



FARMER CANADA: Great life, eh, young fellow? Too bad we haven't a hundred thousand more such healthy-minded lads, away from town, learning this he-man Scout stuff!

CHINESE WOMEN WIN BIG VICTORY FOR THE SEX EQUALITY PRINCIPLE

Defeat Legislation Providing Prison Sentences For Wives—Not Husbands—Guilty of Marital Infidelity

SHANGHAI, Feb. 21—Women in China have won another victory for the principle of equality of the sexes.

By organizing, by issuing biting proclamations, by sending delegates to Nanking, by exerting influence on married men in the legislative yuan in short, by doing an effective and sometimes charming job of lobbying they have defeated a proposed criminal code provision which, in their opinion, would have given legal sanction to a double standard of morality.

The controversy centered around an article in the criminal code which, as first written, would have provided that married women convicted of adultery should be punished by not more than two years' imprisonment. A hue and cry was raised by women because men were not to receive a similar treatment, but for a time the legislative yuan was adamant. The draft was revised to read "one year's imprisonment" instead of two, but still married women were singled out in the law, not husbands.

Thus matters stood early this month. But then the crusaders for justice began showing what feminine persuasion could accomplish.

Hold Big Mass Meeting

Women's organization in Nanking held a big mass meeting. A "Women's League to Fight for Equality Before the Law" was organized. The ladies sent petitions to the legislative yuan (which is China's nearest parallel to the American Congress.) They issued what amounted to a manifesto to the nation.

Fifteen members of the League called on President Sun Fo of the yuan; he is a son of China's 'late leader', Dr. Sun Yat-sen, who was a champion of women's rights. Delegates talked with Mme. Wang Chiang-wei, wife of the

Premier and Acting Foreign Secretary herself a famous revolutionist of 1911; needless to say, they had her sympathy.

Women in Shanghai and elsewhere took up the cudgels. Three groups of delegates representing organized women of Shanghai went to Nanking and fought the good fight. What deserves special note is the influence which doubtless was brought to bear upon male members of the legislative yuan by their wives to attend a meeting of that body, jokingly announced that he probably would feel obliged to ask that the galleries be cleared to guard against "unfair pressure upon the members expression of their opinion".

Equality Their Objective

It must not be supposed for a moment that the women leading the fight were in favor of loose morals. What they wanted was equality for women. What they wanted was to strike another blow at the social concepts linked up with the now-decreasing custom of concubinage.

They were able to bring more than abstract principles of justice into the argument. They have pointed out that an article of China's provisional constitution reads: "The citizens of the republic, irrespective of men and women, races, religions and classes, are all equal before the law". The manifesto to the nation attacked some members of the Legislature as "representatives of the feudalist type", legislating to "oppress Chinese feminism" and to "protect the illegal acts of men", contrary to "the wishes of 200,000,000 women".

Perhaps 200,000,000 Chinese women can't be wrong. In any event the draft has been revised again by the yuan and now provides that those convicted

of adultery, irrespective of sex, shall be sent to jail for not more than a year.

There is by no means universal liking for the provision as it now reads, even among women. Some of them want the question of adultery entirely deleted from the criminal code. It is argued by proponents of this school that conjugal infidelity is likely to mean the end of conjugal love, but that the injured party has the right under the civil code to get a divorce. So why have a criminal case, which cannot restore a broken family?

Further, one of the prominent members of the legislative yuan argues that, as the code now stands, there won't be enough jails to accommodate the culprits. He points out that few nations in the western world have criminal provisions for adultery as such, and he, like many others, wants the whole provision left out in China.

But quite aside from the question of whether the law as revised is yet a good law (the code as a whole has not yet been promulgated and is not in effect), the women have won a big victory for sex equality. And this is significant of much that is going on in China.

