

SHANGHAI: AN EXPERIMENT IN INTERNATIONALISM

BY NATHANIEL PFEFFER

UNDER the Union Jack suspended from the high ceiling of the rather dingy meeting-room, the members of the Society of St. Andrew sat listening to their chairman read his report on the society's contributions to the British Aeroplane Fund. ". . . To do our part toward purging Europe of the menace of Prussianism," he was saying.

From the next room came the regular tramp of men marching, the thud of grounded arms and the harsh guttural of military commands. They were German soldiers drilling.

Yet there was no bursting of doors, no clamour, no attack; the Union Jack was not struck down. The chairman went on with his denunciation of the Hun, the soldiers rigidly goose-stepped. To each it was a commonplace not worthy of notice, an ordinary incident of wartime. For they were in the international city of Shanghai.

Shanghai is to-day a city of world consequence. It is interesting now for more than its commercial possibilities, its colour, variety and cosmopolitanism—a picturesque dot on the edge of an ancient empire where the loose ends of the earth tie up. To those with some thought for the organisation of the world that is being fashioned anew in the crucible into which the war has plunged it, it stands as the laboratory where the problems of internationalism, now a practical issue in world politics rather than a visionary's dream, are being worked out, if only on a small scale. What is being proposed for Constantinople, for the Near Eastern trade route, for some of the Mediterranean ports, for, ultimately, the world, has been in effect for some years in the unique experiment of the International Settlement of Shanghai. How practi-

cable is internationalism? How does it work out? How does it meet the test of war? Is it worth taking a survey of Shanghai?

Here is a city of ten thousand foreigners superimposed on, or rather within, an ancient Chinese city, inhabited by people of every nationality on earth and governed by all the Powers in concert and with co-equal authority. Here British, Germans, Americans, French, Austrians, Russians, Italians, Belgians, Scandinavians, Japanese, Hindus and various Mohammedan peoples have come to make their livings and establish their homes. It is cosmopolitan in the sense in which no other city is cosmopolitan. It is not predominantly French as is Paris, English as is London, American as is New York, Turkish as is Constantinople. Here neither race nor culture predominates.

It is a complex of all the civilisations and "kulturs." You can read newspapers in any language; you can send your children to a school where they will be taught their own language, literature and national interpretation of history; you can go to church and hear a sermon in your own tongue, whether it be Russian or Parsee. In the hotels and cafés three or four tongues can be picked from the buzz of conversation over the tables. The streets are vivid with the colours of the costumes of every people. It is an outpost to which each nation has sent its vanguard in the keen struggle for commercial and political supremacy in the world's richest market.

The internationalisation of Shanghai was worked out empirically rather than adopted by programme. It was developed slowly as the most logical way to deal with the problems that con-

fronted men of all nationalities transplanted in an ancient and backward civilisation; it arose out of as humble a need as that of passable roads and proper sewage. The first step came twelve years after the port had been opened to foreign trade by the Opium War of 1842, by which the British also obtained a grant of land just outside the wall of the native city. By 1850 the French had obtained a similar grant and the Americans had taken up, without a formal cession by the Chinese Government, a site adjoining the British and French concessions.

In 1854, when the need of more settled conditions of living had become pressing, a joint board was appointed by the three settlements to lay common drains and roadways and to assess taxes on the residents of the three settlements for their construction and maintenance. Then a joint code of regulations was adopted and a board of administration appointed for local matters. From this arrangement the French withdrew a few years later, setting up their own concession, which still stands independent of the International Settlement, though in important matters working in conjunction with it. Then in 1863 the American and British concessions were formally incorporated for municipal purposes with a single government. Into that government the other Powers have been admitted, and increased functions have been taken over, until now the ten square miles that make up the International Settlement constitute a completely independent community, internationally governed; and so efficiently governed that, in addition to its ten thousand foreigners, it has a population of four hundred thousand Chinese who have come there for increased security, greater comfort and better opportunities.

