

aries went out from it to the heathen of the valley of the Saone and of the upper Rhone.

Knox College, Toronto

The People of Honan

Probably about eighty per cent. of the people of Honan are peasants. They work the land, living the greater part of their time in the open air. They look strong and vigorous, seeming to enjoy life, and to aim at extracting from it as much happiness as possible. Large numbers of barrowmen wheel their strongly constructed, squeaking barrows, with heavy loads, the year round.

Thousands of men and women live on the boats that carry produce from Honan to Tientsin and other parts of North China, returning to the interior laden with variously assorted cargoes. One often meets men carrying heavy burdens on the ends of their bamboo carrying poles. Peddlers hawk their useful and often showy wares from village to village. Food sellers are busy disposing of their stock of life's necessities.

Certain villages seem to be given up to men of particular handicrafts, such as workers of leather, carpenters, makers of pottery, brick and tile makers, cartwrights, and house builders. Here we meet a company of soldiers, there a number of Yamen runners, all professedly desirous of preserving order and repressing turbulence among the people. Prowling robbers may often be seen attending to their unlawful depredations in the broad light of day. Hardened ruffians, who live by plunder and terrorism, may be met occasionally. The gentleman in the sedan chair, carried hurriedly along by his ragamuffin attendants, is the county Mandarin going to investigate a case of murder just brought to his notice. Prosperous merchants, ambitious students, complacent gentry, and extensive land-holders, may often be seen leisurely strolling across the open plain. Bound-footed women, crippled but bright-faced girls, healthy and happy boys, sad-hearted, hopeless sufferers, the aged who are nearing the close of life's journey, the helplessly blind, the noisy beggar, the itinerant story-teller, the quack doctor, the fortune-

teller and the medicine vendor, these and many others cross one's path from day to day. They make on the observer's mind an impression not easily effaced.—Rev. Dr. Murdoch Mackenzie's, *Twenty-five Years in Honan*

At Supper in the East

The chief meal time is a little after sunset. Rest of mind and body are regarded by Orientals as necessary to the enjoyment of food, and the condition of being refreshed and strengthened by it. This means that the duties of the day must be over. Farmers work in fields at some distance from the village, and tradesmen live on the outskirts of the city, and these cannot well come home to a meal at mid-day. Also, as the warmth of the climate seldom allows of meat being kept for any time in the house, each day brings its own marketing, so that for men and women, the evening meal is the time of family reunion and refreshment.

Cushions are taken from the divan and placed around the tray that rests on a small low table. Bread is eaten with everything, at all stages of the meal. Each guest or member of the family has a few thin loaves laid beside him, three being a common number.

For the reason mentioned, all the cooked food is usually eaten at the evening dinner. A proverb says, "The evening guest gets no supper." He may claim shelter and rest at all times, but coming unannounced after supper-time, he has no claim on the law of hospitality for food. But Oriental courtesy always considers it better to disturb a neighbor than to disappoint a stranger.

When, at a large feast, all cannot be accommodated at one time, they seat themselves round the table in relays, each party rising when finished with a salaam of thanks to the host and making room for another.

When a company of Orientals are to enter a room one by one, to take their seats on a divan or at table, considerable attention has to be given to the competing claims of seniority, family dignity and official position. Some little time is usually spent in protests of self-abasement, each esteeming the other better than himself.

—Mackie's, *Bible Manners and Customs*