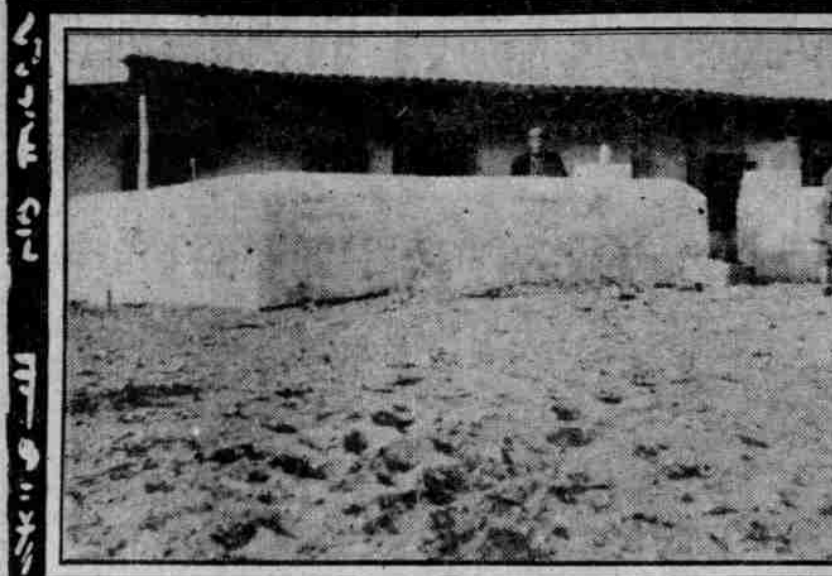


NEW THINGS TO EAT FROM CHINA



TYPICAL NORTH CHINA INN VISITED BY MR. MEYER



MR. MEYER IN NORTH CHINA.

Plant Wonders to Be Introduced Throughout United States by the Government.

Giant Persimmon, Paper-Shell Walnut, Edible Bamboo, Quince-Pear and Juiube.



GIANT RADISHES



BUYING EDIBLE BAMBOO SHOOTS

BY JOHN McFRETHER WATKINS.

HERE is a great project: The plant wonders of north China are to be introduced throughout the United States. This land of ours is to be adorned by dwarf trees; is to bristle with bamboos—big and little, and edible; is to yield the giant persimmon, the papershell walnut, the sweet apricot kernel, the quince-pear; is to be perfumed by the blossom of the wild apricot, the wild peach, the wild plum; is—in short—to enjoy the most sacred of those botanical treasures at which all travelers in the kingdom of quines have marveled these centuries past, but which the proud mandarins have hitherto hoarded closely unto themselves—which they have been especially leath to share with the white foreign devils.

I have the odd story from that well-known botanist and explorer, David Grandson Fairchild, who has himself scoured the most inaccessible corners of the earth—from Far Cathay to the islands of the South seas—in search of plant novelties. On his return from a four-year trip around the world he was entrusted by Secretary Wilson with the organization of a grand scheme for introducing into our soil all foreign species of the vegetable kingdom which we lack and need. In developing the latest phase of this work, Mr. Fairchild spread before him charts showing the topography, the meteorological conditions and the life zones of China and of the United States. Then upon a map of our country he washed in, with water color, our areas wherein the plants of north China would be climatically at home. The result was that he thus covered practically the whole of our vast domain. Here was a great, varied expanse somewhere within which was bound to thrive each of the plant wonders of the north Celestial empire—that region which, of all great continental expanses, is the least known agriculturally; yet which not excepting even Europe—most closely approaches our own territory climatically.

Lands in a Typhoon.

So it was determined to send an American expedition to this region. But where was there to be found an explorer of sufficient spirit and skill to make it? Many regions of this vast expanse had never seen the white face of a Caucasian. After some difficulty, Mr. Fairchild tells me, he discovered the most promising—a young Hollander, Frank N. Meyer, who had but lately arrived in America. Mr. Fairchild told him to pack up, pull out for San Francisco and hurry over to Peking—and Meyer stood not upon the order of his going. I have been permitted to take elaborate notes from the hundreds of pages of reports published in letters which have been received from him to date. That his story is not a very dull one you will directly agree with me.

A Terribly Strange Bed.

