



Photo: R. Moulin,  
from Ewing Galloway

Shanghai's famous Bund, with its large banks and mercantile establishments, through which flows much of the Orient's commerce.

## Cosmopolitan Shanghai

By Lillian Dow Davidson

"AN interesting and astounding demonstration of international coöperation," are the words my husband uses in describing Shanghai, a city without a parallel in the world's history. I feel he speaks with some authority on the subject as he was in charge of the American consulate-general there many years ago. Here the various consuls function, uniquely, as an advisory body in the local affairs. Every really serious question affecting the existence of Shanghai, every threatened danger since its inception, every problem relating to international relations, has been threshed out and action taken or at least influenced by the consular corps as the final and supreme controlling body.

Astounding it is because with so much keen competition between the various nations for commercial supremacy, for official standing, it would be quite

Here centers much of China's commerce with other nations, and here has been worked out a remarkable plan of international government.

natural to expect much honest dissatisfaction with the position occupied and much elbowing to change it. Yet there has been here in the past a degree of friendly coöperation regardless of these rivalries that is most satisfying and is fraught with significance. In fact Shanghai can be called a miniature League of Nations.

Greater Shanghai, a city approximating Chicago in size, wealthiest of all the cities of the Asiatic continent, outside of India, and with the largest population of any port in the whole East, the commercial outlet for half the population of China, is made up of the International Settlement, the French Concession, the Chinese City, a northern suburb



Photo: Keystone View

*An air view of Soochow Creek and the International Settlement.*

called Chapei, the eastern suburb of Pootung, and a southern suburb, Nantao, with an aggregate estimated population of 3,000,000.

The International Settlement is, of course, the most important part of this great Eastern metropolis. In fact the Shanghai of casual mention means the International Settlement together with the French Concession, for they work in close harmony for the welfare of the city. Shanghai is unique. It is not a colony, not really even a concession as the term is generally used. It belongs to no power, therefore it is motherless. It is really a collection of miscellaneous pieces of ground leased by foreign residents

and which, as they were contiguous, grew together to make this wonder city of the Orient. Although motherless, it is much "mothered" by the fourteen world powers which claim a share in this child's upbringing. So eminently well have they performed their task that they may indeed point with pride to their robust foster son whose growth continues unabated.

