

Women and Home

RURAL CHINA—

ITS INDIFFERENCE

Forced to pass a winter-night in the open, a Scottish Chieftain, according to an old legend, gathered up the snow to form a pillow for his head. The clan, shocked at such effeminate softness, deposed him. As a sidelight on national hardness of character, that story pales into insignificance before the commonplaces of Chinese indifference to comfort.

Upholstered furniture, once the pride of the Occident, excites in the Orient nothing but contempt. To the average Chinese, springbeds, ostermoor mattresses, eider-down "comforters" are a snare and a delusion. Awake or asleep, these extraordinary farmers love nothing better than to jostle one another. They live, not in isolated farm-houses, but packed in villages. If forced to travel, they will throw themselves in the mass of the hardest brick or baked-mud conch in a grimy inn, and huddled together, snore content.

You never hear a single one of them complain he was obliged to spend a night sharing the same bed with thirty humans and thirty million inhumans. That dirge is voiced by only aliens in China. Bugs, lice or fleas may do their merry worst; but a brick, stone or bamboo pillow, else a rough block of wood, will transport the average Chinese speedily into happy dreamland, where, if he finds himself suddenly grown rich in his fondest vision of luxury will be to bump his head against the same moment on both sides of the hard frame of a springless cart, negotiating the most frightful roads, without winking. Why should he wince? From infancy he has been inured to discomfort; even to torture.

If he buys an "easy chair," the harder its seat, the more perpendicular its back, the more acutely awkward his decided preference fall to sit on a bench or stool not quite so narrow as the edge of a knife (perhaps, now, you overhear an American mother saying to her daughter, "My child, how many millions of times have I told you not to exaggerate?") ten to one he would rather get down on his haunches in the muck.

His indifference to grime and dust is superb. The loose structure of his home, often as the wind blows, makes it next to impossible to keep out the bacteria-laden dust. The accumulation on the rafters and in the thatch affords a favorite resort for romping rats. In one small room, in which with five Chinese I lived and slept for three weeks, it proved necessary every morning to shake from the counterpane of any bed thick layers of fine grime, precipitated overnight. How much reached my lungs I had no method of ascertaining.

The whole problem of hygiene, both in the home and around it, to say nothing of the village streets piled with manure, is so grave as almost to create despair. Indifference to the best established laws of health in all but universal. It is not at all evident that in Rural China the sale of detergents keeps pace with the sale of other commodities. The question was raised in the Shanghai press why the Chinese insist that people from other lands have a disagreeable odor about them. It was reported from one candid Chinese source that the objection taken is to the smell soap.

Indifference to privacy hardens the populace to not a few offensive public performances that in other lands are scrupulously avoided.

Theoretically, every man's home is his castle and no one is supposed to intrude. Practically, everyone goes where he likes at any time he likes. If a squabble breaks out in a particular compound, bad manners or no, the wall will be scaled to see what it is all about. Nobody objects. At a dinner party, at which I was present, in the residence of the highest official in our territory, the rabble from the street streamed in unrestrained, unrebuked, to gloat and stare at the assembled guests.

CIVICS

What is Civicism? How is it shown? What is its role in modern society? To what extent do we lack it? Why is it necessary that we should practice it in the best interests of our country?

In the British Empire, and more particularly in Canada, people have the prerogative of choosing their rulers. It is the greatest liberty they could wish for; but they must forget that, while enjoying this privilege they take upon themselves responsibilities.

It is this disposition to properly perform the duties and obligations devolving upon a citizen of a free country having representative institutions, which constitute Civic Pride.

Civicism is a virtue by which one is urged to devote himself to the welfare of his fellow-citizens. It is a political virtue, the vital element of democracies.

Like every virtue, Civicism has its degrees and is shown in a more or less intensive way, according to individuals, times, or varied circumstances.

Dollard and his sixteen companions, the martyrs of Long-Sault, barring the way to the Iroquois invasion and thereby saving Ville-Marie—that was a manifestation of civicism, heroic and sublime.

Such was a most unusual instance of civicism, which a nation has a right to demand from its members at the most critical hours of its existence only. But that which society has at all times the right to expect from those that compose it and participate in its government is that they should, in return for their right of suffrage, exercise this right with sufficient knowledge of the questions and men concerned, and that those in charge of the administration of public affairs be chosen in a judicious manner and in conformity with the general interest.