A terrible typhoon greeted him on the day of his landing at Shanghai. Besides doing millions of dollars' worth of damage in that city, this convulsion of nature ruined part of the young explorer's equipment. He arranged to depart directly for Tientsin, but was obliged to wait several days because all railway tickets had been sold out. At Tientsin he found that guests at the inns were required to supply their own mattresses; but, being unable to find one, he spread his thin blanket upon the hard brick bedstead with which the Chinese innkeeper always turns his rooms. Mr. Meyer soon found that he was not alone in this terribly strange bed. Although misery usually loves company, he preferred to spread his blanket upon the dirt floor, and there to seek repose far from the

maddening throng. In the morning his eye opened upon a poisonous centipede gazing hungrily down upon him from the wall. Complaining of this to his native guide, he received the consolation that the latter had shared his chamber with a big scorpion, which was far more deadly. During the remaining nights spent here he slept with one eye open and with his electric flashlight close beside him.

These inns, his guide informed him, are abandoned when 10 years old, because no guest will have the myriads of insects great and small which by that time have congregated within their walls. His second day in Tientsin he discovered in the garden of a wealthy Chinese some specimens of a hardy bamboo, which will be introduced as far north as possible in the United States, as well as a perfectly hardy and quite seedless persimmon which he found in the markets.

On hotel tables at Tientsin he found delicious yellow fruit which appeared to be a cross between the quince and pear, and he walked 30 miles one day in a vain search for the trees. While seeking plant novelties in the suburbs of Peking he was taken ill with fever, but quickly recovered and was soon off to the mountains upon another quest for the mysterious "quince-pears." Not finding many of these, he turned his attention to some new apricots, early peaches and other fruits.

Persimmons Bigger Than Apples.

A giant seedless persimmon larger than the ordinary apple was a rich find made in the mountains. It is four inches in diameter, and has the form of a big orange. Mr. Fairchild has discovered an Oriental process of removing the tannin which gives persimmons their astringency and the discovery will make this introduction of even greater value. This is done after the fruit is picked hard and before it is softened. He tells me that this delicious fruit will doubtless flourish in our country as far north as New England and possibly the northern great plains region, where the Japanese persimmon will not grow. Cuttings sent over by Mr. Meyer are already growing in Pennsylvania, South Carolina and Florida. In these same mountains the explorer obtained the Chinese pistache, which not only bears nuts, but affords an ornamental shade tree. It will be tested as a hardy stock on which to grow further north in this country the pistachio of commerce, now growing in California.

Paper Shell Walnuts.

An apricot whose sweet kernels are eaten like almonds was another find made in these "northern hills" of the celestial empire. Leaving this region Mr. Meyer next explored Chang-chi 300 miles and discovered a most interesting paper-shelled walnut—the shells so thin that the meat can be seen through them. Attempts may be made to hybridize this novelty with our luck-shelled black walnuts.

Mr. Meyer was the first white man ever seen in some of these regions of Chang-chi, where he discovered some delicious new grapes, like the muscatel; also more seedless persimmons, a large flat peach, and a big fruited thorn, which the Chinese use in preserve-making.

A bad sandstorm caught the explorer up in Mongolia, whether he next journeyed to the westward and secured some cogged with sand that his mules could not pull the cumbersome vehicle, and after a four-hour battle with this blinding tempest he nearly fell exhausted. Groping his way to the nearest inn, he found upon its walls warnings left by European guests as to the nature and numbers of the insect life which might be depended upon at this primitive hostelry. Taking heed, the explorer placed three feet tables together in the middle of the floor, and upon this improvised couch managed to sleep unmolested.

But the next day, when the pig-tailed landlord boasted of his fine accommodations and pointed to the writing on the walls as testimonials, the explorer explained to his host the true portend of these inscriptions. The celestial boniface first waxed very wrath, but when convinced, replied that it was "too cold for them to bite." "For most of the inn along the road I have nothing but contempt," writes Mr. Meyer. "If there was a fire in a room the insects were simply omnipresent, and if there was no fire one shivered from the cold, for the wind blew at a high rate through the holes in the paper windows." In this trying condition he obtained cuttings of a new white grape and discovered how the Mongolians bury their grape vines to protect them from the cold, sand-laden storms of their severe winters. A white apricot, a juicy wild pear, and a large-leaved oak which the autumn turns to a gorgeous scarlet, were other novelties found up here in Mongolia, also a hardy wild persimmon which should flourish in New England and the peach regions of Michigan.