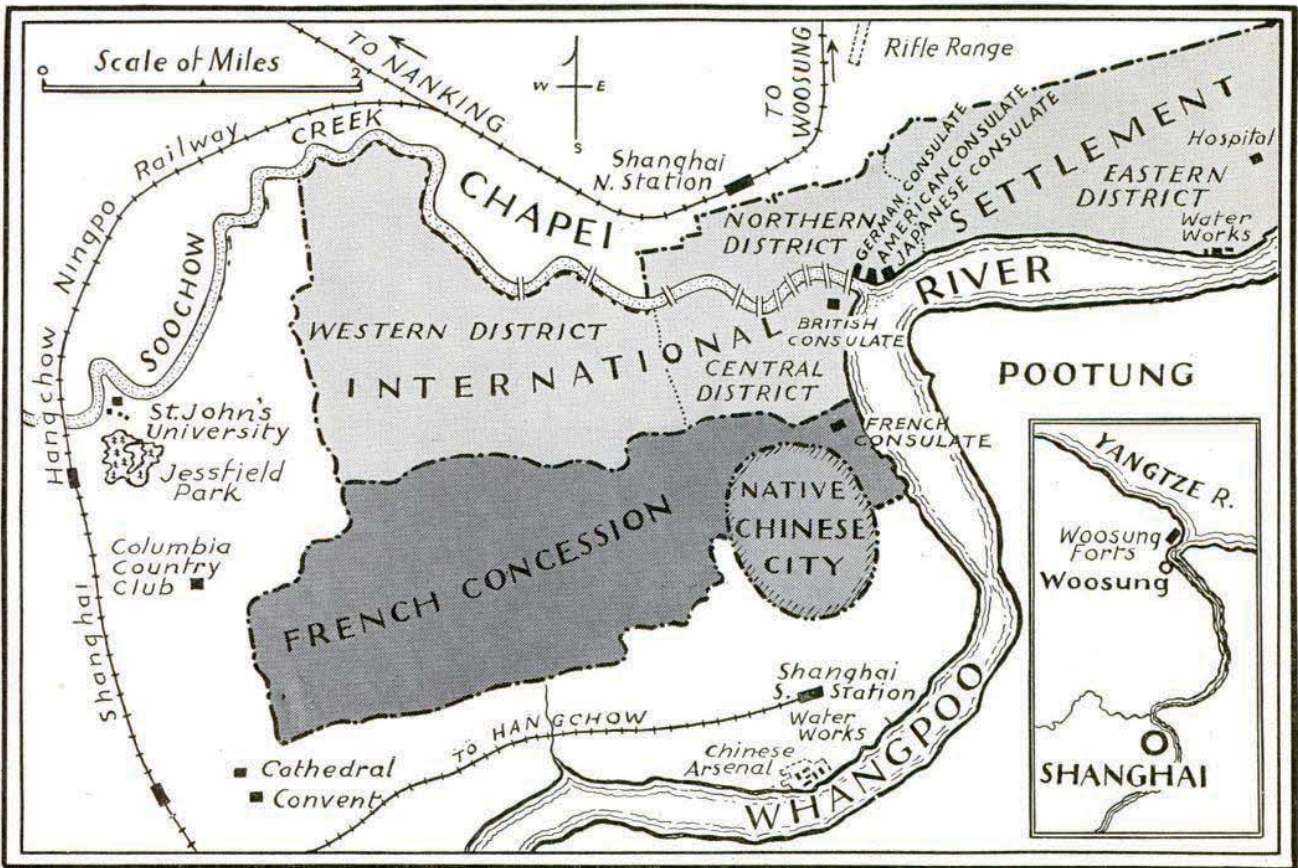
European Shanghai came into existence in 1842 upon the signing of the Treaty of Nanking. By its terms the Chinese government agreed to open five treaty ports to foreign trade. Shanghai was the northernmost of them all. Shanghai then was a small-walled Chinese fishing village on the bank of the Whangpoo river, the inhabitants of which owned several hundred sea-going junks. So in order that the foreigners, largely British in those early days, might have an area, outside

Chinese jurisdiction, where they could carry on their own affairs, the Chinese government set aside a tract of land to the north of this native city, with Soochow creek as its northern boundary. Here foreigners might lease land in perpetuity in return for an annual land tax, called "rent." There were already many Chinese owners on this land but they were not compelled to sell to the foreigners. Consequently this tract of land at first was like a checkerboard with British and Chinese holdings. Here the British built residences and business premises. Traders of other nationalities were allowed to lease land here also but they had to apply for it through the British Consul.

← French Concession →



Shanghai & Hong Kong Bank  
Customs House

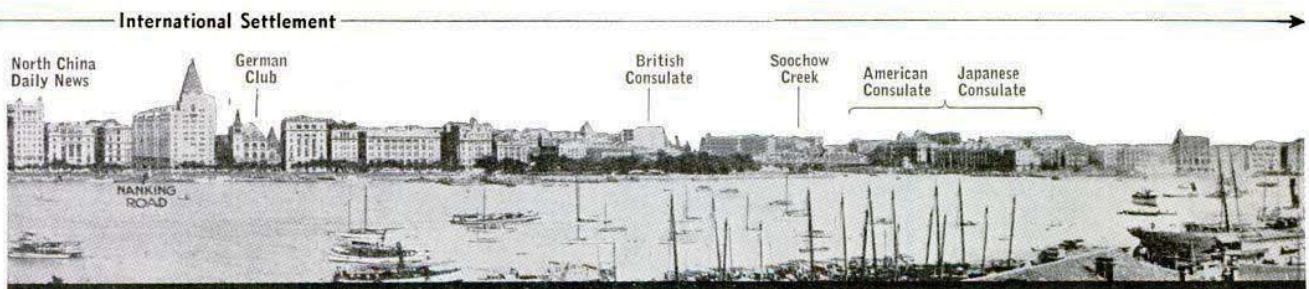


The little settlement on the soft delta land of the great Yangtze river did not thrive lustily at first. At the end of the first year (1844) there were but twenty-three foreign residences, eleven business firms, one consul, and two missionaries. Some six years later the French were allotted, on much the same terms, the land between the native city and the British settlement and in the late fifties a section of land north of the Sookchow creek was set aside for the Americans.