As it functions at present, Shanghai is in many respects a microcosm of the world internationalised and at any rate a working model for Constantinople or any of the other strategically situated cities whose domination by any one

Power is dangerous or provocative of friction. For that which affects it as a whole there is centralised control; for each of its integral parts independent control. No resident of the Settlement in any way forfeits his nationality. He merely merges it with that of his fellow residents in those matters of government which are better administered that way and in which nationality is more or less irrelevant. Thus, every resident is subject to the laws of his own country just as if he were at home; the law of every nation is operative over its citizens in Shanghai as if they were within its own borders. For example, the *China Press*, the American newspaper, is bound by one set of libel laws; the *North China Daily News*, the British organ, by another and more stringent set, often making a considerable difference in the way in which each presents the same news. That one man has duties and privileges that his neighbour has not merely adds to the flavour of life that is Shanghai's.

For the administration of its laws each nation maintains its own court, its own district attorney and its own jail. The smaller Powers maintain only consular courts, however. Litigation is conducted on the principle that operates in international law; that is, suits between citizens of different nationality are heard in the court of the defendant. For the Chinese there is a unique tribunal known as the Mixed Court—a court presided over by two magistrates sitting jointly, one foreign and one Chinese. The foreign magistrates, who are appointed by the Consular Body alternate in sitting. At present the British magistrates—or, as they are called there, assessors—sit Monday, Wednesday and Friday, the American assessors Tuesday and Thursday and the German Saturday. Assessors of other nationalities sit only when the interests of their nationals are involved. To this court are brought all Chinese offenders within the Settlement and civil suits between Chinese. Normally the two assessors sit with equal

authority; in actual practice the foreign assessor's decision prevails, for as yet the Chinese comprehension of modern principles of justice is still primitive.

The other purely national agencies are, of course, the consulates and the post-offices. Each country maintains its own post-office, managed by officials appointed from home and operated under domestic laws and domestic rates of postage exactly as in a city at home. It is interesting to note that one of the appropriations last year in what is known in the United States as the "pork barrel" bill was for a new post-office for Shanghai. But in this case the appropriation was justified, for the American postal agency there has been notoriously badly housed since it was first opened.

The other agencies of government are all international. Final authority is vested in the Consular Body, the organisation of the fourteen consuls, but the actual power is wielded by the Municipal Council, a body of nine men elected by the vote of all foreign residents with certain property qualifications. Because the British are not only most numerous but hold the greatest share of property they have a majority in the council. The present council is made up of six Britons, one American, one Russian and one Japanese. Before the war there was also one German, but he was defeated in the first election held after the war began.

The council has all the power of an American municipality with home rule. Under its jurisdiction are the harbour, customs, streets, roads, sanitation, water-works, electric light and power plant, licenses, taxation and so forth. Two checks however, operate on the council. First, there is the annual meeting of taxpayers, who meet to approve the budget and the apportionment of taxes. Second, any legislation passed by it of a general nature affecting the Settlement must be approved by the government of each nation. This is a contingency, however, which seldom arises.

The protection of the community is vested in a truly international military force and a police force, also international, though unofficially so. The Shanghai Volunteer Corps is made up of companies from each of the nationalities most numerous in the Settlement, with about one thousand troops in all. Each unit uses the uniform, weapons, manual and code of the army of its own country, but the officers are all appointed by the Municipal Council, which also makes the rules for the conduct of the Corps and from which the Corps takes its commands. This force has already on numerous occasions proved itself of great value in defending the Settlement in times of native uprisings, particularly in the revolutions of 1911 and 1913. And it is significant of the spirit of both the Corps and the Settlement that three months after the outbreak of the war the English, German and Austrian companies took part side by side in the annual sham battle and manoeuvres. But that, it may be said, was before the sinking of the *Lusitania*. Immediately after that tragedy it might have been inadvisable.