One Way to Keep Warm.

While returning to Tientsin by way of Chang-chi in search of some interesting edible hawthorns and other new things to eat, Mr. Meyer continued to shiver at the deplorable country inns. The public bedrooms, such as were generally occupied by 20 or 30 men, the landings, which were heated by a fire kept burning under the brick beds, but a private room, such as Mr. Meyer always demanded, was not provided with such a means of heat, unless he endured the stifling smoke for a whole day, the time required to generate a comfortable temperature. "When I eat in such a place," he says, "I sit on blankets and have an overcoat and sheepskin on, so as to keep warm, for the paper windows are in a pitiful state of repair."

A short grass which never grows now and which thrives and keeps green after long droughts was next found by Mr. Meyer. It will be tested for lawn purposes in our arid regions. On a trip to the Western Mountains, which he next undertook, he obtained a pistache tree—a fine new shade tree for our mid-wintered regions.

In these mountains he at last got cuttings of the delicious quince-pear, hitherto sought in vain, and which may afford us an entirely new species of home-grown fruit. Arriving at Shan Hai Kwan on this journey, he dressed the wounds of a foreigner who had just been beaten and robbed by a Chinese mob. On his way thence to Chang-chi he was refused entrance to an inn because the presence of a "foreign devil" was obnoxious to some Chinese officers quartered there. After sleeping in a temple on the hills he proceeded on donkey-back over steep and dangerous passes. Once after throwing him to the ground his steed fell on top of him, but he says, "having a heavy coat on, none of my ribs was broken." Up in these mountains, where the apricot and peach grow wild, he was followed 12 miles by a curious crowd of eight men and boys.

"One feels like a monkey in a zoo, studied by a crowd of provincials," is his comment on the interest which the people thus manifest in him as he travels

From this region he sent cuttings of the wild mountain peaches, and apricots, which will afford us a beautiful flowering shrub. Further north he obtained a lot of "cherry-bud sticks," which the natives bud and graft upon wild peach stock and which may be esteemed by Americans because they will fruit earlier than our common cherries. Proceeding next to Shanghai, he found no sleeping or eating accommodations on the train, where every passenger carried his own bedding and provisions.

Attacked at Hankow.

He was attacked by vandals during an evening stroll through the native quarter of Hankow, where he stopped en route. While some of the ruffians were beating him with their fists, others were thrusting their hands into his pockets, and at the same time all raised a terrible howl, which immediately drew from the neighboring houses and shops a great crowd which yelled and sneered. Affecting to regard these demonstrations as an ovation, he doffed his hat, bowed in all directions and backed out of the main street while his tormentors stood rooted to the earth in silent wonderment and amazement. Passing on to Shanghai, by boat, he there obtained cuttings of a rare white loquat, a new pomelo, an evergreen chestnut, and a tart fruit, which seems to be a cross between the bitter orange and tangerine, and which Mr. Meyer suggests as a new fruit for our breakfast tables. After some difficulty in obtaining guides willing to share the hardships of Manchuria with him, he now proceeded up to that northern region.

Land of Brigands and Wolves.

Powerful bands of robbers who leveled blackmail on passers-by were in possession of this territory, which he now traversed. One town, where he stopped with a missionary, had lately been besieged by these brigands for three days. Delayed by dust storms on mountains where beautiful peonies and great snowhalls grow wild; stopping at filthy, vermin-infested inns; craving clean water, which he nowhere found; victimized by his coolies, who pilfered his food, and deserted by guides who had demanded pay in advance, the explorer had a strenuous time in these Manchurian wilds. Amid the growling of wolves in the entanglements of underbrush he traveled in the wake of a wanderer whom the dreaded Heng-Lai-shan brigands, whom he had just murdered a few days before, further ahead on the trail. But he went on, undaunted until below Lianyung he met a "Thousand Peaks," which he describes as a "gigantic saw marked in blue silhouette against the sky." These are the most densely wooded mountains of the world.