The United States, however, claimed the right for its nationals to acquire land through its own consul in any section opened to foreigners in China. The British finally agreed, and thus for all time was the international stamp set upon the settlement, for the other powers were not slow to claim the same rights. This was undoubtedly a wise decision, otherwise conflicting groups of rival foreign settlements would

have carried on side by side. The American allotment was then added to the International Settlement. The French, however, retained their allotted portion preferring to carry on independently, but they have always worked in very close harmony with the International Settlement.

Big, broad-minded Shanghai has grown into what Mr. Justice Feetham has aptly termed "An Island of Security." The Chinese first flocked there in great numbers during the Taiping Rebellion, a catastrophe that depopulated China by more than twenty million. Since then the city has always been open not only to the hundreds of thousands of Chinese who sought refuge there, but to foreigners as well. Shanghai was an example to all of a well-managed city with its efficient police protection, its opportunities for trade, and its sanitary living conditions. Every internal disturbance [Continued on page 41]



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in China since that time has added to its population. This of course introduced some perplexing problems which have continued to increase with the growth of the city.

Chinese business interests in Shanghai have reached huge proportions and the city finds itself the repository if not the guardian of an enormous amount of Chinese wealth. China in the past was never a "nation" in the present-day Western acceptance of that term but for centuries upon centuries was a collection of powerful family clans. In no country with a strong central power in control of all parts of its territory could a city such as international Shanghai ever have come into existence, but its phenomenal growth would indicate that there was a need for it. Among the non-Chinese residents are many who are foreigners in name only, having been born here in China.

Shanghai has, by treaty with China, complete autonomy. Its local government, however, was not provided by treaty but by local land regulations drawn up by the foreign residents. In the very early days of the Settlement there was the roads and jetties committee which through a gradual metamorphosis became the municipal council, the chief executive power in Shanghai, the head of which under the title of secretary of the municipality was for many years held by a distinguished Englishman, J. O. P. Bland. Today, the same position is called director general and is held by an American, S. Fessenden, a Rotarian, by the way. The municipal council is elected annually and is responsible to the rate-payers who are the land-owners or renters of property, paying an annual rental of over \$35. There are now five Chinese councillors, one less than the number of British. They are sincere, interested, and public spirited.

**T**HEN there are various efficient executive departments, answerable to the municipal council, such as the public works department that has created parks, recreation grounds, built many municipal buildings and 200 miles of paved streets and roads. In addition there is the advisory consular body (mentioned in the first paragraph) and the courts, both foreign, and the Shanghai "special court." As to foreigners, each nation has jurisdiction over its own nationals, oper-

ates its own court or gives its own consul this authority. The Shanghai special court in my husband's day and up to 1927, was known as the "mixed court." Three days a week as assessor he sat for several months on this tribunal, together with one Chinese magistrate and heard cases of Chinese offenders against the law. The other three days it was the duty of a British consular official.

The method of administration has been so wisely framed that there rarely has been the slightest conflict between nations, no attempt on the part of one to outdo another, nor in any way to take unfair advantage of a situation fraught with possibilities of dissatisfaction. In fact it seems to have acted just the reverse. It would appear to be a good working example of Rotary's Sixth Object.

Shanghai is one of the most cosmopolitan cities on the face of the earth. One could almost say without exaggeration that only the jungle dwellers lack some sort of representation there. Every language is spoken. There is a constant interchange of old world and new world thought and culture. It is not a melting pot but figuratively speaking the members of the various nations are loosely welded together while pulling for a common goal—the betterment of their municipality, burying their petty differ-

ences and, in the necessarily close intimacy, finding out the good qualities of each other which naturally leads to goodwill. Shanghai not only does this for the foreigners but for the Chinese residents for they (almost a million of them) come from nearly every province, often speaking such a different dialect that one group cannot understand the other, and thus the barriers are broken down among them as well.

