saw that what was really at stake was no less than the "greater good" of "preventing others from suffering in future." He felt, moreover, that this "move . . . though very limited in scope, will help to make clear . . . that the foreign business man, though extremely anxious to promote his interests, still has a heart." That letter appeared on April 15th, the day of the meeting of ratepayers first called to decide upon the issue of the Child Labour Bye-law.

By this glance ahead we can satisfy ourselves as to what (in the opinion of Chinese who were working steadily for the industrial and social welfare of their countrymen) was at stake, when members of the Industrial Committee, during the civil war of autumn 1924, began to consider what they could do to secure action on behalf of the child workers. I met them in September, and again in October on my return from Japan, a week before leaving China for England. Necessarily, as we saw, there had to be a considerable degree of patience and waiting on opportunity, while the fighting was at its worst around Shanghai (outside the barbed wire fence put up to mark off the Settlement), and while there were not less than 200,000 Chinese refugees in Shanghai to be considered.

The Industrial Committee decided that publicity about the recommendations of the Child Labour Commission should be organised and be promoted by means of letters and informative articles in newspapers and reviews, as and when possible. Only gradually could a further definite plan of action be worked out. Miss Dingman's first proposal that there should be a complete canvassing of ratepayers, on the question, and on their responsibility, was not carried out until the last stage of the effort to carry the moderate measure, between April 16th and the public tragedy of May 30th.

In the earlier stage, before April 15th, action was concentrated rather on conversations with leading citizens, on meetings of a representative character among the members of the different nations concerned, on giving of addresses and on the publicity (through the Press) that we had agreed to promote. Most of us took some small share in the Press part of the campaign, and our appeal thereby to the public conscience of the world was answered in an unexpected degree—practically from all over the world.

Not only the Municipal Council of the Foreign Settlement of Shanghai, but also the British Government¹ received appeals to do all in their power to further the release of the very young Chinese children in the factories and the care of those allowed to remain. Neither of them needed much pressing! The British Government, of course (although the magnitude of British responsibilities was greater), had the same kind of standing in the International Settlement as the other Foreign Powers concerned.

Long before this—in the spring of 1924—the British Foreign Office had, as it were, mobilised all its Diplomatic and Consular officers, in China, in (what amounted to) support of the movement for reform of the conditions of labour. This appears in an interesting way in the first British Report to Parliament (in 1925, on Labour Conditions in China).² And earlier, in the winter of 1923-4, the Diplomatic and Consular officers (to whom I had been supplied with credentials) were already effectually helping me in my work for the reform movement; as is shown in their sympathetic action on various occasions, reported above in Chapters IV. and VII. in this book. The British Ministry of Labour, as well as the International Labour Office at Geneva, were naturally deeply interested in what we were trying to do. And the latter gave us every help in their power. The American share, all the time, was fundamental, and generous financial aid was given by

¹ And, I understand, also the Labour Department of the United States of America.

² Cmd. 2442, China No. 1 (1925), especially pages 3-5.

American funds for research and for salaries of workers. It must never be forgotten that the real originator of this movement from the Christian side, unified in the N.C.C., was an American Secretary of the National Y.W.C.A. of China—Miss Grace Coppock (to whom Miss Agatha Harrison's entry was due), nor that the person who bore the brunt of the effort in the Campaign of spring 1925, was another American, Miss Mary Dingman, Industrial Secretary of the World's Y.W.C.A.¹ The Japanese residents in Shanghai, in and out of the Settlement, did excellent work in the campaign, beginning with their share taken on the Joint Committee of Women's Clubs. Moreover, that Joint Committee of Clubs included leading Chinese women whose support was indispensable.²

The local phases of the civil war had petered out by Christmas time. Early in January 1925 it became possible for the Chairman of the Child Labour Commission, with Miss Dingman, to confer with the Chairman of the Municipal Council, Mr Fessenden, on the degree of public support that would be forthcoming for action: in the preparation and promotion of a draft bye-law to regulate child labour. Hitherto the Council had been able to do no more than receive and publish the report of its own Commission. It was evident that a good deal of sympathy was being stirred up by the public meetings, canvassing of leading people, approach to Chambers of Commerce, and so on. It was recognised that the initiative should again come from the Municipal Council. Mr Fessenden agreed.

In the *Municipal Gazette* of February 12th, 1925, appeared two pleasing items, relating to actions of the Council touched on above. The first of these was an exchange of letters between the Chairman of the Chinese General Chamber of Commerce, Mr Yu Ya-Ching, and the Council of the Foreign Settlement, on the subject of the measures that had been taken by the Council and its servants, in handling the influx of fugitive Chinese soldiers into Shanghai. The letter of Mr Yu Ya-Ching, dated January

¹ See Chapter V.

² See Chapter VI.

23rd, expressed regret that the authorities of the Settlement had been obliged to "undertake the very strenuous task of interning a very considerable number of leaderless soldiers," and it continued: "Now that these soldiers have been despatched to Tsingtao through the co-operative efforts of your good self and the parties concerned, the menace to the peace of the Settlement arising from their presence is removed.

"In recalling the circumstances which characterised this phase of the recent conflict, this Chamber wishes to assure you of its heartfelt appreciation of the effective measures that you have so promptly taken to meet the situation, and at the same time to express its regret that the authorities of the Settlement should have been called upon to shoulder such a burden."

A suitable acknowledgment of this letter and thanks for the "generous tribute to its services" was sent (through its Secretary) by the Council, and the closing words were these: "The Council is not unmindful of the valuable contribution made by your Chamber to a solution of the difficult problems with which the Foreign Settlement was faced, and it is deeply grateful to your Chamber for the assistance rendered."

The friendly spirit is very evident in this correspondence, as it was in the exchange of letters in 1923 (on a Chinese Regulation for factories), between the Federation of Foreign Employers and the Chinese General Chamber of Commerce.¹

The second pleasant item noted in that number of the *Municipal Gazette* lay in the excerpts from minutes of the meeting of the Council held on January 21st, 1925, relating to the circulation and adoption of Part III. of the Report of the *Child Labour Commission*, and to the decision to "request the Legal Adviser to frame the necessary by-law for submission to the ratepayers at the next annual meeting."

On all such questions the knowledge of Mr Lipson

¹ See the discussion of the latter above in Chapter VI., p. 131.

Ward, as Chairman of the Commission, and as a leading barrister among those practising in the Foreign Settlement, would of course be valuable in the preparation of the draft bye-law. The Council could, and I believe did, freely draw on the varied technical and general knowledge available in the ranks of its own Commission, of whom the majority still were in residence in Shanghai; some being in continuous, responsible contact with the industrial interests concerned, and others with the whole body of the reform movement.

The decision having been taken, the Council proceeded steadily with its preparations for bringing the draft By-law before a "Special Meeting of Ratepayers," as required by the "Land Regulations." The quorum necessary for passing and approving such new powers, not already covered by the existing administrative code, is one-third of the qualified voters, which meant at that time about 924 votes. It was decided to call the special meeting on the same date as the annual meeting, that is on April 15th.

The Council explained through the *Gazette*, March 19th, that for several years past it had "failed in its attempts to hold a Special Meeting of Ratepayers, for lack of a quorum, as a consequence of which important legislation has been held up, and it is apprehensive that the past failures to hold a Special Meeting may be repeated this year for the same reason, and thereby its efforts to improve the conditions of child labour in local industries rendered abortive." They made a special appeal to the ratepayers for their attendance and support for the resolutions to be proposed. They also explained their own announced policy in regard to child labour: That they were "sympathetic with any reasonable proposals directed toward child welfare, and the prevention of the industrial employment of children of tender years, to the humane treatment of child workers, to the appointment of a trained foreign inspector who will pay periodical visits to all mills and factories, and generally toward prevention of the exploitation of child labour. It is its (the Council's) aim that

those humanitarian considerations which govern the industrial employment of child labour in Western countries, shall so far as is practicable, have application in the area under its administration, and it accordingly attaches importance to the adoption of regulations, such as might reasonably be imposed, to achieve that social welfare which is generally desired."

