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WORLD TRAVELS

VOL. V.



GUARDIANS OF THE GRAND PALACE--BANGKOK

Frontispiece to volume v.

WORLD TRAVELS

A full descriptive narrative of personal
travels in almost every land and sea,
and among most of the peoples,
both civilised and savage,
of the entire world

BY

CHARLES W. DOMVILLE-FIFE

AUTHOR OF "AMONG WILD TRIBES OF THE AMAZONS," "SAVAGE LIFE
IN THE BLACK SUDAN," "THROUGH CENTRAL AMERICA," "THE
REAL SOUTH AMERICA," "THE UNITED STATES OF
BRAZIL," "MODERN SOUTH AMERICA," ETC., ETC.

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VOLUME V



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VOL. V

*Journeys in the Far East
and the South Seas*

INCLUDING

BALI
CELEBES
EAST INDIES
MOLUCCAS ISLANDS
SINGAPORE
SIAM
PHILIPPINES
HONG-KONG
SOUTH CHINA
NORTH CHINA
MONGOLIA
MANCHURIA
KOREA
JAPAN
INLAND SEA
HAWAIIAN ISLANDS
SOUTH SEAS
FIJI
TONGA ISLANDS
SAMOA
TAHITI

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WORLD TRAVELS

CHAPTER I

BALI, FANTASTIC ISLE OF EASTERN SEAS

IN the island of Bali—a name to conjure with throughout the Indies—there is more to be seen than it seems possible to set down in print. One million people live on its few square miles of surface, and everywhere there are the most fantastic, the most delicate, the most ornate of temples in the world. It is a relic of the past. “Bali, to-day, is what Java was five centuries ago,” writes one traveller. No missionaries are allowed on this island ; it has been preserved, with its wonderful culture, as a gem of beauty from out of the dim past.

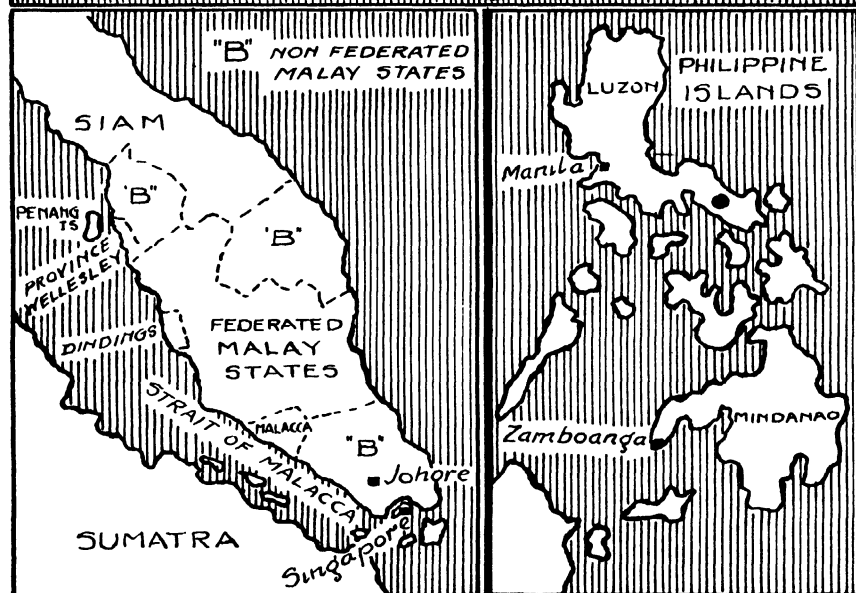
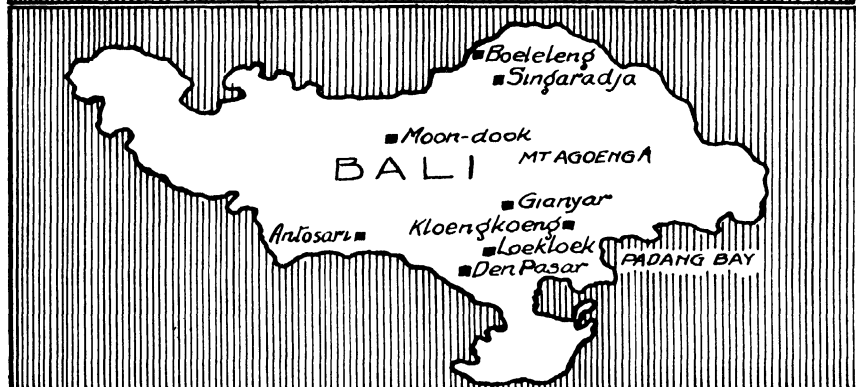
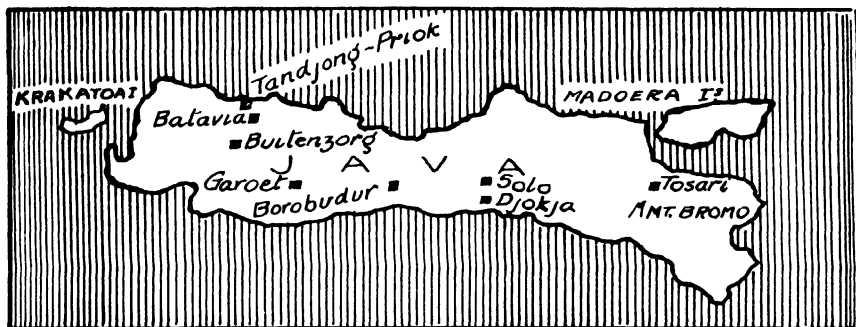
Women, lighter-skinned than the Javanese, with their graceful figures only partially covered, may be seen bearing offerings to the gods ; then there are the bathing places, faintly reminiscent of an old India ; the silversmiths and weapon-makers at work as in days gone by ; sacred pools, into which offerings are still being thrown ; weird cremation towers of ornamental and carved wood ; strange ceremonies ; active volcanoes with smoking waters ; and performances by the *legongs*, or youthful dancing girls,

in costly garments. In a word, I landed at Boeleleng on one of the few unspoiled Oriental islands remaining to-day.

“In Bali, even more than in Europe during the Catholic Middle Ages, religion and life are one,” says an official publication of the Travellers’ Bureau of the Netherlands Indies. “Far more than in the former European countries are the social affairs of the Balinese guided and controlled by their religious beliefs. These beliefs are a curious mixture of Hinduism and Buddhism, grafted on to a primitive animism that at all points thrusts through the latter veneer and makes itself felt as the real foundation on which all has been built up.”

“The Balinese received their Hinduism in the first place, that is, before A.D. 1000, direct from the Hindus themselves, or possibly as an offshoot from Shailendra’s Sumatra-Javanese kingdom. At a later date they received it anew by way of Java, and a second Hindu-Javanese invasion after A.D. 1350 left a deep impression on the literature, jurisprudence, caste system and temples in Bali,” remarks yet another Dutch-Colonial authority; and with these brief explanations of how things came to be, it is possible to understand the underlying motive for much that one sees while residing among these still primitive peoples.

Boeleleng is really the port area of the town of Singaradja, and contains the Chinese and Arab shops and dwellings, the warehouses and the administrative offices. Although my stay in this little place was short, I made the acquaintance of Mah Fatimah, a Balinese woman who, in her youth, was a member of the household of the Dewa Agoeng, the principal



Drawn by Phos O

BALI, FANTASTIC ISLE OF EASTERN SEAS 3

native ruler of Bali in the days before the final establishment of Dutch authority throughout the island in 1908. Her story was a romantic one. The Dewa's capital was the town of Kloengkoeng, and when this stronghold was captured he ordered all his wives, princes, courtiers and dependents to kill themselves rather than fall into the hands of the enemy. Every one of these people obeyed this terrible order except Mah Fatimah, who, being away from the capital at the time, did not hear of it until the Dewa and his court had ceased to exist. This interesting woman is now a citizen of importance in the island, and owns workshops for the manufacture of native gold, silver and embroidered goods. A visit to this place gives some idea of the length of time and the amount of both skill and patience required to produce some of the finer specimens of native handicraft.

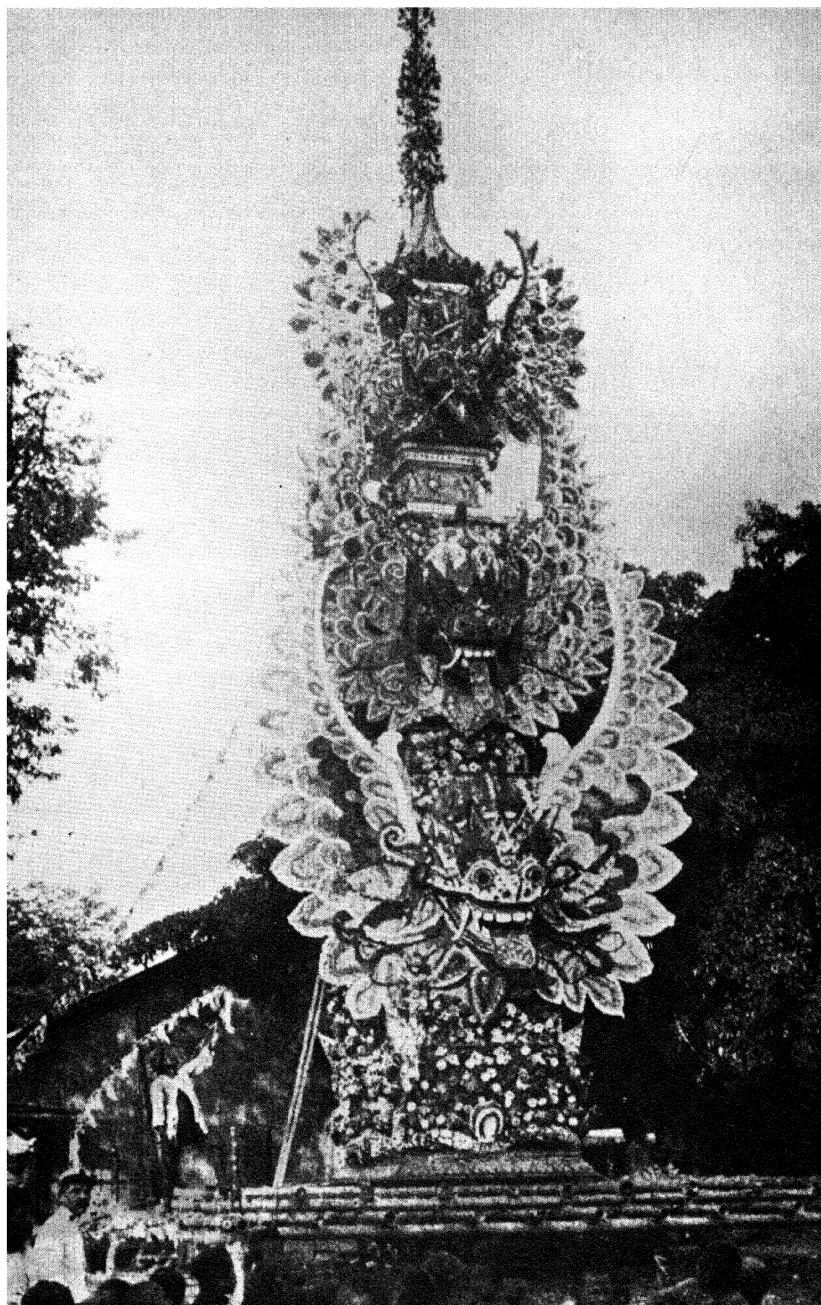
At Singaradja I obtained the services of an English-speaking Chinese guide, and with the aid of a motor car—there are no railways—commenced my rambles through this extraordinary island. Singaradja is the local capital, and has a few European residents but no hotel, only a *pasangrahan*, or rest house. Along every road, and certainly in every village and town, one comes across the most amazingly ornate temples, shrines and other buildings. Sometimes it is merely an old statue and at others a delicately carved temple. Then there are the pagoda-like palaces, the coco-nut palms and, above all, the people and their customs.

Undoubtedly the most impressive sight is the cremation ceremony. "The aristocratic Balinese, after his death, is embalmed. The poor cannot

afford this, but whatever his rank or caste, the Balinese is ultimately cremated ; he regards it literally as his key to paradise. These cremations are highly ceremonious, and may be quite simple or elaborate according to the means of the person being cremated. In order to make the cremations of the lower and poorer classes more fitting, it is the custom for many of these people to band together and wait till there are from ten to one hundred of their dead ready for cremation, and to have a great communal ceremony for them all."

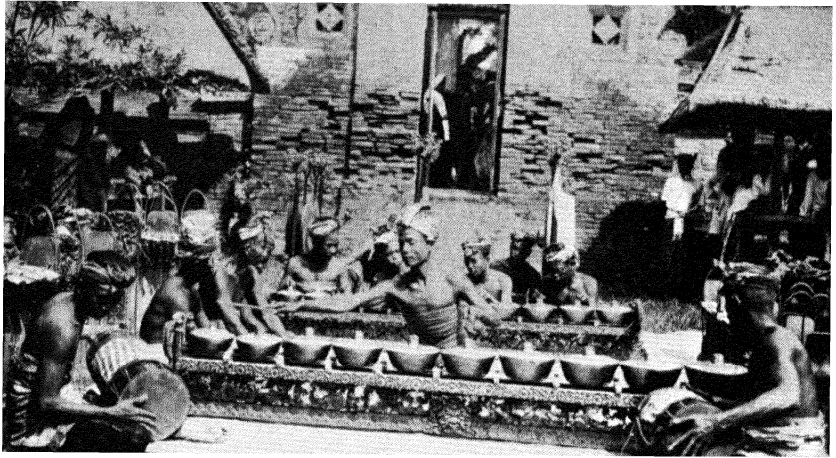
It was one of these that I was able to witness within a few hours of my arrival in the island. In some cases, during the period of waiting between death and cremation, the body, if not embalmed, may have decayed. In this event it is burned in effigy—just a human figure drawn on a *lontar* leaf, or fashioned out of a piece of wood. The Balinese believe that up to the time of cremation the spirit remains in the body, leaving it only to torment relatives. The lighting of the funeral pile is therefore an occasion for much rejoicing. The spirits of the dead are released, and there is no longer any necessity for the living to be haunted by them.

When a date has been fixed for a cremation, the relatives of the deceased purchase or build a portable tower of bamboo and rattan, which is decorated with hundreds of artificial flowers, coloured cotton and gold paper ornaments. The corpse, wrapped in many cloths, is placed on this structure and carried on the shoulders of a large number of people to the cremation pile. This tower is called a *wadah*, and the number of roofs (or height) varies according to the caste of the individual. In one case the tower was

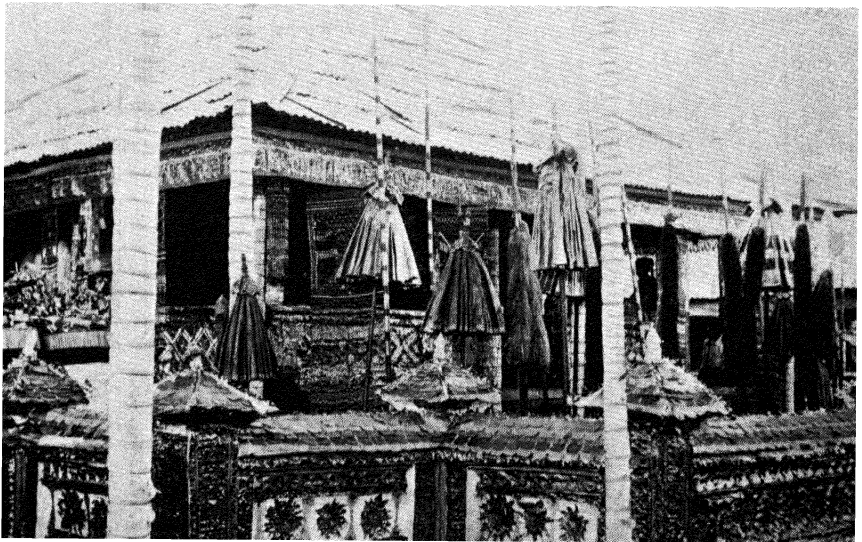


A CREMATION TOWER—BALI

Facing page 4—5.



A GAMELON ORCHESTRA



ALTAR SHOWING OFFERINGS BEFORE A CREMATION—BALI

grotesquely decorated with a hideous mask, which seemed to represent *Vishnu*.

While the body is being carried to the tower, a number of relatives and friends rush towards it and tear off pieces of the original winding-sheets, in order that they may obtain some of the good or strong qualities possessed by the deceased. The body is then placed on the top of the tower, which is carried in procession to the pyre. Just before the start of this part of the proceedings, however, a priest discharges arrows into the air and also at the head of a cloth (or paper) dragon which trails from the bamboo scaffold.

The procession is a weird affair. First comes a row of women bearing floral and other offerings, then lines of men carrying long spears, flags and banners, women with small jars of holy water, and relatives carrying the ornaments, clothes and jewellery of the deceased. Following the tower comes a *gamelon*, or gong-orchestra. On arrival at the place of cremation, all those who have taken part in the procession walk three times round the casket in which the body will be confined before being burned. This circling is to propitiate the God of Fire. Waiting for the corpse is a cremation-animal, or coffin of wood, fashioned to represent some queer beast. It is covered with cloth and decorated with gold-leaf, mirrors, and fragments of many materials, shapes and colours. It appears, however, that a cross between an elephant and a fish is used for the common people and a bull for the nobility. These animals are supposed to convey the spirit to heaven, from whence it returns to earth only when reborn into a new human body.

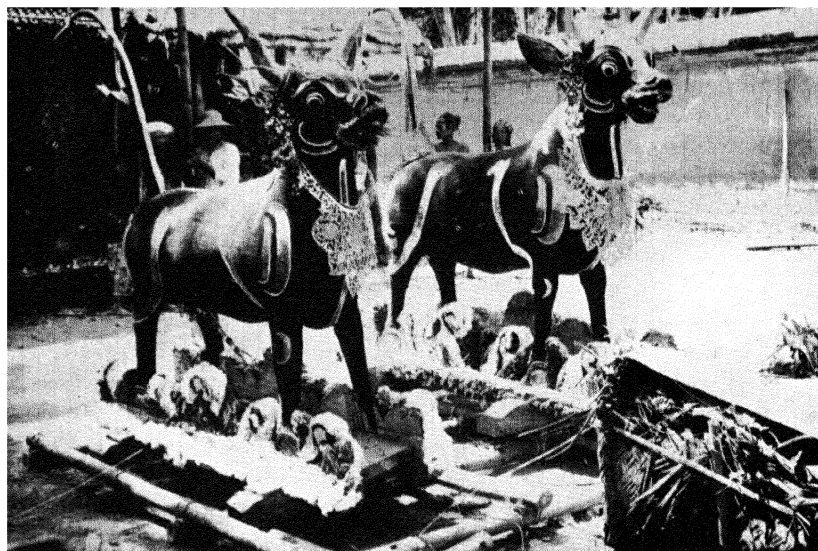
There is no real funeral pyre, as in India. The

body is lifted down from the tower by a bamboo ladder, or gangway, and is placed in the animal-shaped coffin. At the same time the spearmen who have taken part in the procession dance round the bier, and the women sprinkle over the coffin the holy water carried in the small earthenware jars, which are immediately cast on to the ground and broken. The offerings are placed alongside the corpse, and the lid, which really forms the back of the animal casket, is closed over the top. A priest recites verses in Sanskrit, and towards evening, when the sun is dipping below the line of hills, coco-nut oil is poured over this weird-looking coffin as well as at the base of the bamboo tower. Flames leap up into the gathering gloom, and when at last the terrifying face of the animal has disappeared, the relatives search among the smouldering ashes in order to find the skull, which is pulverised to make sure that the spirit has been released.

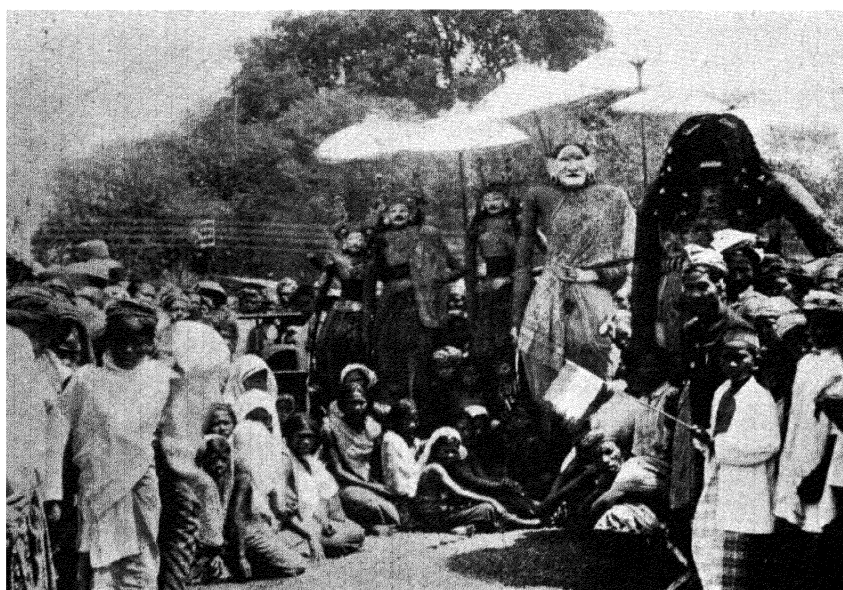
The final act, which takes place on the following day, is the placing of the ashes and some of the broken bones in an urn. This is given to a priest, who conveys it in a sedan chair to the accompaniment of the *gamelon* music, and casts it into the sea or river. In this way are the bodies of deceased Balinese purified by both fire and water.



SEIZING A VICTIM. TCHALON-ORANG.—BALI



ANIMAL-SHAPED CASKETS FOR THE CREMATION OF THE DEAD



THE BARONG PLAY—BALI

CHAPTER II

WEIRD TEMPLE FEASTS

WHILE travelling across this island to the town of Den Pasar, various anniversary feasts, called *Odalan*, were being performed in the many temples. One of the unique features of these celebrations is the *Barong*, a play which takes place in the open. Although I could not understand the significance, it formed a most uncanny spectacle. Two men have fixed to their shoulders a bamboo framework covered with flax, which forms a grotesque and hideous-looking monster, half tiger and half elephant. This is elaborately decorated with leather, gold tinsel and tiny mirrors. The figures recite, chant and dance in a circle of flaming torches held by the spectators, for this play is only performed at night.

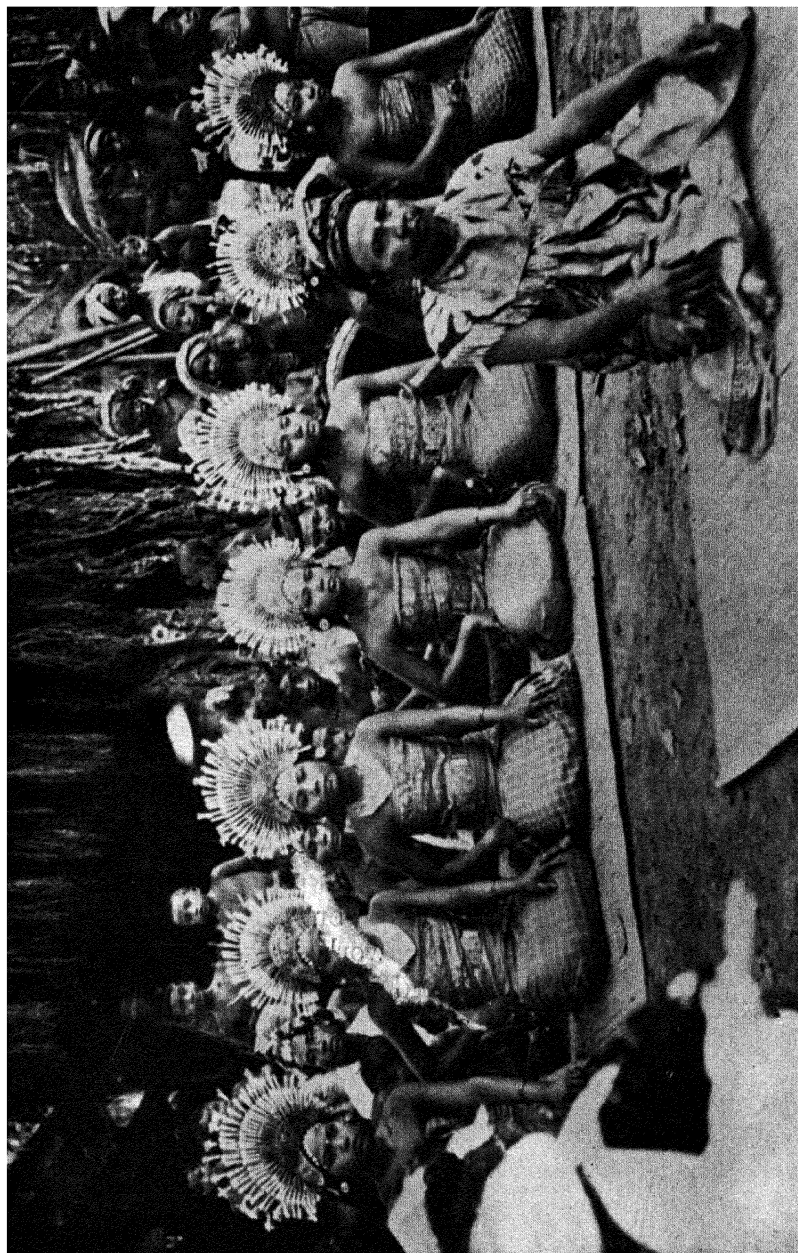
At another temple, during these feasts, I saw a *Tchalon-orang*, or play, performed by men wearing gigantic and fearsome masks, cloaks, and gloves exhibiting revoltingly long and claw-like finger-nails. The whole scene is weird in the extreme. Not a word is spoken, nor is there any music or recitation. Suddenly one of these human monsters reaches out long arms and clutches a victim. The silence is broken by piercing screams, and the wretched captive swoons in the arms of this representative from hell.

Usually a very young girl is chosen, because it is necessary to produce real fear in order to impress the audience with the terrors which await those who traffic with the devil and so offend the gods.

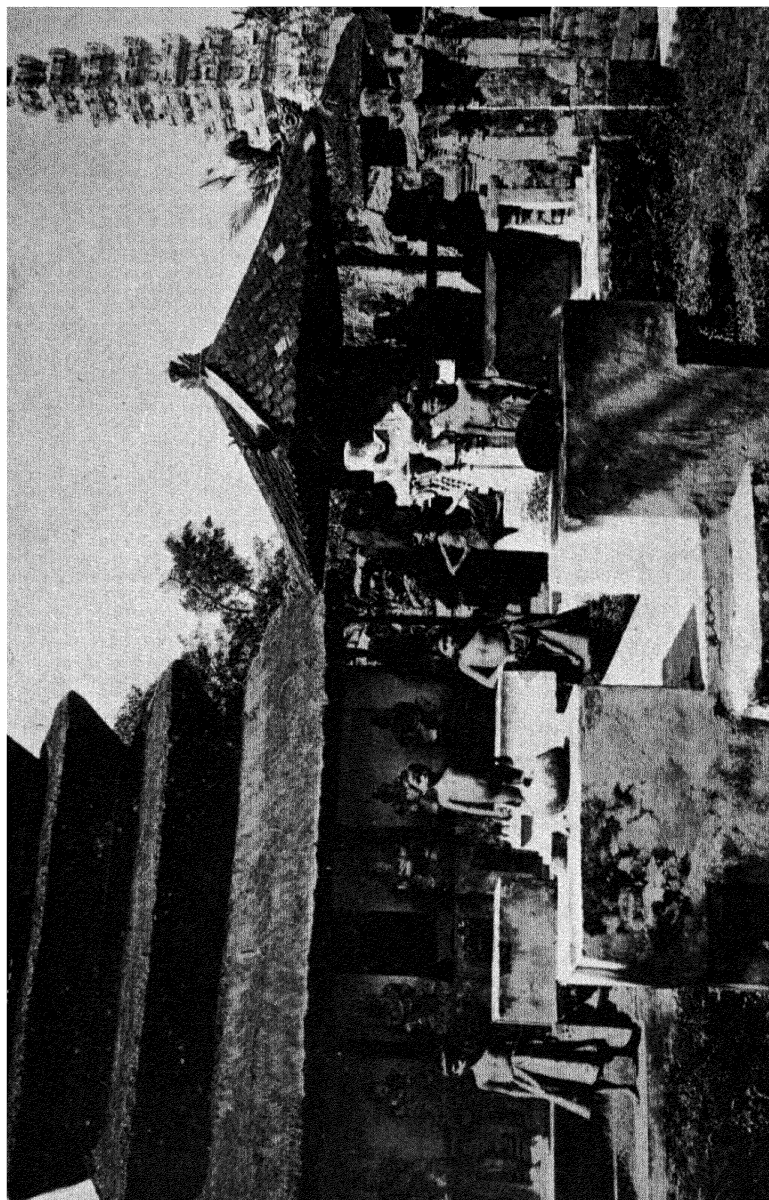
A story attaches to this play. I was told that it deals with an episode in Javanese history. A witch is supposed to have brought disaster to a popular king with the aid of her pupils. Certainly the disgusting figure with tousled hair and long tongue sent a shudder of genuine horror through the ring of spectators, among whom there must have been all the children and young people of the village.

The Balinese are a lighter-skinned race than the Javanese. Very few wear any clothing above the waist, but Nature has endowed this somewhat indolent but good-tempered people with a fair share of physical charm. The *sarong*, used by both men and women, is generally of *batik* or coloured cotton, and a kind of turban is worn on the head. Nearly every temple has its bathing tank, divided into two sections for the use of men and women.

Among industries the cultivation of rice by an elaborate system of irrigation undoubtedly comes first, with cattle and pig-feeding second. The Balinese are good metal workers, and some choice pieces in gold, silver and copper are to be seen in almost every town, although Kamesa appears to be the centre of this industry. Kloengkoeng is the town of the wood-carvers. The weaving of silk, usually ornamented with gold and silver thread, is a household industry, and in certain parts of the island some fine *appliqué* work, with gold and silver leaf on silk, is produced.



THE DJANGER DANCE.—BALI



TEMPLE IN GROUNDS OF A PRIVATE HOUSE—BALI

The houses of these people consist of a number of thatched roofs surrounded by a clay-brick wall. Several families, descendants of the same grandfather or great-grandfather, live in the one compound. The object of the enclosing wall is to keep away evil spirits, and no one leaves the gate open when either entering or leaving it because of this reason. In the palaces of the Balinese nobility two such walls generally surround the buildings, and the entrances through these are never placed opposite to each other. It is considered that the evil spirits which hover in the fields can enter an enclosure only through a gateway, and that they cannot turn a corner.

