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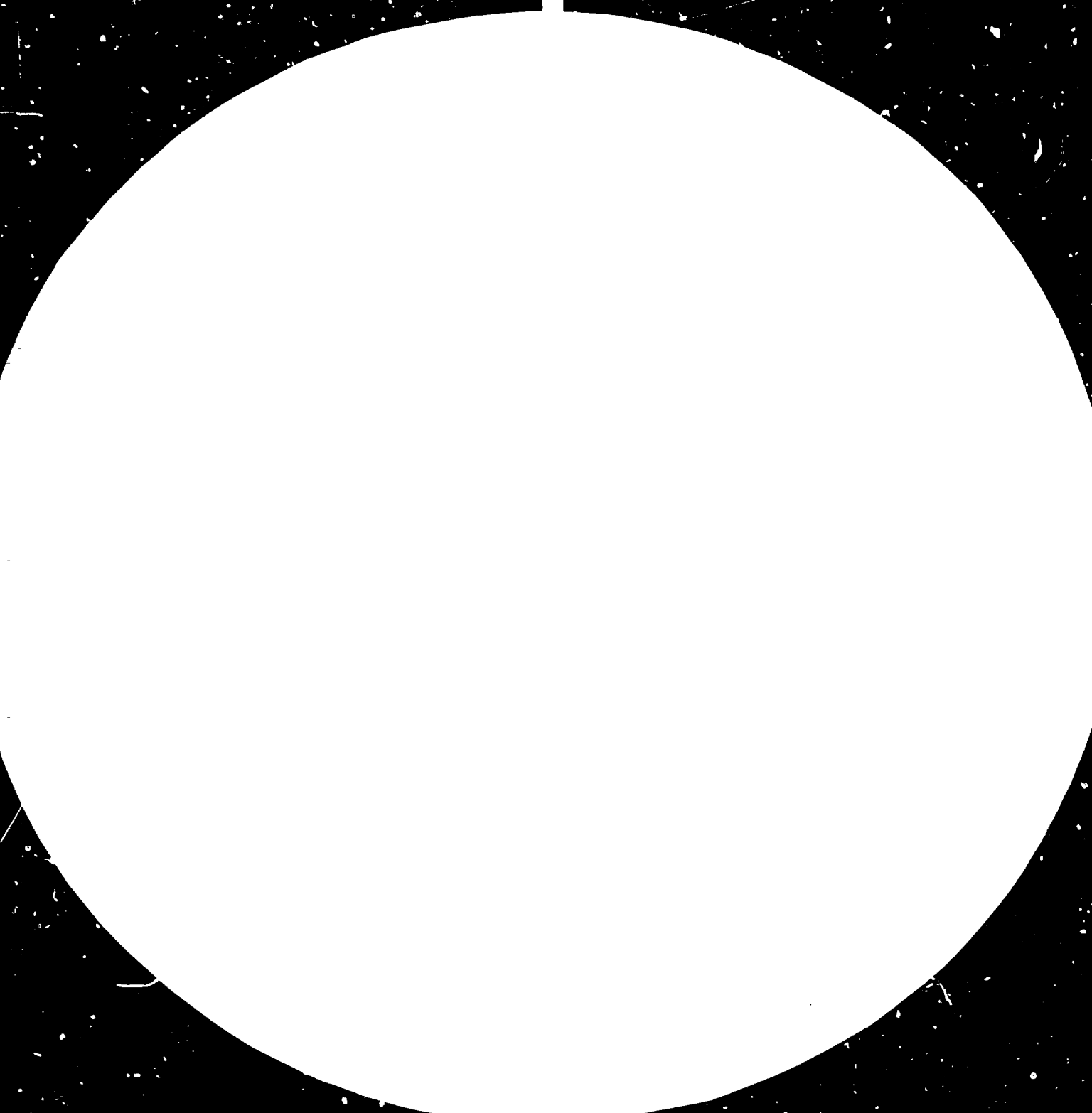
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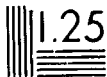
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A brief account of China's Furniture Industry ^{1/}

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1. Present Situation:

The following figures are shown based on the statistics of 1979 (excluding Taiwan Province).

- a) The national value of output of the furniture industry is 1.5 billion Yuan (RMB) of which about 10% is for export
- b) The total production of furniture for civilian use in the market is 21 million pieces. Out of these 9.7 million pieces are of steel-wood structure.
- c) Number of plants: There are 3,000 plants in China and 290,000 technicians, workers and staff.
- d) Annual consumption of wood is 2.3 million cubic meters, that of steel is 80,000 tons.
- e) Several furniture research institutes are being established in Shanghai, Beijing, etc., the Central Technology and Arts College furnishes the course of furniture design.

II. Trend of furniture development:

The present situation of China's furniture industry is being transformed following the introduction of new type of material, like wood-based panels, metal and plastics. However, the furniture industry in general is still at a primary stage, and the development of furniture over the whole country is not in balance.

1. In view of this development, the trend is that in order to utilize large amounts of new types of materials, like various kinds of wood-based panels, the structure of for example wardrobes is being developed from a frame construction type towards a panel construction type which needs larger amounts of wood-based panels. The main material used for sitting and bedding furniture is steel, aluminium and plastics. Both the above mentioned materials are used for desks and tables. Wood products are mainly used for high class furniture.
2. The structure of furniture: self-assembled construction and combination furniture will gradually be accepted by the people, and

they will be quickly developed. At present, the popularization of these types of furniture has begun, and they are gradually put onto the market. The new structure of furniture provides the possibility for serial production. Now, small types of serial production processes for panel furniture have been set up in Beijing, Shanghai and Tianjin, this process will be further developed.

3. The scope of specialization of furniture production will be further expanded. At present, specialized production is practised in accordance with the division of work among plants in many cities. The depth and width of the division of work as well as the level of corresponding organization management will be further promoted to meet the need of the development of furniture production.
4. The standardization of furniture products will be further pushed ahead. The present level in this aspect is not high. New standards will consecutively come up in a few years and will come close to the international level.

III. The present problems of the furniture industry:

1. The technical level of material production for furniture is low, namely the production technology for wood-based panels, steel pipe and plastics products cannot meet the demand of furniture industry so that the quality of furniture products is affected.
2. The design level is low. The designers are seldom specially trained. The design features of various kinds of furniture are not well harmonized as a whole and the designs are not changed often.
3. Only few methods like painting, plastic overlay, etc. are adopted for surface finishing of the furniture.
4. The level of mechanization and automation are low. The manufacturing accuracy of the products is poor mainly because

of the obsolete equipment, therefore the popularization of technology for continuous furniture production is affected.

IV. Assistance is needed in the following topics:

1. The scientific research level for furniture needs to be strengthened. Contacts should be established with advanced research departments of other countries by exchanging publications, training our trainees and visiting the departments concerned.
2. Assistance is also needed in setting up furniture testing laboratories and to provide the related equipment.
3. Organizing lectures by experts in the above fields and providing guidance for improvement of production technology.