Therefore, having public spirit, civicism, or civic pride—these words are synonymous, whether you apply them to the country or city—is to look upon public affairs with the same interest as on personal matters.

It will readily be understood that it is impossible to enumerate the different ways public spirit can be shown. These manifestations must necessarily vary, according to individuals or social places and circumstances in which a citizen finds himself.

The political duty of the leading classes is, of course, more intensive than that of a humble workman, or the illiterate.

The least that can be expected from the most obscure citizen is that he gives a thought to the problems connected with the life and the prosperity of the largest family to which he belongs.

The interest of every citizen, without any distinction as to class and condition, in the governing of society can be shown in two principal ways: by education; that is by trying to find the methods most susceptible of improving the community; by action, which rouses and organizes currents of opinion that direct the spirit of the population and causes the election of the most honest and capable men.

This double task of education and action is the lot of the most intelligent, as well as that of teachers.

In the first place, they reform public habits, create public opinion through newspapers and books, they found societies for researches; form groups by whom questions of national and municipal interest are studied; establish systems of civic instruction.

An English writer, who has very precisely and exactly formulated principles of government science, wrote that "Eternal Vigilance is the price of Liberty," which means that the representatives of authority will fulfill their duties as they are awake that they are watched and helped by enlightened public opinion.

Experience teaches us that individual initiative, more than interference from the States, will generate reforms and progress.

Of course, the national and municipal governments may cure a disease, do some good by laws and by-laws enacted in proper time; but these laws and by-laws, apart from not foreseeing the wants of the multitude, can be fully effective only in proportion to the proper understanding by the community of their object.

In other words, in order that laws be truly effective, the citizens must feel that they would have voted for them themselves, if they had had the power.

Civic spirit is shown in a more definite manner at the time of elections, by the electors, on one hand, choosing with care their representatives and, on the other hand, by patriotic readiness of the most worthy citizens to accept public office,

less than a honor than as a responsibility.

It is mostly by their vote that democracies direct their own destinies and for that reason it has been said that people deserve the rulers they get.

During election time, apathy or non-voting of good citizens is just as responsible as the activity of the others, and for the getting to power of demagogues and unscrupulous men. Showing civicism, therefore, is following attentively the debates knowing the questions and the men, it is examining carefully the records of the candidates and giving one's vote to those whose experience and integrity are best.

Showing civic spirit by those upon whom parliamentary or municipal powers have been bestowed, is accepting willingly the sacrifices inherent to public life and generously putting at the disposal of their fellow-citizens their talents.

An old aphorism tells us that "everybody's business is nobody's business."

It is precisely because too many people accept this false principle that countries, provinces and municipalities experience many difficulties.

Every one is bound to pay, in some way or other, the taxes that are needed for public affairs.

To speak only of municipalities, apart from taxes on property, that affect property owners directly and tenants indirectly, and water taxes that extend to every citizen, there are other taxes from which no one is exempt and that every one pays there is not one inhabitant of a municipality who is not directly interested in the good management of the city in which he lives, even though temporarily.

Every now and then, some great scandal will somewhat shake the apathy of those citizens who are the most, everything is forgotten victims thereof, but a few months and the public have fallen back into their usual somnolence.

However, the guiltiest one is not he who is looked upon as the author of the misdeeds; the real culprit is the public. Without any doubt, the public who elect or allow to be elected dishonest men.

A municipality always has the administration it deserves, and the best administered cities are invariably those where public spirit is the least somnolent.

If but few citizens take the trouble to vote, those closely follow the acts of the elected candidates are fewer still. There are a few leaguers who give some attention to civic questions, but the majority of ratepayers show utter indifference, which is most discouraging for the best intentioned administrators.

Why let the whole burden of the administration rest on a municipal council which, with the best of intentions, may make blunders?

In Europe, as well as in the United States, there exist societies of initiative which actively try to pave the way or admirably second the efforts of administrators.

Popular conscience must be shaken from its dullness. It is of the utmost importance that the citizens should realize that "Everybody's business is, before all, their business."

Civicism does not merely consist in closely following the acts of the administrators; it must watch everything that concerns the City.

Let us take the simple case of the observance of municipal by-laws. It would seem that the citizens take pleasure in infringing as many by-laws as possible, provided they can do so with impunity.