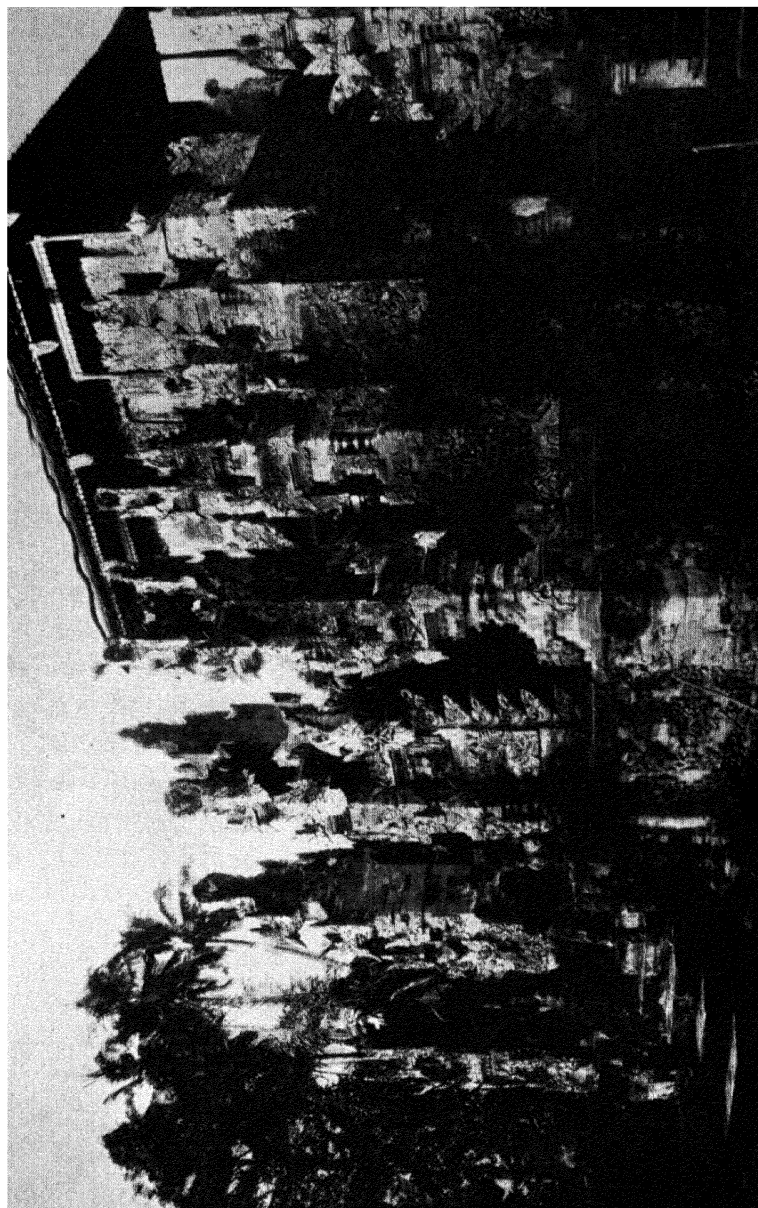
On entering one of these compounds, the first building is usually found to be a rice barn, and the next to contain stalls for cattle or a sty for pigs. Fowls wander about picking up a precarious living all over the enclosure. Then come the living and sleeping huts. At the back of the compound there is often a household temple. It is here that the ancestors of the living are worshipped, and each inmate of the communal home has a special god to which he erects a tiny altar. The central deities are the sun-god, the mountain-god and the sea-god. Occasionally one finds a small shrine erected for Siva. Here the curious mixing of Hinduism with pure animism is particularly noticeable. The house of a local prince is usually built of stone, heavily carved and ornamented with gilt-work, but otherwise it is much the same in general arrangement.

Although the life of the Balinese seems to be an endless succession of religious ceremonies, festivals, dances and plays, these people manage to find time for cock-fighting. They are even obligatory during

certain temple feasts, when they are specially permitted by the Netherlands Indies Government. At other times they are held *in camera*, so far as the authorities are concerned. Among the numerous household feasts that form part of the marriage ceremony, there is one which is most interesting. The bride, dressed in her finest *sari*, wearing many gold amulets and with flowers in her hair, is carried in a palanquin to the house of her parents after spending some time in the compound of her intended husband. The actual ceremony includes a forcible abduction of the bride. Then there are rituals, followed by feasts, in connection with the birth of a child, the filing of the teeth to a point at an early age, at puberty, and, in fact, at various intervals through life.

Many of these ceremonies are characterised by the inclusion of a *legong*, in which two gaily dressed young girls dance while a *dalang*, or entertainer, either sings or chants a story, making witty comments on local events between the verses. Yet another popular dance is the *Ardja*, in which many girls take part. The features in this case are the gorgeous dresses, the diadems formed of gold tubes in which flowers are inserted, and the music of bamboo flutes. Now a few words must be said about the *gamelon* orchestra, which plays such a prominent part in all Balinese festivals. The more usual form is a kind of dulcimer, made of large gongs when intended for use in the open air, and with gongs of the same kind but of softer tone for indoor music. Then there is the *gamelon gambang*, a bamboo orchestra, usually employed during cremations. The masked dances, for which Bali is famous, are called *Dajook*, and during





TEMPLE AT SANGSIT—BALI

these weird ceremonies, often held at night by the light of torches, no word is spoken, and the whole performance is both weird and creepy.

There is one temple feast in Bali that impressed me more than all the others which I saw. This was a performance by *Sang Kyang* dancers, both male and female. By some means these people have been put into a trance, and continue dancing for hours at a time. They walk on red-hot cinders, and dance amid flames until they drop from exhaustion and burns. Never once, however, did I see a *Sang Kyang* evince the slightest sign of pain.

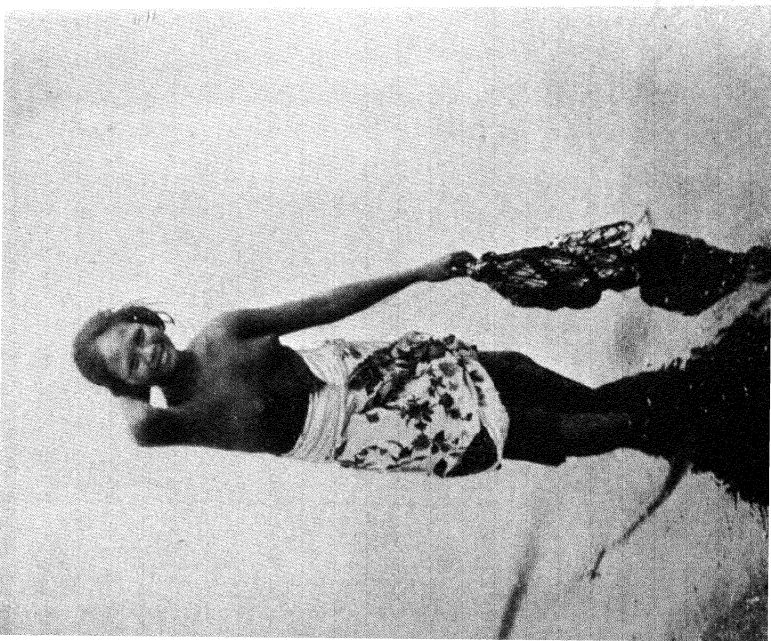
While passing through villages I noticed on several occasions bamboo poles, many feet high, erected close to the entrances of the house-compounds. These were decorated with entwined leaves hanging down like streamers. Near by were smaller poles forming tiny platforms. On top of these rice and other gifts were placed by passers-by. I found, on making inquiries locally, that it was a feast for departed spirits who were being invited to return to earth for a ten days' holiday! At the expiration of this period they would be given a hearty send-off during the ceremony known as *Kuningan*.

CHAPTER III

THINGS SEEN IN BALI

DURING my journeys in the island of Bali there were opportunities almost every day for enjoying not only the fantastic tropical scenery but also the *al fresco* life of wandering by motor car through a land of amazing contrasts. Each night my caravan rested in one of the comfortable and picturesquely situated Government bungalows, used very largely by officials moving from one part of the island to another. The Dutch-Colonial Administration appears to be both energetic and efficient. At the rest house near Moon-Dook, for example, there is an excellent covered swimming-pool situated on a mountain ridge, although this little bungalow only contains four sleeping rooms. The view from the veranda over the terraced *sawahs*, or irrigated rice-fields leading down from the mountains to the little village of Goblek, is exceptionally fine.

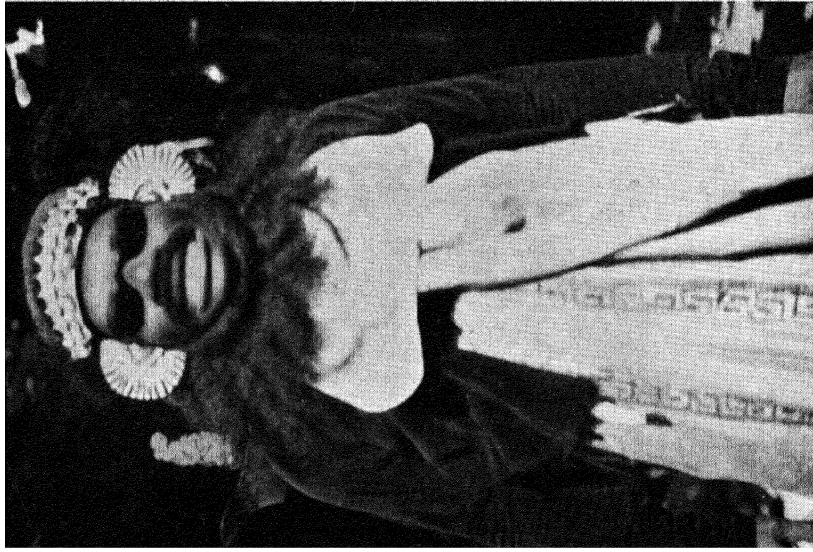
Returning from this side trip, undertaken to obtain a view of the central highlands, I followed the main road through Antosari and Tabanan, where there is a tall statue of a god with two satellites. At Kapal there is an immense elephant and a tiger carved in the rock. A short distance away lies the pool of the Sacred Eel. This curious-looking creature can, however, only be seen with the aid of the priest in charge



A BALINESE GIRL



A RICE BARN—BALI



ONE OF THE HIDEOUS MASKS EMPLOYED
AT RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS—BALI



A NATIVE IMPERSONATING THE
GARUDA BIRD—BALI

of the neighbouring temple, who entices it to come up from the silent depths.

A little farther along this road I came to a fine wayside shrine with a large banyan tree growing through a portion of the surrounding wall. No attempt will be made here to describe these religious edifices of ancient Bali. A glance at some of the illustrations will show how impossible it would be to give a lucid description of these carved and frescoed stone buildings of amazing design.

In a cave near Loekloek, reached by walking across the muddy rice-fields and lighted inside by a hole cut in the rock, there is a sacrificial altar which, by its form, suggests that in past times it was used for human victims. Curiously, the little town of Den Pasar is called locally *Badoong*, and this difference between the map and the local nomenclature nearly caused me to order the driver to take a turn in the road which would have led back into the mountains of the interior. However, there is an excellent little hotel in this place, operated by the famous K.P.M., a Dutch steamship line, which has had much to do with the development of these islands. It was here that I had an opportunity of seeing the famous Balinese dancer, I. Maria. It is said that this amazingly supple native artist, who also plays the *gamelon* gongs, has been offered large sums to visit the United States. Such is the *dolce far niente* life on this island of the South Seas, that he is said to prefer remaining in Bali.

Apart from the fact that in Den Pasar one sees many typical examples of Balinese life, there is very little to detain the traveller more than a day or so. A unique open-air museum, which gives an excellent

idea of local architecture, and a neighbouring beach that is the only one in the whole island free of sharks, are its two principal attractions.

On the shores of the Indian Ocean, near to a village of unpronounceable name, I came upon a fine old temple called Ula Watu. This structure resembled a Chinese pagoda. The tower, called a *meru*, rises to a great height, each terrace, or floor, being smaller than the one below. These curious buildings indicate by the number of their pagoda-like roofs the god to which they are dedicated. The Ula Watu has Siva for its deity, as is proven by the eleven roofs, one above the other, and raised by corner posts. It is said to be the most lofty in Bali.

Wandering one day in a different direction, I came to the Sacred Forest near the village of Sangeh. The trees yield nutmegs, and rise straight up from the ground to a considerable height. Not only the trees, but also the ground on which they stand is considered sacred, and can be used only for the erection of temples. No tree is allowed to be cut down or exploited for any purpose whatsoever. No sooner had I entered this beautiful forest than hordes of monkeys came down from the branches and tree-tops to beg for alms. So tame are these creatures that they fed from my hand. In the heart of this small jungle are the ruins of a very old temple covered in moss. Not very far away, in the centre of a native village, stands what is said to be the largest banyan tree in these islands. It covers a surface of over an acre.

In the little towns of Kloengkoeng and Gianyar I saw the Balinese wood-carvers and goldsmiths at work, producing some of the fine specimens of filigree

which can be bought all over the Dutch East Indies. The first of these places was the capital of one of the rulers of Bali before the island was taken over by the Dutch. There is, however, little left of the old palace of the Dewa Agoong, but in the new Hall of Justice the ceiling is decorated with some extraordinary pictures, illustrating the punishments awaiting the wicked Balinese in the next world. Some twelve miles from this town there is a cave of bats. Thousands of these flying vermin hang on to the walls and roof. The smell is so overpowering that it is almost impossible even to approach the small shrine erected near the entrance.

Other places which can be visited from Kloengkoeng, with a certain amount of difficulty, however, are the Royal Tombs and the Rock Monastery. Leaving the motor car at the little village of Siring, I climbed down a steep incline hewn out of the virgin rock. Far below, a river could be seen rushing through a gorge. It is undoubtedly one of the most beautiful spots in Bali. A little farther down, after passing through a small gate, some nine royal, but not very impressive, tombs can be seen ; then I groped my way with bent head along a narrow and dark tunnel, which leads into a large refectory cut out of the solid rock with an air-hole in the roof for ventilation. The remaining chambers of this monastery can be seen high up in the face of the cliff, but access to them is both difficult and dangerous.

It was during this journey that I visited the sacred spring of Tirta Empool, situated in a pretty mountain glen. Near to the little temple there is a pool for men and another for women. Many were bathing in these holy waters. Jets of natural spring water

came out of the rock in different places, and to each is ascribed special powers of healing. One is used for washing and another by those women who desire to beget children. On the way back to Den Pasar I visited a temple that possesses an immense brass drum, over six feet deep and about the same size in diameter, which is decorated with eight carved human heads. Unfortunately I could not discover the reason for these gruesome ornaments.

It was in and around Den Pasar that I saw many of the dances described in former pages. Hereabouts, also, there are specimens of almost every kind of temple for which this island is justly famous. Some are made of bamboo, wood and palm fibre, this latter substance being woven and used as a covering for the roof. The foundations only are of stone. Buildings of an earlier date are constructed almost entirely of stone, with imposing gateways. These are famous for the reliefs on their walls. There are many curious doorways leading to these Hindu temples; one consists of what appears to be a solid piece of sculpture split into two exact halves, and separated by a space to act as a passage-way.

Some of the village shrines are not only covered by a maze of carvings and relief work, but these ornamentations are also painted in a variety of colours. The most sacred temple in all Bali is the Pura Besa-Kih, situated on the slopes of a mountain called Agoeng. It is the Balinese themselves, however, with their artistic dress and weird dances, who add the human note to this gem of the Eastern seas.

CHAPTER IV

IN THE CELEBES

FROM the mirror-bright waters of the isle-encompassed Java Sea, I glanced back with a feeling which amounted to keen regret as the coco-nut palms and model-like little temples of Bali faded into the misty blue of sea and sky. I was bound for the Celebes, home of the bird of paradise but somehow the little realm passing astern, which had brought to life the gorgeous East of old-time romance, still lingered in memory.

These sea-ways through the Dutch Indies are protected in all directions by a maze of evergreener islets. Each day the waters, the surrounding land the distant line of volcanoes, the lonely reefs and the star-like palms are all tinted pink and gold by the sunrise, and orange, red and smoky purple by the sunset. The days are a pageant of changing colours and the nights a study in silver and indigo. Early in the morning of the second day, lofty mountains lifted their heads above a line of mist. Then the thickly wooded lower slopes assumed colour and form. A dense group of green islets appeared far away to the right. The mountains were the forest-clad Bonthains in the principal island of the Celebes and the chain of islets the little Spermuinde Archipelago. It was an entrancing scene as the vessel entered the roads of Macassar.

This island of Celebes is the third largest in the Netherlands Indies, Borneo and Sumatra coming first in regard to area. From official sources I learned that it is crossed by the Equator, and that the name "Celebes" was first used by the Portuguese writer, Duarte Barbosa, in a paper written in 1516, at which time no European had visited the island. Between the years 1523 and 1528 it was twice visited by Portuguese navigators. The name Celebes is thought to be a rather uncomplimentary appellation given to the land, because of the very unsavoury reputation of the *Buginese* pirates who lived there, but this derivation is not definitely known.

The first settlement of the Dutch in the Celebes dates from 1607, when they established a fort where now stands the thriving little town of Macassar. It is interesting to record from the same reliable source that Islam had not come to the island when the first European contact with it was made, and that it never secured a very strong hold on the inhabitants. In marked contrast with the islands of Java and Bali, and to a somewhat lesser extent Sumatra also, Hinduism never penetrated to Celebes, and no Hindu relics are to be found there.

It is one of the four Greater Sunda Islands (Sumatra, Java, Borneo and Celebes), and has an area of about 72,600 square miles, with a population of just over three millions. It is an island of the most curious shape, being deeply indented by three great bights on the southern and eastern coasts. It is almost entirely mountainous, and in many places the ranges rise abruptly in great cliffs out of the sea. The ocean in the vicinity of Celebes is very deep, and for the most part there is, therefore, no coastal



DYAK CHIEFTAIN IN WAR DRESS—BORNEO



DYAK WARRIOR AND WIFE WITH CORSET OF BRASS RINGS—
BORNEO

plain. Much of the country is densely afforested, and some beautiful mountain lakes are to be seen. Many of the mountains are volcanic, amongst them being Klabat (6,563 feet) and, in the north, the Lompo Batang, which is 10,832 feet.

The rivers of Celebes are short, and for the most part so strongly tidal that they are unnavigable. For this reason the interior was for a long time comparatively unknown. The island is drier than most of the others in the archipelago, and there are great teak forests on the south-east coast. The fauna includes at least two remarkable beasts, the babirusa, a sort of half-deer-half-pig, which in appearance is somewhat like a small and graceful hog with long, curling, upper canine tusks that resemble antlers, and the anoa, a wild bull built on the lines of an antelope.

This completed my entire knowledge of the island when I found myself walking up the Passarstraat of its capital in the blinding glare from a sun directly overhead. No European lives in this portion of Macassar, and the houses, still bearing traces of the old Dutch style, actually lean against each other. They have slanting roofs, balconies projecting over the street and green-painted window-frames with small panes of glass. On one side of this main street are the Chinese shops and the temples, while opposite to them are the warehouses of the merchants. Narrow alleys lead away in both directions into the labyrinths of the native quarters. Macassar has a population of just under 90,000, very few of whom are Europeans. The streets present the usual throng of brown and yellow peoples in white and coloured *sarongs* carrying heavy loads on each end of a bamboo pole balanced

across one shoulder. The Chinese booths are open-fronted, and display only the more crude products of the East.

In the cool of the early evening I explored the old limestone wall, now black with age, which is all that remains of the first factory built by the Dutch in 1607. In the adjoining Prince Hendrik Square, which leads down to the sea, there is an artistic little monument to those who fell in the South Celebes Expedition. By way of old avenues, lined by shady tamarind and canary trees, I entered the European residential quarter, known as the Kerkplein. This takes its name from a small but ancient Protestant church.

With these local rambles completed I drove to the museum, built in the curious native style, and then to the Chinese temple, mausoleum and pleasure-garden, all of which confirmed my opinion that this town is more Chinese than Buginese. These latter people are the true inhabitants of the southern part of Celebes. They are, however, a seafaring race, and sail their picturesque *prahus* all over the Java, Celebes and Banda Seas. In the harbour I saw many of these little craft, which once rendered the natives of this island such dreaded pirates.

During a drive out to the waterfall of Banti-moeroeng the native life of the Celebes and the huts of matting amid the most wonderful palms were an endless source of delight, but I regret to say that never once did I catch a glimpse of a bird of paradise—except in the little museum. The interior of Celebes is still very largely unexploited and to a certain extent unexplored. During a brief excursion by water along the southern peninsula of the island

I entered the beautiful bay of Pare-Pare. The surrounding country is the home of the Toradja people, and on this account is extremely interesting.

In the country districts the natives still carry spears, and decorate themselves in a grotesque manner with masks and coloured dyes. One of their favourite sports is pig-sticking on horseback, and another is riding down deer which are lassoed with thongs. In a little creek leading out of this beautiful bay, I spent an exciting night shooting crocodiles from a native canoe. Both the night and the river were so dark, except within the narrow area of light thrown by the canoe ahead in which the torches were carried, that there was some risk in the shallows of the huge crocodiles when attacked overturning with their lashing tails the frail canoes employed for this purpose.

Although I did not proceed north into the Minahassa highlands, I was told that the natives there had long ago adopted the Christian faith, and were among the most enterprising of the population of the Celebes. This is rather surprising when one considers that not so very long ago they were head-hunters, and buried their dead in great stone urns. These half-buried *timboekers* can still be traced all over the Minahassa country, although the best specimens are now found near Sawangan. They are adorned with all kinds of strange images, including human heads.

CHAPTER V

AMONG THE SPICE ISLANDS

THREE days' sailing among an interesting maze of islands brought me within sight of the towering peak of Goenoeng Api, standing out sharply against the luminous horizon. Nowhere, except perhaps among the coral atolls of the South Pacific, is the sea so blue and in contrast the vegetation so green as among these East Indian islands. Volcanic cones rise above the clouds with thin wisps of smoke hanging over their lofty craters. At sunset the skies are aflame between masses of purple cloud.

Goenoeng Api is the most lofty volcano in the Banda Neira group, and it can be seen from a great distance seawards. Towards midday we passed the mystic rocks of Phantom Island and entered the "Narrows of the Sun." This approach to the largest of the Banda Islands formed a remarkable sight, which was greatly enhanced by the reception accorded the entry of the ship into the wonderful, deep and almost land-locked bay by the gaily dressed native war canoes — the once-dreaded piratical *Bandarese belangs*.

The little township of Neira consists of small white-painted houses rising in terraces against the green slopes of a rocky island at the head of this little lake-like bay. A curious feature of the landscape is a

building standing on the summit of a hill above the town. It resembles a mediæval castle with stone battlements and round turrets. It is the great deserted Belgica Castle, one of the few remaining evidences of early European occupation.

I spent the first day ashore visiting a nutmeg garden. There are few places in the world where such fine specimens of these nuts are to be found. After being plucked, they are split open and separated from the shell, and then exposed to the action of smoke for a few hours. The outer shell, or mace, is dried in the sun on wicker traps, and is of a rich red colour. In order to protect them from insects, the nuts are chalked before being packed for shipment.

“These islands are particularly noted to-day for their beauty and wonderful tropical scenery, and it is difficult to realise that no longer than some 400 years ago this region formed the bone of contention, leading to long and bloody wars between several of the principal countries of Europe. The inhabitants are mostly of the Malay race along the coasts, with a Papua-Melanesian population in the central parts of the islands, whither it has been driven by the more virile and warlike coastal Malay.”

“These Moluccas, the spice islands of a former day, opened the history of the East Indies, so far as Europe was concerned. Their principal products—nutmegs, mace, cinnamon and cloves—were formerly carried by native Javanese sailors out of Gresik (the present Grisee, near Surabaya), from Banda and Ambon to ports in British India. Originally the spices were brought from India to Europe by caravans over the desert, and came into commerce from the Levant through the Venetian and other seafaring

Mediterranean merchants. Later, some of the Greek ships put into Portuguese Goa, and still later the spices were brought to Portuguese Malacca, and the Portuguese became the spice purveyors of Europe through the distributing medium of the Netherlands merchants.” *

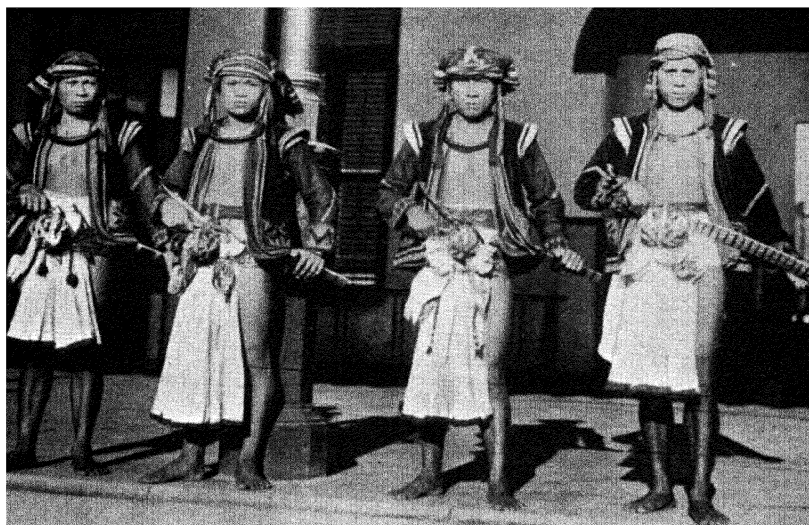
Chartering a native outrigger canoe I put to sea one calm day to view the underwater gardens for which these islands are particularly famous. It is essential that one should pass over the coral reefs when the surface is entirely free from ripples, and for this reason I was advised to make the expedition by canoe and in the early morning. There are few more delightful sensations than sitting in the warm, but not too hot, early sunshine, listening to native canoemen crooning a wild song as the light craft skims over the glass-like surface of the gold-blue water.

Suddenly the paddlers ceased dipping their blades and pointed down into the clear depths. There was no need, for I had already noticed the shoaling of the sea and the appearance of coral of all shapes, sizes and colours. For some time we lay motionless above this enchanting picture. Brown, grey, yellow and pink spires, fans, branches and beds, the amazing work of the little coral polyp, formed the floor of a sea which resembled a layer of shimmering crystal. A few white patches showed where the dead areas were being built round and covered by the untiring submarine constructors of tropical seas. On the coral itself rested black trepang, purple sea-stars, and greyish blue sea-hogs covered with sharp spines which, if touched by the human hand or body, break off at the points and set up violent inflammation.

* Bulletin of Netherlands-Indies.



A NIASSER WAR DANCE—DUTCH EAST INDIES



YOUNG NIASSER WARRIORS IN DANCING DRESS—DUTCH EAST INDIES

Facing page 24—5.



NIASSER WARRIOR IN
FULL DRESS



NATIVE WOMEN—ISLAND OF KISAR

Before leaving this beautiful little island, I obtained a glimpse of the barbarism which lies dormant in these people of a southern sea. The occasion was a celebration in honour of the appointment of a high Dutch official to a post of importance in the Government of the Moluccas. The event was a *tjakalélé*, or sham fight. To describe a native dance is always difficult, and in this case it becomes particularly so, because the greater part consisted in wild springing, thrusting at imaginary enemies with spears, and much savage yelling. The warriors were dressed in curious old armour and carried large shields and spears. There appeared to be a great many complicated movements and formalities, during which these natives, but little removed from the pure uncontrollable savage, worked themselves into a frenzy of excitement. This, combined with their barbaric dress, gave to the performance an appearance of reality not altogether devoid of native splendour.

After the *tjakalélé* there was a more peaceful *Menari* dance by the young girls of the native villages around. Although there was nothing unique about this portion of the day's entertainment the native orchestra, with its curious instruments, and the chorus which was sung by those who were not dancing, had a plaintive melody. Many months later this scene was brought to mind by a *hula* dance to the "*Aloha*" of Hawaii.

While steaming out of Banda Bay, we were accompanied by several native *prahus*. These giant canoes, about ninety feet in length, have carved and decorated ends, at the extremity of which there is an ornament resembling a lantern. One vessel had a raised platform fixed in the centre, and on this dancers were

performing. The war drums and rattles sounded far over the still waters, as many paddlers dipped their blades rhythmically in a wild endeavour to keep these ancient craft abreast of the departing steamer.

Islands of beauty and romance lie but a few hundred miles to the south of Banda Neira, but steamship communication with them is maintained exclusively by a Dutch line which operates from the western end of the Archipelago, and I was therefore compelled to pass them by on the way to Singapore. Some time in the future I may return to this beautiful green garland of the Equatorial seas. The tales told by chance acquaintances met on the world's highway form one of the pleasures of travel, and generally whet the appetite for further adventures or stimulate one's desire to come again to the pavement's end. And so it was of Flores, Ceram, Timor and little Kisar, the islands I could not reach. Here are some of the stories told concerning them by the Dutch traders who live their lives afloat amid this tropical archipelago.

Flores is civilised. It has a road which winds from north to south of the island no less than three times. This amazing highway is over 600 miles in length, and is said to be the most beautiful scenic road in the world. At one moment the traveller is perched on the top of a mountain, and the next he is down again at sea-level. For miles the track is hewn out of the rock, and resembles a mountain pass in a tropical Switzerland. There is an active volcano, Goudon Keo, the smoke from which often causes a wayside fog. Up in the mountains, to which this highway leads, there are the crater lakes of Geli Mutu. Two of these mountain pools are separated from each other



CHIEF IN FULL WAR PAINT—DUTCH NEW GUINEA

Source: *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*

Facing page 26—5.



WARRIORS—ISLAND OF KISAR

only by a narrow volcanic wall. The waters of one are blood-red, and those of the other a vivid green, while a third lake, which lies some distance away, is of a pale blue colour. When seen from above in the vivid sunlight, this contrast is said to be unique in the world.

Still farther along this romantic road, towards the western end of Flores, one comes within easy walking distance of the only remaining specimens of the legendary dragon. These great carnivorous land-lizards, known as the "Dragons of Komodo," often attain a length of six feet. Their forked tongues and long claws give them an uncanny appearance. They are only to be found in western Flores and in the nearby island of Komodo, from which they take their name.

Here is a curious story concerning the isolated little island of Kisar, situated off the north-east coast of Timor. About 200 years ago a garrison of Dutch soldiers was entirely forgotten by their Government, and were left on this tropical islet unrelieved and unremembered. This story is the more surprising when one learns that a stone fort had been built for their reception. In the course of years they intermarried with the natives, but no ship from Europe called at the island for nearly a century, by which time their very existence had been forgotten in the far-away Fatherland. When news concerning them eventually reached home, it was too late to remove their sons and grandsons; and to-day, living in Kampong Kota Lama, near the ruins of old Fort Delftshaven, there are some 200 members of this half-caste race living a life of strict exclusion from the native population of Kisar. Many of these still bear the European names of the original marooned garrison.

CHAPTER VI

AT THE CROSS-ROADS OF THE EAST

IT is Singapore, "The Cross-Roads of the East," an irregular line of buildings and docks fringing the low, green-encompassed shore facing the golden waters of Keppel Harbour, with its trim mail-boats, grim-looking tramps and picturesque, but unwieldy, lateen-sailed junks and *sampans*. This port ranks next to London and Hong-Kong in the average amount of European shipping annually entering and clearing. It is the maritime junction for the sea-borne trade of the East Indies and for vessels going to and from Europe, the Far East and Australia. The town itself, which is situated only seventy-seven miles north of the Equator, has a population of about 300,000.