The *Municipal Gazette* for April 2nd opened with a Notice from the fourteen Consuls-General, representing the foremost foreign powers, and five Consuls for the remainder; giving the date and time of the Annual Meeting of Ratepayers, and of the Special Meeting, "to consider and approve resolutions upon various matters, whereof due notice will be given." In the same issue, and again on April 9th, appeared the Municipal notification of the matters to be brought forward at the Special Meeting; these included an amendment of Land Regulation IX., relating to the collection of Wharfage Dues; a draft bye-law relating to registration in connection with printing and publishing of newspaper pamphlets, leaflets, placards, etc.; amendment of a bye-law relating to licensing of Stock and Produce exchanges, and the Draft Child Labour Bye-law.

The questions of wharfage dues, and press regulation, were among those measures that, as announced by the Council, for several years past, had been brought forward and failed to become law, for lack of a sufficient attendance of voters to constitute a quorum for a special meeting. Hitherto it was not at all clear why the ratepayers had so failed, time after time, to rally in support of measures deemed necessary by the Municipal Council. At this stage of the movement for protection of child labour, and until the end of May 1925, though it was known that Chinese opinion was opposed to the press regulation, it was not generally realised in the Foreign Settlement how intense and deep was Chinese feeling against any foreign regulation of a matter like this in a city which was so closely bound up with the adjoining Chinese city. I had

heard only casual references to the question when I left Shanghai in October 1924. Before May 1925 no sufficiently emphatic warning was uttered, so far as I know, by Chinese members of the child labour reform party, that the juxtaposition of their measure (as it may fairly be called) with those other measures, at a time when there was a chance of a quorum, was highly disadvantageous for it, from the Chinese point of view. The Commission's own Report had markedly emphasised the need for securing the "moral and active support, not only of the foreign residents, but of the vastly greater body of the Chinese public" if the amelioration of the lot of the Chinese child was to be achieved. Mr George Sokolsky, in his chapter on Labour in the *China Year Book*, 1926, says: "Those who were fighting the battle for the restriction of child labour could not understand the local situation . . . they were incorrectly informed of Chinese public opinion by Chinese Christians and reformers, who had come to believe that their own advanced opinions were the same as that of the other Chinese." We must take account of this opinion, and weigh it along with others. Yet I think we are driven to conclude that the reformers had good ground for confidence in the course they were pressing forward. They had the support, in favour of the measure, of the leading Chinese employers of labour—for example, Mr C. C. Nieh, of the Heng Foong Cotton Mill; Mr Fong Sec of the Shanghai Commercial Press; Mr Kwok Bew of the Wing On Company; Mr T. K. Yung of the Sung Sing Cotton Spinning and Weaving, and others. There was also, later, an important public indication of the undercurrent of Chinese favour for the protection of the children, which, throughout, had been evident to the Industrial Committee. When Chinese manifestoes were being distributed in the last week of May, by the General Chamber of Commerce and thirty other Commercial bodies of Shanghai, against the other concurrent measures; these bodies refused to condemn, on the contrary, they wished, conditionally, "to pledge" their "whole-hearted support" to, the

Child Labour Bye-law. One of the conditions was that the Foreign Municipal Council should either establish free schools for the children or make a grant from its annual revenue to the directors of the Chinese Ratepayers' Association, to provide the education. I think Mr Sokolsky would have been on stronger ground if he had simply stressed his two points that many Chinese believed that a quorum for the Child Labour Bye-law was intended to be used primarily in order to carry the other measures which were so obnoxious to them; and that some of them urged the superiority of the Peking regulations "as part of a nationalistic effort to force upon the Council recognition of Chinese law."

In any case, we may say that the general mental atmosphere in the Settlement was unfavourable to a prompt, simple and unequivocal decision in favour of the reform. There was, as can be more clearly seen after the event, too much unrest, especially amongst the workers, in Shanghai.

The unrest had found expression from the beginning of January in an increasing number of strikes. These outbreaks coincided with the return of quieter general conditions, after the removal of civil warfare to another part of China. They began as a demand for better economic conditions, and in many factories were at least partially successful. Strikes of a political character quickly followed, particularly in February, when a succession of very serious strikes broke out in the large Japanese cotton mills, beginning in some disciplinary dismissals by the Japanese foremen of the Chinese workmen for disobedience to orders. Conflicts and casualties ensued, which, by their own nature, in the excited state of the workers, led to further conflicts and casualties. The established sympathy of students for the really suffering Chinese labourers brought them straight into the arena. Strike literature followed, which, the report of the Shanghai Municipal Police said, began in a school used by the strikers as a meeting place, and "took the form of handbills which at first merely gave a resumé of the strikers' grievances and demands, but later, with the object of winning the sympathy of the

Chinese public, endeavoured to show that, apart from the trade dispute, national issues of far wider importance were involved." Factors in the situation were working, directly and indirectly, most dangerously, towards something like a tragedy. There were mills in Shanghai in which, as I was informed in 1924—including the leading British mills—strikes were unknown. These mills were no longer immune, in 1925. And the new development was there totally unexpected. In the Japanese mills, new, large, equipped in the most modern manner, well-lit, clean and thoroughly organised; with various amenities for the workers hardly to be seen in other cotton mills, there was one feature in the arrangements which surprised me, and gave me a feeling of uneasiness. I saw a large building, much more than a glorified gatehouse, at the entrance to the first courtyard of one of the largest of these mills, asked what was the department of work in it, and was informed that it was "for the police," in case of difficulty—difficulty with the workers, was the added explanation. I should say, from all I saw, that discipline is not a matter on which much stress is laid in the Chinese mills.

On April 2nd, in view of the approaching first presentment to the ratepayers of the draft bye-law regarding child labour, Mr Fong Sec's letter appeared in the *North China Daily News*, urging the ratepayers to empower the Municipal Council to apply the provisions recommended by the Commission (see Appendix IV., pp. 275-6). "In comparison with the . . . laws of England and America," he said, "these recommendations are mild. Considering the local conditions, the Commission is wise in recommending this modest beginning.

"When reforms of this nature are broached, it is easy for employers to say that conditons in Shanghai are different from those in England and America, and let it go at that. For the benefit of the foreign employers who harbour an honest doubt as to their ability to meet competition, permit me to point out what we are doing in the Commercial Press. We do not employ children under

fourteen, we give a rest day out of every seven, and our working day is eight and a half hours. We do this because we think it is right, though we have to compete with some of the small printing offices in which are found sweat-shop conditions. The humanitarian view that we take towards our employees has, however, resulted in loyalty and efficiency. As a consequence, the Commercial Press is able to pay good dividends from year to year.

“Since the Municipal Council is sympathetic towards the recommendations of the Commission, I sincerely hope that the ratepayers will vote in favour of the resolution.”

On the following day an interesting letter from a highly cultured Japanese resident, Mr Sakamoto, appeared in the same journal, urging that the increase in industrial efficiency, which would follow on the exclusion of young children, would soon dispel any fears. “So far as I have ascertained all Japanese mill-owners are perfectly willing to observe the recommendations. . . . Nay, most of them are already advancing far ahead in the matter of welfare work and other measures calculated to promote the health and happiness of child workers in Shanghai.