**T**HE International Settlement covers 5,584 acres or nearly nine square miles and according to recent published statistics has a population of 1,007,868 of which 971,397 are Chinese. Although it is thought of as a foreign settlement, there are less than 40,000 foreigners residing there. Of these 18,478 are Japanese, 7,047 British, 4,000 Americans, 3,487 "white" Russians and the other 3,459 representing nationalities other than these. The number of British includes 1,177 British India subjects. The Japanese and American colonies have increased largely in numbers in the last few years. Now the 400 American business and professional firms there represent 50 per cent of American business interests in the whole of China. At the time of the debacle in Russia, "White" Russians flocked here in great numbers. In addition there is the adjoining French

*Traffic problems exist even in this busy corner of Shanghai's Chinese section where 'rikshas are still a favored means of transportation.*



Concession with a population of 348,076 of which 338,156 are Chinese, and 9,920 foreigners.

Shanghai has a very efficient police department under a former British army officer. Fifty or more foreigners are employed, 1,200 Chinese, and several hundred Sikhs, those black-bearded, imposing point officers with their carefully folded turbans who leave such an indelible impression on the minds of tourists. For the stability and security of the municipality, Shanghai maintains its own armed force; the highly efficient Shanghai Volunteer Corps with 2,000 in the rank and file, several British companies of infantry, one American, one Japanese, one Portuguese, and one Chinese, also a British and an American cavalry troop, a battery of field artillery, and a dozen armored cars.

Geographically, Shanghai is an almost perfect location for trade with a great market knocking at her door. It is not on the sea but thirteen miles up the Whangpoo river from its mouth at Wosung. The Whangpoo river connects Shanghai with the enormously rich Yangtze Kiang basin, forming the very heart of China proper, 600,000 square miles, and the home of 220,000,000 industrious Chinese people, half the population of China. The Chinese consider the Yangtze river par excellence. It forms the main artery of trade and commerce with Central China. The Yangtze, 3,400 miles in length, is navigable for 1,630 miles from the sea, and has a wonderful network of navigable streams radiating from it in all directions. This opens up regions where tea, rice, silk, and cotton abound, and manufacturing centers where silk and yarn are made, also porcelain, cotton cloth, oil, salt, india ink, steel, etc. In the last ten years the Yangtze Valley has absorbed 60 per cent of the foreign trade of the whole of China.

**T**HE mighty Yangtze brings down and deposits silt in the roadstead, requiring much dredging, but nevertheless there is a record of its having accommodated at one and the same time, 156 merchant vessels, and 22 warships. Ocean-going trade from across the Pacific as well as that coming from the west enter and clear this harbor at the rate of an aggregate annual tonnage from all countries of 34,583,369 (1928), thus making Shanghai the greatest port in the Far East and ranking fifth in the volume of business in the whole world. Besides this shipping trade, Shanghai is linked with North China by railway.

Shanghai is growing in commercial

importance with the years. She is fast becoming one of the big cotton markets of the world. Much important manufacturing is also done here. There are cotton mills, woolen mills, silk filatures, cigarette factories, rice mills, and over a hundred modern flour mills. Newspapers, magazines, and books are published here in great quantities. The first foreign newspaper in China was published in this city shortly after Shanghai was opened as a treaty port. Now eight English newspapers exist, not all dailies, however. Shanghai is an educational center with a vast array of schools, many of which are operated by missionary organizations. It is a city of clubs, many nationalities having their own, such as the British Club, American, French, Japanese, German, Swiss, Italian, Jewish, Parsee, etc. But the best known is the "Shanghai Club," largely British in membership, although all Westerners are eligible. It has the doubtful distinction of possessing the longest bar in the world and its pronouncements are said to be heard at Number 10 Downing St.

It was in the year 1905 that my husband and I were last in Shanghai, he, as consul-general and I, travelling with my parents, neither one of us then knowing of the existence of the other. Strange, the interweaving of the threads of Fate! We met on board ship, on the good old "Mongolia," on the sea journey between Shanghai and San Francisco. Just one year ago, almost to the day as I write this, my husband and I stood on the Bund, Shanghai's famous water-front boulevard and, lost in a maze of wonderment at the changes, the flight of the years became almost palpable. The growth of this city has taken place by leaps and bounds within the last two decades. At the time of my former visit it was a very busy city but primitive in many respects. Now it is a city with splendid buildings, with all the last-word equipment possessed by any great city. The Shanghai Club was the only building Jim recognized on the Bund.

