

# NEW HIGHWAY SYSTEM IN THE PROVINCE OF HUNAN AN EXAMPLE OF OCCIDENTAL INFLUENCE

(By Frederic J. Haskin in Boston Travellers)

Washington, D. C.: — One of the most impressive manifestations of occidental influence in China is found in the new highway system of the great province of Hunan. The development of this road system is important news to America as it is an earnest of the tremendous future market which may be expected there. With Europe thoroughly industrialized and the domestic American market overproduced, it is to the Orient that we just look to find future absorptive capacity for the huge production of which the United States is capable. Developments such as those reported from Hunan indicate that the hope of a vast Chinese market is not a chimera.

**Lack Retarded Progress**

Roads have been the great lack in China. Their lack has retarded development, trammelled communications and contributed to the periodical famines. With none but the slowest communications and modes of travel, isolation of interior provinces has been complete. There are provinces of China with population nearly as great as the entire United States which have not a mile of railroad and only narrow trails for roads. The gradual opening up of these regions will bring a demand which can absorb all of America's surplus and more.

Hunan is far from the category of a backward province in the Chinese sense but would still be considered so from the American standpoint. It is an interior province in the southeast of China, far from the present seat of military operations, but the very arena of those which attended the first rise of the Canton government on the fall of the old empire. Since then the province has been tranquilized the last extensive operations having occurred in 1926-27.

The province of Hunan for centuries has been one of the corridor routes of South China. The old trade routes from the Nan-shan mountains and the rich agricultural region of the lake from Tung-ting down to the Canton delta passed through Hunan. Located in the Yangtze basin and with streams tributary to that great river, Hunan has seen centuries of trade pass slowly along her streams or move laboriously on wheelbarrow or coolie-back down to the distant seacoast.

**Construction Costs Low**

The transformation already brought about by the introduction of a highway system is striking. There are but 700 miles of improved highway in the province but these have speeded up trade and traffic so amazingly that every effort is being bent to extend the system. Five hundred additional miles now are under construction and presumably, this work will continue until the broad province is laced with highways.

The long-view plan worked out provides for highways extending first into Kwangtung, where Canton is situated and then to the adjoining provinces of Szechwan, Kweichow, Kwangsi, Kiangsi and Hupeh.

All the trade has been carried by coolies. The cost runs about twenty cents per ton mile, gold. This could be cut to ten or probably to 5 cents per ton mile with good roads. The quickening of traffic under such conditions can scarcely be estimated. Hunan has 28,000,000 people, but Kwangtung's 40,000,000 constitute its greatest natural market with the great port of Hong-kong not far beyond. Canton and Hong-kong would provide export outlets for incalculable trade. Yet, so far, the only connections have been the streams and the narrow coolie tracks. The other surrounding provinces, if connected by road, would add scores of millions to the potential market.

The roads built so far radiate largely from Chang-sa, the Hunan capital, but the general trend is toward an integrated system which will establish rapid trade routes between strategic points.

The cost of road building in Hunan is ridiculously low when compared with American costs. Even though every bit of the work, even to the crushing of rock for top surfacing is done by hand, the cost runs only \$700 to \$800 a mile. To build similar roads in the United States would cost from \$70,000 to \$80,000 a mile as to a good deal of the mileage. For these new roads mount the crests of the Nan-shan mountains and wind through valleys and over difficult country. An abundance of rock for building



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# FORTUNE GONE, MARGOT ASQUITH FORCED TO SELL HOME IN COUNTRY

London, Feb. 16—How "poverty" recently forced her to sell her famous Thames-side country home, "The Wharf," at Sutton Courtney, Berkshire, for a "song" was related by the Countess of Oxford and Asquith in an interview here Friday.

"If it were not for my writings," she explained, "together with a small annuity from my father, the late Sir Charles Tennant, I would have to give up my house in London and live quietly in the country."