The island of Singapore, with an area of 217 square miles, is really the southernmost point of the continent of Asia, although divided from the mainland by the Strait of Johore. It is on the Singapore side of this two-miles-broad waterway that the new British naval base is being built. No one who has travelled in these seas can doubt for a moment either its strategic position or its importance in the scheme of Empire. However, I have dealt so fully with the political, economic and geographical aspects of Singapore in a former work—"The Encyclopædia of

the British Empire"—that it is unnecessary to say more on this subject in what is intended as a personal record of things seen and heard during my twenty years of wanderings along the highways and byways of the world.

As the vessel on which I was standing drew close to the quayside, I gazed down upon an extraordinary scene. The sharks were waiting for victims; not the carnivorous monsters, whose black fins I had seen above water two miles out in the Straits of Malacca, but the land variety one meets on the docks and quays of almost every great seaport in the world. In some cities they are drab, surly creatures; not so, however, in Singapore. The Malay is certainly averse to hard work, but he is a laughing and good-tempered fellow; while the Chinaman from the Southern Provinces is mysterious, but always suave. Having crossed the gangway I was immediately besieged by sellers of Malacca canes, cigars, cigarettes, ebony elephants, Chinese and Japanese silks and models of junks and *sampans*. With an effort I broke free, only to find myself in a hastily rigged bazaar on the quayside, complete with booths, touts, and all the nondescript wares of the East.

Although one is inclined to become angry with the eager, seething hordes around, there is really much of interest to be learned with a little patience and a lot of tact. A man wearing a pillar-box hat of red cloth covered with sequins and an embroidered jacket of blue and gold is trying to sell me some precious stones from a large velvet case, which is glittering with the reflected light from many coloured crystals in little nests of cream plush. I am laughingly sceptical of a fine stone which changes colour from

sapphire to ruby-red on being moved from sunlight to shadow. The grave dark face of the seller assumes a pained expression as he handles the gem in the approved Western manner, with the aid of a long pair of silver pincers. He assures me that the stone is a real one, and is cheap for three dollars gold, or fifteen shillings English money. His ideas of the rate of exchange do not impress me favourably. In sheer desperation he takes the stone and places it on the ground, stamping vigorously on its gleaming surface. With a triumphant smile he picks it up, insists upon my holding it in the palm of my hand, while he explains that if it were glass it would not stand such treatment. I have, however, seen remarkable imitations of all kinds of precious stones made in the electric furnaces of Czechoslovakia, and I pass on to a seller of Malacca canes. Here my education is continued. Apparently no cane is genuine unless it has a ridge down one side, and its value depends very largely upon its markings. Yes, there are imitations. Beautiful brown designs are sometimes painted on a plain fawn cane, and so the eager seller spits lustily and with perfect accuracy on to the cane I am examining and invites me to see if I can rub away the mottled patches. I decline to try, but succeed in purchasing another cane for half the price asked.

Realising that all day could be spent in this little offshoot of the great bazaars in the near-by city, I make a determined effort and climb resolutely into a waiting motor car. With much hooting of the horn and twisting of the wheel we get free of the docks and the interesting sharks which infest them, only to meet a stream of buffalo-carts, motors, rickshaws, butcher-blue-clad Chinamen, and *sarong*-clothed

Malays in Beach Road. Each race has its *kampong* in this great city. Here is the Chinese market, surrounded by miles of narrow streets and bazaars, gay with the perpendicular coloured signs and banners of old Cathay. Some of these thoroughfares are very sordid-looking, but they are all interesting if one pauses for a moment to obtain glimpses of the life of this hard-working, economical people, who comprise over seventy per cent. of the total population of Singapore. Smiling merchants display elaborate silks in dingy booths, while wrinkled and yellow-skinned labourers in huge straw hats display their nakedness or filthy rags in the roadway outside. It is the amazing East, never the same and yet unchanging through the centuries.

China disappears entirely when the business centre of this great seaport is reached. In and around Raffles Square one is back again in an English city, with stores, shops and well-dressed crowds. Only the moist heat, of about eighty degrees Fahrenheit in the shade and 140 degrees in the full glare of the sun, prevents any particular inclination to walk beyond the arcaded streets of this fine central shopping district. Cars and rickshaws are everywhere. Hundreds are parked all day long in the centre of Raffles Square.

This atmosphere of home passes away as quickly as it comes when the Malay streets are entered. Here there are many Indians, Javanese, Klings, Dyaks and even Japanese, as well as natives of the Malay Peninsula; and the sandal-wood-perfumed atmosphere mingles pleasantly with the odour of burning joss-stick. Benares work is shown alongside paintings on silk from Nippon. Siamese pottery, birds of

bright plumage in wooden cages, ivory carvings and curios innumerable, all seem to be piled in an inextricable confusion in porticoed and stall-like shops, to which it would be impossible to assign a trade.

When the native towns of Singapore have been explored, there is the "City of *Sampans*," in a little pool of the great harbour. Here a population of many thousands live beneath the matting roofs of the moored boats. Whole families are crowded into a few square feet, and, I was told, some of these water-dwellers never come ashore for more than a few hours at a time.

Driving out one day through a tropical garden city of European bungalows, I followed the coast road to Sea View. Here there are several fine hotels and a bathing-beach. This little resort is a favourite place during the week-end, and a dance in the principal hotel there, with the cool trade wind rushing through the palms, gives some idea of European life in a tropical city.

CHAPTER VII

IN AND AROUND SINGAPORE

WHILE in Singapore, I was fortunate enough to be invited to stay in the house of a local resident. At about five-thirty in the morning one is awakened by a few words in Malay, and the whitish-gloom of the mosquito net gives place to stray gleams of pale sunshine through the parted curtains and the open shutters of the unglazed window. *Chota hazri* stands ready on a little table by the bedside. Human activity begins early in the East ; unless dressing has been finished before eight o'clock, each garment becomes wet and sticky almost as soon as it is donned. By the time one has bathed and dressed, the sea, which is visible between the broad-leaved coco-nut palms, is tinged with golden light, the bougainvillæa is reflecting colour on to the veranda, and one is glad of the shade afforded to the eyes by the broad brim of a solar topee when the sun strikes a mass of red blooms hanging like a curtain from the yellow wall. The house would be called a large bungalow in any Western land. It has two storeys, eight rooms, no glass in the windows and broad verandas. At night the shutters can be closed, but the air circulates freely through the slats and under the doors, which are raised a few inches from the floor to encourage a draught.

Shopping is largely a matter of ordering fruit, tinned meat, chicken, fish or other civilised requirements, and signing a *chit* for the purchases. No one seems to carry any money. At the club one signs for drinks ; in the hotel, personal wants are provided in return for a scribbled initial ; and, I am told, even the contribution in church on Sunday morning takes the form of a visiting card, duly marked with the amount of the gift. Every month a few anxious hours are spent redeeming these promises with the aid of cheques.

There is no afternoon in Singapore. *Tiffin*, or lunch, is followed by a sleep until the sun has decreased in violence, and one bathes and changes for tea, or, more probably, for a drive to the club, a game of tennis, a drink or two, dinner and, perhaps, a swift run in the car along the sea road with a deliciously cool, but not cold, wind blowing in from the moonlit ocean and stirring the broad-leaved banana and tall casuarina trees.

Singapore is a free port, and it is often possible to purchase the wares of both Occident and Orient at prices cheaper than at any other civilised centre east of Suez. Replenishing kit takes a long time, and when this had been accomplished I chartered a car and drove across Singapore island to the native state of Johore. In the Botanical Gardens, passed *en route*, the monkeys are so tame that they come down from their beloved tree-tops to the roadside to beg prettily for nuts.

On the roads of the island I met innumerable carts laden with pineapples, and copra seemed to be helping the planters to survive the terrible slump in the price of rubber, the principal product of the whole Malay Peninsula, with its population of about three

and a half million people. These coco-nut palms add considerably to the beauty and tropical character of the scenery. They vary in height from seventy to a hundred feet, and their feather-like fronds of delicate green colour droop down from the light brown trunks for a distance of ten to fourteen feet. At the age of about fifteen years a coco-nut palm becomes self-supporting. It commences to yield fruit. When it reaches maturity, some seventy or eighty nuts a year can be counted upon ; and, if kindly treated, each palm should live to be a centenarian. The dried kernel of the coco-nut is *copra*, which is used in steadily increasing quantities for the manufacture of soap, oil, candles and other requirements of civilised life. This wonderful palm has over 180 other uses, however. It provides the native with leaves for thatching, fibre for basket-making, timber for house-building, bark for tanning, shells for the fashioning of utensils, roots for the extraction of medicinal essences, fibre for twisting into ropes and twine and matting, hair for brushes and intoxicating liquor for drinking.

After passing through the little village of Seletar, with its evil-smelling rubber works, a stretch of jungle led to the shore of the Johore Strait. A causeway about 3,455 feet long has been built across this waterway, which divides Singapore island from the mainland of the Malay Peninsula. In the centre of this costly highway, built during the years when both the states of the Peninsula and the port on the island were enjoying the prosperity of a rubber boom, there is an immense swing bridge. This gap in the stone causeway enables ships to sail round the back of Singapore island to the naval base, which lies about five miles eastwards of the bridge.

Crossing to the mainland, I passed through the little town of Johore. What impressed me most about this place were the smart uniforms of the State police and the *laissez-faire* life in the little bazaar street. Here, again, John Chinaman seems to have firmly established himself as a retail trader. Looking back towards the Strait I could see bamboo posts, from which fishing-nets were suspended, sticking up from the placid surface in many shallow places. The natives of every South Sea island seem to have devised the most ingenious methods for catching fish. In Burma there is a certain kind of trap in use, whereby the fish is deceived and is made to commit suicide. Here, in Johore, nets are spread from a scaffolding of bamboos, and it is only necessary for the fisherman to put out occasionally in his canoe, draw up the submerged "cod," or culminating point of the cone-shaped net, in order to obtain a supply not only sufficient for his own needs but also to carry on some sort of trade or barter.

Winding up a long hill through the most beautiful gardens, I came to the picturesque white and blue palace of the Sultan of Johore. It is a curious mixture of the Orient and the West and stands boldly on the top of a hill, surrounded by well-kept gardens and overlooking the shimmering waters of the Strait. How long I stood beneath the trees in front of this palace, enjoying the scented jungle breeze and the superb view, I cannot say. Before I left, however, the western sky was full of russet and magenta clouds, which were reflected in the waters of the Strait. Only the topmost cupolas of this Eastern ruler's jungle-fringed mansion were catching the lurid flames of the dying tropical day.

From the near-by mosque I gazed northwards over the endless leagues of jungle and plantation, already veiled in purple mist. Here and there lights twinkled in the far distance, denoting the estate of a rubber-planter in this erstwhile home of sylvan gold.

The Malay States fall conveniently into two categories—the Federated and the non-Federated. There are four of the former kind and five of the latter variety, of which Johore is one. They are all under British protection, but those who have not entered the federation remain under the jurisdiction of their own native rajahs, suitably guided by a British adviser. Portions of the sea-coast on the Indian Ocean side of this peninsula form the five little territories known as the Straits Settlements, which, collectively, is a British colony, with headquarters in Singapore.

The island of Singapore was just a jungle-covered waste when that great empire-builder, Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, hoisted the British flag over it in the year 1819. In the century or so which has since elapsed this worthless island has become a cultivated little land, the nucleus of a vast Malayan dominion, with one of the busiest ports in the world on its southern shore. British brains, foresight and capital, with the aid of Chinese labour, have made of this place “the turnstile of the East.”

There are some curious things in Singapore which I only discovered just before leaving the city. No matter where one travels, it is always the thing *missed* which afterwards seems the most worth seeing. Although I did make a journey to the new temple, with its colossal marble statue of Buddha, it was not until Singapore had faded into the haze of the calm

monsoon in the South China Sea that I learned of its little fleet of high-powered motor cruisers, maintained by the Government, for stopping rubber-smuggling. Those in command of these little warships might have been willing to swap tales of submarine hunting in the Arctic seas for their stories of exciting nights along the jungle-fringed shores of Malaya.

I visited a rubber estate, but they told me only of the early morning inspection of the coolies, of the tapping process—at which the Indians are the most successful—the collection of the latex in vats, its coagulation at the store, the washing and preparation of the *crêpe*, sheet and block rubber, the old smoke method of drying, and the latest chemical processes, and the final packing of the finished article for shipment.

In Singapore itself I saw one of the most efficient police forces in the East. Many of these men are Sikhs from the Punjab, tall, with bushy black beards, and dressed in khaki uniforms. Even here there is a curiosity. Several of the police on point-duty control the traffic by means of large railway signals, made of light wicker work, which are strapped across their backs. By the simple means of turning half-right or half-left the traffic is stopped or allowed to pass at the cross-roads.

Singapore is not an easily governed city ; in it there are congeries of many Asiatic races. The Chinese came to work in the tin mines, and many made sufficient to afterwards become retail traders in all parts of Malaya. There are several Chinese millionaires living in luxurious and ornate houses, amid the flowers and palms of the seaside suburbs. Tamils from Southern India may be seen labouring

on the roads, at the erection of buildings and on the dock-sides. Malays fill many of the positions of minor responsibility in the offices and Government. Order is maintained very largely by Sikh police ; and the European directs operations in many different tongues. Singapore is an amazing medley of peoples, and upon its coco-nut-fringed shores the surf of Eastern ideas beats constantly upon the rocks of Western institutions.

CHAPTER VIII

SEEN IN SIAM

BANGKOK is unique. It still retains those amazing contrasts of extreme brilliance and appalling drabness which constitute the lure of the Orient. If I were asked where the true East begins when coming from Europe—excluding that amazing assembly of states and peoples we call India—I should say unhesitatingly right here in the capital of Siam, one of the most fascinating cities on the shores of Southern Asia.

When the silt-filled Menam River, with its low jungle-covered shores and its palm-thatch huts raised on stilts above the flood-line, has been negotiated from the open shark-infested Gulf of Siam to the little port of Paknam, one obtains a foretaste of the unusual interests to come. A seat in a clean electric train enables the tropical scenery and the primitive villages through which the line passes on its way to the capital to be enjoyed in comfort.

Siam is a native kingdom, with an area of just over 200,000 square miles. It has an Indo-Chinese population of about twelve millions, with Buddhism as the State religion. At Paknam the latitude is only five degrees north of the Equator. So fierce are the solar rays that I was glad of the protection afforded by a helmet when looking out through the open

carriage window. This little river port forms the front door of Bangkok. Very few ocean-going passenger steamers can proceed up the shallow Menam River as far as the capital. I had landed by tender, and a cursory glance at Paknam was sufficient to destroy any desire to stay there for even a single night. It is composed very largely of wooden quays, railway sidings, mosquitoes and native huts in little flower-bedecked gardens between creeks of muddy water shrouded in exuberant vegetation. Scarcely had the train left the station, however, before I realised that the journey was going to be an interesting one.

This portion of the delta of the Menam River is really a fertile Equatorial swamp. It is said that a thousand years ago the whole of the valley was beneath the waters of the Gulf of Siam, but that little by little the silt brought down by the Menam River caused the appearance of this still low-lying land above the surface of the shallow sea. It is everywhere covered by palms of many varieties and swamp grass. For many miles the line runs alongside or across a labyrinth of canals and creeks, which drain the water from the rice-fields and the patches of jungle.

These canals form one of the principal sights of the country lying between Paknam and Bangkok. Upon their muddy surface a considerable proportion of the people inhabiting the delta live an amphibious kind of life. One sees *sampans* laden with fruit and vegetables, tiny canoes in which semi-naked children are paddling to and from school, and rafts of teak and bamboo. At one little wayside stopping-place, where the houses of the villagers were merely thatched huts of palm-leaf and bamboo overhanging the creek, I

watched the housewives make their purchases by leaning over from their verandas as the laden market-boats passed by. The scene was a colourful one, for the natives of Siam delight in bright-hued garments and immense straw hats. Many of the boats had sunshades erected over the head of the paddler, and others were shielded from the fierce rays and the occasional heavy tropical rain by arched roofs of grass matting. Their peculiar shape and gaudy paintwork contrasted with the deep green foliage on the banks and the yellow-brown colour of the water.

Some miles before reaching Bangkok the scenery undergoes a change, rice-fields take the place of jungle-fringed lagoons and canals. Then come the suburbs of the capital—an amazing medley of squalid matting and adobe-brick huts lining unmade and dusty roads. A few years ago it was only possible to go from place to place in Bangkok itself with the aid of a canal and a *sampan*. Now, however, things are different. Motor roads have been built all over the town, but many thousands of the city's population still live on the numerous waterways which intersect the extraordinary native streets and bazaars. Such an important part does water transport still play in the life of the people that this town has often been referred to as the "Venice of the East."

Bangkok is a comparatively new city. It was founded about 166 years ago, after the former capital, Ayudhya, had been destroyed by the Burmese. It grew rapidly, however, and is now one of the largest cities in the Middle East, having a population of nearly 800,000. The Phya Thai Palace and its beautiful gardens formed my headquarters while in

Bangkok. From this surprisingly good and yet typically Siamese hostelry, I commenced my rambles through this city of amazing contrasts.

Resisting the temptation to go at once to the royal city of Aladdin-like palaces, I first wandered about in the mean streets of Bangkok. Only in Canton can this appellation be more truthfully applied to the teeming labyrinth of native houses and thoroughfares forming the live heart of an Oriental city. It is true that the bazaars of Bangkok are not encompassed by the miles of noisome and even deadly alleys through which one is carried by chair in the populous capital of Southern China, but they are, nevertheless, a revelation of the "meanness" of life for the ordinary people of a big Eastern city.

This portion of Bangkok could well be described as a study in sepia. There is a dusty and a musty look about the little open-fronted shops, the mud-brick houses and the roads. Even the people themselves are brown-skinned and often brown-clothed. If their complexions are not sepia, then they are yellow. If their clothes are not rust-coloured, then they will form an almost unnatural spot of colour which accentuates the drab surroundings. Many that one meets in the streets are scarcely clothed at all. Here is a scene which is typical of the East End or the "east side" of the Siamese capital. It is ninety-six degrees Fahrenheit in the shade, but in order to obtain this comparative coolness of atmosphere, while the sun is shining from almost directly overhead, it is necessary to leave the dusty roadway—where my pocket thermometer shows just over 158 degrees of heat—and obtain the shelter of a friendly doorway. It is from such a point of vantage

that I am watching the kaleidoscopic scene in the neighbourhood of Sampeng Lane, the centre of the wholesale trade of Bangkok. Here, as in most cities east of Hindustan, the Chinese are the traders. Great and lumbering country carts are drawn up alongside a crowded pavement. Coolies, naked to the waist and shining with perspiration, are loading bales of merchandise. The roadway is full of yellow and brown people. One man is carrying live ducks in two baskets slung from the ends of a bamboo pole, and it is amazing to see that these birds are not covered with netting, nor are they tied to keep them from flying away. Closely packed—so closely, in fact, that movement of their wings is a sheer impossibility—these ducks are being swung about and knocked by passers-by without any attempt to flutter, squeak, or even move their heads. It is a common sight in Siam, but, somehow, it never fails to cause wonderment.

The raucous cry of a food-seller draws my attention. A black iron pan, with glowing charcoal beneath, contains a number of brown-coloured cakes, which do not seem to be very popular. A woman and a baby come within my purposely restricted view. The pale yellow skin of the infant and the dark brown of its mother seem to point to a mixing of the races. This is a noticeable feature all over Bangkok. At a street tap three little naked boys are taking it in turn to have an East Indian bath. A coco-nut shell is filled with water by one, and poured over the head and shoulders of another, who then returns the cooling compliment.

Experience in many native streets has proved that it is impossible to concentrate attention on one

passer-by, or even upon a group, unless the viewpoint has a very restricted range of vision. Where there are a hundred pictures a minute, each strange and throwing some light upon a form of life never before contemplated, it is, indeed, difficult to keep one's eyes from restless and profitless wandering. Until a low voice spoke to me in the musical monotone of the Chinese language, I had not noticed that the doorway affording me both shelter from the sun and a limited vision was that of a vast silk store. Stepping out of the glare of the street, these semi-dark interiors present only a void until one's eyes become accustomed to the subdued light. Looking round this store-shop I handled costly silks, cheap and gaudy cottons, old mandarin dresses, tasselled hats and felt slippers. It is amazing the trouble that is readily taken by these Chinese merchants on the chance of a small sale.

Walking down Sampeng Lane into a very narrow bazaar near by, I came to the gold and silversmiths' shops for which this Siamese city is justly famous. Here I saw an amazing array of articles made of these precious metals. Among the more uncommon were ornamented and surprisingly expensive belts, betel-nut sets and curious urns, where the object of the craftsman must surely have been to make a little metal go a long way by creating a kind of cage-work design. Outside one of these shops a snake-doctor was attending to a patient. On this occasion, however, it was a boil on the shoulder of a child which was receiving treatment. A horn was placed over the sore, and the mouth of the doctor was then applied to the hollow tube, apparently with the disgusting object of sucking out the poison.

My wanderings in the neighbourhood of Sampeng Lane had a very definite purpose, however. I had been given an address and a guide, and yet we searched for nearly an hour before finding the back room, or really large shed, of a dealer in Siamese fighting fish. Surrounding a big glass bowl, upon which the fierce sunlight was streaming through a central opening in the roof, were many yellowish-brown faces. They were tense, silent and cruel-looking in the deep encircling shadows of the low-roofed building. No one stirred as we entered except a wrinkled old man, who pushed aside two engrossed spectators and placed seats for us to sit on within a few feet of the immense sunlit bowl of water. Before doing more than glance at the object for which we had come, I looked around at the twenty or more faces staring eagerly into the circle of light. It was a study in suppressed excitement. Eyes were being strained to watch each movement in the crystal bowl. Every now and then tension was relieved by a hissing murmur or the exchange of a few words in a vibrant, high-pitched tone by two men standing closer to the bowl than the remainder of the audience. It was evident that they were the owners of the fighting fish which were at mortal combat in the twenty-four-inch water-filled globe, and that they were betting heavily on their champion.

Turning my attention to the circle of light, I was amazed at the insignificant size of these remarkable fighting fish. Neither of the two combatants was more than three inches long when allowance was made for the slight magnification of the clear water. A curious feature of these fish is the way they change colour when in action. and their extraordinary

ferocity. Of a pale green shade, with long tails and side-fins, they have jaws almost as broad as their entire body. When two are placed together in the bowl their bodies change in colour to an iridescent pink. At first they seemed to circle round the glass arena like streaks of blood in the sunlight.

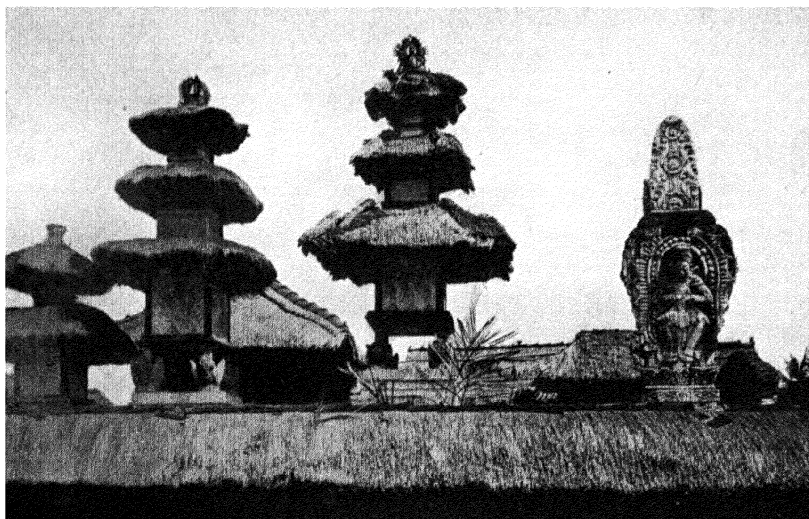
Lines of bubbles suddenly caused a momentary clouding of the water, and I found myself staring as eagerly and as painfully into the glittering ball of light as the yellow and coffee-coloured faces around. These little fish will tear each other to pieces the moment they are placed together with no outlet for the escape of the weaker one. At the actual moment of combat their bodies turn purple, but their tails lose the pinkish tinge of a moment before and revert to the original pale green.

Occasionally, by peering close to the glass, I could see the slightly bulging and evil-looking eyes of these bright-coloured little tigers of the Siamese waters. So swift were their movements, however, and so bright was the light reflected by the globe of water, that only the vision of one accustomed to watching these tournaments could have remained unimpaired. On several occasions during the half-hour of the fight, I had to rest my eyes by looking deliberately into the surrounding gloom.

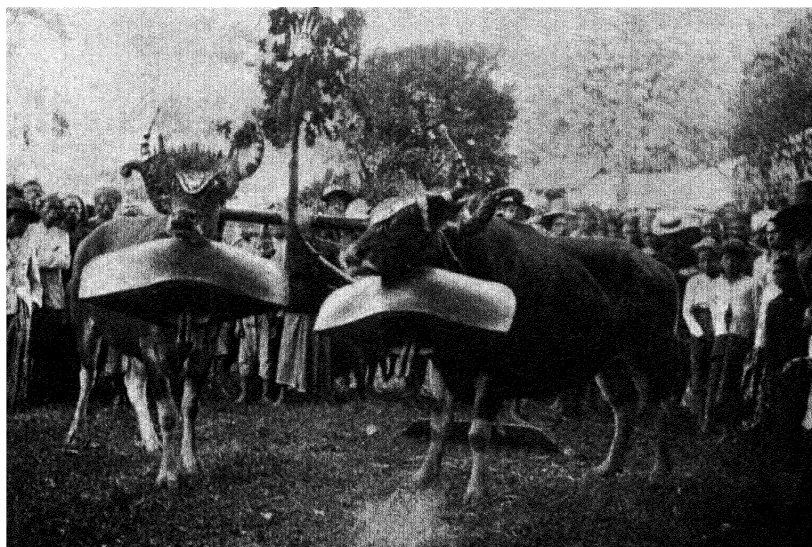
Suddenly there was a murmur of excitement and relief from the audience. Glancing quickly at the bowl I saw one of the little fish hanging almost perpendicular in the water—motionless, and in what appeared to be a mist of blood. The victor was no longer swimming lustily round the tank, but had gone as near to the surface as the neck of the globe would allow. It was moving its tail in an abortive

effort to press its head against the glass. The tension among the audience was relieved, and there was much chattering in the gloom. With the aid of a long-handled scoop, a man lifted the victorious fish from the watery arena into a small bowl held ready by a companion.

I learned after the combat was over that the winning fish is never able to fight again, and is used for breeding purposes only. It is the Siamese equivalent of the cock-fights of other lands and peoples. The owner of what promises to be a good fighter will wager almost everything he possesses on its achieving victory, and the betting among the audience is considerable. The eagerness with which these little fish are purchased from dealers makes it difficult to obtain any reliable information as to where they are found and how they are caught without injury. The old dealer in the Sampeng district of Bangkok said that most of the fish he sold were bred in the tanks outside the shed in which the fight had taken place, but this statement was contradicted by my Chinese guide, who closed his hands tightly to indicate that much secrecy surrounds the source of supply.



A PRIVATE TEMPLE IN THE GROUNDS OF A COUNTRY HOUSE—BALI

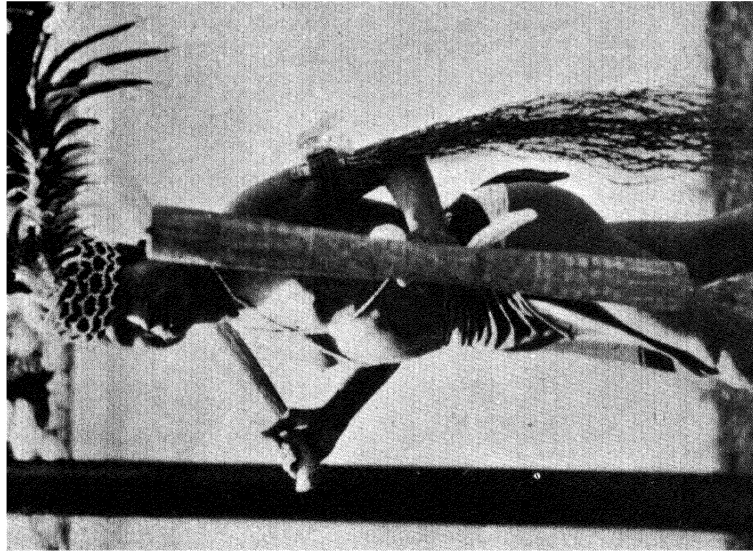


SACRED OXEN WITH LARGE WOODEN BELLS IN RELIGIOUS PROCESSION—BALI

Facing page 16—5.



•NATIVE WOMEN—ISLAND OF CERAM



WARRIOR IN WAR DRESS—ISLAND OF CERAM

CHAPTER IX

BANGKOK, THE BIZARRE

RECEIVING the necessary permission from the Ministry of the Royal Household, I went one morning to the Grand Palace and the Wat Phra Keo, which are surrounded by an ancient wall. These buildings were built in various years subsequent to the establishment of Bangkok as the capital of Siam in 1782 by King Rama I. One comes across marvellous buildings in many remote corners of the world, and it is always a doubtful point as to which of those seen can claim to be the most impressive, the most beautiful or the most interesting. I am inclined to believe that when one is in Moscow the Kremlin seems to take precedence. In England there are so many that the critical faculties become stultified. In Agra the Taj Mahal generally seems to surpass everything seen previously. When one comes to Bangkok, however, the amazing contrast between the drab dust-brown city and the glittering palaces of all colours and shapes within the royal enclosure stuns the senses. The sparkling green, gold, blue and red tapering spires, richly ornamented and carved domes and wildly grotesque figures seem to be unreal. Either one is walking in a city on another planet or else watching a stage play, where the imagination of the author has stimulated into amazing and fantastic activity the creative instinct of an artistic builder.

Passing through the gates of the Grand Palace, with its guard of Siamese soldiers, I stopped abruptly. There were buildings with raking roofs, beneath which every inch of the exterior walls were carved, frescoed, painted with intricate designs, supported by gold columns and flanked by amazing and hideous-faced gods. These were literally heaped round temples built completely of glittering green, blue and gold fragments of polished tiles. Every slender spire was surmounted by a point of gold, and one obtained glimpses of Buddha sleeping, reclining, meditating, exhorting and warning. These figures were of brass, alabaster and gold. In the holy of holies, however, there was one which had been cut from a huge emerald. It was some minutes before I regained command of my senses sufficiently to examine any of these amazing buildings in detail. Then, when the sunlight on the golden balls and the mosaic tiles hurt my eyes, I passed into the Wat Phra Keo, or Temple of the Emerald Buddha. Built in 1785, this unique building is the Buddhist edifice in which all the more important state ceremonies are held by the Siamese king.

In the dim light of the interior the gold pillars shone with subdued lustre. Far away at the end of the great hall an ornamental shrine led the eye upwards to where, beneath a gold canopy, a jewel gleamed with peculiar intensity. It was the famous Emerald Buddha, studded with other precious stones, and said to have been cut from a single gem. This latter statement is, however, somewhat doubtful, as no other emerald discovered has ever approached in size this little jewel-encrusted statue of Buddha. It certainly appears to have been carved out of a block of

jade, but every jewel expert in Bangkok assured me that it was a genuine emerald of colossal size, and has been valued at many millions sterling.

