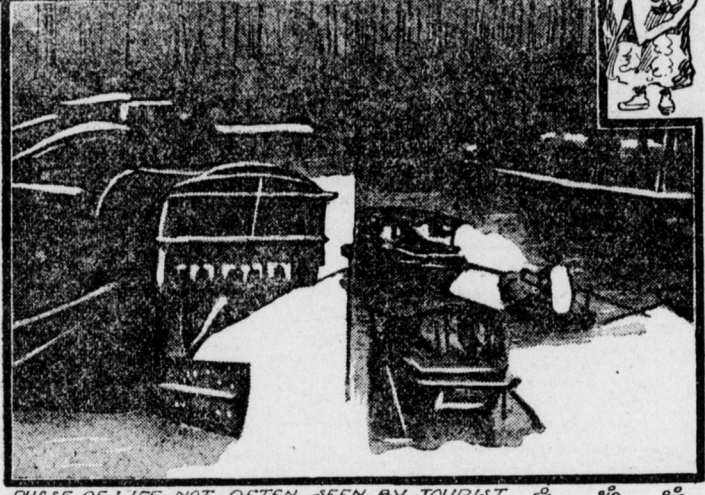


BOATING SLUMS OF CHINA

BY A. E. JOHNSON



PHASE OF LIFE NOT OFTEN SEEN BY TOURIST



CANTON, CHINA'S GREAT COMMERCIAL CITY

A cynic has said that our minds are ruled by catch-words, and there is certainly this amount of truth in the statement, that one's mental image of a place is usually based upon some telling phrase which has stuck, once heard, in the memory, and become inseparably associated, rightly or wrongly, with the locality to which it ostensibly refers.

The Greenland of my fancy, thanks to a mind exceedingly retentive of childish lessons, has for its natural features icy mountains and very little else. That a coral strand, of a delicate pink shade, encircled the continent of India like a fairy zone was a cherished belief only shattered when I first traveled to the east and wondered why it was called shiny.

But there are times when the familiar phrase is more than justified, and preconceived notions are startlingly indorsed by first actual impressions. Every schoolboy knows that China is inhabited by "teeming millions," and I defy the most felicitous of phrasemakers with two words more succinctly to summarize such a first glimpse of a Chinese city as is afforded, let us say, to the traveler from Hongkong who approaches Canton up the Chukiang river.

In the west the over-crowding of cities is a problem which has come to be regarded as amongst the most pressing and perplexing of all that confront the social reformer. But compared with cities of the east, and of China especially, those of the west may almost be regarded as depopulated. Only those who have penetrated the innermost purlieus of a Chinese city can conceive the degree of congestion in which it is possible for a human community to live. In the great Chinese towns it is literally true that the population overflows its confines, the result sometimes being, as at Canton, those extraordinary floating slums which choke the riverside and form at once the most picturesque and most pestilential feature of the city's aspect.

Stand beside the imperial custom house at Canton and let the eye range down the river towards Hongkong. As far as the sight can reach the boats, boats, and again boats. These are no ordinary craft, mere vessels of transport plying hither and thither, but the countless homes of myriad Chinese, in which millions of human beings have been born, have lived, and have died. They are the dwellings of the very poor, who live in them practically free from rent, taxes, and other burdens of the ordinary citizen.

The Tankia (which means boat-dwellers), as the denizens of these floating houses are called, form a sort of caste apart from the rest of the Cantonese. The shore-dwellers regard them as belonging to a lower social order; and indeed they have many customs, peculiar to themselves, which mark them as a separate community. How the swarming masses of them contrive to support existence in a mystery, but their chief mode of employment is in carrying merchandise and passengers from place to place.

is of course hardly necessary to point out that, as against this low rate of pay, the standard of living is correspondingly different.

The "houses" which make up these vast floating slums are of all sizes. Some are but 15 feet long. From these cramped dimensions, however, they range up to a length of 50 and 60 feet. A boat large enough to accommodate a family of moderate size can be obtained for \$20, and since the anchorage is free it is obvious that the Tankia effects many savings impossible to the shore-dweller. For a hundred dollars a boat that is (comparatively) luxurious in its appointments can be obtained; and not infrequently European travelers who wish to make a prolonged sojourn in the vicinity of Canton, and do not care to pay the high prices charged in the one hotel, hire a comfortable house-boat, at a cost of about one dollar per day. In that case the native owners occupy a small space in the bow, where all cooking is done for the traveler without extra cost, with the additional advantage of free transportation to any point on the river.