Margot Asquith, as she is best known to the world, is the widow of the statesman who was Great Britain's prime minister from 1908 to 1916. Right Hon. Herbert H. Asquith, created first Earl of Oxford and Asquith in 1925. He died in February, 1928, at 75.

"It is impossible," said Lady Oxford and Asquith in the interview, "for anyone to realize how difficult it is for me after having lived on such a scale so many years, to have to give up so many things."

"I was offered 3000 pounds not long ago by an American newspaper to write about my most intimate friends, I needed it, but I refused."

"Taxation, the fall of dividends and other reasons are responsible for my situation. Yet my husband served the country for 25 years and I assisted him nearly nine years at Downing street when he was prime minister."

"My rich friends are dead. My present friends would help me if they could, but they cannot. I still have their love, and I prize it as being more important than any financial assistance, but there are few to whom I can now turn."

"During the time my husband was prime minister he was paid 5000 pounds (\$24,300 par) by the state. That isn't enough for prime ministers. We entertained constantly. No. 10 Downing street was almost an open house. Our expenses were large."

"Before he died neither of us ever dreamed we would have to part with 'The Wharf.' It has many memories of the great and of the interesting. My husband is buried there. I will be buried there too. It is a sorrow which cannot be avoided, but nobody can take those memories from me."

It is understood that "The Wharf" cost 12,000 pounds (\$52,230 par) and was sold for considerably less than 7000 pounds (\$23,800 current).

material and extremely cheap labor make construction at this low figure possible. It must not be presumed that these are slovenly built roads. The hills are graded, declivities filled and the broad white ribbon sweeps over hill and dale in a manner suggestive of the best roads of California or Virginia. One reason for this may be that S. K. Tan, commissioner of construction of Hunan province, is an engineer graduate of the University of California who has the strong support of Gen. Ho Chien, the governor, a military chief who has been able to maintain peace and order in the province. On the engineering staff are other Chinese graduates of American universities.

## Buses In Operation

The roads encounter many streams, especially in the mountain sections. These are bridged with solid stone structures, designed to endure like the Great Wall. Stone retaining walls must be built in some places and the scraps of cliffs must be paved with stones to prevent landslips on the roads. Few American counties would undertake to build such roads in these times.

The old roads through this province were among the best in China. The wheelbarrow routes were paved with flag stones laid end to end, the stones little more than wide enough to catch the single wheel. The coolie pack routes are paved, with the flags laid crosswise, and some are as much as 3 feet wide. The new roads are from 25 to 35 feet in width.

Curiously enough, the wheelbarrows are not allowed on the new roads. They must keep to their old stone tracks for the present. But the coolies may use the highways and trot along at an accelerated pace. Motor truck transportation has not yet begun, although negotiations are being made for a fleet of trucks. Motor buses—200 of them—are in operation and an additional 200 are to be procured. They are operated by the government. So far there is not one single privately owned motor car in this province of 28,000,000. Gasoline is extremely expensive but motors are adapted to burn charcoal gas.

An interesting feature of the road program is that the government has planted along the roadside right of way tung oil castor bean and other plants of economic value while fruit trees take the place of the billboard seen in America. The crops produced by these plants and trees go a long way toward road maintenance.

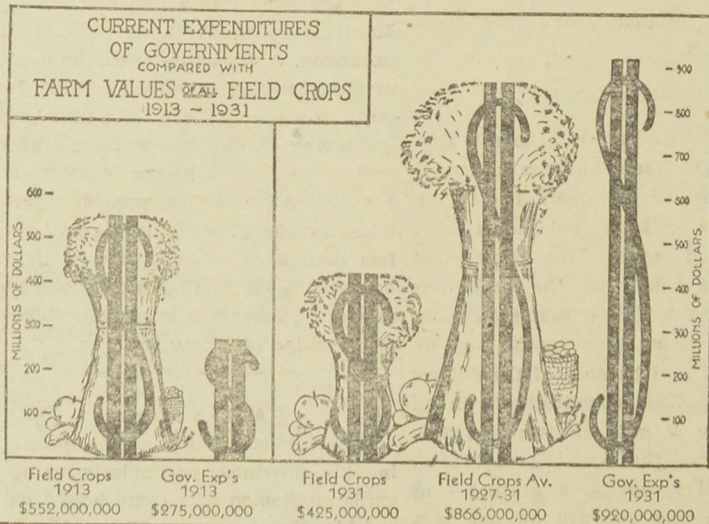
Hunan not only is rich agriculturally but has extreme coal deposits. It also has mines of lead and zinc, and this one Chinese province is the principal source of the world's antimony supply.