The Chinese woman never has been as privileged as most of her Oriental sisters. A pretty firm independence of spirit, even though vastly hampered during the last thousand years, is her heritage from the past. Moreover, Chinese women in centuries gone have here and there made names for themselves in politics, art, literature. True, a Chinese girl was much less valued than a boy and this is true generally although to a lesser extent today; a male heir was wanted to perpetuate the family name, and a son was potentially an economic supporter for his own family, not destined to go with a dowry—to another family.

True, also, the making of marriage alliances by partners, not lovers, has caused mass tragedy not only to women but to men through the centuries. But still a woman once married and competently managing her household was a figure of dignity and power.

It is held by Sophia H. Chen, known to many foreigners as an authority on the old days, that the imported Indian conceptions of womanhood, which came with Buddhism have much to answer for as enemies of a sound status for women. Although foot binding as such did not come from India she indicts the Indian attitude, degrading the women, for a huge share in making it possible for "this torture of womanhood to develop and flourish for almost a thousand years". Also she blames Indian philosophy for the social doctrine against remarriage of widows.

AN INTERESTING STORY OF THE RED COATS IN WEST

John P. Turner, who has contributed several excellent articles on pioneer days in the Canadian West to the Canadian Geographical Journal, tells in the February number the dramatic story of the first reat journey of the Canadian Mounted Police from Fort Garry to what is now Southern Alberta. This was in the summer of 1874. The famous force had just been organized, under the command of Lt.-Col. George A. French, and this initial expedition was in the nature of a test, although it also had a very definite purpose—the suppression of whiskey smugglers from the Missouri, who had been operating among the Western Canadian Indians in the sure conviction that the arm of Canadian law could not possibly reach them. The men stood up well to the severe test, and this memorable journey laid well and truly the foundation of the reputation of the Mounted Police. It is a stirring tale, told with imagination and restraint. Part of it only is told in the February number. We are promised the conclusion in March.

Anything that tends to strengthen the cordial relations of Canada and the United States should command the wholehearted support of every intelligent Canadian. Along that famous unguarded boundary that nominally divides, but really unites, the two countries, have been established several memorials that happily commemorate their unusually friendly associations. There is the Peace Arch on the boundary between British Columbia and Washington; the Glacier-Waterloo International Park in the Rockies, partly in Alberta and partly in Montana; the International Peace Garden, between Manitoba and North Dakota. Established in commemoration of one hundred years of peace, this reservation contains a memorial cairn on the international boundary in the Turtle Mountains on which is inscribed a solemn pledge by the two nations that they will never resort to war for the settlement of their differences. Also there is the Ambassador Bridge between Detroit and Windsor. Mr. E. B. Oberholtzer, in the February number of the Journal, describes a project similar to that in the Rockies, an international park to embrace the Quetico Provincial Park of the Ontario side of the boundary, and the Superior National Forest in Minnesota. The idea, as in the case of the Glacier-Waterloo Park, is that by a treaty or concurrent legislation this region should be named an International Park, without of course, interfering in any way with national jurisdiction or administration on either side. It is nothing more than a friendly gesture, but friendly gestures are important in international relations.

Of the remaining articles in the February number of the Journal, Mrs. Peck writes entertainingly of that well-known Indian town, Caughnawaga, near Montreal; General Ionoff describes from close personal knowledge a little-known part of Central Asia; and D. W. Buchanan gives a comprehensive view of that interesting experiment the University City of Paris.

Practice Continues to Wane

But now—although General Chiang Kai-shek still lists foot binding among the chief curses of the nation—the young women of big cities under modern influence do not have bound feet, and the practice continues to wane elsewhere, so that it may be considered in the way to probable complete extinction. Thus, too, with the status of widows; Miss Chen (in private life Mrs. H. C. Zen) points out that "twice-married women" are still the exception but that the attitude toward them has changed which is the all-important consideration.

So it goes throughout the social scene as it affects women. The impact of Western ideas of freedom, the influence of Christian missionaries, the cast impetus given to revolution on all fronts by the overthrow of the monarchy, all are continuing to liberate the Chinese woman, who already was endowed with far more natural independence than, for example, the typical Japanese woman.

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