Most of the boats, however, are small. A thatch of palm leaves, or a cover of matting, over a part of each boat serves to protect the occupants from sun and rain, and serves as an eating and sleeping place. The interior presents a curious picture of domestic economy, beside which the arrangements of an Irish cabin or a crofter's cottage in Lewis are palatial. On many of them pigs and chickens are reared, and frequently, when the smallness of the boat does not afford deck-space for such stock, a box or cage is suspended from the stern to serve as a pigpen or chicken coop. Nor do sties and henneries, in addition to the apartments of the family, exhaust the accommodation of the tiny craft, for on many flower gardenings is carried on, a considerable space being set apart in the bows for the flower pots.

How life can be endured in such quarters, cribbed, cabined and confined, well-nigh passes comprehension. It has been estimated that about Canton there are not less than 85,000 inhabited craft, and that of this vast number some 40,000 are permanently located—250,000 to 400,000 human lives, that is to say, daily rising and falling with the tide. Births, deaths and funerals all take place within the narrow limits of the boats, and many are the inhabitants of the floating slums who never set foot on land throughout the whole of their strange existence.

Not all the boats in the dense mass that blocks the riverside are squalid, however. There are some as gaudy and resplendent as the majority are wretched and poor, and these are familiar to every one who has visited Canton. "Have you been to the flower-boats?" is a question continually heard in the hotel, and he is sure to be a recent arrival who answers in the negative.

The "flower-boats" are, in brief, the pleasure resorts of Canton. Whole streets of them are moored in rows that extend from mid-stream to the shore, and every night they are thronged with seekers after pleasure and recreation—of a sort. For it cannot be pretended that the amusements to be found thereon are of a very high moral order. Concerts, or rather sing-songs, are held on some, but most cater to that gambling instinct which is the national vice of China.

Vision of Husband Drowning True.
Boston.—In a vision in which she says it seemed as though she was viewing actual happenings, Mrs. Lotie Johnson of Beachmont at midnight saw her husband, George Johnson, clinging to an overturned boat in mid-ocean, heard him cry for help, and finally, with one despairing shriek, throw up his hands and sink.

With the cry of her husband ringing in her ears, Mrs. Johnson awoke and ran screaming to her mother. Her husband had started early in the evening with a friend in a power boat for Gloucester.

LOVE, THE MAGICIAN

FOR ITS SAKE WOMAN WILL ENDURE AND FORGIVE ANYTHING.

Eastern Journal Makes a Few Comments on the Position of the Average Wife—Works for Board and Clothes.

A young man not many years ago began calling on a girl; he kept her out on the front porch late at nights; he made life a torment for her if she looked at any other man; and finally he married her.

He is poor and her father is in fairly good circumstances, so that for the first time in her life she began to taste privation and self-denial. She cooks for him, cleans, sews, mends and slaves for him and their two children.

Why has this man put this woman in a position where she must experience such hardships in addition to his tyranny?

Because he loves her. This is a common interpretation of love, the sweetest word in the language.

Because he loves her, many a man has brought many a woman down to a hell which she has loyally striven to turn into a heaven.

Woman is so constituted that so long as she believes herself loved and appreciated she can forgive anything and endure anything and still be happy.

A wife is the only laborer on earth who works for her board and clothes and is expected to be grateful for the privilege.

But even she appreciates a trip and a day off now and then.

The husband who doesn't economize on expressions of affection or stint his wife on praise may do as he will without friction or argument.

So long as he doesn't sink the lover in the husband he need fear no rival. He may forget every other rule, but if he remembers this all will be well.

Even when the steak is leather and the bread a cinder he must merely remark that the meal isn't quite up to her usual high standard of perfection—and it doesn't happen again.

Every woman is an idealist, and she will break her neck trying to live up to what she thinks a loving husband expects of her.

There are worse things than work. It is generally the lonely, hungry-hearted women who are trying to amuse themselves and feed their starved lives on the froth of parties and the dry husks of club papers.