Although the coolie carrying a load of 150 pounds at the rate of 15 miles a day still is the principal freighter along the heavenly Heart road, which runs from Shang-sa out into the open country, the time seems not distant when the motor truck will be taking his place, carrying five tons 200 miles. The gods in the roadside temples tremble with violation and probably indignation.

It wasn't the machines that wrecked us, says the Skeptocrat, but the worldwide epidemic of dementia, with delusions of grandeur and a distorted concept of values, used for money.

A lot of people are talking confidently about Technocracy who couldn't tell it from a diplotocus if they met it on the street.

## How Canada Gets and Spends



A study showing the comparison between the cost of Government in Canada and the farm value of all field crops has been prepared by W. Sanford Evans and released for the National Committee on economy in public finance by the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. The study, as illustrated by the chart, indicates that in 1913 the total sum expended by governments for ordinary purposes was equal to 50 per cent. of the farm value of all field crops in Canada. In 1931, Governments expended a sum equal to 77 1/2 per cent. of the value of all field crops.

As prices were exceptionally low and yield not high in 1931, another comparison is added. The average value of all field crops for the 5 years, 1927-1931, including three years of good prices, was \$866,000,000, while the ordinary expenditures of governments in 1931 were \$920,000,000.

Whereas in 1913 a sum equal to one-half the value of the field crops sufficed to meet ordinary government expenditures, a state has now been reached where the average value of all field crops falls short by many millions of dollars of meeting the ordinary requirements of governments.

## Notice of Legislation

Notice is hereby given that application will be made by the Municipality of York to the Legislature of the Province of New Brunswick at the next Session thereof for the passing of an Act to amend Chapter 36 of the Acts of 1922 so as to increase the amount of the Bank Loan under the said Act to an amount of \$60,000.

Dated the 24th day of January, 1933.

C. D. RICHARDS,  
Solicitor  
Municipality of York

## A CARAMEL SAUCE

To one cup of granulated sugar, slowly melted in a heavy saucepan until it is golden brown liquid, slowly stir in 1-2 cup of boiling water. Cook, stirring, about ten minutes until it makes a rich syrup. Use hot or cold.

Regardless of what caused the depression, this much is certain: That the fiddle ds being played by a lot of us who didn't dance.

## Notice of Legislation

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that application will be made at the next Session of the Legislature of New Brunswick for the passage of an Act authorizing Fredericton Exhibition, Limited, to issue bonds or debentures in a sum not exceeding \$15,000, principal to be payable in ten years from the issue thereof, and to bear interest at a rate not exceeding 5 1/2 per cent per annum, payable semi-annually, payment of both principal and interest to be guaranteed by the City of Fredericton. The lands and buildings now owned by said Fredericton Exhibition, Limited, are to be conveyed to the said City. The proceeds of the said issue are to be used to repay monies borrowed by said Fredericton Exhibition, Limited, and advances made and to be made by the said City.

Authority will also be sought by said Act to enable the said City to guarantee accounts of said Fredericton Exhibition, Limited, which may be contracted in any year in connection with the holding of an exhibition in a sum not exceeding \$5,000, said accounts to be paid by said Fredericton Exhibition, Limited, after the close of the said exhibition each year.

Dated the Thirtieth day of January, A. D. 1933.

C. L. SYPHER, Sec'y,  
Fredericton Exhibition, Limited.

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