With two Chinese mule carts he next crossed from Lianyung to Antung, a ten days' trip over mountains and through valleys, the people of the small villages en route collecting at the inns "to see the foreign beast who had just arrived." After he had reached Northern Corea one of his horses fell "head over tail" down a precipice and a box of provisions was precipitated into the Yalu, 200 feet below. "In less than no time I was in the water," he reports, "and with a few strokes of swimming it was in safety." In these Corean mountains, whose slopes were sometimes covered by beautiful scarlet lilies, he saw giant apricot trees, sometimes ten feet in circumference, and he obtained seed of a red blackberry, besides

many other novel plants. He next spent eight days in a junk on the Yalu, the food abominable and the other conditions so insupportable that he contracted fever. His next journey was to Vladivostok, where "the Chinese guide deserted him, and he was attacked by Inman through a region filled with tigers, wild boars, bears and wolves, and where 180 people had been murdered by outlaws in the ten previous months.

Bloody Duel in the Night.

But the most thrilling incident of his entire trip occurred after he had reached Habarovsk, Siberia, where he was attacked by three desperadoes while he was returning from a restaurant, at 8 o'clock at night. "All at once," he says, "I heard some rustling behind me and immediately a piece of cloth was drawn round my throat. They got me down on the ground and I received a few heavy blows on my head, but they did not stain me. I returned the blows in the faces of the two attackers (the third

kept watch) and at an opportune moment I drew my large dagger and plunged it into the stomach of the leader, on which he uttered a cry and immediately the vagabonds cleared off." The next morning the frozen corpse of a well-dressed man, evidently another victim of the trio, was found 200 feet from the same spot.

During the past few months this strenuous young man, who cannot find guides able to keep up with his pace, has been interested, primarily, in obtaining for us cuttings of the wonderful edible and timber bamboo of North China. The shoots of certain Chinese bamboos afford a new food which, Mr. Fairchild tells me, we should seriously consider in this country, where they can be grown in the South and marketed in the North. They taste somewhat like celery roots, but are much more palatable, and are of enjoyable crispness. They are one of the high-class vegetables of China, where they are a prime favorite among American tourists. They are generally served in a sort of stew.

In fact, he has gotten cuttings from hundreds of bamboo which will be useful to us—some as stakes for vines or orange trees, others as ornamental landscape screens, others as temporary irrigation pipes—these latter saving the expense of making troughs or buying drain tiles and iron piping. Some of these bamboo obtained in China will, Mr. Fairchild hopes, grow here as far north as Philadelphia.

GIANT RADISHES, some 18 inches in diameter, which may be grown in this country, as a better stock fodder than turnips, are among the other hundreds of novelties which Mr. Meyer has sent over. The Chinese juiube is still another of these interesting importations. Of these plum-like fruits the Orientals have as many varieties as we have plums and prunes. One form just sent over is three inches long, another is flat and still another is seedless. Then there are scores of species of grains and grasses and garden vegetables and fruit flowers and trees—some tiny dwarfs which are no higher than your knee when 20 years old.

Washington, D. C.

BEAUTIFUL ORNAMENTS FOR THE HAIR

THE somewhat ornate character of the up-to-date coiffure has not only brought about an amazing demand for false hair but has stimulated the interest in hair ornaments as well. Not in many years have so many beautiful combs been sold, for the soft mass of puffs now poised more or less deftly upon almost every woman's head offers opportunity for the becoming adjustment of large or odd combs which would have been hopelessly unadaptable in connection with earlier coiffure fads.

The best of paste is durable, with proper care, and almost as brilliant as the diamond, though the secret of its brilliancy lies in the setting rather than in the stone itself. Designers have planned for the high-class comb settings as dainty and artistic as though they were to be devoted to real diamonds, and the results are altogether charming.

The new wave art combs and craftsmen's combs set in semi-precious stones must also be taken into account, and some of these are eminently artistic and beautiful, but while the paste combs are in order with any evening dress the combs in shell and cabochon stones with gold or silver mountings demand judgment in the wearer and must harmonize with frocks and hair colorings, as well as with the coiffure lines.

Moreover combs of this sort have been so quickly imitated in the cheapest and most tawdry of materials that unless the comb of real shell and gemstones is particularly original and beautiful it is likely to be misjudged. There are some wonderfully lovely things in this style of comb, however, and in combs of enamel and jewels, too, the famous jewel workers like Laligues have given great thought and effort to the producing of combs of the world.

