

THE RAIFFEISEN AGRICULTURAL BANKS

A recent issue of the Government's Consular and Trade Reports describes the working of the Raiffeisen agricultural banks. Friedrich Wilhelm Raiffeisen was born in 1818. During his incumbency as Mayor in two country towns in Germany he noted the oppression of agriculturists by usurers. He determined to relieve farmers from this infliction. He established a farmers' co-operative banking organization. It is now in successful operation in hundreds of German and Dutch villages. The two basic principles are that each institution shall work for one particular community only, and that the bank shall not consider its own profit but only the benefit to the borrower. Thus there is removed the danger of a possible non-acquaintance with particular circumstances, as the sphere of operation is small, and also the temptation to take undue advantage of an applicant's difficulties. A definite rate of interest is charged on all loans. With the exception of a salary to the cashier, the banks are managed free of charge. The directors and managers are well-known villagers who keep informed as to the integrity of borrowers and who are willing to place their business knowledge at their fellow-citizens' disposal. Another essential feature is the indivisible fund, representing the total accumulation of all profits. When the sum reaches too high a figure, a general meeting of the bank's members decides how the excessive income shall be spent, either in raising the percentage paid to depositors or in acquiring objects and works essential to the members' welfare. The members are any persons enjoying a good reputation with legal residence in the community or its immediate neighborhood. Each village bank must become a stockholder in a central bank. The Dutch central bank is appropriately at the centrally located city of Utrecht. The Utrecht bank works like a clearing-house. All surplus funds of the local banks are deposited there, and advances are made to village banks. These banks are also inspected and controlled by the central bank. The Dutch Government grants an annual subsidy to the central bank on condition that an official accountant appointed by the

Minister of Agriculture supervises the administration. Of the village banks connected with the central bank at Utrecht, not one has thus far suffered any loss. The Raiffeisen plan, it is evident, contains an idea worthy of transplanting to this country and to its Territorial possessions.



THE SHANGHAI INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE

Two endeavors for the better understanding of the Chinese by foreigners and of foreigners by the Chinese deserve chronicling. Both are educational and are leading to more intelligent and kindly mutual intercourse between Chinese and foreigners. The Chinese Government is not unmindful of the desirability, and even necessity, of foreign help and suggestion, and is seeking, wherever profitable, the "useful learning" of the West. But let no one think that the Chinese are not showing individual independence and energy. The anti-opium edicts are a proof of this, and the result is evident in a greater moral fiber among the men. Moreover, the anti-foot-binding movement has already relieved crippled women and enabled them better to care for their children. Thus, in order to help China, foreigners, in addition to a consciousness of the worth of their own civilization, must appreciate whatever present progress China is making and whatever excellence Chinese history discloses. In other words, any patronizing attitude by otherwise benevolent foreigners will defeat their own ends. Among the first to adopt an "equal terms policy" was the Rev. Dr. Gilbert Reid, an American who has long enjoyed an intimate acquaintance with Chinese of education all over the Empire. It led to the formation, years ago, of the International Institute at Shanghai, a joint stock company. Its members are Chinese and persons of other nationalities. As expressed on its seal, the Institute's ideals are Truth and Harmony. The irresponsible, deplorable, and often mendacious newspaper reports concerning both Chinese and Americans daily emanating from Shanghai in particular show the desirability of having at that place some counter-irritant, establishing truth instead of falsehood. As to harmony, the Institute's practical purpose is,

whenever possible, to harmonize the differences which, under existing circumstances, arise between the Chinese on the one hand and three classes of foreigners on the other, namely, the merchants, the missionaries, and the educators. The Institute affords, especially to Americans, an invaluable opportunity to influence, first, the present-day native leaders, and, second, the large body of students in the Government schools. The former is possible by reason of Dr. Reid's wide personal acquaintance, the latter because of the Institute's intimate relations with the Imperial Board of Education and with the Commissioner of Education in each province. Influence is conveyed by books, pamphlets, a monthly paper, lectures, conferences, conversations, receptions, public gatherings, classes for study and research, and by university extension. Though Dr. Reid, a foreigner, directs the movement, the Institute has from the first received much encouragement from the Chinese, whether from the Imperial Government at Peking, the provincial authorities, the local gentry, or the merchants. Native sympathy with the movement is further indicated by the fact that no less than two-thirds of the hundred thousand dollars so far expended by the Institute has come from the Chinese. They are now watching to see how much practical encouragement America will give to the work. Certainly, wherever the cry of "China for the Chinese" proceeds from bigotry it must be met by a manifestation, such as Dr. Reid's, of intelligent friendliness, if the cry is not to lead to an anti-foreign crusade. To check it, foreigners need not only to help China educationally, they need to check their own too often contemptuous attitude towards the Chinese, an attitude largely due to the lack of just such a means as the Shanghai International Institute affords for the cultivation of mutually sympathetic appreciation.



THE CANTON CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

The second educational endeavor to which we would call attention is the Canton Christian College. If Shanghai is the commercial metropolis of North China, Canton is of the South. It is situated on the Pearl River, ninety

miles from the British island of Hong-kong, and is the nearest Chinese city to American territory in the Philippines. It has a population of over two millions, and is the capital of two provinces; their population is about forty millions. The natives of these provinces are notably enterprising. Cantonese shops are found throughout the Empire and the Cantonese have scattered themselves not only over China but all over the world. With the exception of certain students, all the Chinese in America come from the two Cantonese provinces. It is in the Cantonese heart that the injustice and indignities of the interpretation of our immigrant laws rankle. It is the Cantonese who started the recent boycott of American goods in China. It will be the Cantonese more than any other Chinaman whose friendship or enmity will work good or evil to our relations with China. It is fortunate, then, that the Canton Christian College should be no school devoted to a narrow religious training, but a university adapted to China's peculiar needs. The College is located on a fifty-acre river site near the city. The broad spirit of this educational endeavor has appealed to the Chinese, and they have contributed many thousand dollars to the erection of the present buildings. It is now proposed to build on the College grounds a memorial to that great friend of China, the late John Hay, Secretary of State, whose diplomatic skill secured a world declaration in favor of the integrity of the Chinese Empire and the "open door" in trade there. Certainly the erection in China of a suitable memorial to Mr. Hay should deeply and permanently impress the Chinese people. The influence of the Canton College has been evident not only mentally but physically. As the College authorities have noted, nothing marks the spirit of New China more distinctly than the turning of the students to athletics. When the College was established, it was considered undignified for a student to take any exercise more violent than a slow walk; long finger-nails were fashionable and ill health common. Football and baseball were first played in China by boys in long coats. The pre-eminence of the Canton College in athletics has been evident ever since 1906, when the first track meet ever held