Great care is taken to ensure the safety of this most holy jewel. Not only is it necessary for anyone desiring to see it to obtain the permission of the Royal Ministry, but the statue is placed far above human reach. Near by, and in the charge of a priest, there is a long rope suspended from the ceiling which could be used to rescue the Buddha in the event of fire. The walls of the Wat Phra Keo are ornamented with mosaic glass cut into very small squares, and a kind of gold brocade with blue medallions, which throw into striking contrast the lustrous yellow columns. There is no vivid sunlight to render the interior garish. There are, in fact, no visible windows, and the light which filters through the broad entrance is sufficient only to reflect in stray gleams from the jewels and the precious metal.

There are so many palaces surrounding this temple that even a guide-book would fail to convey any idea of their number or their ornate but unique beauty. The wall enclosing them is over a mile square, and the interior is filled with buildings such as one expects to see only in a dream. The Chakri Palace is a three-storey building with magnificent and purely Siamese roofs, upon which the labour of years must have been spent by many artists and builders. To attempt to divorce one of these buildings from its neighbour for the purposes of description would be to create the impression that each structure forms a separate unit in the *coup d'œil*, whereas the impression I obtained was of a bizarre city of palaces and temples, linked by the most hideous gods of immense size and

by the most artistic gateways fringed by trees that it has ever been my lot to behold.

The King of Siam is a very enlightened monarch, and appears to rule his people in a way that they understand and appreciate. Bangkok has acquired all the amenities of civilisation without allowing any Western innovations to intrude or form a blot upon the Oriental horizon. From the Wat Phra Keo I drove to the Throne Hall, which was being prepared for an ambassadorial reception that afternoon. It is interesting to note that no visitor to any part of the royal city is allowed to enter these precincts dressed in any way which is considered disrespectful to either the Buddhist religion or the Siamese State. Such unconventional attire as knickerbockers, shorts, plus-fours, open-necked shirts or stockingless legs—however shapely—cause their owners to be refused admission, even when the “open sesame” of the Ministry has been obtained.

Expecting to see a building similar to the Grand Palace, I drove up the broad avenue of somewhat dusty pebbles, between lines of trees, past the statue of King Chulalongkorn and stopped at the entrance to a perfectly modern building in the Italian Renaissance style. Constructed entirely of white marble, brought from Carrara, it cost over a million sterling and took many years to build. The interior of this palace is decidedly striking, although the Throne Room has something of the atmosphere of a cathedral nave. The lofty arched ceiling is covered with paintings depicting episodes in the history of Bangkok. There is a lofty central dome through which a yellow light streams down on to the throne. The walls are of marble and gilt. Its most extra-

ordinary feature is the painting of Buddha receiving homage from representatives of every known religion and creed. Even the Christian faith is symbolised among the disciples of the "Enlightened One." Certainly this picture, upon which the light falls with striking effect, stimulates thought upon the curious similarity which exists in the scriptures of the great religions of both East and West. It is in this magnificent Hall of Audience that ambassadors of foreign countries are received by this Eastern monarch, whose face is screened from the vulgar gaze by an immense and glittering fan, and whose head is shielded from the sun by a gold umbrella when he is carried in procession through the streets of Bangkok in the royal palanquin.

From this it must not be supposed that the King of Siam is continually surrounded by barbaric splendour. It is, in fact, this curious mixing of the modern West with the ancient East which causes the Siamese capital to be unique in many ways. The king often drives about in one of his fleet of scarlet motor cars. He dresses frequently in European clothes, although his coronation dress is probably the most extraordinary of any monarch. His capital reflects this skilful blending of the two great civilisations of the modern world. There are parts of Bangkok which are so painfully modern and Western that I did no more than drive through them. Their one advantage over the towns which served as models is the provision of projecting roofs over the sidewalk, to afford protection from the fierce sun and the tropical rain. There are electric tramways and lights, telephones and telegraphs, up-to-date hotels and shops, but all these things belong to another Bangkok, a city which may have its attractions for the resident, but certainly not

for the traveller who regards with horror the day when cities, both East and West, will look alike.

There are sacred white elephants in a great paddock in the Dusit Park. Unfortunately, however, I cannot write enthusiastically of these immense albinos with light blue eyes. In the first place they are not white, but resemble an ordinary elephant after a wash down with chalky water. They are very sacred, and their lives must be rendered unbearable by the attention lavished upon them by their keepers. I was told that no others have ever been seen in the jungles of Siam. The common grey elephant is regarded as a beast of burden, and its load is usually a heavy one. In the teak forests of the vast interior, thousands of these immensely strong but usually docile and patient animals are employed in hauling the sawn logs out of the thick undergrowth.

Just beyond the elaborate building in which the white elephants are housed, there is an equally sacred snow-white and long-haired monkey. Inquiring of a priest why these animals are considered sacred, it was explained that even in the *uncivilised* West age is respected, because white hairs on a human being are a sign of the approach to the spiritual state. There are certainly more ways than one of regarding the simplest problem. Bangkok is, however, full of revered objects both animate and inanimate. In the Buddhist monasteries there are days when only the chiming of antique clocks, suspended from the ornamental roof, break the mysterious silence. Visit the same edifice on another occasion, however, and yellow-robed priests will be chanting prayers, or crowds of gaily dressed people thronging in for a feast or a sacred play.

The Wat Benchama Bopitr, a temple of white marble, is considered by the people of Bangkok to be the most beautiful "Wat" in the capital. It was built in the days of Chulalongkorn, and is consequently in the modern Siamese style. It contains examples of all the different forms in which Buddha is represented throughout Siam. Then there is the great Wat Aroon, or "Temple of the Dawn," with its five *prangs*, or spires, covered with innumerable fragments of highly coloured tiles which sparkle in the Equatorial sunlight and give this building the appearance of being studded with precious stones. The central *prang* is nearly 150 feet high, and from its summit I obtained a fine view over this great and fantastic Eastern city.

In the Wat Phra Jetubon, which is the largest temple in Bangkok, there is the immense Sleeping Buddha, inlaid with gold and pearls, as well as 400 smaller statues in the surrounding courtyard. However revered a god or holy man may be, his graven image ceases to interest when one has seen it reproduced in thousands of different ways, all with a sufficient similarity to present the popular likeness. I therefore left the remaining "Wats," and made my way into a snake-farm, where every variety of poisonous reptile found in Siam has its representative, in order that anti-snake bite serum may be prepared in the laboratory for despatch all over the country.

It is always necessary to rise early in order to see a market in full swing, and there are few places where the real life of a town or country can be studied to better advantage. With a roseate dawn colouring the eastern sky, I set forth one day in a motor launch to explore the remarkable river and canal bazaars of

the Siamese capital. To describe the jostle of boats, market women, gondoliers of every shade from yellow to black, and the amazing fruits, vegetables, flowers and fish is almost impossible. Everything and everybody comes and goes by water. There is no decaying vegetation left behind, because all refuse floats away downstream. Buyers often wade into the muddy water and stand submerged as far as their waists in order to make the most simple purchase. There is much shouting and many raucous cries in high-pitched tones. Many queer dresses are to be seen, but there are very few which are really colourful or artistic. The whole scene resembles a water carnival far more than it does a floating mart.

One hot afternoon during my second visit to Bangkok, I sat amid an international crowd of people on the lawn of the Phya Thai Palace, looking at an exhibition of Siamese classical dancing. The head-dresses of the graceful girl-dancers and the weird music were the interesting features of this performance. The actual steps and the marching round seemed to be repeated with somewhat monotonous regularity. In the School of Arts and Crafts, where young Siamese boys are trained in various artistic handicrafts, such as gold and silver work, pottery, leather-work and the making of furniture, I spent another interesting afternoon. There is something stimulating in being among youthful and enthusiastic creators of things beautiful, especially when the creations are often of barbaric conception and free from conventionality.

Although I did not penetrate far into the forest-clad interior of Siam, where there are few roads, I met several travellers who had spent many years in the north and centre of this fertile country. One of

these, with his wife, had come down from the distant interior in a bungalow erected on a bamboo raft. For several weeks this little house and its occupants had floated down a tropical river to Bangkok. The railways supply the deficiency in highways—they are extensive and well managed. Over 2,000 miles of track connect the capital with the principal towns of the interior, and also with the system which crosses the Federated Malay States to Singapore.

One of the most interesting places to visit outside Bangkok are the ruins of Ayudhya, situated about forty miles north of the capital. This place was the centre of Siamese culture from the year 1350 until the city's destruction by the Burmese in 1767. Although many of the ruins are covered with jungle growth, a sufficient area has been cleared to give some idea of their former glory. Then there is Lopburi, about eighty-five miles from Bangkok, where there are the ruins of a still earlier capital, which reached the height of its fame between A.D. 468 and 1350.

Although every new land visited provides the thrill of novelty, some exercise a strange fascination and leave an indelible mark on the memory. I had succumbed to the spell of Oriental Siam.

CHAPTER X

THE OLD AND THE NEW IN THE PHILIPPINES

IT is the fascinating combination of the old and the new which forms the subtle charm of Manila. I have come from Siam, across the China Sea, to this island of Luzon, chief among the 3,000 islets of the Philippines with their ten millions of people. A mere 1,460 miles of ocean have changed my outlook on life. The East has disappeared entirely, and in its place there is a beautiful city which presents a curious mixture of American efficiency, Spanish antiquity, and Filipino colour and life—of the latter I saw quite a lot within a few hours of landing.

Perhaps this is an opportune moment to say something of the disturbed conditions which have existed for many years along the frontiers of the East. The Englishman is liable to think that it is only in the Indian Empire that persistent unrest has existed. The resident in Cairo knows that things are not like they used to be, and the dweller in the Dutch East Indies bemoans conditions in Sumatra and Java. One of my first experiences in the Philippines was to see a posse of police with rifles going out for a country walk, and some hours later to witness the return of three patrol waggons full of ardent young coloured “politicians,” destined for Bilibid Prison. In the

great Chinese city of Canton I was shown gruesome photographs of recent horrors. Later on, in Northern China, I travelled with machine-guns and troops to the frontier of Mongolia. In Manchuria I went to war. Japan was in the throes of Shanghai fever, and even picturesque little Honolulu was astir with the news of a great fleet approaching this midway rendezvous between West and East. Only in the still far-distant South Seas, among races but little removed in the matter of time and inclination from cannibalism, did the war clouds roll away, leaving only the murmur of distant thunder across the blue Pacific to disturb the peace of the whispering palms.

The most interesting part of Manila is undoubtedly the old walled city of Intramuros, around which has grown up the fine and new American town of broad streets and avenues pulsating with life. The building of the old wall, many feet thick, battlemented and now lichen-covered, was commenced in 1590, some nineteen years after the founding of the city by the Spanish *conquistador*, Legaspi. I entered this old colonial town by one of the five remaining gates and found myself in historic Fort Santiago, overlooking the Pasig River.

Here was a world apart. Every stone seemed to speak of the days of the buccaneers, treasure-ships, cowed monks and armour-clad dons. The little vessels passing up and down stream below these battlements seemed out of place. I wanted to see rakish galleys with tall poops and the arms of Spain emblazoned on broad sails. Glancing down into the old fort itself, however, I watched for several minutes a sentry pace to and fro, while a group of soldiers lounged on a near-by seat: one was cleaning his

bayonet while the others looked on and smoked. So there was not so much change after all, despite the lapse of centuries. I had only to clothe these men differently in imagination, and the hands of time would move backwards very fast.

Down among the narrow streets I came face to face with some of the 2,000 Spaniards who still linger in the old haunts of their race; but their numbers compare very poorly with the 259,437 Filipinos and the 17,800 Chinese inhabiting the growing city beyond the old walls. Apart from the garrison, however, with its headquarters in Fort Santiago, there are barely 3,000 Americans in Manila, and only 600 English, so there is little cause for wonder in the old names of many streets, such as the Escolta, the principal shopping thoroughfare, the Calle Real, narrow, old, and forming one of the entrance ways into the walled city.

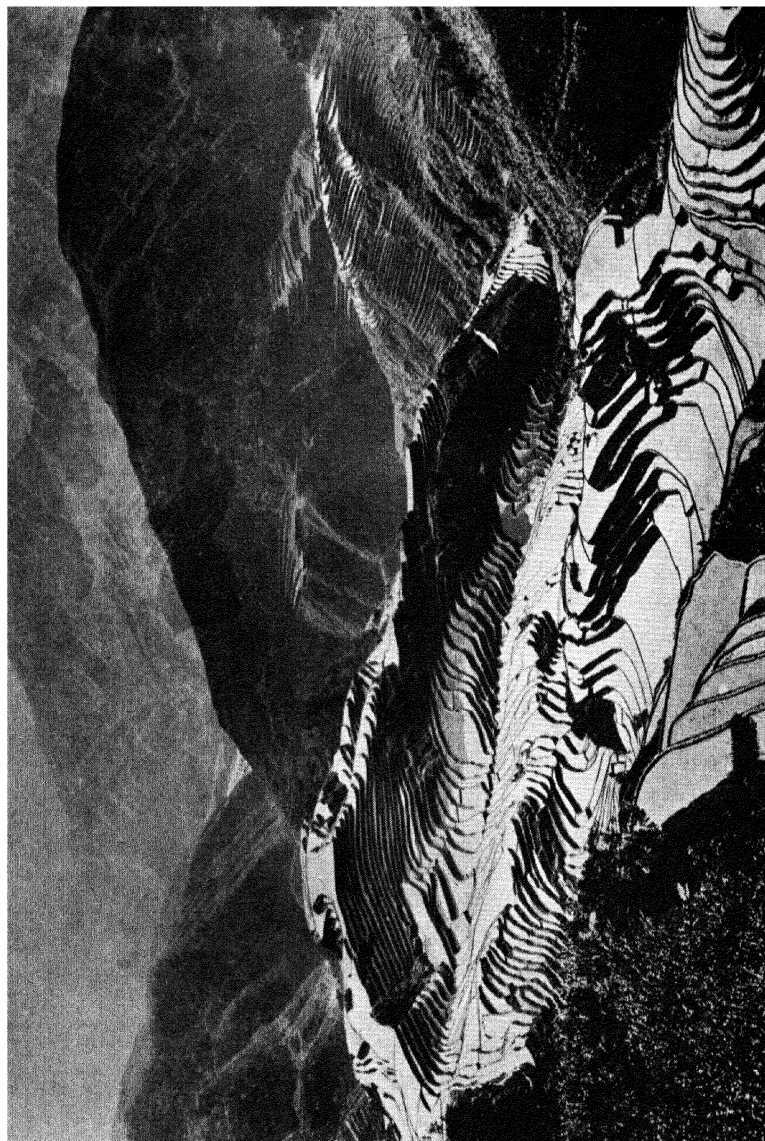
There is an atmosphere of permanence and tranquillity in the by-ways of Intramuros, which strikes one as remarkable after a drive through the noisy commercial streets of the new Manila. I stepped into the past when an old padre showed me around the Augustine Church, a relic of the late sixteenth century, and again when entering the Santo Domingo of the old Jesuits and the Recoletos, with its convent and monastery. The roar of traffic had died away, and the hurtful sun-glare filtered only through the narrow windows as I gazed at mellow paintings and upon dim carvings in wood and stone. In old-world *patios*, with vision limited to a cloister or a wall, and in the little by-paths only a few feet wide, there was an air of detachment from the world, which enabled me to feel the lure of old Manila.



MAIN SHOPPING THOROUGHFARE—MANILA



ONE OF THE FINE PROMENADES—MANILA



RICE TERRACES ON MOUNTAINS OF THE ISLAND OF LUZON

In this part of the town are the shops where the best Manila hats can be obtained. The making of these is largely a home industry, which has its centre in the little town of Baliuag, situated some forty miles north of the capital. Here entire families may be seen patiently plaiting the fine and pliable straw threads. The entire lives of these people are spent at this work, and its many little secrets are jealously guarded and handed down from one generation to another.

Curiously, the fibre or straw for the best type of hat, known as *balibuntal*, comes from a distant quarter of the island of Luzon. High up in the mountains is the picturesque little village of Lucban, and it is around this remote spot that the Buri palm grows so luxuriantly. From the fronds of this palm the fine straw is obtained. During the rainy season it is possible for the hat-makers to work all day long, because a humid atmosphere is essential, but in the dry months only in the early morning and the evening is the air considered to be sufficiently impregnated with moisture for really high-class work. Although an ordinary hat can be made in a week, I was shown examples in old Manila which had occupied an expert weaver for six months—such a hat may cost over £20. Unfortunately, the hat-makers of Baliuag and other villages in Luzon suffer terribly from impaired eyesight.

In the shops of the Escolta I was shown beautiful examples of old *piña* embroidery, very little of which now remains, and the art of making it is being lost rapidly in these days of machine production. It is handwork from beginning to end. *Piña* is made of silk-like threads obtained from the leaf of the pineapple

plant. The delicate little fibres are removed from the leaves and then dried. At the time of weaving, they are short lengths of somewhat stiff, glossy thread. Home-made looms enable these to be cleverly interwoven into lengths of *piña* cloth. The centre of this disappearing industry is the province of Iloilo. Here, also, the *jusi* cloth is made from the fibres taken out of the stalks of the banana plant. It is a material of coarser texture than *piña*, both of which are really types of native linen.

In the history of Philippine embroidery there is a pretty tale of romance. It is not of Malayan origin, although this exquisite work has been carried on by Filipino girls for many generations. When certain Irish women fled from the Emerald Isle because of the persecution of their faith, they entered French convents, and occupied the long years of renunciation in bringing to perfection the rose-and-heart patterns of embroidery learned in their far-away home. Many of these nuns eventually crossed the Pyrenees into Spain, from whence they were sent overseas to carry on religious work in the tropical lands acquired by Spanish arms. It was in the convents of Manila, during the sixteenth century, that this fine embroidery had its origin. Even to-day, in the convents of Looban, the Hospicio de San José, and in Santa Rosa, much fine work of this kind is still being produced, although by far the largest proportion of the embroidery sold to-day is made in the homes of the people.

In the pine-clad mountains of Northern Luzon, native fabrics are woven by the various races inhabiting these uplands which will cause any traveller who knows the Peruvian and Bolivian highlands to imagine

that he has made a great discovery. There is such a marked similarity between the designs and colours of these home-made cloths and those woven by the Aymaras on the roof of the New World that it must surely form another link connecting the Pacific peoples of East and West in the days when the world was young.

All these things, besides much wonderful wood-carving and cabinet work made by the primitive Igorote people, I saw in the stores and curio shops of old and new Manila. Then I went along to the Aquarium to see what Nature had to say about the seas around these Philippine Islands. It is no ordinary building, for the tanks are housed in a bastion of the city walls, with a delightful old-world garden in their midst. Not only the extraordinary colours of these South Sea fish create surprise, but the almost unbelievable shapes and forms. Then there are rare birds, snakes and sea turtles—all convincing proof that the big hotels and modern office blocks of new Manila are merely exotic growths which have accompanied the great blessings of sanitation and order into what is at heart just a wild South Sea island.

Wherever one goes in the Philippines, there is sure to be a water-buffalo somewhere in the vicinity. In the streets of Manila one sees these strong but extraordinarily patient and docile animals dragging heavy loads on the crude two-wheeled country carts. In the rice-fields the carabao drags the plough through the mud and water. On the farms and among the villages of thatch-huts, which are raised above the ground so that the fowls and animals may sleep in shelter below, this beast of burden becomes

also a purveyor of milk and meat. So important is his labour to the Filipino peoples that one must know something of his habits in order to understand the life of these islands, which have an area of just over 115,000 square miles.

The water-buffalo does not believe in speeding—his average rate of progress is about two miles per hour. Unfortunately his skin is somewhat sensitive to dry heat. It is said by medical specialists who have examined him that so thick is the hide that it lacks a sufficient number of pores. For this reason the *carabao* is most happy in the rice-fields, where he can have several warm mud-baths a day. Much of his spare time is spent submerged to his nose in a muddy pool. After the bath he allows himself the luxury of drying in the warm sunshine, and the contracting or drawing effect of the hardening mud-pack refreshes him so much during the night that he is able to work with renewed energy when the warm Philippine sun rises above the horizon of blue-grey mountains. He is a lovable beast in spite of his somewhat terrifying curved horns and immense shoulders. Filipino children are his special favourites, because they walk about with bare feet. Somehow he objects to white people—because of the noise made by their boots and shoes, and, if hearsay be true, he dislikes their smell.

This interest in the water-buffalo came after a week-end spent in the beautiful country surrounding the Mountalban Gorge, where the scenery is second only to the amazing sunsets and the peculiar native life of the countryside. Returning to Manila, I spent a most interesting afternoon at the Bilibid Prison. It was here that I saw patrol-waggon coming in laden

with political prisoners. Many of these seemed to be mere boys. I could not help thinking that there must be something very far wrong in the educational systems employed by both England and America in native countries like India and the Philippines that so many young discontents should be produced in lands to which the white man has brought so many advantages.

Passing through the massive gates and reception hall, I ascended a circular iron stairway and moved across a narrow platform above the cells and exercise yards of this great prison. All the iron grills are raised and lowered by a system of pulleys from look-out towers. It is impossible for a group of prisoners to overpower a guard, who does much of his work from a turret raised some thirty feet in the air. Coming to a central stand, from which a good view could be obtained of the main parade ground, I waited for the striking of a bell.

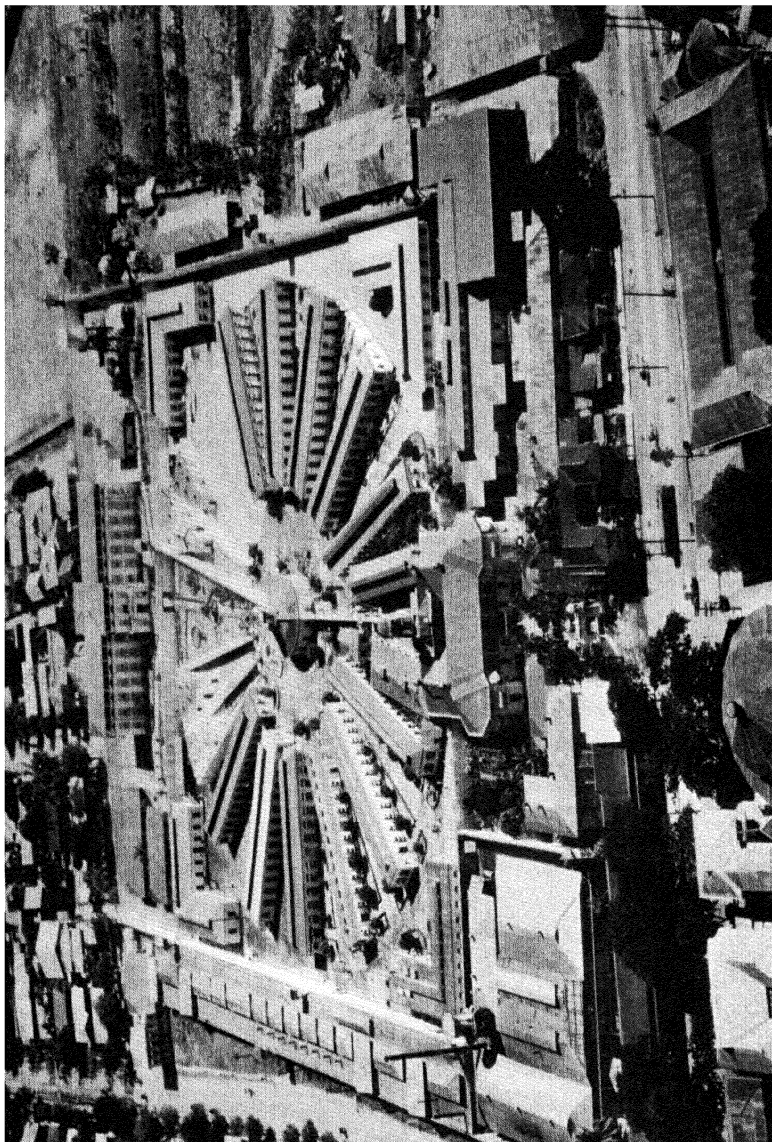
This is the signal for the prison band to march forth with a blare of trumpets and a rattle of drums. Behind comes a battalion of convicts. When the centre of the parade-ground had been reached, the United States flag was raised like a standard, the column of marching figures divided into two parts, and for half an hour these coloured criminals performed a most intricate and spectacular exercise which culminated in the "present arms" with imitation rifles, the raising of the flag, and the stirring tune of "The Star-spangled Banner" being played by a really excellent band.

There was, however, something very pathetic in this scene of mock patriotism. Undoubtedly it formed an enjoyable break in the monotonous lives of the

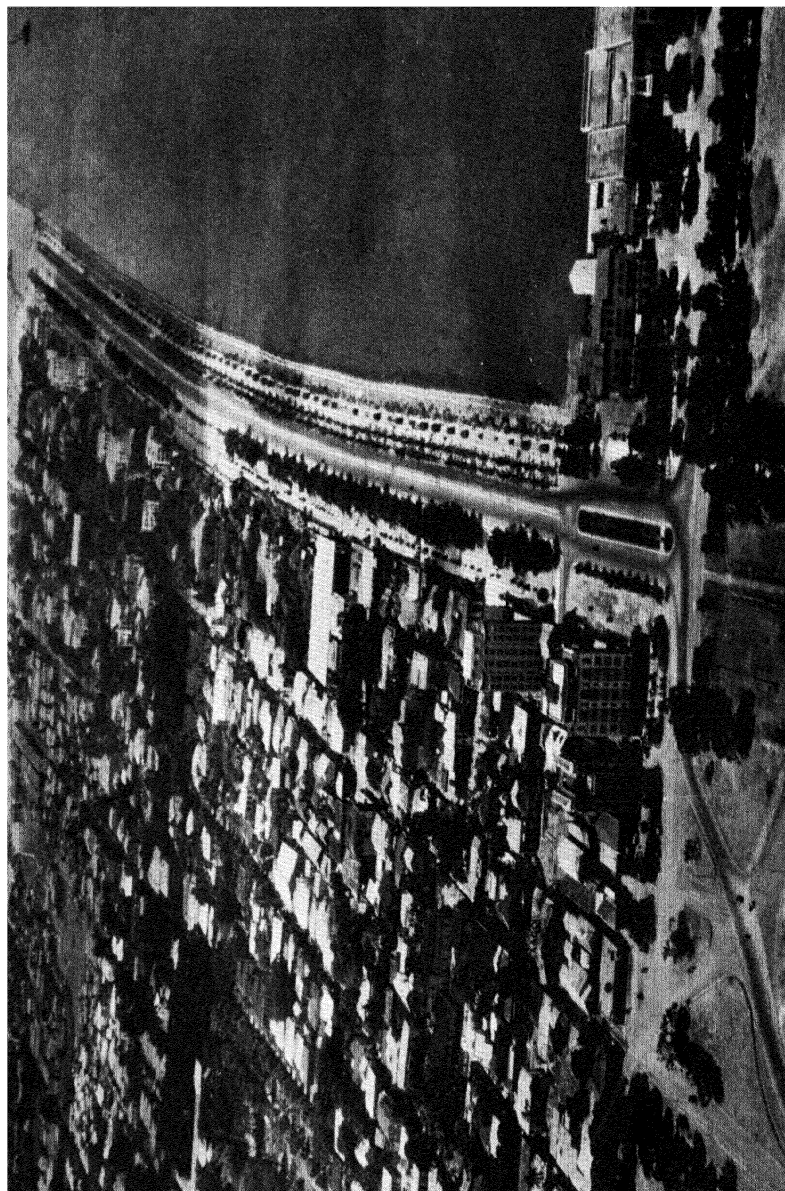
convicts, and gave an excellent incentive for exercise in the cool of the late afternoon—all this part of the ceremony was praiseworthy—but I could not help glancing down on to the other side of a dividing wall, where the haggard features of a Japanese murderer were pressed close to the bars of the isolated little house containing the condemned cells. There were several of these chambers of horror, and I was told that two were occupied. A little farther away a great black cross had been painted on a bluish-white door. The building to which it gave access was a tall white-walled cell standing alone ; in it was the electric chair.

Passing from the cells and courtyards into the amazing showrooms, where the work of the prisoners is piled up ready for purchase by visitors, I was amazed to find such a vast quantity of really excellent and ingenious furniture. Whole suites and amazing wicker-work chairs were offered for sale. These showrooms resembled a vast factory, and I was told that the money earned often provides a means of livelihood for the convict on his release. It is frequently sufficient to last him quite a considerable time. Moreover, a man who has learned his trade in Bilibid Prison is actually sought after by native manufacturers. Here it should be remarked, however, that there is no stigma attaching to a sentence of imprisonment among the Filipino people. Unfortunately, many of the crimes committed in these islands by the natives are of a violent character.

When passing out of Bilibid I chanced to glance between the bars of a cell in the entrance hall. Judging from the furniture, it would seem that this little apartment is used as a spare office. In it was



BILIBID PRISON—AERIAL VIEW



THE DEWEY BOULEVARD—MANILA

the horrible face of a half-Chinese half-Moro criminal lunatic. Although this visit to the principal penal colony of the Philippines was both interesting and instructive, I was glad to return to the streets of free men—only, however, to hear newsboys shrieking of fresh political disturbances and brutal murders. America has a big task in these turbulent islands. The weakness which for so long characterised British rule in India seems also to be paralysing the administration of the Philippines.

Why the main shopping thoroughfare of Manila should be one of the narrowest streets in the whole city presents a problem which is worth a moment's thought. In many towns I have noticed the same curious phenomenon. In distant Buenos Aires the Florida is barred to traffic at certain hours of the day ; in Rio de Janeiro the Ouvidor is permanently reserved for pedestrians ; the Rue de la Paix is certainly not one of the broadest streets of the French capital ; and Bond Street, in the heart of the world's greatest city, is so narrow and congested that one only drives through it in a motor car when compelled to do so. Perhaps it is the herd instinct of mankind, but whether this is so or not, it teaches a world-wide lesson that the largest and most magnificent thoroughfares are seldom the most popular.

In the Escolta I spent much more time than was necessary to inspect the goods in the really fine shops which border it, and when at last my car was manœuvred from behind *caromotas* and *calesas*, I drove out in sheer desperation along the road towards Fort M'Kinley. When the town had been left behind, many typical Filipino villages of nipa-palm shacks raised on bamboo poles were passed. One

could look through the unglazed windows of these flimsy houses and on to the broad verandas, where it seems that all the leisure moments of the native population are spent. There is no privacy ; and farther out in the country there are thousands of natives living the same primitive life as that of their forefathers.

Standing on high ground, and commanding a wonderful view far and wide over the country surrounding the capital, stands the largest post of the United States Army in the Philippines. Fort M'Kinley is well worth seeing, as it gives an idea of how well cared for are the troops of this great country. Wire-netting covered bungalows extend in a circle round the parade ground, the rifle range, the golf-course, the base-ball pitch, the swimming-pool, the tennis-courts, the reading-rooms, the various messes, the infantry and artillery lines, the hospitals and all that goes to make up a great military post. It differs in many respects from an Indian Army station. There are no native battalions, and all the buildings for both work and recreation are concentrated in an immense and almost unfortified area. Only some barbed wire and a few defence works protect this so-called fort, which really bears no resemblance to its title. Fort M'Kinley is a great and well organised military camp. If one would see more evidence of warlike preparations, then a three-hours' drive to Cavite, the headquarters of the Asiatic squadron of the United States Navy, with its fortified islands, guns, searchlights and ships, will provide that imposing spectacle.