“Indeed, Shanghai should not be allowed to give the Red propagandists any pretext for fomenting strife again among workers, by remaining apathetic to the abominable child labour conditions here. Moreover, the intelligent public of the world—London, New York, or Tokyo—are waiting and watching what action Shanghai ratepayers will take on the decisive 15th of April. Japanese ratepayers are already on the *qui vive*.”

On that evening, April 3rd, one of the most enthusiastic of all the meetings in support of the By-law was held in the Nippon Club of Shanghai, at which more than 500 Japanese,¹ including managers and foremen from mills, were present, with others. Mrs Sakamoto (a member of the Joint Committee of the Shanghai Women's Clubs, formed² specially to promote industrial and social reforms)

¹ Probably many of these were not ratepayers.

² See in Chapter VI., page 128.

took the lead. She laid stress on the responsible position that Japanese ratepayers held in the matter, and spoke of how they had heretofore manifested their civic interest in the affairs of Shanghai by their large attendance at the Annual Ratepayers' Meeting. The *Shanghai Times* of April 7th, reported how she "gave a vivid picture" of the children working under ten years of age, and that "her eloquence of appeal" convinced the audience, "that from the standpoints of humanitarianism, of industrial efficiency, of international friendliness, the coming bye-law should by all means be passed and enforced." An important speaker followed her—Mr Bunji Suzuki, President of the Japanese General Federation of Labour—then on his way to the International Labour Conference at Geneva. He expressed his practical sympathy with Chinese workers and promised to do his part in directing the attention of Geneva delegates to the need of having labour delegates from China in the next conference in Europe. Finally, he laid great stress on the immediate adoption of child labour legislation. . . . A great international city like Shanghai ought to be worthy of its name, fame and importance, and legalise a minimum regulation, such as Mrs Sakamoto had presented." The audience appeared, particularly, to appreciate "the dispassionate report" of Mr Okada, the leading Japanese employer, who, speaking as a member of the Child Labour Commission, assured them of the reasonable and practicable nature of the proposed bye-law. Never, said the Press reporter, had a more successful meeting been held in the Nippon Club of Shanghai.

The Foreign Press, centred in Shanghai, apparently never before within so brief a time had to deal with a question that absorbed so much attention, as did this question of what was to be done about the child workers. Between them the four leading newspapers in English—British and American—had no less than seventeen leading articles to guide the foreign community, between March 14th and April 16th. The *North China Daily News* and the *Shanghai Times* each had five such articles. The

former published no less than sixty letters about the question, of which fifty appeared in the month of April 1925.

Every Chamber of Commerce, foreign or Chinese, took serious notice of the matter. Seven large British firms, headed by Mr A. Brooke-Smith of Messrs Jardine, Matheson and Company, Ltd.; six Japanese firms; five American firms; six Chinese firms, all employers of labour, published a letter of April 9th, to state explicitly (it was already well known), that they were in full sympathy with the policy of the bye-law. They added that they hoped that it would be "accepted and passed by the ratepayers and that the efforts being made to secure the necessary quorum at the Annual Meeting will prove successful." The real crux of the practical problem of applying the reform lay in the great cotton mills; and there we were supported by the experience of the three leading manufacturers. These were: for the Chinese, Mr C. C. Nieh, in whose mills it was obvious, to any visitor, that very young children were not admitted; for the British, Mr Brooke-Smith, of the Company owning the Ewo Mills,¹ a constant friend of the reform, as I found from the time of my arrival in Shanghai; for the Japanese, Mr Okada, whose able support already has been made clear. I betray no secret when I assert that, without the practical experience of these men, it would surely have been impossible for the Child Labour Commission to arrive, as it did, at its unanimous recommendations.

The most ardent of the reformers knew very well from the previous history in all industrialised countries, that this kind of reform was not carried without opposition and delays from those who, at first, could not understand it, and from those who thought their needs and interests were menaced by legislation for defence of the child. They also knew that in every such country the measures for protection of the child eventually had won the day; and they

¹ It was in these mills of Messrs Jardine, Matheson and Co., that the first decision to exclude children under ten years was made, and tried, beginning, I think, in September 1923.

saw that here, too, there was increasing realisation among thoughtful Chinese that the reform must come in China, if the Chinese people were to hold their heads high among the nations. There were new lessons of course to be learned, in a political sense, during the struggle for a solution of this particular phase of a world problem. I have not troubled my readers with detailed illustrations of the main arguments of objectors, set out in the correspondence columns of the daily Press, because they were so familiar in the history of the British movement—where they were dispelled by practical law and administration. That the Chinese parent could hardly be expected to be readier than the Lancashire parent had been to relinquish the earnings of the children, was self-evident. It was not so clear, in advance of the meeting of April 15th, that the views of the nationalists in the South and of militarists in an adjoining province might strongly, although indirectly, affect the issue. The *China Press*, a few days before the Ratepayers' Meeting, rather enterprisingly had an interview with Marshal Chang Chung-Chang, at his military headquarters. He was "strongly opposed to the proposal to abolish child labour," indeed he "considered the foreigners crazy for advocating such a thing, and furthermore said quite frankly that he considered it interference in Chinese affairs." In this opinion he had the support, such as it was, of two foreigners who freely wrote letters to the *North China Daily News*.

The reformers were well aware that they themselves would be labelled, as so many movers for reforms in the past had been, as "inexperienced" people. They had, in the local circumstances of the struggle in Shanghai, the enjoyment of calling forth from one of the objectors a new name for their kind—that of being "uplifters"! The really effective opposition came, however, from those whose minds were set on having no new regulations that were not Chinese in China.¹ And in this very factor, along

¹ See the words applied to the Foreign Settlement of Shanghai—"Extra-territorialised Chinese soil"—quoted from a despatch of the British

with the willingness of all the noteworthy employers within the Settlement to be regulated by the proposed by-law, may we not see the final answer to those who, in Western countries, foolishly and heatedly, condemned the foreign industrialists in Shanghai, as being responsible for the employment of children in Chinese factories ?

In the issues of the *Municipal Gazette* for April 9th and 15th the Council published the correspondence of their Secretary with the Secretary of the British Section of the Women's International League, with reference to a resolution, passed by the Council of the League in London at their Annual Meeting in February, and forwarded through the British Consul at Shanghai. The main clause of the resolution ran thus: "This Council urges that the Ratepayers' Assembly . . . support the adoption by their Municipal Council of bye-laws prohibiting the employment of children under twelve years of age and limiting the hours of work as may be recommended by the Commission." It also directed that the resolution should be sent to the International Labour Office and to the League of Nations, for the information of the League Commission on the Traffic in Women and Children. The reply from the Council Chamber, Shanghai, April 6th, 1925, was that the Council would give due prominence to this expression of the opinion of the Women's International League, by publication of the resolution in the *Municipal Gazette*.

The publicity for this Municipal effort increased so greatly, locally and internationally, that the promoters of the reform in the Industrial Committee, and their fellow-workers in the two Y's, may clearly be exonerated for not having added (before April 15th) a personal canvass of every individual voter to their already heavy labours. It was none the less a very necessary step, and, as events of a political character shaped themselves during the month of May, it became evident that April 15th was probably

Minister, Sir F. Bruce, to Consul Medhurst, Sept. 8th, 1862, in *Shanghai, Its Mixed Court and Council*, by A. M. Kotenev, 1925, published by the *North China Daily News* publishing office.

the last opportunity, in 1925, to carry the Child Labour Bye-law. An energetic canvass of individual voters in the first quarter of 1925 might sufficiently early have furnished some definite information as to what it was that had caused the necessary quorum to fail, as it had done on the other measures (Press regulation, etc.), in previous years.