Sitting alone at night waiting for a husband to come home doesn't thrill a woman a bit more than it would a man.

But any woman can be broken of the club habit by a husband who will stay in of evenings and try to entertain her in a spirit of love anything like that of courtship days.—Philadelphia Telegraph.

Artificial Clouds.

D. L. Murphy, United States consul at Bordeaux, reports the invention of M. Lestout, a French grape grower, of a process for producing artificial clouds for the protection of vineyards from frosts and the heat of the sun. The report says it has been tested under various conditions and proved a practical success. It consists of filling small wooden boxes, open at the top, with inflammable composition, reduced to a fine powder and pressed into a compact mass. When this composition, which consists of equal parts of resinous and earthy matter, is set alight, a dense cloud of smoke is produced, hanging over the vineyard long enough to protect the plants from the April sun rays, and give them a chance to recuperate from the dangerous effects of the frost. The inventor claims that by his method 50 acres may be protected at a cost of about two dollars.

Taming a Refractory River.

Since the timber has been stripped from its mountainous drainage basin, embodying an area of 27,000 square miles, the floods of the Susquehanna have been extremely sudden, violent and destructive. Such a particularly outrageous stream is the Susquehanna that it is difficult to find room upon it even to navigate a ferry boat comfortably. One of these quiet reaches is McCall's Ferry, where a part of Washington's army crossed on its way to do up Cornwallis at Yorktown. The commander himself crossed at Conowingo ford, 14 miles below. At this historic spot some clever engineers are demonstrating that the Susquehanna is good for something, after all, for they are building a hydro-electric power plant which is remarkable not only for its size but in many other respects as well.—Technical World.

New Variety.

"You have deceived me," growled the man who had bought a bungalow in the suburbs.
"How so, sir?" asked the oily tongued real-estate agent.
"Why, when we were negotiating you said there were no common gossips in this neighborhood."
"And I spoke the truth, sir. They are all uncommon. You couldn't find their equal in seven states."

Not Political Talk.

She—You never hear of women speaking from the rear platform of a car.
He—Oh, I don't know! I've heard 'em saying things to the conductor, all right!—Yonkers Statesman.

COUNTRY HAS FEW RICH MEN.

They Are as Scarce in Bulgaria as Black Swans.

Bulgaria is the nearest approach to a peasant commonwealth which the world has known in modern times. There is not a Bulgarian Slav who is not the owner of a plot of land upon which he lives and out of which he gets his own livelihood by his own labor.

Large landowners are almost unknown, says the London Illustrated News. The few men of wealth in the country are mostly of foreign birth or descent; and even they would not be counted as wealthy according to the standard of other European countries.

The small landowners, who form the vast majority of the population, are peasant born and peasant bred. They are extremely thrifty. They are content with very plain food; they wear the same sheepskin garments from year to year, only turning their coats inside out with the changes of the season.

Whole families, even of well to do peasants, sleep in the same room upon mats stretched out on the floor. They live under conditions of dirt and discomfort which no British or German or French laborer would tolerate for a week. Yet notwithstanding their disregard of the simplest sanitary arrangements they grow up singularly strong and healthy.

Moreover, they are free from the irritation caused among other laborers, overworked if not underpaid, by the spectacle of neighbors living in affluence and ease without any necessity to curtail their expenditure. Rich men are black swans in Bulgaria. It was told by a foreign banker in Sofia who had traded for many years in the country that he doubted greatly whether there were 50 men in all the rural districts who had net incomes of \$5,000 a year.

A Study in Green.

He got off the Pullman, lit a perfumed cigarette and began to walk the platform. He was a tall young man, and a little too thin in the legs for his height, but his shoulders were wide enough; his tailor had seen to that.

As he swung along the platform with a studied stride imported from Pall Mall, he was a picture for a clothier's artist. His cap was green, not a vivid green, but a subdued sort of autumn green. His clothes matched his cap. His green trousers were rolled up displaying a pair of billiard-table-green silk socks. There were green laces in his shoes, and his necktie was green, with a green stickpin in it, and on the hand with which he carried his perfumigator so gracefully was a large green set ring.

He was a beauty, all right. The only thing we would have changed about him was the self-conscious look on his proud young face. As the conductor shouted "Aboard!" we were sorry to see the young man fall on his hands and knees in his haste to get up the steps and out of our vulgar midst.—Newark (N. J.) News.