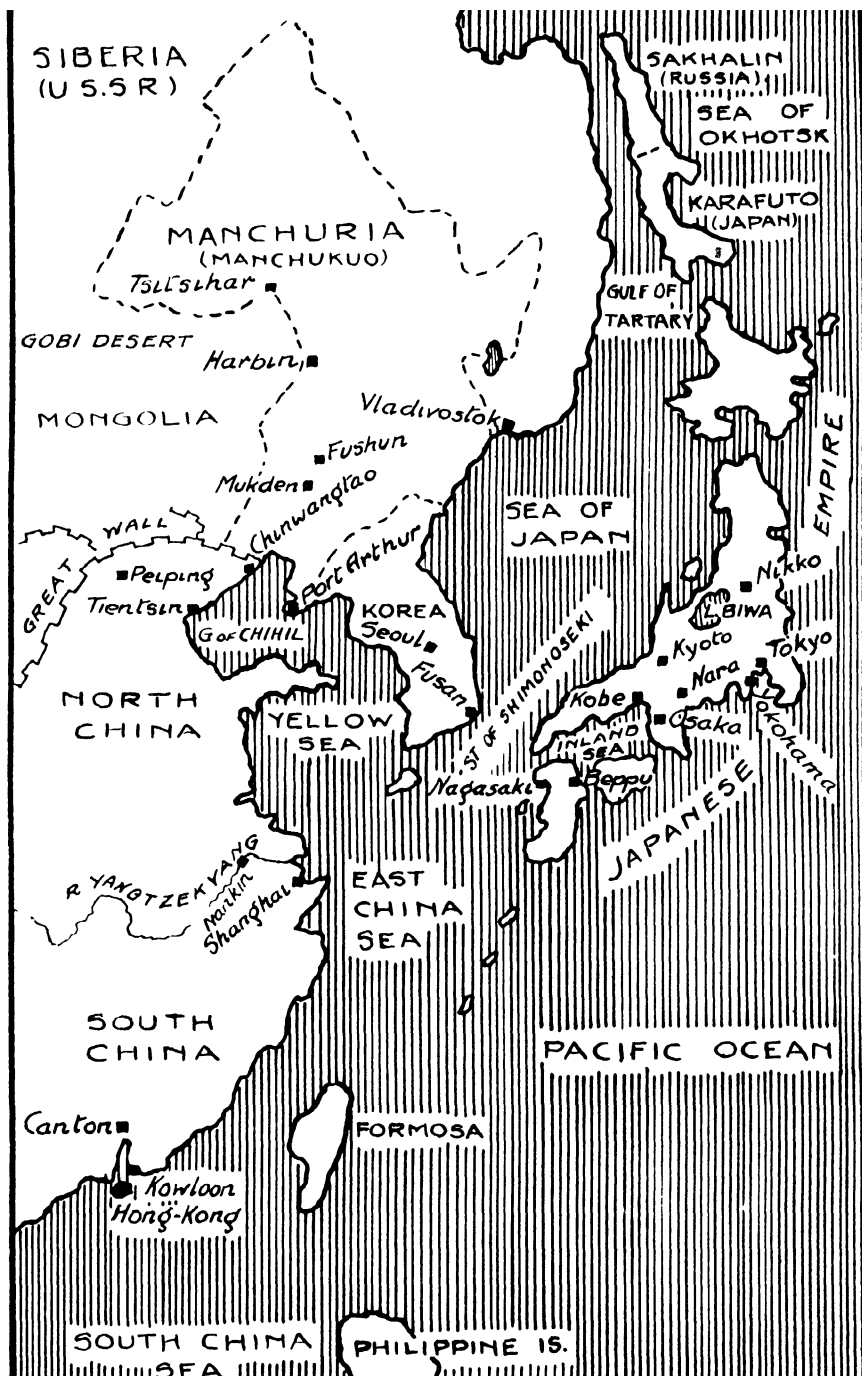
In this island of Luzon there are many other places redolent of old Spain besides the walled city of

Intramuros. One of these, passed on the way back to Manila from Fort M'Kinley, is the old Convent of Guadalupe, now a mass of creeper-clad ruins. I stood for some minutes beside the deep well, and walked over the grass between the old cloisters, listening to the birds in the trees. Somehow, there is an indefinable atmosphere of peace, which is not dependent upon location, in these relics of a bygone age. Their halo of romance will last as long as one stone remains upon another.

Away in distant Pagsanjan, about a hundred miles from the capital, I came upon something which provided a thrill. Falling into a pit of tropical growth, deep in the hill-jungle country, there is a most beautiful waterfall which can only be reached in a native *bancas*, or long canoe, made from a solid log. It was not the waterfall or the beautiful forest growth which appealed to me as unusual ; it was the return trip through the rapids in one of these dug-out canoes, wonderfully handled by the native paddlers as we rode on the waves between the green, leafy walls. These forests, which cover over sixty per cent. of the total area of the Philippines, supply enormous quantities of hard wood through the agency of well equipped lumber companies operating over a hundred mills. The wood is mostly used for cabinet-making, and is exported to many countries.

These islands have been called the " Land of the Palm and the Pine," but from what I saw in Luzon, the flame-trees, the poinsettias and, above all, the orchids, should be brought into any word-picture intended pithily to describe the Philippines. There are said to be nearly a thousand varieties of orchids, of which the Butterfly of Luzon must certainly be

one of the most beautiful. These are not just hot-house varieties, but natural blooms obtained in the wild jungles. Again, when steaming out of the thirty miles wide Manila Bay, the colourful skies reminded me that the Philippines also claim to be the land of flaming sunsets.



CHAPTER XI

HONG-KONG, THE DOORSTEP OF CHINA

“ **Y**OU may go to—Hong-Kong—for me ! ”

It seems incredible that these words of contempt for this beautiful island, which forms the gateway to China and the Far East, should have constituted the catch-phrase of an English popular song but little over half a century ago. In the days of sail it had a terrible reputation for typhoons, pirates, poisoners and malaria, which entirely obscured both its value and its extreme beauty. To-day all is different, and “ *Fragrant Stream* ”—which is the meaning of the words *Hong-Kong*—has come into its own.

The Lyeemoon separates this island from the mainland of China. As the vessel which has brought me from the Philippines steams up this broad and blue lagoon, flanked by wondrous hills and covered by queer little sampans and great lateen-sailed junks, with eyes painted on their bows to enable them to see their way across the ocean, I gaze up in sheer admiration at the mist-covered Victoria Peak and at the amazing city of this name which climbs its slopes. Down by the water's edge there is the shipping-filled harbour and away across the china-blue sea fantastic hills and real pirate isles dot the estuary of the Pearl River, the road to the teeming Chinese city of Canton.

Up to the year 1841 this little island, situated so near to the coast of Southern China that I can see it clearly as I write, possessed no recognised name. There was only a picturesque little fishing village, which was known to the captains of the square rigged ships of those days as Heun-Kong. Listening one day to a conversation in the club, I heard a student of Chinese emphatically deny that this meant "Fragrant Stream," although such a designation would seem to be peculiarly suitable for this most beautiful island. His suggestion was that it meant Heung's Harbour, the haunt of a notorious pirate of those bad old days. However this may be, the island became a British colony in 1841, and has made such immense strides forward since then that it is now not only one of the finest cities of the East and one of the busiest harbours, but also a pleasure resort for people residing far and wide along the easternmost marches of Asia.

After what is known as the Second China War, about two square miles of the mainland of the Kowloon Peninsula were leased to Great Britain in perpetuity. Then, in 1898, a further 386 square miles of this portion of China were acquired on a long lease, and are now called the "New Territory." Collectively, this Crown Colony is an important naval and military base for the protection of British commerce in South China, and, commercially, it is a prosperous receiving depôt for merchandise on its way to and from the great and populous republic of the mainland.

When viewed from the harbour, Hong-Kong presents a scene of exceptional beauty. The island itself is about ten miles long, and varies in width from two and a half to five miles. It is really a very



NATIVE STREET—HONG-KONG

Facing page 72—5.



NATHAN ROAD—KOWLOON



QUEEN'S PIER, FACING HONG-KONG HARBOUR

irregular range of hills rising abruptly from the sea to a height of nearly two thousand feet at the culminating point called "The Peak." Across the broad harbour, on the mainland of China, a similar range of hills balances the picture. Although the city of peculiarly square houses nestling at the foot of the Peak is often referred to as Hong-Kong, its proper name is *Victoria*, and it is the capital of both the island and the British territory on the mainland.

On the lower slopes between the hills and the sea are the half-European half-Chinese streets and houses of the maritime and commercial quarters. Above these crowded areas are the European bungalows, which seem to increase in both size and beauty as the eye ranges upwards, until at last it rests upon a beautiful garden-city on the mountain-tops, some fifteen hundred feet above the harbour. One of the houses nearest to the summit is Mountain Lodge, the summer home of the Governor. Just above this can be seen the slender steel masts of the wireless station, and then the summit of the Peak, 1,824 feet high, is silhouetted in misty green against the deep blue of the sky.

On the opposite side of the harbour stands the city and docks of Kowloon, which fade into a background of rugged blue hills. It would be difficult to find a flaw in this panoramic view of Hong-Kong from the waterway, and I hurried ashore in a launch, or *walla walla*, as these boats are called locally. Although the central portion of the city is entirely European, so far as the design of its streets and buildings is concerned, I had no sooner climbed the short incline leading to the great shopping thoroughfare, called Queen's Road, than I obtained my first glimpse of China—*albeit* somewhat modified by several massive

buildings, Sikh police and European sanitation. These things, however, did not in any way detract from the novel and picturesque scene. The population is largely Chinese, but there are a sufficient number of Indians and Japanese, not only to increase the bizarre appearance of the colourful streets but also—as I was very quickly told on mentioning this fact to a resident—the difficulties of administration. A short time before I reached Hong-Kong there had been a terrible massacre of Japanese, caused by the outbreak of the trouble in Manchuria and the appearance of Japanese troops in North China. Even when I arrived, picket boats with machine-guns were lying alongside the British warships in harbour, ready to reinforce the police should any further trouble occur between these two Eastern races.

Wandering along Queen's Road towards that part of the city which, quite unnecessarily, is called China Town, I met such a stream of Asiatic humanity amid such typically Oriental surroundings that it was difficult to believe this road to be the principal shopping thoroughfare of the European quarter. The colour and animation is difficult to describe. Banners, Chinese signs, the clatter of wooden clogs, the shuffle of felt slippers, and lines of small silk and curio shops, combined with the blue slops of native coolies to form a picture which I had mentally determined would not make its appearance until Canton was reached.

Two things impressed me during this first day ashore in Hong-Kong. I had expected to see pale-faced Chinese women with long black hair knotted at the back, and dressed in the little coat and trousers made familiar by every romance and depicted in every

imaginary scene of the Flowery Land. Although Hong-Kong is not China proper, and there were a number of women dressed in this way in most of the streets of Victoria, the majority of the younger girls were either dressed in European clothes or in flowered silks and muslins, and their faces were heavily smeared with white powder and rouge in a vain endeavour to appear Western. The effect was grotesque in the extreme. Within half a mile of the banks and shipping offices one is in the midst of a Chinese bazaar. An equal distance in the opposite direction are the lower levels of the city, covered with a compact mass of Chinese shops and tenements. Scarcely a European face is to be seen, and the arcaded pavements are decorated on the columns supporting the upper storeys of the houses with a maze of Chinese writing and signs.

Curio-hunting is always a matter of personal inclination. Not being a collector of any particular form of Oriental art, however, I contented myself during these early explorations of Hong-Kong with just looking round in a variety of shops. Apart from the bright-coloured silks with amazing patterns, the blackwood furniture, the lacquer ware, the china and the jade, one of the things which attracted me most were the ivory balls. The carving of these is something to marvel about for many a long day. I was shown a specimen of the finest open-work pattern, inside which there were no less than eighteen smaller carved spheres which could be moved round with the aid of a tiny rod inserted between the lattice-work of each ivory ball. It is difficult to understand how these inside spheres are carved in view of the fact that the outside globe seems to be complete and

unbroken. As examples of skill and patience, they appeared unique.

The climate of Hong-Kong varies considerably, not only according to the season but also in relation to one's height on the slopes of the Peak. It happened to be the cool season during my stay in the island, and the thermometer was registering about fifty-five degrees Fahrenheit in the streets along the water front. It is no uncommon thing, however, for the temperature to rise until it reaches a hundred degrees in the shade during the hot weather, and on the Peak in winter ice has been known to occur. The view from Victoria Peak on a clear day affords one of the finest panoramas of mountain and sea that it is possible to obtain, but, unfortunately, this lofty point is often shrouded in wet mist. It was for this reason that I decided to seize the opportunity to ascend this mountain on the first warm and really clear day.

Taking a motor car from the centre of the city, we soon climbed up by circles and zigzags to the beautiful residential districts of Victoria which overlook the harbour and the distant coast-line of Kowloon. The roads are bordered with bamboo and semi-tropical vegetation and flowers of all kinds. Spread out below is the great city with 300,000 Asiatics and 15,000 Europeans. Climbing still higher the rocky slopes are dappled with the green of grass and coarse shrub ; then come the Japanese firs and the end of the motor road. From this point one is carried up a steep winding path in sedan chairs by three coolies. The views become really magnificent. Beyond the island there is a vista of sunlit winding waterways and steep blue-grey mountains. Some of the little islets are in the mouth of the Pearl River, and although

so close to Hong-Kong are still the resort of river pirates, about whose activities I learned much during a boat journey up this broad stream to Canton.

Just before reaching the summit one passes the drive leading to the beautiful summer residence of the Governor of Hong-Kong. Looking down from this point, many tiny little bays and fishing villages can be seen tucked away coyly in forest-clad coves. Even the coolies, on whose shoulders are the long bamboo poles in the centre of which one's chair is suspended, show signs of fatigue on the steep incline, beyond the wireless station, by which the actual summit is reached. It came as a distinct relief to climb this last slope on foot. The curious up-and-down movement while being carried, due to the length of the poles and the consequent spring of the central weight, is well calculated to produce a slight feeling of nausea.

The air was decidedly cold on this summit, although the altitude is only 1,824 feet above sea-level. Looking at a thermometer, which I generally carry on mountain excursions, it came as a surprise to find that it was registering only thirty-eight degrees Fahrenheit, although the geographical position was only twenty-two degrees north of the Equator. The climate of Hong-Kong is often damp and cold during the months of January and February. However, the air was clear and the views across the ten square miles of anchorage to China, and down the steep fir-clad slopes to the palms, bamboos and roofs of Victoria, were really superb. There is an electric train by which a part of this climb can be accomplished, but one does not get the same glorious panoramas as those obtained from the road which circles round the garden-clad hills.

Victoria, when seen at night from the water with tiers of lights stretching upwards from the crowded harbour to where tiny stars twinkle from amid the lofty trees, makes an unforgettable picture. In one respect this city disappointed me, however. The only Chinese lanterns I saw were either being used for the purpose of an advertisement or else formed decorations in the ballrooms of the hotels. The night signs are, however, remarkably effective and invariably consist of Chinese writing in glowing red or blue electric flame.

One day I wandered into a district with the suspicious name of "Paddy's Market," although why so called I was unable to discover. It is really a Chinese by-way, and full of interesting old shops in which many curious things are to be seen. Judging from appearances, however, it would seem to be a small replica of the "Thieves' Market" of Shanghai. A dealer in jade explained to me that the genuine stone comes principally from the Koulkoun Range, which lies between the Gobi Desert and Tibet. The best jade is apple-green in colour, although for certain purposes the emerald jade, for both clearness and shade, also commands a high price. This precious stone is something more than a jewel to its Chinese possessor, for it protects him against evil, and amulets made of it are handed down from one generation to another. The high prices obtained for objects made of the best coloured stone are often remarkable. I was shown a necklace of perfectly matched beads for which over 25,000 Hong-Kong dollars had actually been paid by a Chinese merchant.

The beautiful motor roads invited me to take a drive round the island. It is curious how reticent

British colonies are concerning their attractions for pleasure-seekers. I often wonder whether this is due to natural coyness or a mid-Victorian official dislike of publicity. This coast highway forms one of the most glorious marine drives that I know ; and about half-way round the island there is Repulse Bay. If this delightful little bathing resort, with an excellent hotel and many bungalow residences, had been situated on the French Riviera, in California, Florida, or other centre of seaside fashion, it would have become world famous even with half its present beauties and advantages.

Imagine a semicircle of steep tree-covered and rocky hills enclosing a beach of white sand washed by sapphire seas. Palm-thatch bathing chalets, looking like a South Sea islander's village, fringe the shore. White stone terraces ablaze with marigolds, begonia, lilies, and masses of other blooms, hanging enticingly over Italian-like stone balustrades, rise in tiers up to where the vivid coloured sunblinds of a big hotel form a striking contrast against the green tree-covered slopes. Into this picture must be introduced blue skies, warm summer breezes, nights with the heavens ablaze with stars and the terraces and palms dimly illuminated with the soft glow of lanterns, Chinese waiters to answer the mere clapping of hands, and you will have some idea of a summer-time week-end spent in this little bathing place of Hong-Kong island.

Over in Kowloon and the New Territory the scenery is equally as rugged as on Hong-Kong island, and many glimpses are afforded of the simple life of the Chinese peasant tending his tiny farm or practising some inherited handicraft in more natural surroundings

than those of a Westernised city. Kowloon is principally devoted to European shipping and commerce, although there is a large Chinese and Japanese population to lend colour to its massive stone buildings and busy maritime and industrial life.

I could have lazed away many days and nights in hospitable Hong-Kong, but the call of the real China was intensified by the knowledge that one of its greatest cities and some of its most characteristic sights lie only six hours distant by steamboat up the Pearl River.* The whole of China was in a state of unrest, however, and many curious rumours of unpleasant possibilities attaching to the use of the river highway to Canton caused me to hesitate whether to go by train, involving a journey of one hundred miles, or by the overnight steamboat from Hong-Kong. I chose the latter alternative, however, and late one warm evening walked along the dimly lighted Chinese waterfront of Victoria to embark on the S.S. *Taishan*. It was the beginning of many queer experiences in the New China.

* Sometimes called the *East River* or the *Canton River*.

CHAPTER XII

A NIGHT ON THE PEARL RIVER

THERE are two methods of protection against the pirates who infest the rivers, islands, coasts and even ports of China, and with both of these systems I had been made familiar before the S.S. *Taishan* cast off her mooring ropes from the quay-side at Hong-Kong and steamed out into the broad and dark Pearl River. The yellow light from a cluster of old-fashioned electric globes shone down from the roof of a dilapidated archway on to a curious scene. For some minutes I stood inside this busy entrance to the wharf leading to the night steamer for Canton. All the gates of this pier were closed except one, and through this filed a motley throng of Chinese, carrying bundles and baskets. Armed police and other officials searched the pockets, clothing and everything carried by each one of the hundreds of Orientals pouring through the narrow entrance to board the *Taishan*, which would carry them during the night to the teeming city of Canton.

The purpose of this rigid search was to discover any arms concealed by these Chinese passengers. Piracy is a fine art on the rivers of this great overpopulated country, and a favourite method of capturing a steamer for a sufficient length of time to plunder all its passengers is to send on board before the vessel

starts a number of armed confederates in the guise of deck, or third-class passengers. Cloaked by the river and the night, these bandits steal up to the bridge and hold up or shoot the European captain and officers, while one or more pirate boats from a near-by lair come alongside the stopped vessel and rifle it from deck to keel. If there is a wealthy European or Chinese on board whose movements have been communicated to the pirates, then he also will be taken off the ship and held for ransom. This is what occurred many times during recent years on almost every important river in China, and the searching of native deck passengers is one of the methods employed to prevent it.

The *Pekin and Tientsin Times*, during my stay in Hong-Kong, published the following letter and comments, which throw a lurid light on the conditions which have existed for many years in this vast Asiatic country :—

The last news concerning Captain Baker, of the Yangtze Rapids Company, who was seized and taken away for ransom by Communist bandits above Hankow some weeks ago, was that he was in a weakened condition owing to the privations he has suffered.

By the latest river boats to arrive here from the Yangtze, we learn further details of the Captain's seizure and the high demands that were first made by the bandits. The following is a letter, written at Pailochi by Capt. Baker, dated January 24th, to the American Consul-General: "Sir, I have the honour to state that I am in the hands of Communists at Chow Ho, Hupeh. On January 16th, while the Yangtze River lighter number two was proceeding up-river, she grounded at low point, and while trying to get off she was seized by Communists, while I was forcibly taken on shore, and have been living under the most deplorable conditions since. Yesterday, January 23rd, two men interviewed me, stating that they were agents of the Soviet Government, and demanding a large indemnity for my release, and stated if some indemnity was not forthcoming I would be

beheaded. Of course, the indemnity demanded, ten million dollars, is simply impossible, but perhaps between the U.S. Consul-General and the Rapids Company something in the way of a reasonable indemnity may be offered whereby I could be released from this awful position. While I am not exactly ill-treated, conditions are such that I cannot stand it long. So, gentlemen, if there is anything on earth you can possibly do for me, please do it in the name of God. Very respectfully,

“ (Signed) CHARLES BAKER.”

My cabin in the *Taishan* was quite clean and comfortable, but it was at the noisy end of the long corridor leading to the covered deck in the stern of the ship. A canvas screen hid from view the hundreds of talking, laughing, sleeping, *fan-tan* playing, smoking but seemingly quite good-tempered Orientals forming the deck cargo. Then I noticed that a steel grill separated this portion of the ship from the cabins and saloons in the centre. On the broad promenade deck similar iron gates had been fitted at each end of the superstructure, effectually preventing either a stealthy approach to the navigating bridge or a concerted rush by armed pirates who had come aboard as deck passengers. In the chart-room on the bridge a number of rifles and revolvers, although kept in a locked case, were, nevertheless, ready for any emergency which might arise from the night-shrouded waters.

Dawn was just breaking when the noise of much talking and movement caused me to remember that Canton was to be reached in the early hours. Dressing quickly, I went on deck, and in the half-light of 6 A.M. watched this great Chinese city, an amazing conglomeration of queer houses, streets and shacks, with lights and lanterns still aflame, pass by in all its sordid immensity. The muddy river was awakening to life.

Curious steamboats, such as one expects to see only in some picture of old days on the Yukon or Mississippi, were laden with people whose yellow skins appeared almost ghastly in the early light.

The whole river was crowded with *sampans* and queer barges. A woman in one of these was hastily wrapping a baby on her back with the only garment she seemed to wear, preparatory to using the single oar with which these craft are manœuvred. Other queer-shaped boats were laden with vegetables for the market, and some housed half-naked families beneath arched matting roofs. The morning seemed heavy with the odour of the river and of teeming humanity. The turgid stream carried refuse of all kinds, as well as many queer objects. I watched two men float past on a big pair of wooden steps, which they endeavoured to guide in the swift current with the aid of a pole. The mortality among these river dwellers must be very great. The banks were lined with wooden buildings of fantastic shape. One had a cabalistic sign in flaming red electric light which was still glowing. Noisome passages cut through the maze of nondescript houses and dilapidated stores like black gashes in a decaying carcass. Interesting it certainly was, but sordid beyond the power of words to describe.

In this strange city there are some 200,000 boat dwellers, many of whom have actually been crowded from the labyrinth of streets and narrow passages of this abode of uncounted millions. No sooner was the steamer alongside the Canton Bund than a bespectacled Chinaman in black silk coat and grey skirt, looking more like a professor than a guide, whom I had engaged by telegraph, whisked me

through the surging crowd of unfamiliar humanity on the river bank and into a narrow and evil-smelling passage. Here, chairs and coolies were waiting to carry us—for an educated Canton guide never walks—into the heart of this human *maelstrom*.

CHAPTER XIII

THE ENIGMA OF TEEMING CANTON

SCARCELY had our chairs been raised from the ground before the light of day changed into a murky gloom, and we were plunged into the miles of eight-foot wide rabbit-warrens forming old Canton. Some of these alleys were bordered by little shops, from the dark interiors of which gleamed silks, embroideries, jade, gods of bronze and ivory, slippers, Chinese lanterns and stacks of blackwood furniture. They were often so narrow that in the tangle of passages, crowded with men carrying immense burdens and women in black-quilted coats and tight trousers, our bearers could only make headway when the passers-by crouched against the side walls or stood in doorways.

The noise of a thousand clogs in a Canton street is something which impresses one with the density of the population more even than the endless stream of yellow and brown faces passing by. This click-clack of wooden-shod feet had an ominous sound in this tortuous maze of the narrowest passages I have ever seen used as thoroughfares. At times the stench was unbearable and the sights nauseating. For ever damp and muddy, the cobble-stone pavements had open drains and gutters filled with the sewage of the crowded houses and streets. Luckily my chair had

been provided with a wooden roof, for in the *Street of the Washerwomen* the slime from hundreds of dirty garments dripped down upon us, and a rivulet of foul water flowed around the coolies' feet.

The sordid poverty of Canton is something which must be seen to be fully realised. Tiny pieces of raw meat, no larger than an egg, and suspended by a tiny thread of straw, are carried triumphantly home by those possessing the means to buy such a luxury. More frequently one sees a rat, smeared with blood, being saved for the stewpot. The butchers' shops are a sickening sight of stale entrails and black, fly-covered meat.

No wheeled vehicle can penetrate into this old quarter of Canton, yet there are miles of these narrow streets which are bordered by open booths filled with food and merchandise of all kinds. All these goods are conveyed about the city on the backs of men. Huge pieces of furniture come swaying down these narrow alleys, and will be carried for miles to their destination by the ragged and half-starved coolies of Canton. Man-power in China is used to-day in the same way as horses were employed in Europe half a century ago. In the broader streets of this city, which have been cut recently through the maze of houses, one sees laden wheelbarrows, well-to-do Chinese in rickshaws, heavy weights slung in the centre of a long carrying-pole, timber carts on two rough wheels and laden with logs, omnibuses formed of a single wheel with seats all round in the manner of a large wheelbarrow, and all these forms of locomotion depend upon the toil and muscles of human beasts of burden. There are motor cars, but these seem only to be used by Government officials and

by the newly formed Republican police and guards. One is for ever reminded of the Bolshevism which swept away the old monarchy. Soldiers with rifles stand at the corners of the wider streets. Being masters of the situation, however, they are not to be found in the narrow passages of the old city.

Standing one day in the European settlement, which occupies the island of Shameen, I was watching the crowd of boats in the narrow creek dividing this little cantonment from the teeming Chinese city around, when my eye caught sight of something startlingly familiar floating in the muddy water. It was a human body, and I watched it pass some of the crowded boats expecting that it would be hauled to the side of the creek. Such is the value of life and the desire for sanitation in China that no notice was taken of this decaying corpse. This district of Shameen forms a striking contrast to the motley streets of the real Canton. It is crossed by a fine avenue of banyan trees nearly half a mile in length, and has many large buildings and houses.

Although it is no longer possible to view executions in the yard where this formed a gruesome but almost daily spectacle, there are occasions even now when criminals are publicly tortured in the most appalling manner. Searching one day in a Chinese photographer's shop, I came upon a collection of the most horrible pictures it is possible to imagine. One of these showed a local bandit tied to a post and suffering death by that old Chinese method, *the thousand cuts*. Others showed the bodies of men and women killed in a variety of revolting ways during a recent uprising. There was quite a large collection of photographs of prisoners being beheaded in the



STREET SCENE—CANTON



SCENES AT A CHINESE FUNERAL 101

yard which was used for this purpose until a few years ago.

No European ever really understands China or the Chinese. He learns during every hour of his time in the country something that is new, something interesting and to be admired, or of that which is foul and loathsome. Each day spent in this extraordinary land caused me to realise more deeply the truth of this old saying. But strange as China and its people may seem to Western eyes, it must not be forgotten that the Chinese had the same customs long before the people of the Occident had emerged from complete barbarism. Is it so extraordinary that hot beverages are taken instead of iced drinks in order to obtain a cooling effect ; that on entering a house from the muddy streets, shoes instead of hats are removed ; that surnames are written first instead of last ; that white is used instead of black in funeral processions ; and that when tea is served, the saucer is placed on top of the cup instead of beneath it ? It is certainly necessary to think carefully before referring to everything one sees in China as "strange."

Riding one day through the old city in my chair, I came upon the *Street of the Coffin Makers*. Matting was spread above the narrow passage like a sunblind to keep out the little air and light which might have rendered it more inviting and healthy. The heavy coffins, hewn from solid logs, were piled one upon the other in numbers which seemed absurd until I remembered that trades such as this are often hereditary occupations, that they are largely concentrated in one area of the city, and that a high death-rate among two millions of human beings means much work for undertakers. I was told that

this half-dark and damp alley had existed for 3,000 years.

Near by I came upon the more cheerful *Hotel for the Dead*. This consisted of a series of little bungalows facing a wall covered with yellow blooms. The most important thing in the life of a Chinaman is death. It must be arranged for long beforehand, and is a constant source of anxiety and expense to the relatives after it has occurred. The soul of a Chinaman can never rest unless the body which has been left on earth is reposing in what is called "good earth." The place of burial has to be chosen by an expert, and many considerations enter into the final selection of a site. Owing very largely to the fact that Canton and many of the large cities of China are completely encompassed by millions of graves, extending far and wide over miles of countryside, the finding of a piece of good earth to act as the last resting-place of a well-to-do Cantonese may take months or even years. In the meantime the body cannot be buried, and must be lodged in this *Hotel for the Dead*.

It was explained to me while being shown round this amazing establishment that the rent of rooms in it varied from about six to twenty Chinese dollars a week, and that many of the bodies rested there for months before final burial. In the entrance I noticed some weird-looking idols and a small temple. The whole hotel was kept scrupulously clean, and consisted of a line of small bungalows, each with a front parlour and behind this the mortuary chamber. They were gay little places, for the Chinese believe that death is merely the transition from this life to another. As I entered one of these miniature houses, I noticed artificial flowers in the front room,

where relatives come to pay homage to their dead ; the worship of ancestors being a cardinal point in the teachings of Confucius.

Passing into the chamber containing the body, I was surprised to find an entire absence of any tomb-like atmosphere. The beautifully lacquered coffin was resting on a raised mound of specially selected and very dry earth. Standing in the corners were all the flowers, paper streamers and images which had been used in the funeral procession. The room was light and airy, and the walls were decorated with red and gold paper medallions. This was the death-chamber of a wealthy Chinaman, whose body had been resting in the hotel for nearly two years because the relatives could not find a piece of earth which was considered by the experts to be sufficiently " good " for the final interment of the coffin. It is essential, for those whose relatives are willing to pay the hundreds of dollars necessary, to be laid to rest finally on the slope of a hill, where the soil is dry and of a certain composition, and where landslides or floods are unknown. The finding of these pieces of good earth forms a lucrative occupation.