The whole world (so far as interested) knows that, while the number of voters who attended increased, as compared with the recent years, yet the quorum was not present at the Special Meeting of April 15th to carry or to definitely reject the reform. Special facilities in transport by increased tramway service and loan of motor-cars did not achieve the desired result. Only 399 ratepayers, representing 622 votes, attended, and this fell short of the required number by 302 votes. The previous year the votes had numbered only 450. Thus, from the increase in votes, one may conclude that the appeal of the child had been effective in some degree.

The disappointment was great and bitter for those who had hoped not only to obtain early release for the youngest children, but also to *pave the way* to a better position for the older labour, which from the outset was the aim of the Industrial Committee, N.C.C. If the measure had been carried on this first occasion of its being brought forward in Shanghai, then the foreign community would have achieved what no nation had yet achieved at an early stage in this kind of reform. The reformers, however, were not thinking on these lines. They very soon rallied, and the belief of the Acting Consul-General for Great Britain, Mr J. T. Pratt, that there was "no doubt that the proposed bye-law commanded the approval of the great majority of the foreign residents of Shanghai" must have been a considerable encouragement. His opinion also was that the outcry against "the apathy of the ratepayers" was ill-founded.¹ This view Mr Pratt illustrated as follows :

"In London, for example, with all the excitement of

¹ See Cmd. 2442, 1925, p. 107.

a political campaign between opposing parties both in possession of efficient organisations and ample funds, not more than half the ratepayers register their votes at an election. If a demand were made that one-third of them should attend and spend a whole afternoon listening to the reading of reports and accounts, and registering purely formal votes, as is the case at an annual meeting of ratepayers in Shanghai, I am satisfied that only a very minute fraction of them would respond. The failure to secure a quorum in Shanghai was due to other reasons besides apathy. The campaign was left entirely in the hands of the women, who relied on speeches, meetings, and letters in the papers, without making any attempt at a personal canvass of each ratepayer. There is also no doubt that some of those who opposed the by-law stayed away to prevent a quorum being obtained."

I agree that in the actual planning and pushing of the campaign the women were left with a free hand to do their best, as they saw it at the time. Yet unquestionably there was ready help given them on all sides from the men, of various occupations, British, American, Chinese and Japanese; and this help was given in thought as well as action. In particular it is unquestionable that some ratepayers who opposed the bye-law deliberately stayed away to prevent a quorum being obtained.¹ A certain number (unknown) of those who stayed away did so because of their sympathy with various Chinese points of view. Either they felt that the time was not ripe for the removal of the children from entry into the factories and from work there along with their parents, who had neither a safe home nor a school to leave them in. Or they even agreed with Marshal Chang Chung-Chang (for I have heard such sentiments expressed), that it was "crazy" of

¹ See testimony in the *China Press*, April 16th, 1925: "The writer of a leading article in it asked five acquaintances "Why they did not attend." One forgot the meeting; another was in favour of the proposed by-law but did not consider it necessary to attend, and three said they were opposed and purposely remained away."

foreigners to attempt this reform. Or (and this would account for the largest number of absentees) they sympathised with the nationalists who wished only to have Chinese law on Chinese soil. Of this point I have more to say in a moment.

To the great satisfaction of those who had so long worked to win the requisite support for the Child Labour Bye-law, Mr Pratt "came to the conclusion that it would be a mistake to admit defeat, and that the best policy was to call another Special Meeting immediately, before public interest had waned.

He found that his views met with the general acceptance of his colleagues and the leading men in Shanghai. He drafted a letter accordingly to the Municipal Council, dated April 24th, which was signed at once by seventy-six ratepayers, asking them to call another Special Meeting, and suggesting that the date should be a convenient one in the first week of June. This letter was published in the *Municipal Gazette* of April 30th. The first list of signatures comprised the leading British, American, Japanese, German, Dutch and Norwegian ratepayers, and the American, British, Dutch and Norwegian Consuls-General. After recapitulating the circumstances and expressing the belief that it was in the interests of good government that another attempt should be made to secure a quorum for the legislation proposed on the various matters, including the Child Labour Bye-law, the letter supported the idea that an active canvass of ratepayers would produce a quorum to decide upon these important matters.

Finally the signatories pledged themselves to attend such special meeting and to use their "utmost endeavours to induce other ratepayers to attend, to which end further copies of this letter will be circulated for further signatures to be added."

A copy of this letter was sent from the Consulate-General to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Great Britain, and it was acknowledged on June 10th, 1925. He approved the action taken by the Consul-General,

desired to be kept fully informed of all developments, and enquired what steps could be taken "if the deadlock resulting from the absence of a quorum continues."¹

The arrangements in Shanghai developed swiftly. Notice was given from the Council Chamber that the Special Meeting was convened for June 2nd, "to consider and approve resolutions upon various matters, whereof due notice will be given."

Mr Pratt himself presided at a meeting, held at the British Consulate, for the planning of the canvass of rate-payers qualified to vote, and for enrolling the men and women canvassers required. The aim was to secure an ample attendance of voters, beyond the minimum for a quorum.

In the *Municipal Gazette*, dated May 19th, the Resolutions were set out exactly as for the Special Meeting of April 15th, except for a small addition in Resolution VII., shown in our Appendix IV. below, p. 276. There, too, may be seen the explanation of this addition, which was designed to meet a difficulty on which much stress had been laid by correspondence in the daily press. It appeared to the Council that, by discretionary powers to allow children already at work in the factories to remain there, thus excluding only children under ten years of age who were not already employed, the hardships feared for parents might in the main be averted.

The claim of many who objected to the bye-law that some monetary assistance should be given to children excluded from work and wage-earning for their "rice-bowl," called forth a definite statement from the Council, "that the grant of any form of dole or other compassionate allowance . . . from the public funds to those who might be thrown out of employment" did not appear to the Council to be justified. The discretionary powers that they proposed seemed to them to be a better method. Under British factory law, whenever the age of entry of children into factories was raised, those children who were

¹ See Cmd. 2442, China No. 1 (1925), pp. 108 and 112.

already lawfully employed were allowed to continue in their employment although below the new limit of entry.

No official attempt, apparently, was made to deal with the need that would arise for educational care of those children under ten (and later under twelve) years who would be dependent on their parents' wages after the bye-law began to take effect. Some of the considerations which prevented the British China Indemnity Delegation and Advisory Committee from recommending the application of grants from the Indemnity Fund to provision for elementary education in China, probably also had effect in this case; for example: "There is a strong and very natural feeling in China that the elementary education of the people must on no account be allowed to fall under foreign control." At the same time the Delegation did "venture to suggest that it might be well for the British Chambers and the residents in the various Settlements to consider whether they might not with advantage take a lead in bringing about a much-needed development of primary education in those foreign settlements and concessions in which they live and carry on business."¹ The suggestion of Mr Yuan Shih-tao, touched on above, in Chapter VI., is apposite here. This problem of providing for the education of the young children under ten years of age, whom it was desired to exclude from the factories, was carefully considered by Miss Elizabeth Morrison, a member of a joint Chinese and Foreign Educational Committee in Shanghai.² She communicated her plan in a letter to the *North China Daily News*, April 7th. The plan was for a new volunteer committee to take the responsibility of establishing full-time schools in the most crowded industrial centres. Details cannot be elaborated here, but the idea as to finance was that they should be supported by public subscription, supplemented by gifts from the employers. Supervision, and the supply of teachers, were to

¹ See Report of the Advisory Committee, Cmd 2766, 1926, pp. 135 and 137.