Saving the Autoists.

"Hey, boss, stop!"
From his seat under a tree the tramp ran out into the hot white road and hailed the red car, frantically.
"Well, what is it?" the owner asked, in an ill-natured tone, as he halted.
"Just look-a-here, boss," said the tramp.

And he extracted a huge nail from the tire of the hind wheel and held it up in horror.

"Half a mile more, boss, and she'd 'a-gone right through. Lucky I noticed her shinin' in the sun. I've saved ye close on a 100 plunks, boss, and no mistake."

"It might have ruined the tire, that nail," said the owner. "I'm much obliged to you." The tramp looked up at him expectantly. A greenback changed hands.

Then the red car droned on its way and the tramp palmed the nail again for a blue laundrette that he saw in the distance.—Minneapolis Tribune.

Pins Her Faith to the Goat.

Goat's milk and no vaccination is the doctrine of the duchess of Hamilton, premier duchess of Scotland but shyest and most retiring of women in private life, in bringing up her four children. She is president of the British Goat society, and a goat is always a valued member of the ducal retinue. The family never goes anywhere without one. The duchess is always preaching the value of goat's milk and goat's flesh, averring that the virtues of the goat have not been appreciated. The duke, an invalid, passes most of the time at his Scottish home, Hamilton palace, a great mansion that absorbs nearly all his income. He inherited the title from his cousin, the twelfth duke, but the estate passed to the late duke's daughter, now the marchioness of Graham, who is one of the wealthiest women in England.

Eyes All Around.

Pearl—It was awful, dear, awful!
Ruby—What?
Pearl—Why, so many young men pass up our street in the evening, I told Jack to whistle 'I've Got My Eye on You' when he was a block away.
Ruby—Gracious, and did he?
Pearl—Yes, and then I found the whole neighborhood had their eyes on him.

Couldn't Resist.

"It's dollars to doughnuts on my candidate."
"Well, I'll take a slice of those odds. Shall we put up the deposit in the bank or in the bakery?"—Kansas City Journal.

THE AMERICAN HOME

W. A. RADFORD EDITOR

Mr. William A. Radford will answer questions and give advice FREE OF COST on all subjects pertaining to the subject of building for the readers of this paper. On account of his wide experience as Editor, Author and Manufacturer, he is, without doubt, the highest authority on all these subjects. Address all inquiries to William A. Radford, No. 194 Fifth Ave., Chicago, Ill., and only enclose two-cent stamp for reply.

Gable ends are not objectionable if rightly treated. I rather like gable effects in house architecture, because they seem natural. Formerly there was no other way to stop a roof when a builder got beyond the end of the house.

At first the roof ends were left open, but pioneers in house building learned to fill the three-cornered space with logs chopped slanting at the ends to conform to the general slope of the roof, and a few generations later they plastered the chinks full of clay mud to keep out the snow and most of the wind.

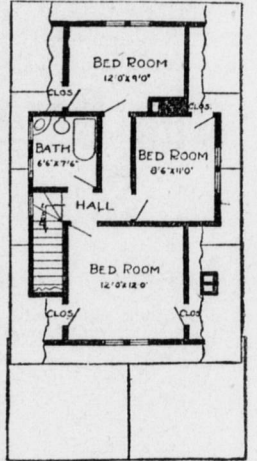
When I go up north into the timber country I sometimes see a log house built on this plan, and if it is well done I always entertain a feeling of respect for the builder. It shows an ingenious attempt as well as the right disposition to make the best possible use of the materials available, and I often think there is more skill required to build a house under such rough conditions with the tools at hand than in the building of fine houses under modern city conditions with all the different kinds of patent improvements to draw upon.

We have now almost an endless variety of house designs, most of which are born of a desire to have something new, which is all right, because new generally means progress and old too often is the outward sign of stagnation. But in house building the newest and best generally is but a renaissance of old architectural ideas frescoed with modern embellishments of the decorator's art. The construction itself, in

ation, except to add the necessary furniture. Such houses are not homes in the fullest sense of the word. They are merely shelters and are usually looked upon as temporary. This is one great fault of the American people. We are too ready to move, to sacrifice our home ties, to chase the delusive rainbow that we may fool ourselves trying to find the pot of gold.