Some days after the visit to this hotel, which is situated in the very heart of old Canton, I drove out to the countryside. Passing through a scene of great activity, where roads were being constructed and hills levelled for the building of a new city, of which many bare-looking thoroughfares had already been completed, I visited the museum and then the park and monument erected in honour of the leaders of the revolution which destroyed the monarchy. The day was a public holiday, and all Canton seemed to be lounging aimlessly about. It was here that I first

noticed the effect of the Bolshevik régime and propaganda among the people of South China. It was a case of new wine in old bottles. Without education, without a knowledge of the world beyond the rabbit-warrens in which they live and which have been described very truthfully as "the most extraordinary conglomeration of primitive existence to be found in the world," they were without the means to enjoy themselves, and had been robbed of the peace of mind which would have enabled them to rest.

Religion has been almost destroyed throughout China. Although the old temples exist and one finds many worshippers at these shrines, there is doubt and disbelief everywhere. Life, always cheap in this over-populated land, has become cheaper. The tyranny of the old mandarins has been exchanged for a harsh, ruthless and purely mercenary dictatorship. In the course of my wanderings I passed the houses of the so-called leaders of the people, and found them strictly guarded by troops with fixed bayonets. At the moment Canton was peaceful, but a few short weeks before the streets had been running with blood. The star of the new republic was painted on every police station, and was carried by every speeding car in and around this teeming city which forms the capital of the South China state.

Once again I received proof that the transition from bondage to freedom can only be accomplished slowly. Everywhere there were the rumblings of a coming storm. The country roads were unsafe. Bands of roving bandit-soldiery, whose criminal activities there was no existing power to curb, spread terror far and wide. Every street corner in the new Canton was guarded by soldiers with rifles. Police

cars full of armed men, from which fluttered the flag of the new state, raced about the streets, yet life went on largely unchanged, and presenting all the outward characteristics described in the story-books of the old China.

Some four or five miles outside the city the road curved and twisted through a seemingly endless expanse of bare hills. The reason for the winding of the road, which had been recently constructed, were the millions of graves which form a circle, some twenty miles in width, almost completely round Canton. The dead of many generations in this city of millions lie buried all over the suburbs. There is scarcely a half-acre of good earth which is not occupied by a little curved stone wall marking the freehold resting-place of some wealthy Cantonese. In spite of the new teachings, public opinion is violently adverse to any interference with these colossal cemeteries, upon which so much money has been spent in the past by relatives of the deceased. For this reason, roads, railways, buildings and all else must wind and twist or be constructed on divided patches of swampy soil, and so add to the chaos which is the China of to-day.

While rambling round the old congested city, not far from the narrow passage called *Physic Street*, where the native herbalists and doctors have their tiny stalls for the dispensing of many old remedies, I found a shop in the back of which the famous Cantonese feather work ornaments were being made by girls. This work has a foundation of filigree silver, or silver-gilt, upon which minute fragments of brilliant-hued birds' feathers are stuck in order to form brooches, pendants and other personal adornments. The

feathers are cut into pieces, which can scarcely be seen without the aid of the magnifying glass worn by the girl who is shaping and sticking these brilliant little particles on to silver images of peacocks, butterflies, birds of paradise and other like objects. The result is a brooch of the most delicate blue, green or mauve, in the form of some beautiful creature of the air, and made largely of its feathers. Many of these little brooches are not expensive considering that the eyesight of the young makers is soon sacrificed. I could not help thinking whenever I saw a blind Chinese woman or man, usually encased in foul rags, that it is in the production of works of fine art, often in combination with the septic dust which is so deadly in northern China, that the terrible eye diseases are caused and perpetuated.

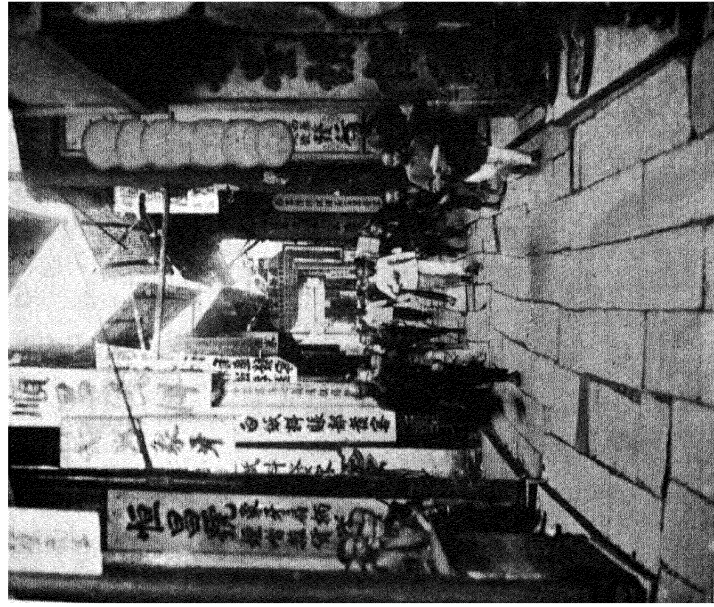
Many of the temples of Canton have been converted into schools since the partial suppression of the old religion. A few still remain, however, such as those of Wah Lum and Chan Ka Chi, where one sees the hideous and tawdry idols of the "heathen Chinese." Nominally, the new Government, which was originated very largely by Sun Yat Sen, has adopted the Christian faith, but in actual practice the old beliefs have been destroyed among a large section of China's millions, and nothing has yet taken their place in the hearts and minds of the people. In one of these old temples I saw the same little offerings of flowers, the burning of joss-sticks, and the curious altar from which the dimly lit and grotesque gods looked down upon the bowing worshippers. I was told that in the old days these temples were kept scrupulously clean, and now they are dirty and dilapidated. On the other hand, they



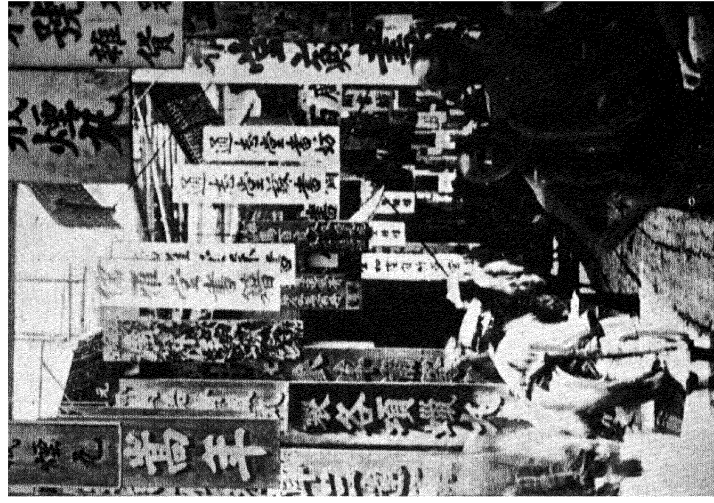
CHINESE WEDDING PROCESSION, WITH CLOSED PALANQUIN
OF THE BRIDE



ONE OF THE NEWER STREETS—CANTON



ONE OF THE RABBIT-WARRENS—
CANTON



ADVERTISEMENTS IN ONE OF THE
NARROW PASSAGEWAYS—CANTON

were often centres for the most gross forms of immorality, superstition and even oppression, as I had reason to discover in still distant Peiping. In the Wah Lum Temple there are still the 500 *genii*, or stone images, each with a different expression, but one can no longer ascend the nine-storeyed Flowery Pagoda, from which a beautiful view used to be obtained over the old city. The upper floors of this building are no longer considered safe, although a school has been established just beneath it.

One day I visited the house of a wealthy Chinese merchant in the heart of the old city. So crowded are the streets that special precautions have to be taken against robbery. When the outer doors were opened, a crowd instantly gathered to obtain a glimpse of the interior, but an old iron grill closed the inner hall against intruders. Coming from the teeming city outside, the contrast was remarkable. The old-fashioned Chinaman pays little attention either to the outside decoration of his house or to its locality. The moment the interior is reached, however, the outside world of sordidness and misery passes away as if by magic. There is an atmosphere of peace, which renders it almost uncanny. The feet of the family are encased in soft slippers, while those of the servants are bare. The rooms are arranged round a central little garden, in which everything seems to be grown in an artistic vase or bowl. This little space—not unlike the South American *patio*—is literally filled with flowers, creepers and even tall trees, being continuously watered with the aid of troughs made of split bamboo. Birds in cages hang in the windows looking on to this perpetually wet and stone-flagged little Chinese garden.

The surrounding buildings are often two storeys high, which cause the little flower-decked square in the centre to resemble a pit of moist sub-tropical growth. The rooms are somewhat bare from the Western point of view. A single flower in a vase, a lacquered panel, heavy black wood furniture arranged round the walls, some teak cabinets, an alabaster god, and a few pictures painted on silk let in to the narrow panels were a few of the things which caught my eye in this house of an old mandarin. It is the custom when paying a visit, first, to discuss world happenings slowly and with no show of emotion or sentiment, and then to eat a variety of curious foods, such as black eggs, which have been buried for years and when dug up are just lumps of olive-green jelly, sharks' fins, which have been sun-dried for perhaps months, birds' nests made into a kind of soup, young bamboo shoots, sucking-pig, and the delicately browned skin of ducks, which is the only part of this bird considered a delicacy. Fruit is served at the beginning instead of at the end of a meal, and when one has been made almost sick by the number and variety of small dishes, it is the custom to depart at once and not to sit down for a talk lasting into the small hours of the morning.

By the time I was ready to leave Canton, war had broken out in many parts of northern China. Japanese forces were driving the Chinese war lords from their strongholds in Manchuria. Much of the native city of Shanghai was in flames, and the shells from Japanese warships and from the replying Chinese batteries were flying over Shanghai, the great International Settlement of the Wangpoo and Yangtse Kiang Rivers. A wave of anti-Japanese feeling was

passing over the whole of China, and this was followed very rapidly by a noticeable hatred of Europeans. Signs such as these cannot be disregarded in the fanatical East, and I abandoned a projected overland journey in order to reach Peiping and the war zone in Manchuria as quickly as possible by sea from Hong-Kong.

At Canton railway station the effects of the storm passing over northern China were already noticeable. Public hatred of the Japanese and derision at the feeble efforts made by European countries to end hostilities were being increased by fiery articles in the Chinese newspapers. The station of this southern capital, many hundreds of miles distant from the scene of conflict and terror, was filled with troops armed with the latest pattern automatic rifle, imported largely from Russia. These troops were being sent to unknown destinations. There were scores of Japanese spies, and as the train passed across country on its hundred miles' journey to the coast, the red-paper decorations of the recent New Year festivities were being plastered over by ill-concealed notices denouncing all things Japanese. It seemed that the war clouds, which are for ever hovering over the Far East, were about to break in unrestrained fury.

CHAPTER XIV

ON THE PEIPING EXPRESS

THE lights of Port Arthur glittered across a freezing sea in the dusk of a winter evening as the steamer in which I was travelling north up the Chinese coast passed out of the Yellow Sea into the calm waters of the Gulf of Chihli. By the following morning we had dropped anchor amid fields of thin floe-ice in the Bay of Chinwangtao. From this little port, situated only a few miles south of the Manchurian border, a railway line runs inland for a distance of 251 miles to Peiping, the old capital of China, and still the most characteristic city of this vast land of Eastern Asia, which has an area of about 4,290,000 square miles and a population which is believed to number well over 400 millions.

Getting ashore by tender was a cold business. The sky was a clear blue, and a bitter wind, coming from the Siberian snows, was sweeping across the brown hills and plains of northern China. Heavy ice hung around the shore-line. In the harbour small floes had to be poled away from the quay by fur-clad Mongolian-faced men to enable our powerful little tug to come alongside. A line of steaming coaches on this section of the Peiping-Mukden Railway—a Chinese portion of the great Trans-Siberian system—were waiting invitingly on the quayside.

The temperature had dropped to well below zero, and I contented myself with a survey of the unusual scene from the interior of the train which, in about nine hours, would carry me to the most amazing city in the modern world. The inhabitants of northern China are a sturdy, brown-skinned race, totally dissimilar to the yellow people of comparatively poor physique among whom I had been living in Canton. No longer were the thin blue coats, tight trousers, and little black skull caps the standard of respectability. These big Mongolians were encased in rough sheepskin coats, their heads in immense fur hoods, and their hands covered by fingerless gloves. Then we moved away from the dock into the little town station, where I noticed a guard of smart Japanese soldiers in khaki and scarlet, with the flag of the Rising Sun flying over the buildings. This section of the Peiping-Mukden railway is under international protection. It forms the only safe connecting link between the Legation Quarter, or fortified international settlement of Peiping, and the sea and ships. This strategic line to the principal city of China has been guarded by foreign troops since the Boxer Rebellion in the year 1900.

My greatest surprise, as the train raced southwards towards the great industrial city of Tientsin, was the extraordinary barrenness of this portion of China. Brown plains, entirely devoid of grass and almost without trees, stretched away to the horizon for hour after hour. Of broken ground, mud hovels and small putty-coloured villages there were, indeed, plenty. It was, of course, the mid-winter season, and the cold was so intense that the rivers and small canals were frozen solid. At one point along this

line I watched the fur-clad inhabitants of the countryside returning from some near-by town with their purchases piled on sledges, which were being pushed by hand over the ice of a frozen river.

When 171 miles of monotonous country had been traversed, we steamed into Tientsin. Here there were guards supplied by the regiments of British and United States infantry, who were protecting the large and well-built European quarter of this great commercial and maritime metropolis of northern China. Walking along the crowded platform, I discovered that a number of Chinese soldiers, fully armed, were travelling on the engine of the train. By the time we started on the last run of eighty miles to Peiping I was in possession of the reason for these elaborate precautions for our safety.

Notwithstanding the presence of companies of British, American and Japanese infantry in the towns along this route, the line itself is entrusted to the care of the Chinese military forces. Such has been the state of the country for many years that scarcely a mile of this or of any other railway line in China is safe from the attacks of bandits, who often work in a similar way to the pirates of the river and coast. The presence of bands of insubordinate soldiery coming down from Manchuria had made matters worse, and it was not long before we passed an armoured train complete with machine-guns and even cavalry horses for pursuit. I learned, later, that a train on the previous day had been held up in spite of its own guards, who were shot dead, and much booty taken from the passengers and mails.

The sun was setting behind a line of vivid carmine clouds when I first saw the immense brown battle-

mented walls of Peiping. Small leafless trees, with their black branches silhouetted against a vivid sky, and a level sandy plain, from which an icy wind was whisking clouds of dust into the air, were the impressions obtained of the country around as darkness closed over the scene, and we passed through the walls of the Chinese city into the Chenyangmen Station.

In Peiping all the mystery of the East seems to reach a culminating point. It is sinister. There is so much to see and yet so little one can understand. Only with a working knowledge of its history does this ages-old spiritual and temporal capital of all the mainland countries of Eastern Asia become even intelligible to the Western mind. The outer walls, some fifty feet high and forty feet thick, which encompass its four separate cities, were nearly a century old when Columbus discovered America and King Henry VII. of England built the *Great Harry*.

The story of Peiping is very largely the history of China, and its beginnings are lost in the mists of 4,000 years. The first mention of a town having been built on or near to the site of the present city occurs about 1121 B.C., and it was called Chi. Very little is known concerning this early stronghold against the nomadic Tartar tribes of the north. Records of the year 539 B.C. state that it contained a large number of houses.

Possessing a long history, with many rulers, it has become the custom in China to reckon periods, changes and events, not by the names of individual emperors or by exact dates, which are often shrouded in mystery, but by the titles of the different dynasties. A long sequence of unfamiliar names and remote dates convey such a poor impression of the growth

of a country or a city that it would seem best to give here a brief account of the various dynasties and the developments which rendered these periods of historic importance. Although the Chow Dynasty, from 1200-200 B.C., is generally referred to as the third, it is of this period that the first reliable records exist to-day. In the Confucian temple can be seen ten stone drums which contain a record of the first known writing. It was about this period also that some of the best bronze sacrificial vessels were made, and the two great Chinese thinkers, Confucius and Mencius, flourished.

Three important events occurred during the succeeding Chin Dynasty, which occupied the years 249-206 B.C. The Great Wall of China was constructed; and there occurred the "burning of the books," which was an effort by the emperor to create a new epoch by cutting China off from all knowledge of her past, because he considered that the life of the people had for too long been dominated by tradition. The principal event of the Han Dynasty, between 206 B.C. and A.D. 220, was the growth of Confucianism. About this period, also, Buddhism was introduced from India, and successful conquests in Central Asia were the means of introducing Persian and Babylonian influences. It is said to be the age of the Chinese historians, antiquarians and dictionary makers. It is also recorded that in A.D. 166 occurred the first intercourse between China and Europe. A Roman commercial delegation visited China, and a Chinese embassy, some sixty years later, visited Antioch.

About the succeeding 400 years little is known, except that the destinies of China were presided over



GROTESQUE IMAGES GUARD THE LAMA TEMPLE—PEIPING



BAND OF LAMA PRIESTS IN THE TEMPLE—PEIPING



THE BUDDHA WITH A THOUSAND HANDS IN THE WINTER
PALACE, PEIPING



CELEBRATING THE BIRTH OF CONFUCIUS

by members of the Wei Dynasty, during which time there were frequent communications between the Roman emperor, Diocletian, and the rulers of this early Eastern State. Tea is mentioned in official records for the first time in Chinese history. In the fourth century A.D. the city became the capital of a Tartar state, and from this period it was known as Yu-Chow. During the Tang Dynasty, which lasted from A.D. 615-960, books and newspapers were first published in China. Poetry and painting attained considerable importance, and porcelain was first manufactured. It is recorded that the first Christians, the Nestorians, came overland from the Mediterranean and settled in Changan, Shensi Province, which was then the capital of China.

For nearly 900 years the city of Yu-Chow, a forerunner of the present Peiping, grew in size and importance. The Sung Dynasty from A.D. 960-1259 was important, because during this period the city was captured by the Chin Tartars and its name changed to Yen-Ching. It is said that this was the age of China's cultural Renaissance, and that the art of painting was perfected. In the year A.D. 1215 Mongolian tribes under Jenghiz Khan besieged the city, looted it and set it on fire, but then turned their attention to an invasion of Central Asia and Russia. His grandson, the famous Kublai Khan, completed the destruction of the old Chinese Empire and established the Yuan Dynasty. This lasted from A.D. 1260-1367. During this time a new city was built on the ruins of the former town, and to this the Mongols gave the name of Khanbalig. It was during this period that Marco Polo visited the court of Kublai Khan, and travelled about the country.

Chinese forces coming north from the Yangtze Valley captured the city and drove the Mongols from the country in the year 1368. They established the Ming Dynasty, which lasted until 1643. During the first years of this rule the city was rebuilt more or less in its present form, and was then given the name of Peiping Fu, meaning *City of Northern Peace*. In 1421, however, when one of the Ming emperors moved his court to the new city, the name was again changed to Pei-Ching, or *Northern Capital*.

Among the buildings still existing which were constructed during this period are the Temple of Heaven, the Great Bell Temple, the Five Tower Pagoda, and the city walls as they now stand. Manchu rule began in China about 1644 with the establishment of the Ching Dynasty, and continued to flourish until the revolt of the Southern Chinese drove the last Manchu emperor from the throne, and established a republic in the year 1911. The Manchus reserved the inner or Forbidden City for the use of the imperial court. The town surrounding this was used by the families of the conquerors, and is now known as the Imperial City. The remainder of the area enclosed by the original walls was given over to the Manchu Bannermen, or invaders of various Northern races, who were distinguished by their banners, while the Southern City, now the shopping section, was assigned to the conquered Chinese.

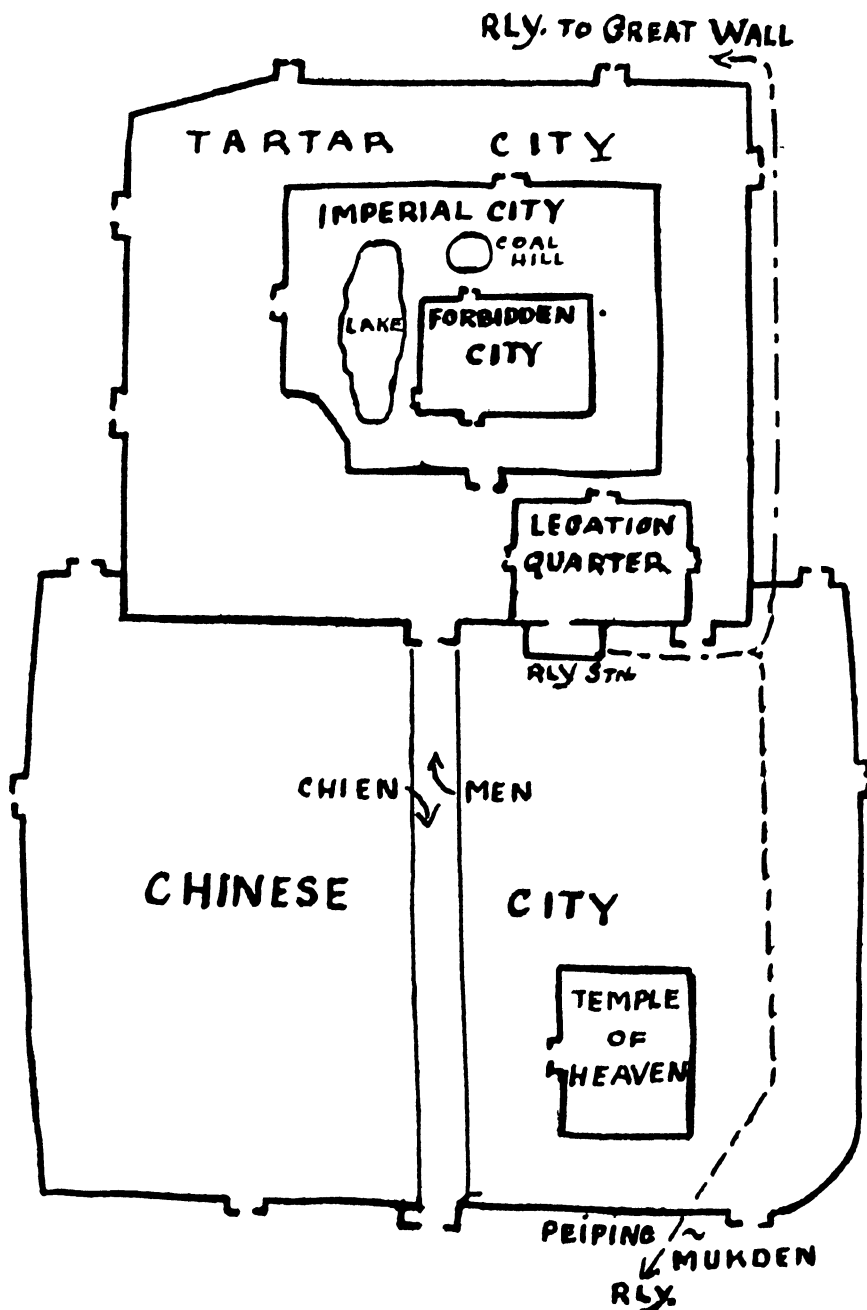
CHAPTER XV

ALONG THE CHIEN MEN TO THE TEMPLE OF HEAVEN

HAVING mastered these essential facts of Chinese history I climbed into a rickshaw, wrapped myself in furs, for the temperature was below zero, and proceeded out of the Legation Quarter—where all Europeans are supposed to reside after sunset—into the maze of native towns, one inside the other, and each surrounded by its own wall.

The use here of a small diagram will save much explanation as we proceed through the different cities, which are considered to have a population of about one million, although no proper census has ever been taken.

Riding as far as the old wall surrounding the Tartar City, I climbed to the top and gazed down at the astonishing crowd of native streets, the high gateways of the Imperial City, the yellow glistening roofs of the Forbidden City with its trees, and the many temples and pagodas stretching away as far as the eye could reach. A distant view seldom does more than whet the appetite for closer inspection, however, and I returned to the waiting rickshaw. The walls of Peiping vary from forty to sixty feet in thickness at the base, but they are not made of solid masonry. The centre is formed by an earthen mound



which is faced with brick. The Legation Quarter, which I had just left, is an area of the Tartar city enclosed by a wall. Its gates are loopholed for machine-guns, and are constantly guarded by Chinese soldiers. There are also troops of many nationalities housed inside this quarter. They are retained in Peiping for the defence of the legations and the majority of the foreigners who live in this part of the city. It is entirely European in aspect, with broad, well-paved streets and drainage, water and electric light systems. The only building which appears to be at all in keeping with the architecture of the Chinese city is the chapel of the British Legation, made from a converted temple.

The great commercial artery of the Chinese city is the Chien Men, and it was into this teeming thoroughfare that I rode in an elaborate brass-bound rickshaw on this bright but cold winter morning. For a moment I glanced back at the imperial gateway of the Tartar city—a massive structure looking more like a palace which had been built on the walls of an old fortress—then I became immersed in a sea of people, animals and vehicles. The Chien Men is a broad thoroughfare, and from it on each side stretch the narrow and tortuous passages forming the principal bazaars of Peiping.

Here was a city entirely different to anything I had seen before. The roadway was full of great, double-humped Bactrian camels, blue-covered and springless carts drawn by mules, hundreds of rickshaws, in which well-to-do Chinamen sat muffled in furs, donkeys with heavy loads—not singly but in long lines—beggars in indescribable rags, Mongolians in dark blue cloth coats, and trousers strapped tightly

to their legs, Chinese soldiers in sheepskins, Europeans dressed in heavy fur-lined coats and Cossack caps of astrakhan, in fact, such a heterogeneous mixture of peoples that it is difficult to find words or space to describe them all.

There is something so fantastic about Peiping that I felt it must be the capital of another world. Not everything that one sees in this city is either pleasing or artistic. On one side of the Chien Men there is a great native market which is perhaps the most sordid, tawdry, and yet the most interesting place in the whole city. The stalls are covered with dried fish, felt slippers of many colours, paper flowers, and a host of oddments from every quarter of the world. Appallingly dirty children, who have quite evidently remained in their garments throughout the cold season, purchase and eat sticky lumps of boiled sugar, which are covered with the dust that rises in clouds from the many shuffling feet and the gusts of icy wind. The clearing of a thousand throats adds to the appalling din and to the unhealthiness of this teeming city of Asiatics. In one place I came upon a number of human scavengers sorting among the refuse for scraps of food and clothing.

Peiping shows another sight when, towards the end of Chien Men, one enters the great park of the Temple of Heaven, the most sacred of all the buildings of the capital, and formerly used only by the emperor and his court. It is sometimes called the Temple of the Happy Year, because the Altar of Heaven stands some distance away. After traversing the great tree-covered enclosure—every place of beauty or importance is surrounded by a lofty brick wall in this thousand-years-old city—the heavenly blue

pagoda-roofed temple of glistening tiles, mounted upon three circular terraces of white marble, carved all over with imperial dragons, forms a picture in the cold, clear sunlight which is not likely to be forgotten. Its setting amid sage-green trees is most effective.

A long avenue leads to the Altar of Heaven, a lofty platform open to the four winds and surrounded by three marble terraces, rising one above the other. In the old days it was the custom for the emperor—the Son of Heaven—to come here once a year and make such sacrifices as the burning of an ox in the near-by oven, which is lavishly decorated with apple-green tiles. All around this place of assembly there are gigantic braziers of copper-bronze, in which incense was burned in vast quantities during the ceremony. The emperor took upon his own shoulders the sins of the entire nation by this annual visit to the Altar of Heaven.

The terraces surrounding the actual altar, or platform, were used by the high priests of the three religions practised in China—Confucianism, Buddhism and the Llama cult, a debased form of Buddhism which has several millions of adherents in Tibet, Mongolia, China and elsewhere in the East. The gateways to this altar are called “pai-lous,” and these curious arches, often beautifully carved, are really monuments erected in honour of the dead, and are to be seen all over Peiping—in the streets, gardens, palaces and temples. On the platform at the top of the circular terraces there is a hollow marble tile, upon which the emperor prayed to the gods of *all* the religions. The Chinese believe that this Altar of Heaven is situated in the exact centre of the Universe.

There are so many temples in Peiping that to describe them all would be to usurp the place of a guide-book. In the Temple of Agriculture, another enclosure about two miles in circumference, there are altars to the Spirits of the Earth, the Sky, the planet Jupiter and to Shang-Ti, the great god who rules in heaven and on earth and who is master of the spirits. In one of the oldest observatories in the world, founded by Kublai Khan in 1280, I saw bronze astronomical instruments made by a Jesuit priest from the original Chinese models. In the Temple of the Imperial World there is a slope of marble, deeply carved with dragons, used only by the emperors of China. Even the royal household, the priests and the courtiers were compelled to climb the steps placed alongside. There is a priceless statue twice life-size, and cut from a single block of precious stone, in the Temple of the Jade Buddha, which is now used as a private residence. When all these inanimate things grew temporarily wearisome, I roamed among the people in the great bazaars and markets to learn something of life in the China of to-day.

Leading out of the broad Chien Men is narrow little Jade Street, gay with banners, lanterns and queer Chinese signs. Although it is the bazaar of the antique dealers I succeeded in purchasing there a beautiful fur cap, made necessary by the extreme cold of the Peiping winter. Then Lantern Street attracted me by its glowing globes of light in the frosty dusk of the later afternoon. Here I saw Chinese lanterns of every make, kind and size ; some of them when illuminated resembled crescent moons and others baskets of flowers. In Silver Street I was

disappointed. Although in one or two shops there were some beautiful specimens of Eastern jewellery, the general aspect was most unattractive.

These narrow shopping thoroughfares in the Chinese city of Peiping are much cleaner than the appalling alleys of old Canton. The reason for this soon became apparent, however. Not far distant is the Legation Quarter, with its hundreds of foreigners of many nationalities who come into these bazaars to do their shopping. Pass through Jade Street any day in the week, and you will be unfortunate if you cannot pick out from among the passers-by representatives of at least twenty nationalities. Scarcely two people are dressed alike in the whole of this great city, and, therefore, one soon loses that feeling of being conspicuous if every detail of clothing is not in keeping with that of the majority. The result is a bizarre mixture of Russians in Cossack caps, American Legation guards in khaki uniforms and pointed bearskins, the men of various nationalities and creeds in shaggy fur coats, Tibetans in sheepskins and rags, Mongolians in dark cloth trousers, and, most curious of all, the Chinese themselves in quilted coats, caps with ear-flaps, and respirators with cotton wool bound carefully across their mouths and noses to prevent them inhaling the cold air and the septic dust.

CHAPTER XVI

LIFE IN PEIPING

IN the everyday life of the people one of the things which impressed me most were the street vendors and their cries. Early in the morning one hears a penetrating noise like some human soul in agony. There is a melancholy tone in its long drawn-out notes which, in the early light of dawn, is somewhat disturbing until the discovery is made that it is the seed-cake seller. The cry is accompanied by a single beat on a steel gong. Another street hawker sells a curious thick yellow liquid made from apricot kernels, sugar and yellow flour. The cry of this man is a more jovial one, but like all the others it is intended to penetrate into the walled enclosures of houses and courtyards. The presence of this queer drink in a Chinese street soon attracts a crowd of eager children.