The police force is appointed and directed by the council. The majority are Chinese and Sikhs from northern India, but there are about five hundred foreigners, of whom the larger part are Scottish and Irish and the remainder of all nationalities. For the complicated problem of maintaining order in a city of four hundred thousand Chinese unused to Occidental ideas of order the police force is an effective and efficient body. And at no time, even since the war, has either the Volunteer Corps or the police force been used for any other purpose than the protection of the community as a whole; never has either been used in the interests of any one nationality.

The test of internationalism will always be, of course, its resistance in time of war. That test Shanghai has met. Its existence as an international community after two and a half years of war, into which almost all the rest of

the world has been swept, is *ipso facto* proof that it has met it. But it has not only retained its international character; it has also retained its neutrality. In spite of the large preponderance, in numbers and influence, of the subjects of the Entente Allies; in spite of the undisputed use of the city by the Germans as the headquarters for their propaganda for inciting insurrection in the Orient; in spite of much bitterness and high feeling and an unbroken succession of crises and dramatic incidents—life in the International Settlement has been at the tautest stretch of tension since August, 1914—in spite of all that, the Settlement has been officially neutral exactly as have New York, Madrid and Amsterdam.

The Municipal Council, though controlled by representatives of allied nations, has legislated only as the agent of a neutral community. In the harbour the laws of neutrality have been strictly enforced. German and Austrian vessels have been given the shelter of internment and their crews permitted to live on shore. Germans and Austrians have been allowed to come and go within their full legal rights. The British Enemy Trading Act, which since the spring of 1915 has forbidden trade of any kind between British subjects and those of hostile nations, has been enforced only within its rights, and the trade black-list applied only as it has been in other countries. German and Austrian commerce in China, it is true, has been completely paralysed, but that has been as the natural consequence of the blockade rather than of local restrictions. But their rights and privileges as citizens and taxpayers of the local government—the use of transportation facilities, light, power, water, even for commercial purposes—they have been accorded in the same measure as those of other nationalities.

Some infractions there have been undoubtedly but they have been almost entirely in personal relationships. Germans and Austrians have been expelled from the clubs, discharged from their employment in allied firms and virtually barred from social activities. A great deal of bitterness has been engendered, bitterness that will spoil for a generation the zest of the cosmopolitan social life that made Shanghai the "Paris of the East." But beyond that, with but a few minor exceptions, the infractions have not gone, although there have been opportunities and temptations in plenty. At least one of the escaped officers of the *Emden* was known to have made his way to Shanghai and taken shelter in the German club, but he was allowed to continue his journey, presumably to rejoin his country's forces. And in the "Medicine for India" case, when Chinese coolies were caught smuggling arms and ammunition out of the country to India at the instructions of Teutonic agents, although the name of the prominent Austrian business man who had given those instructions and supplied the arms was publicly known, he was not molested and is now living there, possibly still sending arms to India in the guise of medicine.

Possibly we may not be justified in drawing too sweeping conclusions from the results of international government in Shanghai; perhaps the stakes have not been so big in China as in the Balkans and Africa. But this much can be said: it has at least proved that nationalism is not the last word in the organisation of the world, and that some sort of federation, if only for the sore and sensitive spots of the earth, is not entirely visionary. What has been successful in a city on the Chinese coast at least deserves trying on the shores of the Bosphorus—and eventually, perhaps, on the shores of the Seven Seas.

THE BRIDGE

BY ETHEL WENDELL TROUT

OVER the rushing, busy stream
I stretch my mighty span,
Touching the heart of the city's mart,
With its turmoil and struggle and pain and smart,
Which have been since the world began;
Watching the lives that go over, under,
Lives that are full of joy and wonder,
Lives that have been one mighty blunder,
Comedy, tragedy, dream.

Day after day, and year after year,
I stretch my mighty span;
Guessing the goal of each brain and soul,
Guessing how each man has paid life's toll,
What of it all is the plan;
Watching the life that goes under, over,
Fussy small tug or deep-sea rover,
Pomp and vanity, riches and pride,
Grief and poverty, side by side,
Vision and smile and tear.

God knows the plan he has made for man,
And all are working his purpose out,
But I stretch my span, and the passers scan,
And wonder what it is all about.