² A Sub-Committee of the Industrial Committee (N.C.C.).

come through the East China Educational Association. An important contribution to discussion was made by Miss Morrison in her calculation that, at the outside, not more than 4000 children (under ten years) would need to be provided for in the Settlement.

During this month of May 1925, while the foreign community were devoting much care and anxiety to securing a quorum for a decision on the Resolutions prepared by the Municipal Council, with special concern for the Child Labour Bye-law, the whole of Shanghai was suffering increasing disturbance by riotous strikes. Mr Sokolsky, in the *China Year Book*, said: "During the early part of May new strikes broke out in the Japanese cotton mills in Shanghai. Rioting became a daily occurrence in the vicinity of the mills. Finally seven Chinese were wounded in the course of one of the riots. One of these men, Ku Chung-Hung, died of his wounds. . . . On May 24th, it was announced that a large memorial meeting would be held in honour of the dead man, who became a hero in the eyes of the strikers. His body lay in state in Chapei, just across Soochow Creek and opposite the Japanese mills. It is quite understandable that the mass emotions engendered in such a situation might lead to trouble."

Mr Sokolsky further believed that the situation was aggravated by the Municipal Draft Child Labour Bye-law. Yet the avowed opposition of Chinese in Shanghai to the Municipal amendments was centred, as we have seen, on the press regulation and the other amendments, of earlier origin than the Child Labour Bye-law, *not* on the latter. Of that the chief fault, in Chinese eyes, was that it was supposedly (says Mr Sokolsky), "a subterfuge to put through other bye-laws which they resented." His reasoning has considerable interest. He does not, however, take into account, there, another very important event in the South whose political influence in Central East China was becoming very strong.

In Canton, in May 1925, the second Congress of "All-China Labour" was held, the first having assembled in

May 1922 in the same place. In a report from the Industrial Committee, N.C.C., I find a suggestion that it was probably between these two congresses that the Kuomintang, in the South, first saw that the labour movement might become an instrument in the Chinese National revolution. Incidentally, I know, from my correspondence with Mrs Sun Yat-Sen after my visit to Canton in November 1923, that the Kuomintang was just then beginning to think seriously about promoting the welfare of labour. By May 1924, when I had interviews with Shanghai manual workers, as detailed in Chapter VII., the language, and some of the ideas of the Marxian school, had begun to enter into Shanghai labour associations. It is recorded that in November 1924 Dr Sun Yat-Sen promulgated Trade Union regulations for Kwangtung Province, on modern lines. Without doubt, Southern revolutionary links with Shanghai had begun before the strikes in Shanghai in February 1925; Mr Sokolsky is probably right when he contends that, apart altogether from the riot and shooting in the Nanking Road, on May 30th, "there would have been anti-bye-law demonstrations in Shanghai by the Chinese."¹ The Police report of the Shanghai Municipal Council Police reported that pennants, carried by the students who invaded the Louza District seeking their comrades, were inscribed with such devices as: "Abolish Extra-territorial Rights," "Cancel all Unequal Treaties," "Oppose the Bye-law governing Printed Matter," "The Japanese have killed some of our Chinese, and let us all rally to the assistance of our Brethren."² When, then, on May 30th, in a contest with the police in the streets of the Foreign Settlement—whatever the cause—Chinese again were killed, and this time *students*, forces of uncontrollable passion were bound to be let loose all over China.

Mr Pratt, in his *Memorandum on Labour Conditions in China*, declares that the failure of the great effort to secure the quorum, on June 2nd, was due to the vehement

¹ *China Year Book*, 1926, p. 919. ² *China Year Book*, 1926, p. 920.

opposition of the Chinese residents of the Settlement to the proposed bye-laws that were prior to the Draft Bye-law for Child Labour.¹ I agree, and from all the documents before me I think the matter cannot be conveyed more tersely than in his statement: "The opposition to the proposed Press Bye-law, in particular, aroused a very violent and dangerous agitation. . . . A few days before the date fixed for the second meeting there occurred the shooting in the Nanking Road, known as the Shanghai Incident of the 30th May 1925. This produced a very dangerous situation. On the day of the meeting itself there was further violent rioting, accompanied by shooting. Some of the most enthusiastic supporters of the cause of labour reform were afraid of the consequences if the meeting were held, and the Municipal Council judged it prudent to send out private messages warning ratepayers not to attend. In spite of all this there was an increased attendance, namely, 514 voters, representing 725 votes, but this was still not enough for a quorum. At both meetings a larger percentage of British voters attended than of any other nationality. The bye-law was thus not passed, but there is no doubt that a quorum would have been secured had normal conditions prevailed."

On June 1st, that is, the day before the meeting, a Proclamation was again published by the Council declaring a *State of Emergency*. The "requisite measures," contained in this Proclamation, were mainly directed against: any action that might cause a crowd to collect in any public streets or public place; printing, publishing, or exhibiting any documents, picture, flag, etc.; inventing or spreading any rumour or report which might foment trouble. And all peaceful inhabitants were exhorted to retire to their houses during the hours of darkness.² On that date began the general strike of workers in Shanghai.³

¹ China No. 2 (1927), Cmd. 2846, p. 3.

² *Municipal Gazette*, June 4th, 1925.

³ *China Year Book*, 1926, p. 922.

The situation in this last stage as regards the Child Labour Reform was very complicated, through the juxtaposition of the bye-law with measures passionately opposed by Chinese residents. The Child Labour Bye-law was really approved in its humanitarian aspect by many Chinese, and was not desired by some of them only because it was in the form of a foreign law. Among those who had worked so long and hard for this bye-law, counsels inevitably became divided as to what was the right course to pursue. The Joint Committee of Women's organisations represented the Chinese Women's Club as well as all the chief foreign nationalities. Some were for, and some were against, pressing for the desired decision. The choice of action had to be left to individual and group conscience. Some, who felt that the situation had become so dangerous as to drive out all considerations other than regard for the main body of Chinese opinion, went, as individuals and as representatives, to the Chairman of the Council. And the Council acted, thereafter, as shown in the statement of Mr Pratt. Some, even as they took this line, felt how perplexing was the choice. "Here," said one of them, "for months and for months we had worked for a quorum, and on the eve of having it *we did not want it.*"

When all these, and others, went to the meeting, as they drove to the Town Hall, they saw the Nanking Road in an unfamiliar aspect, "almost deserted by traffic, as a heavy guard of volunteers and police kept the street clear of all except those on their way to the meeting." After that meeting, which was declared "not held" because there was no quorum, it was the opinion of a good many foreigners that any question of regulation by the Council of the conditions of child workers was finally closed in the Foreign Settlement, for they were convinced of the inadvisability of there attempting regulations affecting Chinese customs, against the national feeling. Yet it was not against the spirit and provisions of the bye-law itself that Chinese opposition was directed.

It is conceivable that adjustments might, under new

conditions, willingly be made which would lead to a joint minimum regulation for Chinese and Foreign Shanghai as a whole. The organisation in 1926 of the Directorate of Greater Shanghai and its continuance under the Nationalists opens up an idea of new possibilities in that direction. If the opposition shown in 1925 were to become hardened, the possibility of regulation for the child workers would appear to be very far off. There is no evidence yet of any effort among the trade unions to put regulation for young workers actively in the forefront, where it should be, in their own interest. Something may, on the other hand, be gained for the children, meanwhile, by the improved economic status for the adult workers, which was undoubtedly partly obtained through that year of economic and political strikes.