Another morning cry, or really street song, is that of the itinerant hair-oil seller. The coiffure of a Chinese woman is a somewhat long and tedious business, and it requires a plentiful supply of cheap oil. The midday hours are broken by the less musical calls of the vegetable and meat peddlers. The vendor of kerosene does not cry his wares, but beats upon a hollow wooden gong with a mallet. In the afternoon there is the cake seller, and because he is appealing

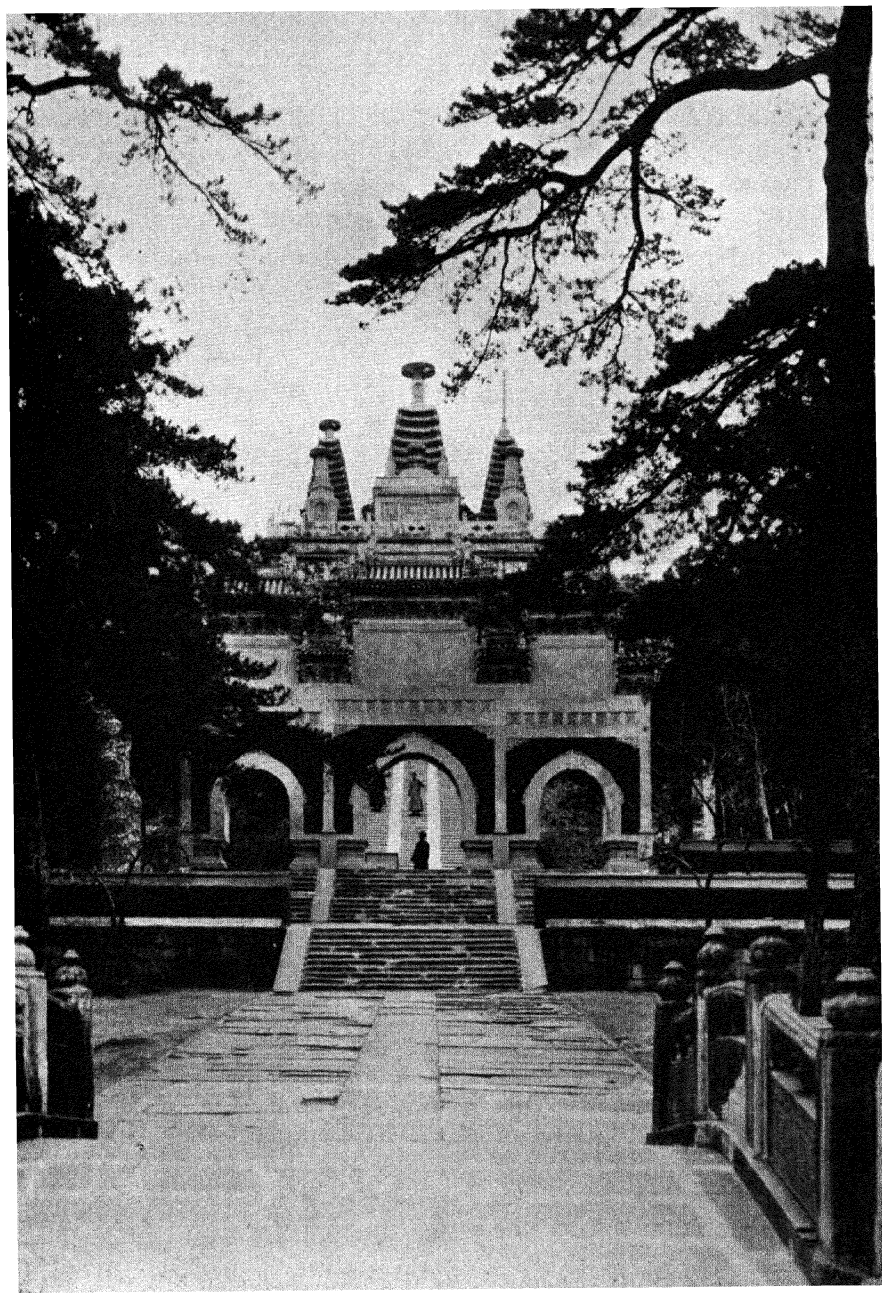
to the womenfolk, he sings quite a tuneful little song. Purchasers of this article have it handed to them suspended from a piece of grass, which is prevented from being pulled through the cake by a tiny piece of split bamboo. Another of these hawkers uses a revolving gong which, on being turned, strikes bells of different notes. The knife sharpeners give two or three blasts on a copper horn. The medicine seller has a curious circular tub in which a ball runs round, making a most unpleasant noise. Then there is the gold-fish dealer, who has a cry somewhat similar to that of the old English lavender woman. I could fill pages describing all the street sellers and their cries. There is even a midnight opium and morphine vendor who calls his wares and ironically adds that he has drugs for dreams and drugs which rot away the body and mind.

Chinese workmen, like those of many Eastern races, sing while they labour. Watching one day the laying of some foundations for a building, I heard the foreman sing a verse to which the chorus was supplied by the labourers. On the canals in China, especially during the early hours of the evening, one can hear the songs of boatmen coming from afar in the still air.

There are some curious temples in the Tartar city, which is ringed in by a forty-foot-high wall, built in 1419. Entering this city one morning by the imperial gate, I circled round the walls of the royal enclosure—each of the towns of Peiping is like one among a nest of Chinese boxes—and made my way through many crowded streets, bordered by flamboyant shops and mud hovels, to the Temple of the Eighteen Hells. Here I saw depicted in life-sized statues the terrifying

punishments awaiting the sinner. In the midst of a street market stand the Bell and Drum Towers, but the human pressure around these was so great, and several agitators were apparently trying to arouse hatred of the Japanese in particular and the foreigner in general, that I considered it advisable to move on to the near-by Temple of Confucius. Here are the ten stone drums, placed far out of reach and carefully guarded by priests, which are said to contain a record of the first known writing. They are believed to be over 3,000 years old. Adjoining this temple is the Hall of Classics, in which the young princes of China were instructed in the teachings of Confucius. Crossing the almost deserted courtyard, in which the winter snow was still lying beneath the bare trees, I entered one of the long halls on each side. Here there are statues of all the disciples of this early faith.

Although China has many spoken languages, there is only one written medium of communication. If a resident in one province desires to talk to somebody from quite another area of this vast land, he may have great difficulty in understanding or in making himself understood ; but they can at once exchange ideas in writing. Most Chinese characters have been evolved from picture writing. The sign for "woman" when repeated twice means "trouble," and three times signifies "gossip." Place this same symbol beneath the character meaning "house" and you have, not "a lady indoors," but "peace." All Chinese mouths are not as pretty as the little triangle signifying this human feature, but place the sign for it below that meaning "a gateway" and the result is "a beggar." All so absurdly simple that it takes the



TEMPLE OF THE GREEN CLOUD—PEIPING

Facing page 114—5.



DRUM TOWER IN THE HEART OF THE NATIVE CITY—PEIPING



THE CHIEN MEN AND THE SOUTH GATE OF THE TARTAR CITY—
PEIPING

average European fifteen years of constant practice to understand a few hundred characters. Everything is written from right to left, and Chinese books have to be deciphered from the back page to the front one.

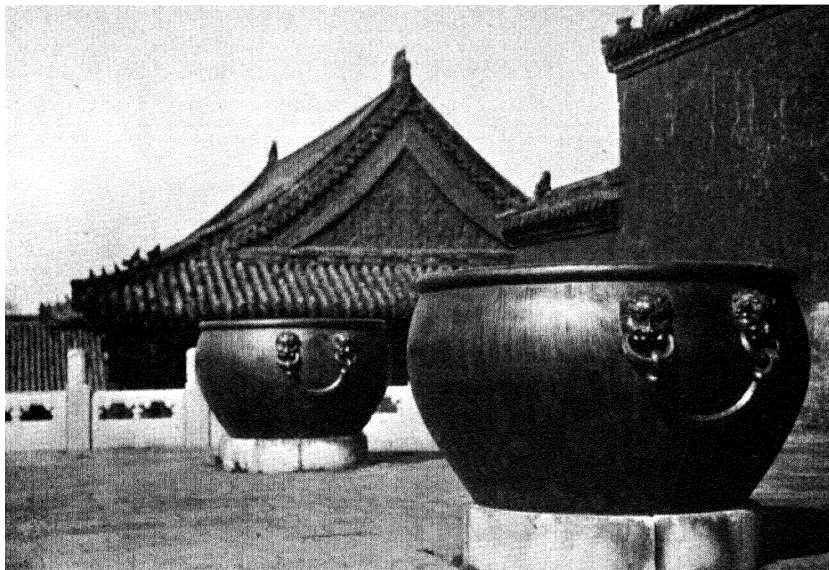
It was in the Lama Temple of the Tartar city that I obtained the biggest thrill. This extraordinarily dirty and weird building, unlike many of the religious edifices in Peiping which, since the establishment of the republic, have been either abandoned and allowed to fall into disrepair or else have lost their hold on the public, is very much in use, and adjoining it there is the Lamasery of Eternal Peace, which is the official residence of the "Living Buddha." Here the courtyard was full of yellow-robed priests, and after passing through shrine after shrine with their images of Buddha I arrived at the holy of holies. An old priest was standing beneath a gigantic golden image of Buddha, carved from a single tree trunk and about eighty feet high. Here, before him, on the altar decorated with many curious things, was a lighted tallow candle and piles of joss-sticks. Igniting one of these I stuck it in a heap of sand at the feet of this heathen image, and was then free to walk around both the temple and the monastery. In one building I came upon a class of aspirants for the priesthood, who were chanting and swaying on their rough wooden benches. Many of these were mere children, and their chanting in a shrill treble contrasted with the deep bass voices of the older priests.

It was in this temple that I made my first discovery of the debased nature of this cult. While in the priests' quarters a yellow-robed figure sidled up to me and offered for a Mexican dollar, which is the currency in China, to show me the "Passion Buddha."

He spoke English almost perfectly, and by the way in which he invited me to view this object I knew that it was something of an obscene character. Although I cannot explain its nature, and I do not know who was responsible for carving this disgusting figure, it occurred to me that any religious cult which harboured such a loathsome object in a monastery where young priests were living and receiving so-called instruction must, indeed, have a peculiar code of morals.

The opportunity which I sought to investigate still further the Lama cult occurred one afternoon in central Peiping. I made the acquaintance of, or rather forced myself upon, a young priest whose face bore the unmistakable sign of European blood. Quite early in the conversation I asked him how he became a member of what appeared to be a very degrading cult. He told me that he had become interested in it through reading, and decided to make a personal study of this branch of the Buddhist faith. After great difficulty he succeeded in getting himself accepted as a novice at a Lama monastery in Japan. There he stayed for several years before being transferred to Peiping.

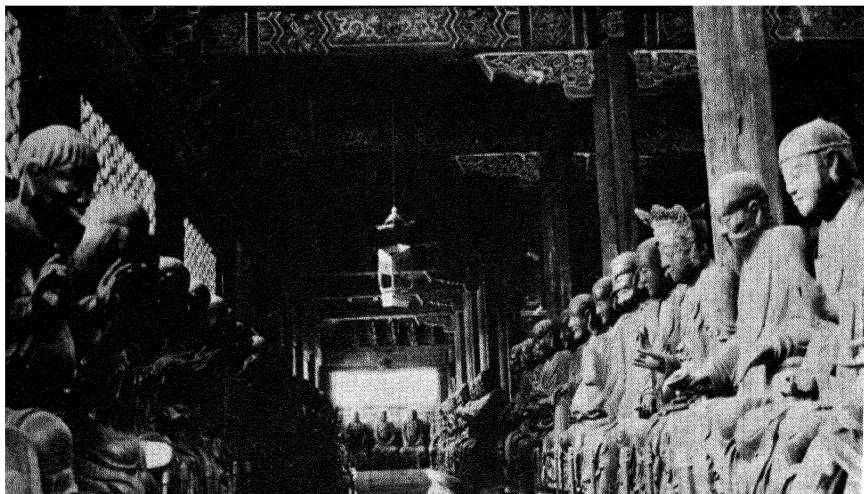
Although I have been in some of the dirtiest cities of the world, and have lived with both half-breeds and natives, it appalled me to think how this white man could endure the mental and moral slime which I knew must surround the practice of this Asiatic cult. This I explained to him, and he told me that dirt meant nothing to him, and that it was part of the mental training to steel oneself so that eventually its existence became unnoticeable. In one hour I had learned sufficient of the Lama doctrine and practice to view all that concerned this religion, with its



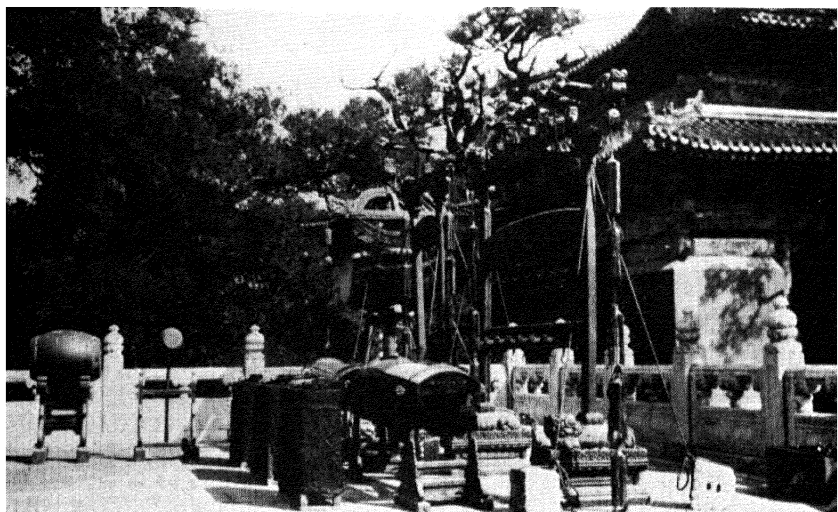
IN THE FORBIDDEN CITY : BRONZE INCENSE URNS IN FRONT OF
THE ROYAL PALACE, PEIPING



THE TEMPLE OF HEAVEN—PEIPING



HALL OF FIVE HUNDRED BUDDHAS IN THE TEMPLE OF THE
AZURE CLOUD, WESTERN HILLS, PEIPING



COURTYARD OF THE YELLOW TEMPLE--PEIPING

millions of adherents in Central Asia, from an entirely different standpoint. Cleanliness and morality appear to be unknown virtues, while showmanship and deception are praiseworthy accomplishments. This is not the place for a more intimate account of all that I learned concerning this remarkable cult during my travels in the East, but in future pages I may have more to say about the Lama priests that I have met and their queer views upon life and death.

CHAPTER XVII

IN THE FORBIDDEN CITY

IF there is one place in Peiping to which the foot-steps of most travellers will lead it is the Forbidden City, hidden behind its massive walls, thirty feet high and of equal thickness, in the centre of the city of the conquerors. Approaching this place by way of the Hsi Hua Men, or West Gate Glorious, I crossed the broad moat and stood inside the grand marble-paved quadrangle containing the Hall of Highest Peace, the Grand Reception Hall and the Throne. Scarcely twenty-five years ago it was as difficult for a European, no matter what his credentials unless he was a ruling prince or the ambassador of a king, to enter this Forbidden City of the Chinese emperors as it was to reach Lhasa, the holy city of Tibet.

The walls of the Forbidden City have a circumference of about two miles, and the interior space is filled with palaces, each surrounded by a courtyard and encompassed by white marble terraces. If you have seen a willow pattern plate, then the form of nearly all these royal buildings will be familiar, but you will have no conception of their brilliant exterior colouring. Standing on one of the terraces I gazed around at the amazing yellow tiles of the roofs and the blue, orange, green and purple of the scrolls and decorations. In the courtyards there are huge bronze

urns, carved tortoises and exquisite metal images of the sacred ibis.

Everywhere there were soldiers with rifles—a very necessary precaution when the turbulent state of China and the value of these buildings with their contents are considered. In some of the personal apartments of the late emperor, the beautiful old red-lacquer furniture and other priceless treasures have been left untouched. It is said, although I did not see them, that even the solid gold band instruments are lying in the theatre of the palace.

Many of the halls and the Throne Room have, however, been converted into a vast National museum without in any way damaging the beautiful interiors. Experts have estimated the value of the collections of Chinese works of art and antiquities at thirty million dollars. It was, however, the decoration of the ceilings which impressed me most. The blue, green, purple, red and gold designs are amazingly intricate. In the Tai Ho Tien, or Throne Hall of Supreme Harmony, which was used for the coronation of a new emperor and for the New Year receptions of princes and nobles, there is a most complete exhibition of portraits of emperors. The earliest represents a legendary monarch who lived about 3000 B.C. The imperial throne of stags' horns is in this building, as well as a wonderful collection of antique black-wood furniture, carved lacquer work, and the bronze cones which once indicated official rank.

In the Middle Throne Hall, or Chung Ho Tien, there is a unique collection of clocks, dating from the early eighteenth century. Many of these old time-pieces are studded with precious stones, and their mechanism operates birds, waterfalls and other curious

objects. They were nearly all presented by European monarchs to one Chinese ruler, who had a passion for unusual clocks. Another curiosity of this hall is the iron tablet, dating from A.D. 1655, which prohibited eunuchs from taking any part in State affairs. It would be impossible to detail here all that I saw in these palaces of the Forbidden City. In 1913 the royal treasures from the palaces of Mukden, in Manchuria, and from Jehol, were removed to Peiping, and among them I noticed a flower jar, dated A.D. 954, which must surely be one of the oldest pieces of Chinese porcelain existing to-day. Then there is a pair of semi-transparent white bowls and many beautiful pieces of bronze and jade.

Just beyond the Forbidden City there is a slight eminence called Coal Hill, about which a curious story is told. It is said that for many generations the people of Peiping considered that a former emperor had built this huge mound, about 150 feet high, of coal and covered it with earth and Buddhist temples, so that in the event of a close siege the capital might be supplied during the winter with a sufficiency of fuel. Colour was given to this rumour by the erection of royal granaries and stores within the Tartar city about the same period. Tests have proved this story to be entirely incorrect.

Peiping is a city of great distances. It is said to cover an area of nearly thirty square miles ; and out beyond the walls there are almost as many interesting sights as there are within the fortifications. While circling round the outskirts of the Tartar city I passed the beautiful little Temple of Heavenly Peace, the ruins of the Altar of the Moon and the massive, ornate and well-preserved Five Towers Pagoda,

which was built in 1474. About two hours in a motor car on a dusty road, along which laden camels were coming towards the city from Mongolia and the Gobi Desert, and I landed at the Summer Palace of the late dowager-empress.

The whole of this vast garden and its palaces, lakes and bridges of marble and red lacquer were designed for the amusement of the empress who had ruled China for nearly a quarter of a century. Finding difficulty in obtaining the necessary funds for the conversion of the ruins of an older Peiping into a pleasure palace for her declining years, this last dowager-empress appropriated the fund of fifty million dollars collected for the creation of a Chinese navy, and built the Summer Palace.

One American writer describes this place as a "Woman's \$50,000,000 whim." It is said, with a certain amount of truth, that the misuse of this money was responsible for the defeat of China at the hands of Japan in 1894. Perhaps the Marble Barge, which is made very largely of wood, and was the sole contribution of the old empress to China's sea power, is the most characteristic feature. The long terrace by the lakeside, the many pagodas and palaces, and, above all, the Pai-lou, or commemorative gateway, and the camel-back bridge which spans a corner of the lotus pond are, however, its principal attractions.

During my stay in Peiping I was lucky enough to see the funeral procession of a retainer of the old imperial household. Although the country is now a republic, this member of the court was allowed to be buried with all the pomp and circumstance of a passing age. Even to-day, however, wealthy Chinese have the most elaborate funeral processions in the

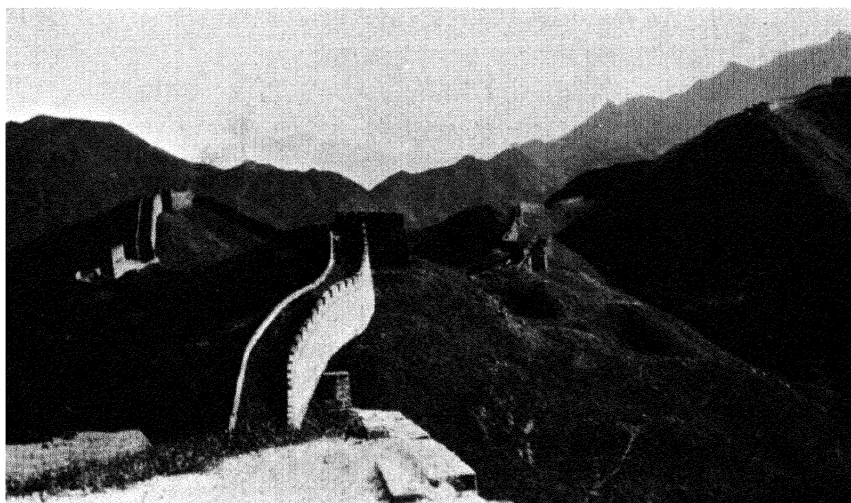
world. They often give employment to hundreds of people, and cost thousands of dollars. On this occasion the bier was an immense structure painted and draped entirely with the imperial yellow. It must have weighed nearly a ton although constructed of wood. It was carried in the procession by a large number of coolies who, walking in double file, supported on their shoulders the two long poles or handles.

This funeral procession was nearly a mile in length, and resembled the parade of some grotesque Oriental circus. Bands of weirdly dressed musicians played still more weird music. Donkeys, palanquins and chairs were used by the relatives and friends of the deceased, but hundreds joined in the procession on foot. Immense lanterns and banners were carried by men dressed in long coats with white dots in the form of circles, as some mystic religious sign. In their strange little hats were yellow plumes. The portrait of the deceased, or "soul tablet" as it is called, came immediately behind the bier.

Then there were ingenious but somewhat gaudy paper models of rickshaws, servants and what appeared to represent a pagoda-like house. The most queer thing of all was an immense amount of imitation paper money which, like the other paper symbols, was to be burnt so that it could accompany the spirit into the next world, and would serve to purchase the same degree of comfort in the after-life as that enjoyed by the deceased while on earth. Fire crackers were continually being exploded, and there were many people armed with long white streamers who were waving these and slashing at imaginary objects. They were devil-chasers employed to frighten away



A CAMEL CARAVAN OUTSIDE THE WALLS OF THE TARTAR
CITY--PEIPING



THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA



GREAT BUDDHA IN THE LAMA
TEMPLE, PEIPING



IN THE TEMPLE OF THE LITTLE WESTERN
HEAVEN, WINTER PALACE, PEIPING

evil spirits. The nearest relative was carried in a chair, but was entirely screened from view. The coffin on the bier was covered with yellow and gold draperies.

I had seen a small funeral in one of the narrow streets of Canton, where the principal objects carried in the procession seemed to be paper flowers, fish, and birds with long necks. My chair had been held up for a minute or two to allow this pathetic little funeral to pass. I had noticed how happy every one seemed, but felt that this was not to be wondered at if the dead tradesman or coolie had lived all his life in the narrow alleys which are the same to-day as they were a thousand years ago. This semi-royal *cortège* passing through one of the principal streets of the Tartar city of Peiping formed one of the most extraordinary sights that I ever expect to see.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA

EARLY one bitterly cold morning I left Peiping for the Great Wall which divides China from Mongolia. Although the distance to Chinglung-chiao, which is the nearest railway station to the Wall, is under forty miles, the train occupies over three hours in this climb to the summit of the Hankow Pass. Owing to the disturbed state of the country, the entire line was guarded by unkempt Chinese soldiers. Unfortunately a heavy fall of snow in Mongolia had not only sent the thermometer down until it showed, in exposed positions, some forty degrees of frost, but it also created an icy wind from the north, which was bringing the sand in clouds from the Gobi Desert, besides whisking up the dust from all over the dun-coloured plains of northern China. In summer or early spring this journey is said to be a delightful one. In mid-winter, however, only barren fields of dry mud, with what little vegetation there is carefully protected by endless lines of grass and bamboo wind-breaks, became occasionally visible through the dust-storms.

After travelling for about two hours, during which we passed through many little towns, each surrounded by hundreds of tiny earth mounds that I learned were graves, we entered the mountains and climbed slowly

through a gorge. The rain of dust had ceased, and the rocky walls closed in upon the line. Amidst hissing steam, and with a fringe of icicles hanging from the coaches, we came to a standstill at the little wayside station of Chinglungchiao, which forms the terminus of this line to the Mongolian border.

The Great Wall of China is one of the Seven Wonders of the World. Curiously enough it is not a stone structure, but is formed by two retaining walls built of reddish-brown brick, rising from granite foundations. The intervening space, about twenty-five feet at the base and fifteen at the top, is filled in with earth and stones. It was built during the reign of the Emperor Chin Shih Hwang, some 200 years before the Christian era, and is about 2,500 miles in length, if the loops and secondary walls are included. It extends for over 1,700 miles in a direct line (main wall only), and runs from the sea at Shanhaikwan, on the borders of Manchuria, to the confines of distant Turkestan. It is said that the principal wall alone, which goes up and down steep mountain ridges, took fifteen years to construct by slave labour, and that millions died and were buried in its core. The Great Wall was intended to defend China proper against the incursions of the Tartar hordes.

Getting out of the warm train into the freezing air was a decidedly cooling process. In the narrow pass between the steep mountain slopes were a number of unkempt Tartar tribesmen with shaggy ponies and sedan chairs to carry travellers up to the Great Wall or to the Mongolian villages beyond. In a moment I found myself surrounded by primitive men in untanned sheepskin coats, and with parchment-like faces of a yellowish-brown colour. Among this wild-

looking crowd there were many misshapen beggars, one of whom crawled on his knees and held up sightless eyes as he stretched out his hands for *cumshaw*, the Chinese equivalent of *bakshish*, or alms.

The cold was so intense that I decided to allow two of these tribesmen to carry me along the several miles of steep and rugged mountain paths to where the Great Wall cut an even line across the clear sky. For the protection of travellers, soldiers were stationed at intervals along this bandit-infested caravan road into Mongolia. I had not proceeded far when one of my bearers slipped on a stone, and in a moment I was tipped out of the chair on to the stony slope of the mountain. Being thickly clad it took me a minute or so to regain an upright position on the slope, and before this could be accomplished one of our armed guards had rushed with a yell of fury at the unfortunate Mongol bearers, and was beating them indiscriminately with the case in which he carried his rifle to prevent it becoming clogged with ice and sand.

The scene was almost indescribable. Every minute I expected to see the wild tribesmen, who collected from all quarters, draw their knives. Eventually, however, I persuaded the soldier to stop beating the men, and mounted a shaggy little pony which had been brought up by a man and boy, whose laughing faces were in striking contrast to those of the angry crowd around. Slowly we climbed the rugged path, passing a typical Mongolian village of earth and stone shacks in the valley below. Arriving at the wall I dismounted, and climbed the flight of stairs leading to the top.

On returning to civilisation, a friend explained his

secret ambition to ride along the top of this wall from the sea to Turkestan. If the whole length of wall has the same broken surface as the section which came under my own observation—and it is equally as steep as those parts where it climbs along the summit of this Pass—then I think any such feat would be impossible, quite apart from the attacks by primitive tribesmen and outlaws to which such a cavalcade, unless performed by a large and well-armed party, would undoubtedly be subjected.

The view over Mongolia was somewhat disappointing. Successive ridges of brown-coloured mountains, with the valleys obscured by a grey mist, and a few mud hovels with a single line of dusty, shaggy camels coming from the Gobi Desert, was all I saw of the wild land which lies between the Great Wall of China and the Siberian plains.

CHAPTER XIX

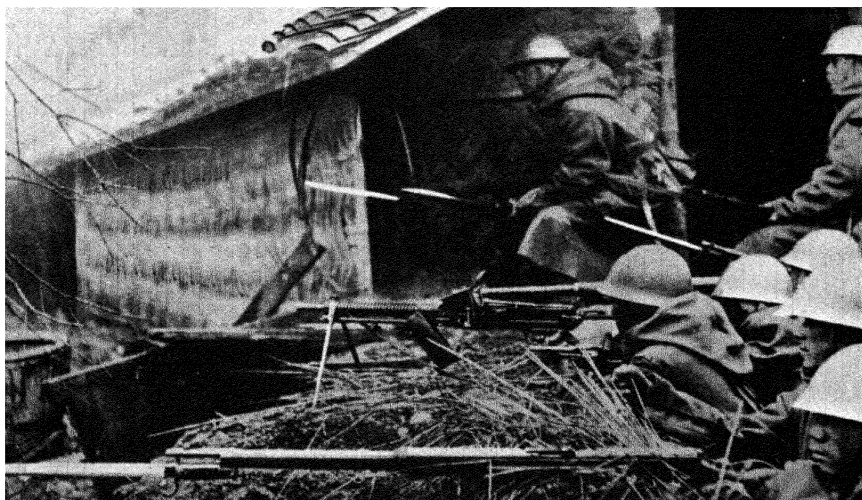
MANCHURIA, THE FEVER SPOT OF EASTERN POLITICS

MANCHURIA has been a fever spot in Eastern politics for over half a century. Take a look at the map of Asia and you will see that this great province of the old Chinese Empire, the homeland of the Manchu emperors, which at one period included the imperial capital, is wedged between the vast area of China-behind-the-Great-Wall and the Siberia of the Soviets. It also stretches south and east, however, joining Korea and approaching the sea-girt isles which form the heart of energetic Nippon.

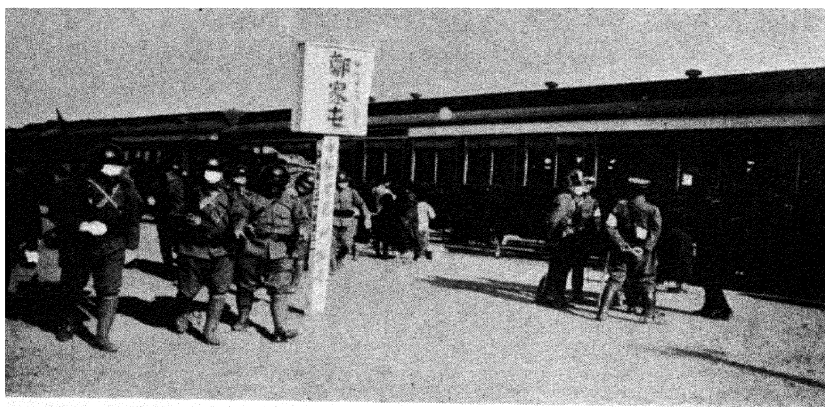
Manchuria is a rich land with about 460,000 square miles of territory inhabited by some twenty-nine millions of people who live on the mines and the soil. It has been developed almost entirely by the outpourings of Japanese capital, brains and energy, yet at different periods of its turbulent history it has belonged to China, and in point of population is more than half Chinese. It has also been occupied by Russia, and there are hundreds of thousands of Soviet subjects resident in its towns. Both of these great Asiatic nations were driven out by the military power and commercial energy of Japan. Here, then, are the makings of a first-class zone of rivalry and war.