As we worked eastward on our friendly mission of Rotary extension, we were constantly receiving letters from members of the Shanghai Rotary Club expressing interest in our coming visit. Several weeks before our actual arrival, we received a telegram in which a program of entertainment had been carefully thought out, providing for a week of activity along the most enjoyable lines. Our stay there was one of entire satisfaction. There were teas and receptions at which we were privileged to meet socially the Chinese Rotarians

and their wives and I was surprised to find so many of the ladies speaking English. Very charming they all were, and we were grateful to Rotary for giving us this opportunity. One little Chinese lady, exceptionally well educated in English, told me among other things of a bank here in Shanghai (the beautiful new building had been pointed out to me) that was run entirely by Chinese women for Chinese women, not a man in the place. That surely is an achievement of which any city might well be proud.

**T**HE Chinese Rotarians one night gave a dinner party in our honor at the very elegant home, European style, of one of their number. In the beautiful dining-room, we were seated at five round tables, nine to a table. Our little hostess was a very pretty Chinese woman, richly gowned in black and gold, and adorned with gorgeous jewels. The subject of jade came up at my table and one of the Chinese Rotarians asked her to show me her ring. It was the finest piece of jade I have ever seen, the very costly kind of a rich emerald color so favored by the Chinese themselves.

Our host was a collector of old Chinese painted fans, some of them many hundreds of years old. They were uniformly mounted in big books on white brocade and I could tell by the caressing way he handled them that this Chinese gentleman loved every one of them. The workmanship of many was exquisite. In the dressing-room of our hostess was a glass cabinet that fairly made me gasp, for it contained an array of the most expensive and delightfully attractive bottles of French perfume. My head grew dizzy trying to judge their worth when I thought of some of them, twelve or fifteen dollars an ounce.

I will now quote my husband. "It was a great pleasure to observe this fine Shanghai Rotary Club in action. Among its membership of 175, were many nationalities, including happily a considerable group of Chinese, the latter university men for the most part. In fact, for the year 1931-32 a brilliant and delightful Chinese, Dr. Fong Sec, is president. Most likeable are these Chinese men and enthusiastic over Rotary. Here, to my mind, Rotary is achieving its greatest usefulness. What greater service could it render than to bring together in close friendship men of different races and nationalities.

"And how anxious they were to profit by my visit! Meetings with the different officers, with the directors and even with

individuals were held, all desirous of learning of any defects I had observed, all possessed with the desire of having their club as near perfection as possible. I certainly enjoyed myself and I hope I was of some assistance to them. One of the objects of my visit was to induce the club to carry on extension work. Many of the older clubs (the Shanghai Club was organized in 1919) have been somewhat forgetful of this obligation. I was definitely promised that immediate efforts would be made and it was characteristic of the spirit of this club that, following my departure, they organized Hangchow and Canton, and had it not been for the disturbed conditions existing in Nanking, I am sure they would months ago have added this important city to their list. This now gives us in China the following clubs: Shanghai, Peiping, Tientsin, Hangchow, Canton, and one in the British city of Hong Kong."

The Cathay Hotel, where we stayed, an edifice that would embellish any city, stands on the corner where Shanghai's narrow and congested principal retail street, Nanking Road, meets the Bund. Throughout Asia, we met travellers whose advice was, "Save your money

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for carrying on the court work were not of the best. For instance, congress did not consider it necessary to provide funds for a proper jail at Shanghai though prisoners sometimes numbered two dozen or more. On one occasion a very efficient municipal policeman on street patrol, around ten o'clock one night, caught a man crawling over the consulate wall which gave access to the jail courtyard. Ascertaining that he was an American, the offender was brought promptly to the consulate the next morning for trial. At once he was recognized as one of the regular prisoners serving a long sentence.

He was evidently a very conscientious criminal for having discovered a method of getting out, he admitted that it was his custom each night, when all had quieted down, to leave his cell, climb the wall, and go down town for a little innocent amusement. When the hour came for all good men to retire, he always returned to the jail and was thus arrested while endeavoring to get back into the place where he believed he belonged, at least, for the period of his sentence.

until you get to Shanghai. You'll go crazy over the shops there." Well, we did. No woman can resist their allure. The men, of course, scowl at them or pretend to do so. Nanking Road is a strange mixture of East and West and sometimes the twain meet as in the three Chinese department stores. Bubbling Well Road used to be on the outskirts of town, the finest residential street. The residences are going farther afield and this is now the heart of the city. Here is Shanghai's Race course and recreation ground.