The "young worker" was mentioned among the items at the "All-China Labour Congress" of 1926 at Canton. In that year, as mentioned already, thoughtful, educated Chinese spoke to me, of their own initiative, about child-labour regulations as a future reform.

It is outside the scope of this book to follow the immense development of the strike movement and the political demonstrations in Shanghai which spread to every part of China. We have only been concerned with those consequences of the fatal "Incident" of May 30th that were immediately linked with the fortunes of the rate-payers' meeting which was convened for June 2nd. The Report of the Judicial Enquiry on behalf of America, Great Britain and Japan (by Mr E. Finley Johnson, Mr K. Suga and Sir H. Gollan) is accessible in the *China Year Book* of 1926.

The effect of the Incident upon Chinese members of the Reform movement which called me to China, is, I believe, shown in its truest form by a communication, issued within a few days of the event, by the Chairman of the National Committee of the Y.W.C.A. (Mrs H. C. Kong Mei), and the President of the Board of Directors of the Shanghai Y.W.C.A. (Mrs T. T. Wong). Their

faithful adherence to the aims and principles of their Association, in a crisis so severely testing to their relations with their foreign colleagues, stands out in that communication, in the midst of much of an emotional kind then spoken, written, or printed. Extension of its currency is desirable, for the rectification of notions in Western countries about the real characteristics of purely Chinese nationalism. Mrs Mei and Mrs Wong told in their first paragraph how the officers of the Y.W.C.A. had actively co-operated with other groups in the city in endeavouring to promote the appointment of a commission—adequate in both Chinese and foreign representation—to make a thorough and impartial investigation of the events in question, and a public report, “to the end that full justice may be done to all concerned.” They added :

“We pledge ourselves to aid in all possible ways in the securing of such justice and in all processes which may help to bring about a better understanding and a right relationship between our own people and the foreign nations concerned.

“We have conveyed our sympathy to the Student Union because of the death of their members. We wish herewith to express publicly our deep sympathy with the families and friends of the students who have been killed, and with all who are suffering from the violence of feeling or action which these events have aroused ; and our desire to help the present situation in any way we can.”

Such readiness for better understanding, even in the midst of troubles, can be found in many more instances than is known outside China. An interesting example of amicable correspondence to add to others I have quoted may be seen in the *China Year Book*, 1926, p. 959. Members of the China Association (Shanghai Branch) and the Shanghai Chamber of Commerce in the course of a joint meeting, August 31st, 1925, which aimed at re-establishment of friendly relations and normal conditions of trade, drew up a resolution. This recorded their support of the principle of direct Chinese representation on the Municipal

Council of the Foreign Settlement, and declared that the Chinese belief in a lack of sympathy on the part of British merchants towards Chinese national aspirations was without foundation. In a letter to the Chairman of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce sending a copy of the resolution, they asked for co-operation in bringing the unhappy situation to an end. A cordial expression of appreciation and goodwill came in the reply from Mr Yu Ya-Ching. Particularly the sympathetic attitude towards the national patriotic movements of the Chinese people seems to have been valued.

The interest of Chinese and foreigners in that "Wonder City of all Asia," Shanghai, are not only interlocked; in some things they are organically one.¹ No industrial or other economic and social problem can be more than partially solved there, until there is effective mutual understanding and co-operation, expressing itself administratively as well as personally. A leading liberal daily paper in England lately put forth a special article, favouring an idea of the political status of a "free city" for International Shanghai. To me it seems that no one who has penetrated into even simple questions of daily life, behind the Bund, can imagine that such a scheme would solve the common problems of Chinese and foreigners, in trade, industry and commerce, which are the main, basic reasons for the presence there of the foreigners.

It is a fundamental joint endeavour to correlate the foreign and Chinese cities and to smooth out their relations that is most needed. I would say, from what I have seen as well as personally experienced, that the main difficulties between them have risen out of an artificial exclusion and barrier for which both are responsible.

It was impossible for Marshal Sun Chuan-Fang, when he wished to consolidate his position in Chinese Shanghai in 1926, not to be concerned to raise the efficiency of that great city to the higher, modernised level of the Inter-

¹ *Together* they set Shanghai far ahead of all other Ports of China in revenue and foreign trade.

national Settlement alongside of it. Even so also it had been impossible for the International Settlement not to be disastrously affected in 1925 by the political and economic unrest in the adjoining Chinese city, and in 1926 by the national divisions.

If gradually, with patience, by actual training in the government of the modern city, Chinese councillors and administrators could practically experience what it is that International Shanghai is best qualified to impart to them of methods and standards of public health and of financial and other administration; if, at the same time, Chinese Shanghai could doggedly pursue the big common-sense task projected by the Marshal (and practically endorsed by the Nationalists) of raising it to the same modern level, that ought to lead ultimately to the true solution of the governing problems.¹

The foreigners are, in the main, essentially traders and need primarily two indispensable conditions. These are: (a) security for enlightened modern government of the fine international city which they have reared on a barren part of Chinese soil; (b) goodwill of the Chinese, for which assuredly they would give much in return. If its lines of government are made mutually beneficial and satisfactory to Chinese and foreigners, China can secure a fine impetus for the (immensely needed) development of her national resources, human and material. National provision for education, the first need of her children, would then come easily within her own grasp.

The task is great, but the rewards of success would be valuable almost beyond computation for China.

¹ Although the method whereby Chinese members of the Municipal Council of the Foreign Settlement may be chosen remains to be worked out, a resolution in favour of the principle was carried by an overwhelming majority at the Annual Meeting of Ratepayers in April 1926.

APPENDIX I

HONGKONG

No. 22 of 1922.

I assent to this Ordinance,

CLAUD SEVERN,

Officer Administering the Government.

September 29, 1922.

An Ordinance to regulate the employment of children in certain industries.

January 1, 1923.

Be it enacted by the Governor of Hongkong, with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council thereof, as follows :—

- Short title. 1.—This Ordinance may be cited as the Industrial Employment of Children Ordinance, 1922.
- Interpretation. 2.—In this Ordinance :—
- (1) “ child ” means a person under the age of 15 years ;
 - (2) “ dangerous trade ” means any trade or occupation whatsoever which is declared by regulation made under this Ordinance to be a dangerous trade ;
 - (3) “ factory ” means any premises wherein or within the close or curtilage or precincts of which any manual labour is exercised by way of trade or for purposes of gain in or incidental to making any article, or part of any article, or altering, repairing, ornamenting, finishing, or adapting for sale any article, provided that at least ten persons are employed in manual labour in the said premises and the close, curtilage and precincts thereof ;
 - (4) “ industrial undertaking ” includes :—
 - (a) mines, quarries and other works for the extraction of minerals from the earth ;
 - (b) industries in which articles are manufactured, altered, cleaned, repaired, ornamented, finished, adapted for sale, broken up or demolished, or in

1 Edw. 7, c.
22, s. 149.

10 and 11
Geo. 5, c. 65
Schedule.

which materials are transformed, including ship-building, and the generation, transformation, and transmission of electricity and motive power of any kind ;

(c) construction, reconstruction, maintenance, repair, alteration, or demolition of any building, railway, tramway, harbour, dock, pier, canal, inland waterway, road, tunnel, bridge, viaduct, sewer, drain, well, telegraphic or telephonic installation, electrical undertaking, gaswork, or other work of construction, as well as the preparation for or laying the foundations of any such work or structure ;

(d) transport of passengers or goods by road or rail or inland waterway, including the handling of goods at docks, quays, wharves, and warehouses, and the carriage of coal and building material and debris ;

But does not include any agricultural operation.