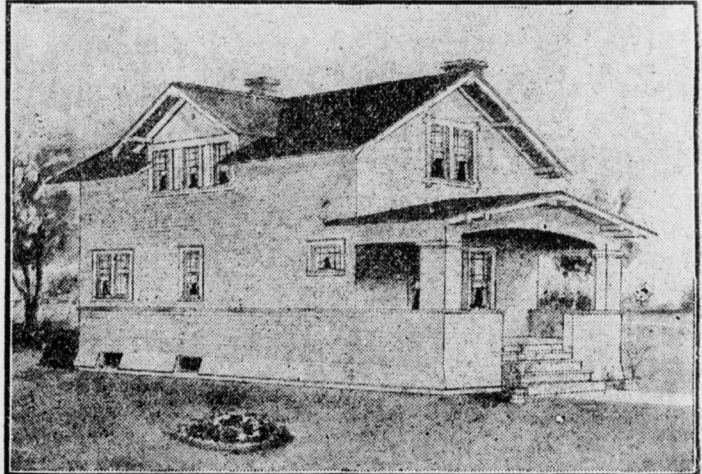
The question is often asked: "Can you make a house attractive when the gable end looks toward the street?"

The design of this house answers the question. To make a gable attractive you must have a window in it.



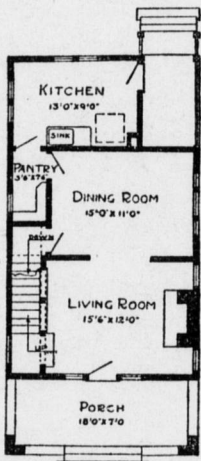
Second Floor Plan.

to fit the size of the pediment or recessed triangular space between the level of the eaves and the peak, and the window must correspond in every respect to the general style of the house. In this case the porch relieves the plain appearance of the end of the house under the roof project-



most cases, was worked out long before the art of building was chronicled by historical writers. I am not advocating the "nothing new under the sun" theory, for there is an endless variety of new things in house building, but they are, for the most part, merely accessories to the old principles of construction.

I don't know anything more interesting than a home with gables well designed, sheltered as these are with a wide projection of roof and



First Floor Plan.

partially screened with a climbing vine. It is one thing to build a house out of it is quite another thing to give it an artistic, home-like appearance. This is something that an architect or a builder cannot do. An architect may design and a builder construct a house rightly proportioned and in conformity with its surroundings, but the family must then take the building in hand and add the intangible air of refinement and sociability to complete the structure. A great many sources are drawn upon to bring about the desired results, but they all have their roots in education acquired by reading and thinking.

I have seen families live in houses just as they came from the builder's hands, without any attempt at decor-

tion, and you will notice the style of the porch roof corresponds with the main roof on the house. The plan of building the porch around and connecting it directly with the side of the house gives it a distinctive appearance.

When a lot is narrow this style of house may be built to advantage because you get the necessary room from front to back instead of sideways. The building is 20 feet in width by 34 feet in length, but as the roof comes down into the upper rooms the second floor is somewhat narrower, but you get three bedrooms and the bathroom, and the rooms are all fair-sized and well lighted. Houses like this are common in the older towns in the eastern part of the country, where building lots are not so liberal as they are in western cities.

Thought They Were Saints' Days.

The refusal of the British house of commons to adjourn over Derby day recalls a story related of one of the Roman Catholic peers who took their seats some four or five years before the passage of the first reform bill, after an exclusion of a century and a half. He gave notice that on a certain day he would make a certain motion whereupon there arose from his noble colleagues a general cry of "Derby!" The astonished novice named another day, only to be greeted with an equally unanimous expostulation of "Oaks!" At this, he explained that he would have to ask the forgiveness of their lordships, but, having been educated abroad, he was forced to acknowledge that he was not familiar with the list of saints' days in the Anglican calendar.

Expensive America.

The expensiveness of our hotels keeps many Europeans of moderate means from visiting this continent (America). The other day an English man, who had been traveling for three years in all parts of the world, chiefly playing golf, said: "At home I am in easy circumstances; on the continent (of Europe) I am a prince; in America I am a pauper." He meant that we are wasteful.—Canadian Courier.