**M**OTOR cars are so plentiful in Shanghai today that you have to look lively to keep from being run down. It seems almost a matter of history that Jim, in 1904, had one of the first two automobiles that ever surprised the streets of Shanghai. At home we have a photograph of him taken in it in front of the Loonghwa Pagoda, his face stiff with pride. It was an open car, no doors, no windshield, and the tiny hood seemed almost beneath his feet. The tonneau was entered through a door in the rear and the effect is just as comical as a woman's hat of ancient vintage. Those were the days when cars were extremely

Another prisoner, serving a long sentence, with tears streaming down his face, begged my husband almost daily for a release from his cell and asked that some work around the place be given him for a few hours each day. Finally consent was given, and he was placed at work on the upper floor of the consulate, polishing the woodwork. A guard was stationed at the foot of the stairway to prevent his escape. A day or two later he broke jail, and it was two weeks before he was captured and returned by the municipal police.

**T**HERE was a particularly crowded courtroom that morning, including the usual press reporters. My husband with much dignity was presiding as usual. As the man was brought forward the municipal police officer displayed the objects found in the culprit's pockets. Jim at once recognized an old gold-plated watch of his. He inquired of the prisoner, with much sternness, where the latter had obtained this valuable. Quite promptly came the frank answer that on the day he was released from close confinement and given work, he had gone into my husband's bedroom and stolen the watch out of a suitcase but, he added quickly, with much disgust, "The watch is no good. I've taken it to nearly every Chinese pawnshop in Shanghai and couldn't raise even a dollar on it!"

temperamental if not so very artistic.

This one possessed a chain drive and the links were constantly breaking. At one time two Chinese mechanics were kept steadily at work filing out new links but at last the time came when a new chain was required. Jim wired a minute description of the model, date of manufacture, etc., to the makers, put up his car and waited. Six or more weeks went by, then the chain arrived but, alas, it was the wrong size! Another wire went forth with a most trying two months further wait. There was much happiness as my husband, accompanied by his Chinese driver, went to the small shed in which the car stood in all its proud beauty. Lying on his back, the Chinese sought to place the chain in position. Soon, out peaked his head with the sad news, "No can walkce." The enterprising (?) makers in the States had again sent out the same-sized chain. It was six aggravating months before the right size was obtained and then only through the coöperation of a tourist passing through Shanghai.

As my husband returned to scenes of his former residence, he recalled many interesting and amusing experiences. In the old days the facilities at the consulate

One can imagine the laugh that went over the courtroom regardless of the frantic effort with the gavel to control it. As other cases continued, a ripple of laughter would now and then start the audience off again into another wave of loud ha-has, much to the judge's chagrin. Just how many extra months Jim tacked on to the sentence of the prisoner in return for the frankness about the watch, I was never able to find out.

You, who are plebeian enough to love gravy, will be quite sympathetic with the attitude of some very tough negroes who were in jail awaiting trial for mutiny and attempted murder. The large cell in which they were confined adjoined the consul general's office, not a very pleasant arrangement in many respects. Many times a day my husband was obliged to pass it and rarely did he do so during the few weeks of their confinement that the much-enraged colored men did not rail vociferously at being served pork without gravy. The Chinese cook, they declared was selling the fat from the meat and giving them their meat dry. They would have their gravy or protest to Washington! Jim gave orders to the cook to use the fat for gravy, and, at the same time, warned him that the prisoners were a bad lot and might kill him if they got the chance.

The cook paid little attention either to the orders or the warning. He was expected to hand the food in through the bars but becoming careless and overconfident, unfortunately, one day he unlocked the cell door and entered with his tray. It was at the noon hour when the staff, with the exception of my husband, was at luncheon. There was a dull thud, the unmistakable sound of a felled body. Jim rushed out into the hall, observed the cell door open, and the cook on the floor, his life being literally kicked out of him by the enraged prisoners. Jim ran in and dragged the all-but-dead cook out and slammed the door before the prisoners were able to realize that they had been given a fine chance to escape. After that those representatives of the sunny south certainly received their gravy, in full measure and overflowing.