(5) " Inspector " means any person appointed by the Governor to be an Inspector of Juvenile Labour for the purposes of this Ordinance ;

(6) " Protector " means any person appointed by the Governor to be the Protector of Juvenile Labour for the purposes of this Ordinance.

Regulations.

3.—(1). It shall be lawful for the Governor in Council to make regulations for any of the following purposes :—

(1) declaring what trades and occupations are to be deemed to be dangerous trades for the purposes of this Ordinance ;

(2) prescribing the ages under which children shall not be employed in particular trades or occupations ;

(3) prescribing the conditions under which children may be employed in industrial undertakings ;

(4) imposing obligations upon persons who employ children in industrial undertakings, and on the servants of such persons ;

(5) defining the duties and powers of the protector and the inspectors ;

(6) exempting any industrial undertaking or factories from the operation of the Ordinance or any part thereof ;

(7) generally, for the purpose of carrying into effect the provisions of this Ordinance.

(2). All regulations made under this Ordinance shall be laid on the table of the Legislative Council at the first meeting thereof held after the publication in the *Gazette* of the making of such regulations, and if a resolution be passed at the first meeting of the Legislative Council held after such regulations have been laid on the table of the said Council resolving that any such regulation shall be rescinded or amended in any manner whatsoever, the said regulation shall, without prejudice to anything done thereunder, be deemed to be rescinded or amended as the case may be, as from the date of publication in the *Gazette* of the passing of such resolution.

(3). The regulations in the Schedule shall be deemed to have been made under Ordinance, and shall be in force until rescinded or amended by regulations made under this Ordinance.

Search and enquiries.

4.—(1). It shall be lawful for the Protector, and for any person authorised thereto in writing by the Protector, and for any inspector, to enter and search any place in which he may have reason to believe that any child is being employed in an industrial undertaking, and to seize anything which may appear to be evidence of any offence against this Ordinance.

(2). Every person who employs or has employed any child in an industrial undertaking, and every servant of any such employer, shall on demand give to the Protector, or to any inspector, all information in his possession with reference to such child, and all information in his possession with reference to the labour conditions and treatment of any children employed by such employer.

Presumptions.

5.—In any prosecution under this Ordinance :—

(a) if it appears to the magistrate that any person who is alleged in the charge to have been a child at the date of the alleged offence was a child at such date, it shall be presumed, until the contrary is proved, that such person was a child at such date ;

(b) if it appears to the magistrate that any child, who is alleged in the charge to have been under any particular age at the date of the alleged offence, was under that particular age at the said date, it shall be presumed, until the contrary is proved, that the said child was under the said age at the said date.

Penalties.

6.—Every person who contravenes or attempts to contravene or fails to comply with any of the provisions of this

Ordinance or of any of the regulations made thereunder shall be liable upon summary conviction to a fine not exceeding two hundred and fifty dollars and imprisonment for any term not exceeding six months.

- Consent. 7.—No prosecution under this Ordinance shall be commenced without the consent of the Protector.
- Commencement. 8.—This Ordinance shall come into force on the 1st day of January 1923.
Passed the Legislative Council of Hongkong, this 28th day of September 1922.

A. DYER BALL,
Clerk of Councils.

Assented to by His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government, the 29th day of September 1922.

A. G. M. FLETCHER,
Colonial Secretary.

SCHEDULE

REGULATIONS.

1. The following are declared to be dangerous trades :—
 - Boiler chipping.
 - Fireworks, the manufacture of.
 - Glass-making.
2. No person shall employ any child in any dangerous trade.
3. No person shall employ any child under the age of 10 years in any factory.
4. No person shall employ any child under the age of 12 years in carrying coal or building material or debris.
5. (1) The owner and the manager of every factory in which children are employed shall cause to be kept, in English or Chinese, a running record of all the children at any time employed in such factory.
 - (2) Such record shall contain the following particulars :—
 - (a) name of factory ;
 - (b) address of factory ;
 - (c) name of employer or employers ;
 - (d) name of manager of factory ;
 - (e) name of child ;
 - (f) sex of child ;

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- (g) date of birth of child, or, if date cannot be ascertained, estimated age on some given date ;
- (h) address of child ;
- (i) name of parent or guardian ;
- (j) nature of employment ;
- (k) actual hours of work for every day on which the child is employed.

(3) Every such record shall be entered up promptly and accurately.

6. No child shall be allowed to work in any industrial undertaking for more than 9 hours in any period of 24 hours.

7. No child shall be allowed to work in any industrial undertaking for more than 5 hours continuously.

8. In any industrial undertaking the interval of relaxation between any spell of 5 hours' continuous work and the next spell of work shall be not less than one hour, and the interval of relaxation after any spell of work of less than 5 hours' duration shall be of reasonable duration having regard to all the circumstances.

9. Every child employed in any industrial undertaking shall be allowed one day's rest in every seven days.

10. No child shall be employed in any industrial undertaking between the hours of 7 p.m. and 7 a.m.

11. No child shall be allowed to carry any weight which is unreasonably heavy having regard to the child's age and physical development, and no child whatever shall be allowed to carry any load exceeding 40 cattiees in weight.

NOTE.—An Ordinance to provide against accidents in factories was enacted by the Governor-in-Council on April 1, 1927, giving him powers to make regulations. The first regulations (April 14, 1927) require the notification, in a prescribed form, of every accident in a factory which results in loss of life or disables any employed person so as to cause absence from ordinary work for more than three days. Mill-gearing (including driving belts, shafting, flywheels, pulleys, etc.), and all dangerous parts of machinery, must be securely fenced to the satisfaction of the Secretary for Chinese Affairs. The aim has been to make this legislation simple and to move slowly so as to educate Chinese opinion step by step.

APPENDIX II

CHINESE GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL REGULATIONS

An Order in re Child Labour, promulgated by the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce on March 29, 1923

1. This Order applies to factories under the following heads :—

- (a) Factories in which the number of labourers employed is over 100.
- (b) Factories in which work of an extra-hazardous character, or which is detrimental to public health, is carried on.

Note.—A further Order will be promulgated in due course with regard to factories in which this Order does not apply.

2. All factories established by foreigners in accordance with the preceding clause, and which are within the jurisdiction of the Chinese authorities, must also abide by this Order.

3. The proprietor of a factory shall not employ boys under the age of 10, nor girls under the age of 12.

4. Boys under 17 and girls under 18 are regarded as juveniles.

5. Juveniles shall be given tasks of an easy and light nature.

6. Juveniles shall not be required to work, exclusive of recesses, for more than 8 hours per day, and adults shall not be required to work, exclusive of intervals for rest, for more than 10 hours a day.

7. Proprietors of factories must not compel juveniles to work between the hours of 8 p.m. and 4 a.m.

8. Not less than two full days in every month shall be granted to adults for rest, and juveniles must be given not less than three full days' rest every month.

Note.—In emergencies, or in case of accident, or in times of urgency, this rule may be temporarily suspended, but all such cases must be reported to the local authorities within 3 days of their occurrence.

9. All labourers must be given not less than one recess each day, and such recesses must be for not less than one hour.

10. In factories where both day and night work is carried on the shifts of workmen must be changed not less than once every ten days.

11. Wages shall be paid in the local currency, and payment in kind must not be made without the consent of the employee.

12. A definite pay-day must be fixed, and wages must be paid not less than once each month.

13. In special cases when the working hours must be prolonged, factory proprietors must make reasonable compensation for such overtime.

14. Owners of factories shall not make any deduction from the wages of their employees as security against breach of the rules of the factory, nor for any damage that may be caused by them.