Some excellent designs in real shell combs have followed as successfully as might be in their footsteps.

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over so much of the head an ornament of combs and pins the effect is lamentable. The barrette is used when necessary, but eliminated if possible; the slide combs do not show, and the large comb is set against the puffs instead of below the massed hair, after the old fashion.

Often there is no comb at all, handsomely or paste comb, but if she does not sport a tiara the chances are that she uses no jeweled or shell ornaments save the ordinary pins.

She has said "avaunt!" to the unnatural marble wave, too. Possibly irons are still used upon her hair, but they must produce only the loohest, largest, most unaggressive and natural of waves, and the women who visited Paris last Summer and Fall have been distressing the souls of their New York hairdressers by vehement protests against waving as it is generally known here.

Then, too, the Parisian, while she puffs her hair out extravagantly and pins it up to her hat, in the effort to fill in the angles of the capucine clipper, does not understand the pompadour as it is once more being travestied here. Her hair must be drawn back loosely, softly, with no suggestion of a roll or other support.

The support may be there, but anything like the smooth, hard roll seen on so many American women is a caricature of the mode. The front pompadour need not be very high. The hair is drawn back softly, usually dropped a little sideways over the brows, and is massed there, not in a puff or curl, but in a soft, abundant and obviously artificial size as one frequently sees, but in a cleverly adjusted arrangement of loops and puffs and curls, which softens every sharp angle of the head without introducing any amazing new ones.

The dressing when done, while increasing greatly the size of the head, does not really follow and indicate the shape of the head itself, and for that reason is a thing prettier and more generally becoming than any of the old modes, such as the chignon or the much abused Psyche knot which made head and hair depart at a tangent from each other.

Of course all this applies to the conservative Parisian coiffure. There are exaggerations there as here, but it is seldom that the elegant "mondaine" goes in for the spectacular extravagance of hairdressing.

One of the prettiest and most popular of evening hair ornaments at present is the ribbon or mood drawn around the head in and out among the soft locks and puffs and finishing at the left front with

a knot of ribbon, a little cluster of flowers, a jeweled ornament or some form of sweeping feather ornament.

On the whole, the cluster of flowers—a camellia, with its glossy dark green foliage, a rose spray, or some other effective blossom—is the thing most in harmony with the suggestion of simplicity of the ribbon arrangement, and a more charming coiffure than this of loosely waved and puffed locks, interwoven velvet ribbon and flowers we have not had in many years.

The chief rival of this sort of hair ornamentation in Paris is the more audacious coiffure pinned or crept at large and full egret poised at the left front and sweeping away somewhat to the side. The spray used in this fashion has a certain grace, but the big egret, even at its softest and fluffiest, does suggest a feather duster thrust sideways into the coiffure. In London both spray and egret have been practically banished from fashionable hats and hair as a result of Queen Alexandra's intense antagonism to the wearing of these feathers, and it seems a pity that there is not some autocratic and humane leader of fashion who can do as much for Paris or New York.

The hair wreath and the spray of artificial flowers or foliage is still in evidence, and much is done with such ornaments all in gold or silver. With the puff coiffure on the crown of the head the Spanish side ornaments of flowers are, of course, impracticable, but in this day of eclecticism in fashion many women wear their hair as best suits their heads instead of conforming to set rules, and where the hair is low a spray of flowers back of the ear is liked.

Handsome knots, bows, etc., in velvet beautifully embroidered in seal pearls, tiny brilliant, gold, silver, crystal, etc. are worn to harmonize with evening costumes.

The Real Folks.

Washington (D. C.) Star.

Folks that likes you—them's the kind. Worth a journey long to find. Can't let 'em get away from you. To be standin' up in line. Where the chosen congregate. In the courts of the great. Yet tame, somehow, doesn't seem To bring mutual esteem.

I'll admit it must be good. For to have it understood. That you're one of the select. Few considered quite correct. Hair people near an' far. Bowin' low an' sayin' "hi." Must be mighty soothing, all. "Dustier hair, Joe," "Howdy, Bill!"

Folks that whispers in your ear. Compliments that ain't sincere. Folks that use 'er fur a day. Then let 'em laugh an' turn away. How we strive their praise to win. Only to return again. To the folks that ain't true. Folks that likes you 'cause they do.