Thanks to the initiative of private citizens who inaugurated this movement in 1913, we have, each year in the spring, a "Clean-up Campaign," in which the municipality actively takes part. But why limit this effort to the spring only? Why should not all citizens keep the sidewalks and lanes near their residence clean all the year round? Why do not our fellow citizens follow the example of citizens in other cities and towns, adorn their lanes or windows with plants?

There is also a tendency among our citizens to systematically disparage the place they inhabit.

There is not a single city which does not afford some appreciable advantages, which its inhabitants should make known—and it is especially true in our Province, so rich in historical monuments and picturesque sites and which is crossed by the mighty St. Lawrence.

Another form of manifestation of civic spirit is the encouraging of local trade and industry preferably to foreign industry and trade.

Nothing accumulates wealth in a city so quickly, and nothing contributes to the direct or indirect de-

To the Electorate of the Village of Athens Ladies and Gentlemen:

Thanking you for the confidence you placed in me last January, and having served you faithfully for the year 1924, am offering my services for 1925, asking for your approval.

Wishing you all a Prosperous New Year,

I remain as ever,

P. Y. Hollingsworth

To the Electors of the Village of Athens

As I am standing for reelection as Councillor for the year 1925, I solicit your vote and influence.

Wishing you all a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

D. L. JOHNSTON

ELECTORS OF ATHENS:

Ladies and Gentlemen:—

A ballot for me on Monday next will be a vote for a safe, sane and economical administration of the business of your Village for 1925.

If you wish for lower taxes and that becomes at all possible you best attain that desirable object in one way:—

Vote for M. B. Holmes for Reeve.

Thanking you one and all for your confidence in the past, and requesting your support on Monday January 5th.

velopment of its property and efficiency as prosperous industries.

By encouraging our local industries, preferably to the industries of other places, we show enlightened civicism.

As regards local trade, it is evident that the trader who pays taxes to a municipality should have the preference over the owners of large foreign stores who carry on their business by mail and who do not contribute one cent to the municipalities where they have no establishments.

*Millions of dollars are, however, expended each year in purchasing from these foreign firms.

Civic spirit may be manifested in many different and varied forms, but the few cases I have just mentioned are sufficient to show that it is not only at the polling-booth that enlightened civicism may be evinced.

Education as regards civicism remains almost entirely to be done. The clergy and newspapers can play a most important part in the development, among the adults, of citizenship—but we should go farther. It is at school that we should begin to impress on the minds of

the future electors the principles of civicism.

As he goes up and gets ahead, he will be taught to observe the works performed by the municipality; how the streets are paved, the sidewalks are built and the water mains and sewers laid. The protection of the citizens' property against fire will be explained; he will be made to understand that the duty of the policeman is not merely to watch people, but to protect lives and property. He will be made to understand that there are no rights without duties and no duties without rights. On his mind will be impressed the idea that each citizen is responsible to the other citizen and that he must not do any things which might harm his fellow-citizens' property or welfare.

If the civic education of children is undertaken when they begin attending school, and if the clergy and the newspapers take charge of the adults, we may hope that we will soon have a larger number of citizens who will realize that they are criminally in leaving it to others to take an interest in public affairs, and that to lack civicism is to show a pitiful egotism and a deplorable want of intelligence.

To The Electors:---

We, the undersigned nominees for the office of Village Council for the incoming year, hereby appeal to the intelligence of all electors, and ask their hearty support in the contest.

If elected, we can assure the ratepayers that the moral and financial interests of the Village will be cared for to the best of our ability.

A. M. Eaton
S. A. Coon
W. H. Jacob.

Purcell's Hardware

YES, WE HAVE THEM!

WESTINGHOUSE RADIOLAS

TRESCO RECEIVERS

One, two and three tube outfits, the Marvel of the Radio Age. Reception from England on the one tube outfit.

THE WONDER CRYSTAL SET

Guaranteed Reception for 1000 miles. No Tubes, no batteries to buy. This set, \$15.00, installed complete with Head-Phones and all accessories.

Ask for Prices and Free Demonstration.

COLEMAN QUICK-LIGHT LAMPS

And Lanterns, priced from \$10.00 to \$15.00. Ask for Free Demonstration in your home.

PARKER PENS AND PENCILS

Yes, we have added these to our stock, and now can furnish any size. Come in and see our stock.

GUY E. PURCELL.