15. If any savings scheme is proposed for the benefit of the employees, the owner of the factory shall not retain any portion of his employee's wages without first obtaining their consent, and any proposals for a savings scheme must first be submitted to the local authorities for approval.

16. Any employee who resigns, or in case of the death of an employee, the owner of the factory of such employee must pay the full amount of wages due to the employee, if he resigns, or to his relatives in case of death; also the full amount of the savings deposits remaining to the credit of such employee must be paid.

17. According to the conditions and circumstances of his factory, the proprietor must make provision for gratuities and rewards, and he must first submit his proposals to the local authorities for approval.

18. Owners of factories shall provide, at their own expense, suitable educational facilities for their juvenile employees, also for any of their adult employees who have been thrown out of work.

Note.—Such free tuition shall be given for not less than 10 hours every week for juveniles, and for adults who have been thrown out of work, free tuition must be given for not less than six hours every week.

19. In case of injury to, or of illness of employees, the owner of the factory must either limit the working hours of the employee or suspend them altogether, in his own discretion, but in the case of those who have been injured, or of those who become ill while employed in the factory, the proprietor must pay all of their medical expenses, and he must not deduct anything from their wages during the period of the illness of such employees.

20. Female employees must be given leave five weeks before and five weeks after accouchement, and they must also be given a suitable amount of money.

21. Juveniles and women must not be allowed in the engine rooms, or other places where machinery is in motion, for the purpose of scavenging, oiling, or for doing repair work, or to do any hazardous work.

22. Juveniles shall not be ordered to do any work which is connected with the handling of explosives or of noxious drugs.

23. Juveniles must not be employed in any place which is detrimental to health, or where dust and/or powder is flying about.

24. In all factories precautionary measures must be taken against danger to the life and health of employees, and the local authorities have the right to send an officer to make periodical investigations into these matters.

25. Any factory whose premises and adjoining structure, found by the local authorities to be dangerous to health, or to the public weal, the proprietor of such factory must make the necessary alterations, in accordance with the local authorities' orders.

Note.—With reference to the above, when ordered by the local authorities, the whole or any part of the buildings may be condemned, and shall not be used.

26. The proprietor of a factory may engage any suitable person as manager of his factory, but the appointment must be reported to the local authorities.

27. Owners of factories shall be held responsible for the observance of the provisions of this Order.

28. This Order comes into force on the day of promulgation.

APPENDIX III

KIANGSU PROVINCIAL AUTHORITIES TAKE STEPS TO REGULATE CHILD LABOUR

(Ordinance with regard to organising a Committee for factory investigation)

An Ordinance, numbering 4559, from the Civil Governor of Kiangsu Province to the Industrial Bureau¹ reads as follows:—

The Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce has already promulgated a set of factory regulations. Although there are special articles in regard to child labour, they are perhaps not perfect, since there is no careful inspection. This would tend to make them exist in name only.

Dame Adelaide Anderson, of Great Britain, has presented personally a memorandum. It was entirely because of her humanitarian spirit that she wished children to be better treated in all the factories.

A Child Labour Commission has already been appointed by the Municipal Council in Shanghai, to investigate factory conditions. China should also organise a commission of the same nature to sit in Shanghai so that regulations in regard to children in both the Chinese and foreign factories will be similar.

Besides writing to Commissioner Hsu, of Foreign Affairs in Shanghai, asking him to see Dame Adelaide Anderson about the matter, the Commissioner of the Industrial Bureau of Kiangsu is also notified.

¹ From the "Shun Pao" newspaper, May 20, 1924.

APPENDIX IV

Text of the Draft Bye-law proposed by the Municipal Council of the Foreign Settlement of Shanghai, 1st April 1925, as amended in a Draft Resolution for the Meeting of Ratepayers convened for June 2nd, 1925.

RESOLUTION VI.—That the following Bye-law be passed and approved:—

1. No person shall:—

- (a) For a period of 4 years from the date at which this Bye-law shall become effective, employ in a factory or industrial undertaking any child under the age of 10 years.
- (b) After the expiration of the said period of 4 years, employ any child under the age of 12 years in a factory or industrial undertaking.
- (c) Employ any child under 14 years of age in a factory or industrial undertaking for a longer period than 12 hours in any period of 24 hours, such period of 12 hours to include a compulsory rest of at least one hour.
- (d) Employ any child under the age of 14 years in a factory or industrial undertaking except upon the condition that every such child shall be given at least 24 hours of continuous rest in every period of 14 days.
- (e) Employ any child under 14 years of age in a factory or industrial undertaking in connexion with any dangerous unguarded machine, or in any dangerous or hazardous place, or in any work likely to cause serious injury to body or health.
- (f) Expose any child under 14 years of age, employed in a factory or industrial undertaking, to dangerous or hazardous conditions without having previously adopted all necessary and reasonable precautions for ensuring the safety of such child.

2. For the purposes of this Bye-law:—

- (a) "Factory" means any premises wherein or within the close or curtilage or precincts of which any manual labour is exercised by way of trade or for purposes of gain in or incidental to making any article, or part of any article, or altering, repairing, ornamenting, finishing, or adapting for sale any article, provided that at least ten persons are employed in manual labour in the said premises and the close, curtilage, and precincts thereof.
- (b) "Industrial undertaking" includes:—
 - (i) mines, quarries, and other works for the extraction of minerals from the earth;
 - (ii) industries in which articles are manufactured, altered, cleaned, repaired, ornamented, finished, adapted for sale, broken up or demolished, or in which materials are transformed, including shipbuilding, and the generation, transformation, and transmission of electricity and motive power of any kind;

- (iii) construction, re-construction, maintenance, repair, alteration, or demolition of any building, railway, tramway, harbour, dock, pier, canal, inland waterway, road, tunnel, bridge, viaduct, sewer, drain, well, telegraphic or telephonic installation, electrical undertaking, gaswork, or other work of construction, as well as the preparation for or laying the foundations of any such work or structure ;
- (iv) transport of passenger or goods by road or rail or inland waterway, including the handling of goods at docks, quays, wharves, and warehouses, and the carriage of coal and building material and debris, but it does not include any agricultural operation.
- (c) In any prosecution for an offence against the provisions of this Bye-law if it appears to the Court having jurisdiction in the matter that any person who is alleged in the charge to have been a child under a certain age at the date of the alleged offence was under that particular age at the said date, it shall be presumed, until the contrary is proved, that the said child was under the said age at the said date.

3. Every owner of a factory and every person carrying on an industrial undertaking shall at all reasonable times permit the duly authorised representatives of the Council to inspect such factory or the working of such industrial undertaking for the purpose of ascertaining whether the provisions of this Bye-law are being duly complied with.

4. Any person offending against or infringing this Bye-law shall be liable upon conviction to a fine not exceeding \$100 and/or imprisonment for any term not exceeding one month.

RESOLUTION VII.—That the Council be authorised in its discretion to proceed with the proposals contained in Part 3 of the Report of the Child Labour Commission, dated the 9th day of July 1924.

Note.—The proviso contained in Resolution VII. was the only amendment; otherwise the Bye-law was precisely as submitted to the Ratepayers' Meeting convened on April 15th, 1924, when there was not a quorum. The amendment was proposed to enable the Council "to impose the proposed regulations in such a manner as to bear least hardly on those chiefly concerned" and to "refrain, so far as possible, from interference with children already in employment, and to take such steps as may be feasible by adequate registration, by photographing, etc., to ensure that in cases where the Bye-law becomes operative no more children, in future, may be engaged." They considered that thus the restriction within the Settlement of the employment of child labour could be brought about without the hardship resulting from the wholesale dismissal of children from the factories.

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