A MANCHURIAN FAMILY IN CEREMONIAL DRESS



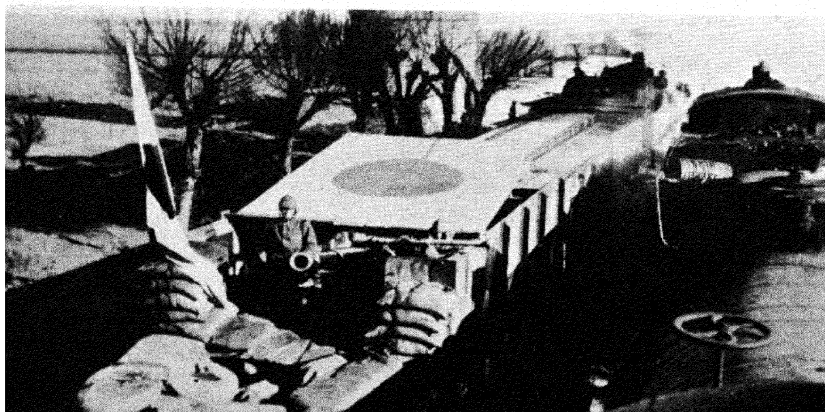
JAPANESE TROOPS IN ACTION NEAR HARBIN



JAPANESE PATROL GUARDING PLATFORM



JAPANESE WOUNDED RECEIVING ATTENTION IN TRAIN



JAPANESE ARMoured TRAIN ON THE MUKDEN-PEIPING RAILWAY

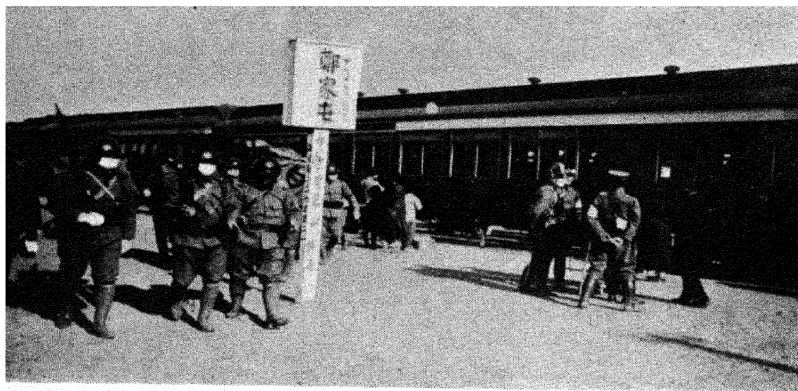
Although, on leaving Peiping, I passed close to its borders my way lay southwards to Japan, then in the throes of the Manchurian war fever. On a previous occasion I had, however, come from across the Pacific to these lands of the "Morning Calm"—an artistic term which may accurately describe the salient climatic feature of near-by Korea but certainly not the principal characteristic of Manchuria during recent years. It was while sitting in the big Japanese hotel in Mukden that I obtained my first insight into this complex problem of the Far East. Here is what that great Japanese transport organisation, the South Manchuria Railway, which has played such a prominent part in opening up this wild country, has to say regarding local history in one of its publications, which I picked up in the Yamato Hotel :—

This city can well boast of its history as the birthplace of the Manchu Dynasty, which reigned over China for 267 years until quite recently, when the present Republic established itself. It requires little explanation to prove that Mukden is one of the oldest towns in Manchuria. At the time of the Yuan Dynasty it was known by the name of Shen-yang, and under the Ming Dynasty it already formed a town of considerable importance. In 1625, the town was created the capital of China by the founder of the Manchu Dynasty, which was then arising as the conqueror of the Ming. Later, in 1644, when the Mings were altogether overthrown, and the Manchu Dynasty assumed its reign over all China, the capital was transferred to Peking, when Mukden was known as Liu-tu, or Pei-tu, which means home capital and rear capital respectively. In 1658, Feng-tien-fu (the Feng-tien Prefecture) was established here, and since then the city has been known as Feng-tien. Foreigners, however, all call it by the old Manchu name of Mukden. In the Russo-Japanese war, the fiercest and most momentous battle was fought along a line extending over a hundred miles east of this city, and resulted in such a great victory for the Japanese as to bring about the speedy termination of the war.

The city is divided into three sections, the Walled Town, the Foreign Settlement (*Shang-fu-ti*) and the New Town. This latter is quite a fine city built upon land leased and developed by the South Manchuria Railway, one of the most efficient systems in the Far East.

The whole political question of the rights of the three countries—China, Japan and Russia—in the now autonomous state of Manchuria is so complex, and involves consideration of so many factors, that pages would be occupied if any discussion on the subject were entered upon here. Sufficient to say that the partition of China, either in whole or part, among the great Powers having big interests therein is not a new political thought. It has been an ever-present distasteful possibility for the last half-century. Opposed to any such measures are England and America, who have always endeavoured to maintain what is known as the “policy of the open door in China.” This means the right of China to govern herself so long as she does this without jeopardising the rights of foreigners residing within her territory. This policy also aims at keeping this great potential market—some 400 millions of people—for the open competition of the commercial world. Complications arise, however, when China herself becomes torn by internal strife, and allows the administration of what is a very large proportion of the continent of Asia to fall into a state of anarchy. This has actually been the condition of affairs in China, and in Manchuria particularly, since the overthrow of the monarchy in 1911-12 and the assumption of power by numerous military chiefs, or “war lords.”

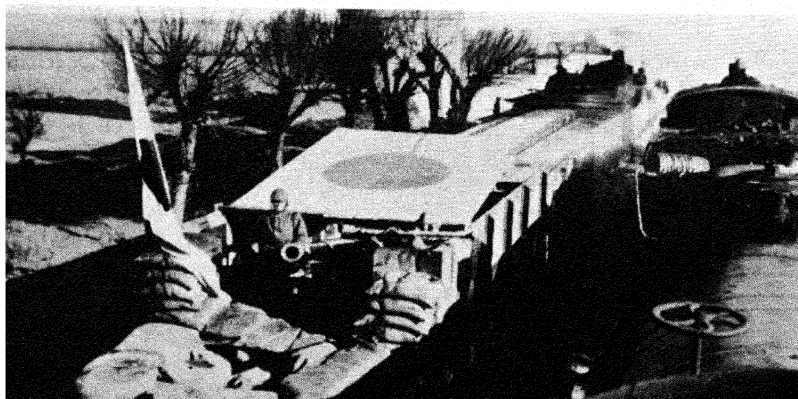
When I was in Manchuria, life and property were



JAPANESE PATROL GUARDING PLATFORM

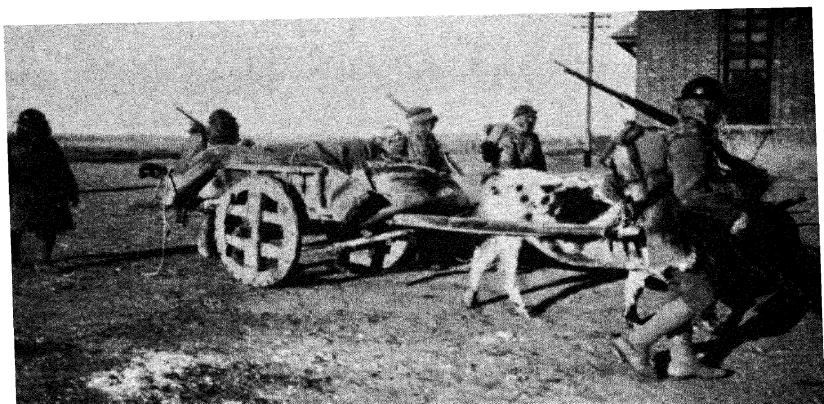


JAPANESE WOUNDED RECEIVING ATTENTION IN TRAIN



JAPANESE TROOPS ADVANCING OVER A FROZEN FIELD IN MANCHURIA

Facing page 130—5.



JAPANESE FOOD CONVOY



CHINESE SPIES CAPTURED BY JAPANESE TROOPS



JAPANESE PATROL NEAR HOKOMON, MANCHURIA

safe only in the cities and along the route of the railway lines which were under Japanese or foreign management and protection. Robbers and bandits wandered in powerful groups all over the open country, levying toll and committing the most appalling outrages everywhere and anywhere that they could. Although it is of vital importance for the nations of Europe and America to preserve all their rights to unrestricted and competitive trade in China, there is really little to create surprise when Japan, who has developed Manchuria since the overthrow of Russia in 1908, becomes exasperated at seeing these huge investments threatened with extinction at the hands of undisciplined armies and roving bands of barbaric outlaws.

It must not be forgotten that Manchuria adjoins the Japanese mainland territory of Korea, or *Chosen*, and its development into a separate kingdom, created and supported by Japanese bayonets, can only be viewed dispassionately as a stage in the annexation of this country by Japan. The placing of Henry Pu-yi, the last of the Manchu emperors on the ancient throne of his ancestors in Mukden, was a stroke of genius on the part of Japan. The power of this young emperor must depend, however, upon the support he receives from the great "Empire of the Little Peoples" of the Far East.

After studying these matters in Mukden, I turned my attention to the north, where 100,000 Russians live in towns like Harbin, alongside the heterogeneous races of Eastern Asia. Here there are Soviet railways of great commercial and strategic value situated inside the Manchurian border. These lines form essential links in the great Trans-Siberian system.

Only a nebulous geographical line divides the frontier forces of a communistic state from those of the most efficient empire in the Far East and of Manchuria, its new ally. The more I learned of Manchukuo problems the more convinced I became that this great powder magazine needed only a spark to set Eastern Asia ablaze with all the far-reaching consequences of such a conflagration.

In Mukden three railway systems join : (1) the Japanese lines coming from the south and east ; (2) the Chinese-owned lines from Peiping, Tientsin and the south-west ; and (3) the Russo-Chinese lines from the north. At the time of my stay in this city it was difficult to tell whether I was in a Japanese, a Chinese, or an essentially Manchu city. It depended very largely upon one's outlook at the moment. Commercially it is the city of the *Soya* bean, the value of which is almost empirical and needs a study to itself ; but it is also the rendezvous of the fur trade, and something like eight million pelts are brought down each year from the northern mountains for distribution to the world's fur markets. Like all the old cities hereabouts, Mukden is a walled town, which covers a little over a square mile and is surrounded by brick fortifications about thirty feet high. This wall is about four miles in circumference, and has eight towered gateways. Within these defences stand imperial palaces and many other original Manchu buildings. Beyond this enclosed city, however, there was once an outer ring of mud walls, now broken in places, surrounding many streets, very largely native in character, covering an area of about ten square miles.

Lying between the Manchu city and the Japanese "New Town" there is the Foreign Settlement, or

Shang-fu-Ti, an area of rectangular streets and blocks of buildings housing the Consulates and many European residences. This adjoins the area developed by the initiative of the South Manchuria Railway. Although Shen-yang, the old walled city which was the capital of the Manchu Dynasty from 1625-1643, is rapidly being modernised, it still preserves much of its traditional Chinese aspect. Walking down Supingchieh Street, only the people passing by give any indication of its whereabouts or character until one glances at the shops and sign-boards. It was in a street not far from the Supingchieh that I witnessed a Chinese Stilt Dance. Some ten or fifteen young men and women, dressed in weird costume, danced with stilts strapped to their legs, which raised them about two feet above the ground. They formed a troupe of street players, and the performance was accompanied by the beat of a drum. It was extraordinary how these people maintained their balance while standing on one foot, without the slightest movement.

There are warehouses in Mukden which reminded me of those far-off days when Manchuria's tribute to Peiping was "Forty Tigers with fur a finger long." They are filled with the most wonderful Asiatic pelts, all systematically graded for transport abroad. In the shops one sees some fine gold and silver ornaments of native workmanship, but Mukden, except for its street life, is not a city like Peiping, where time must be lavishly expended in order to see and understand its interesting peculiarities. The population of this city numbers just under 400,000, and is made up of 334,000 Chinese, 24,000 Japanese, 25,000 Koreans and 2,000 of different European nationalities.

One of the principal sights in Mukden are the Imperial Mausoleums ; and not knowing that a permit from the Consular authorities is necessary in order to visit these places, my first journey there was wasted. However, the omission was soon corrected, and I drove to the nearest of these palace-tombs, at Pei-ling, about four miles to the north of the city. Standing on a tree-covered hill, the Mausoleum of the Emperor Ta-tsung, who died in 1644, is surrounded by the usual wall, about a mile in circumference. Near by stands a monument, with an epitaph extolling the virtues of the illustrious dead written by his successor. There are two granite horses, modelled after the favourite animals of the Emperor, standing in the courtyard of the tomb. Another royal Mausoleum, called Tung-ling, is situated about ten miles from Mukden on a wooded hill. It is the tomb of the Emperor Tatsu, the founder of the Manchu Dynasty, who was buried here in 1629. The most attractive features of the buildings are the raking roofs of bright yellow glazed tiles and the supporting woodwork under the eaves which is painted with the most vivid blues and greens.

There are, of course, many old temples in and around Mukden. One, the Hsien-Wang-Ssu, is dedicated to the seven princes who helped in the establishment of the Manchu Dynasty. A monument in the centre of the new town takes the form of a huge cannon ball. It is about twenty-two feet in height, and stands above the ashes of the 232,000 Japanese soldiers who gave their lives in the Russo-Japanese War.

About twenty miles east of Mukden are the Fushun coal-fields, which cover an area of 16,500 acres and

possess one seam which has an average thickness of 130 feet. The total amount of coal available is estimated at over 1,000 million tons. Here is what is said about these mines by the Japanese company to whom they belong : " These deposits were originally discovered some 600 years ago by Koreans who worked them in a very primitive way, but later the Manchu Government forbade further operations as they feared they might interfere with the spirits of departed imperial ancestors whose graves were in the vicinity. When the Russians entered Manchuria they took up mining here, but the scale was so limited that the daily output was only 360 tons. Under Japanese management, extensive improvements have been made and numerous modern methods introduced, about Yen 129,000,000 having been invested."

" As Mukden is the great distributing centre for goods in the middle section of South Manchuria, the very large volume of merchandise coming to and from the city enhances the business activities of the market," says another official publication. " The chief exports are beans, beancakes, millet, wheat, rice, tobacco, hemp, drugs and skins. Above all, the city is the great centre of the fur trade in Manchuria."

CHAPTER XX

CURIOUS KOREA

FROM Mukden I crossed Korea, or *Chosen*, as it is called by the Japanese, and am now in its capital city of Seoul. There is nothing like travel to make one realise not only the importance of a sound geographical knowledge, but also the shortcomings of a modern European map which gives the ancient name to such an important city of to-day as this capital of the Japanese mainland territory of Korea. While travelling across the fertile basin of the Hun-ho, a vast prairie region covered with fields of rice, wheat and maize, during the daylight hours of the 481 miles' journey south from Mukden, I searched a local map in vain for the city of Seoul. Finding no mention of it in the whole of Korea, I glanced at my ticket and discovered that the modern name is Keijō.* It was, therefore, at this station that I eventually alighted from the comfortable express train which was southward bound for the shores of the narrow strait dividing Korea from Japan.

In its setting of green hills and trees, Keijō struck me as one of the most picturesque cities in Eastern Asia. It is, however, only a small place with a population of about 30,000, and at first sight does not present a typically Korean scene. As the capital of

* Sometimes spelt *Keizyo*.

the Yi kings, it flourished for over five centuries, however, and not only is it surrounded by a battlemented wall, but there is also an interesting old Korean section, apart from the modern streets and buildings. The comfortable hotel in which I stayed was built on the site of the Temple of Heaven, and later in my rambles I discovered that the old Nandaimon Gate is practically all that has been left of the ancient city wall.

Thinking that I had not come to Keijō to see either a Japanese population or a fine Western street, such as that of the Nandaimon-dori, I passed quickly through this broad thoroughfare with its electric tramcars and other signs of modern progress to the Shoro, beyond which most of the Koreans now live. The southern section of the city is occupied very largely by the Japanese. Apart from the interesting little shops where I saw many curious things made of inlaid iron and brass, which is a Korean speciality, and those metal-bound chests with quaint butterfly hinges which one sees in museums at home, that which appealed to me as most curious of all were the Koreans themselves. Tall yellow-faced men with a knot of hair on the top of their heads, goatee beards, baggy clothes, and wooden clogs on their feet which must weigh such a considerable amount that there is little to wonder at in their shuffling gait. The hats of these Koreans were, however, the most extraordinary part of their apparel.

The head covering has always held a unique position in Korean male fashions. First, there is the black crinoline, which consists of a tight-fitting skull-cap, on top of which is placed a high cone, then comes a small round brim, which is secured to the

head by ribbons under the chin. This remarkable headgear is donned in sections, and, needless to say, the custom of raising one's hat is unknown. There are few more extraordinary sights than Korean men with this witch-like hat perched on the top of their heads. Another kind of headgear which is seen less frequently in the streets is made of white horse-hair; then there are the old-time military hats of blue, and those with ears sticking out at the side to show that the wearer's attention is directed to the voice of his sovereign. Most choice of all, however, is the ruler's own hat. This has ears tied up like those of a rabbit on the top of the high crown, as an indication that he need listen to no one. Curiously, in this land of "mad-hatters" the women wear no hats at all.

As I penetrated deeper into the Korean town the roadway became very narrow, because so many of the shopkeepers brought their wares out into the sunshine, and the flow of human life grew more varied and interesting. The religious ordinance which compels the Korean to mourn for at least three years for a father and a proportionate length of time for other relatives has produced a curious state of affairs. Here, as in China, white and not black is the colour for mourning, and the length of time during which it is obligatory to wear this has caused the ordinary man to adopt it permanently. It is natural, therefore, that one should see every pool and stream occupied almost from dawn to dusk by women washing the clothes of their menfolk.

Among the human stream which passed me under the old Nandaimon Gate, I saw one man who, in addition to wearing the white clothes of perpetual mourning, had also a hat of woven bamboo, almost

a yard in diameter and shaped like an inverted bowl. It completely covered his head and came down almost to the shoulders. The human traffic around had to make room for him to pass so as to prevent disarranging this enormous headgear. He was mourning for his father, and must therefore hide his face completely while walking in the street.

During the early summer I travelled through Korea, and this picturesque country certainly lived up to its reputation as the "Land of the Morning Calm." Undoubtedly one of the most interesting places in the capital is the Keifuku Palace, which was built in 1850. Of the several buildings now existing, the Banqueting Hall, by the side of a lotus pond, is the most beautiful. The Palace of Prince Yi is occupied by this Korean nobleman, and only the garden can be seen by special permission. In the fine art works maintained by this prince many Korean handicrafts are still carried on. Then there is the famous big bell, which for centuries pealed forth when the time came for opening or closing the city gates. Its reverberating notes also rang through the old streets every night at eight o'clock as a signal to all the men that they must return home, so that the women of Seoul could walk abroad without the presence of a single male in all the roads and passageways of the city.

Little over half a day's journey from Keijō there is a region of rugged mountains which forms one of the scenic attractions of the country. It is called Kongo-san, but is more generally known as the Diamond Range. It is a great cluster of several thousand lofty peaks on the north-east side of the peninsula. "As one traverses this mystic mountain

group and views its skyscraping peaks, craggy cliffs, and leaping streams dashing against the fantastic rocks, the sublimity of this creation of Nature is deeply felt. Moreover, numerous Buddhist monasteries, many of them perched in seemingly impossible places, dot the landscape."

Korea is a striking example of the fate of a nation which places its trust in words rather than in deeds. Its ideal for thousands of years has been the poet and the scholar rather than the soldier, with the result that it has fallen beneath the heel of its more virile neighbour across the Strait of Shimonoseki. Japan has, however, tried to develop and even Westernise Korea. She has given much that the country would never have possessed had it been left to its own resources, but Korea is not happy, because its ideals are so different from those of its ruler.

In the little town of Keishu, not far from the port of Fusan, I obtained a good idea of the life of the Korean peasant. His home, which resembles a beehive, is made of adobe brick and roofed with rice straw ; but a farmhouse is tiled, and is usually of two or even three storeys. This latter type of building is surrounded by half-inundated rice-fields, from which the water is pumped by old-fashioned treadmills. There are two events of major importance in Korean national life—one is marriage and the other death.

A wedding is a somewhat elaborate affair. After the father of the bridegroom has found a suitable girl, the horoscopes of the young couple are submitted to a *pansu*, or astrologer-priest, who is invariably blind ! He declares whether the union is likely to be a lucky one, and decides upon a day and hour for the marriage when the stars of the bride and groom

appear to be in a favourable position. At the appointed time the bride's face is gaily painted, and she is dressed in elaborate clothes. A crown and veil is placed on her head, and pages with grotesque little hats accompany her to where the priest is waiting to perform the ceremony.

Every one seems to have paper sunshades, and at the head of the procession a goose is carried as an emblem of conjugal fidelity. Not until after the wedding ceremony is over is the veil of the bride removed so that the husband may then see for the first time the face of his life partner. It is the custom for the bride to remain absolutely silent for several days after the wedding in order to prove both good breeding and becoming reticence. I wondered, when these customs were explained to me in old Korea, how many European or American girls would marry at all if the same rigid conditions obtained in the West.

CHAPTER XXI

JAPAN AND THE INLAND SEA

I OPENED the big porthole to the sunshine, and in came Japan. The misty-blue outline of a pointed, snow-capped cone, a placid sheet of water on which floated a queer-sailed *sampan*, with long shadows trailing away from its side, a curved, raking roof on a far-away hill, and a number of little dolls' houses appeared in succession like a kaleidoscopic picture in subdued colours. We were moving across the Inland Sea in the early morning of a country famed as the "Land of the Rising Sun," and the quaint, colourful town of Beppu had come into the cabin of the ship on the face of a looking-glass.

Because the Japanese still dress in kimonos and do their hair in elaborate style ; because one still hears the staccato noise of many wooden sandals on stone-flagged streets, which are gay with banners and cherry blossom, or are glowing beneath moon-like electric globes in festoons, do not imagine that this fairyland extends beyond the realm of play. These artistic, diminutive people have remodelled their land in places to suit the century, and themselves to conform to the hard, commercialised and ambitious world of to-day.

Beppu gleamed in the sunshine after a shower of rain as I stepped into the entrancing little main street

of this town of hot springs on the island of Kyushu. A rapid glance around and I was satisfied that the shops, the prettily dressed people, and the gay streets, often narrow but full of colour, light and quaintness, would fulfil my preconceived ideas of a real Japanese bazaar. Japan is generally clean, but Beppu on this early summer morning shone and gleamed. It has no slums such as I saw later in the great industrial city of Osaka, nor has it any modern streets flanked by great stone buildings and occupied by hurrying crowds of thoughtful and often haggard-looking men and women, such as one sees in the Westernised streets of central Tokyo.

In a circle of picturesque mountains, this little Japanese model has one great reason beyond mere charm for its existence as the home of 43,000 people and the pleasure-town of many more thousands in the course of a year. It has Aso-San, a volcano which produces hot mud heavily impregnated with sulphur and smoking water springs, which turn into little rivers on the mountain slopes, and come steaming down to medical baths in the clean and gay little holiday hotels. So abundant is this natural hot water that it is provided at the railway station for travellers to wash their hands, in many of the private houses, schools, hotels, and it is even laid on in the police station and the prison. From this it will be apparent that Beppu is a Japanese Spa. Whether it is the association of all things hot and sulphurous with the devil or merely a curiosity of translation I cannot say, but all the hot springs and boiling mud pools of this little place are called either "public hells" or "private hells." Instead of being fearsome places of warning to evil-doers, however,

they are delightful rural spots where Japanese as well as foreigners lie soaking in the water or mud amidst the azaleas, the cherry blossom, or the pines.

Perhaps it is time to say something about the Japanese Empire, which consists of more than 400 islands, as well as the territories of Korea, Formosa, Japanese Saghalien, a leased territory on the Chinese mainland, and some mandated islands in the South Pacific. Its total area is just over 260,000 square miles, and its archipelago stretches from the sub-Arctic waters and lands of Saghalien to the tropical South Seas. Japan proper, which extends around the mainland of easternmost Asia for nearly 2,200 miles, like a great breakwater, dividing the Pacific Ocean from the almost landlocked Sea of Japan, is the most densely populated country in the world. With an area of only 147,078 square miles it has over sixty-five millions of people. The population of the entire Empire is, however, eighty-five millions. These figures supply the reason why the eyes of Japan are for ever turned towards the more sparsely inhabited areas of the Asiatic mainland.

One afternoon in Beppu I attended a geisha dance in the City Auditorium. There can be no doubt that a great deal of artistic thought is given to the training, setting, costumes and music of this dance, which is the universal form of entertainment at banquets and other functions in Japan. The show consisted of dancing, mime and singing. Much attention was paid to scenic effects. Fans, lanterns, moons and paper sunshades were all prettily employed to create a series of moving pictures typical of the art of Japan. Geisha may be hired much in the same way as professional entertainers in other



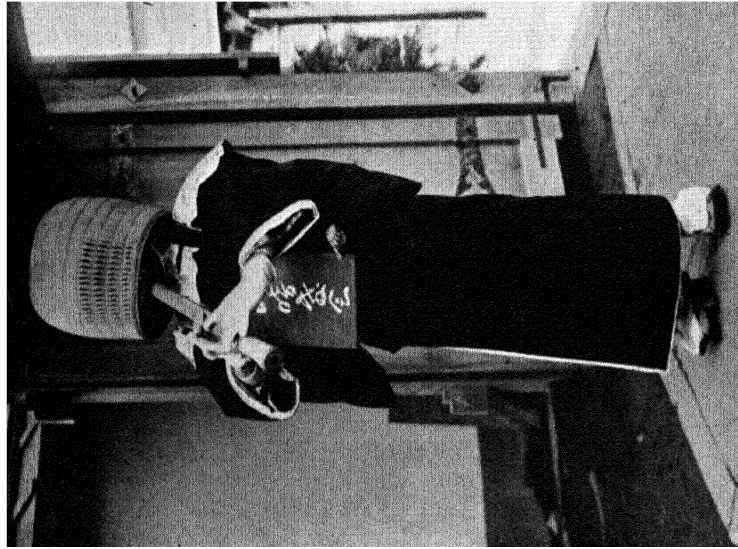
A TEA CEREMONY

Girls receiving instruction in Japanese deportment.

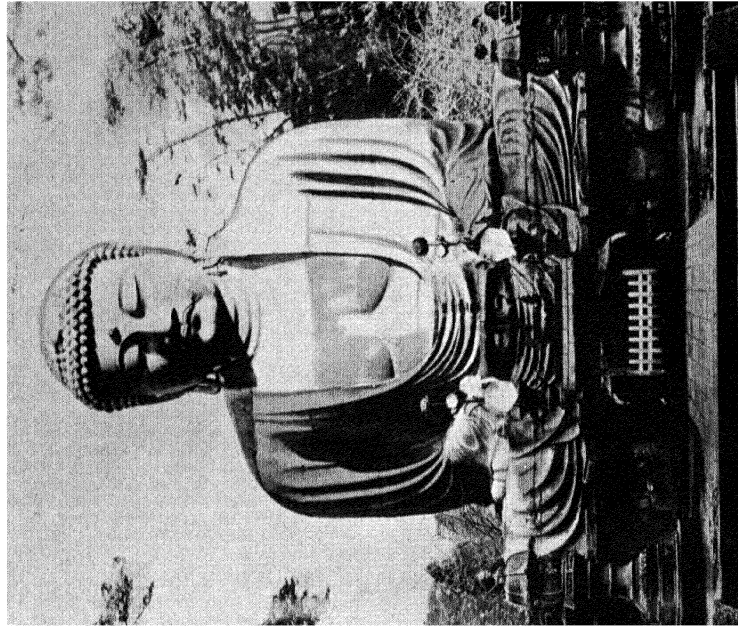


OLD AND NEW JAPAN

Facing page 144—5



A MASKED MUSICIAN
Aristocratic Japanese who have fallen on evil times
adopt this disguise when begging in the streets.



**THE GREAT DAIBUTSU OR IMAGE OF
BUDDHA—KAMAKURA**

countries. The price depends upon the reputation and number of the dancers. The geisha girls are trained from an early age, and live in separate houses under strict supervision. These houses are usually situated in the central part of all the important cities. Geisha girls are something more than dancers. Having been trained in the art of entertaining, decoration, music and charm, they are regarded as high-class artists, and should not be confused with the unfortunate women of the *Yoshiwara*. Few banquets or social gatherings are considered complete without at least a small geisha.

Beppu is almost entirely Japanese in aspect, and during cherry blossom time, which lasts from March to May, its gardens are full of colour, and contrast with the sombre green of the cryptomeria trees. Japan has been called "a land of flowers," and it well deserves this title, because every month of the year has its seasonal blooms, not only in the public and private gardens but also in the fields and on the mountainsides. Among the native flowering trees and plants must be mentioned the peach, pear, cherry, plum, camelia, globe-flower, rhododendron, magnolia, azalea, wisteria, morning glory, iris, lotus, evening primrose, and, of course, the chrysanthemum. The art of *Ikebana*, or "flower arrangement," is studied largely by Japanese girls of the better class.

One of the most curious things I saw at Beppu is the great Daibutsu, said to be the largest in the world, which has been erected at Noguchi, where there are many hot springs. This immense image of Buddha is dedicated to the souls of a million people who have died without relatives to mourn them. Many who have committed suicide are included in

this memorial. What makes it so peculiar, however, is the inclusion of a large number of human bones, collected from all over Japan during a pilgrimage, in the concrete of which the image is made.

Extending for over 240 miles, the Inland Sea of Japan somewhat resembles an immense sub-tropical fjord. It is about forty miles across at its widest part, while the narrowest place scarcely allows sufficient room for a large ship to pass through. Leaving Beppu, I crossed this "Mediterranean of Japan" to the great seaport of Kobe. The snow had not entirely disappeared from the surrounding mountains, and white cones were often reflected on the placid surface of this landlocked lagoon. Many thousands of small islands are scattered across its surface. Every now and again one appeared with a house of quaint Japanese design perched on its summit. Little white-sailed fishing boats with their bows cut away so that they seemed to be floating in the air, dotted the surface. Just before reaching Kobe we passed through a narrow channel which is called the Eastern Gateway of the Inland Sea, and from the deck of the ship I obtained some delightful views of white sandy beaches and green pine-clad islands rising up from the blue-gold waters which were tinged with the fires of the westering sun.

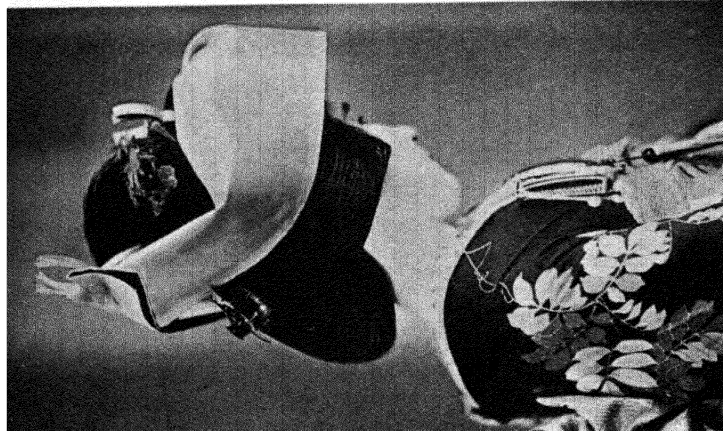
At the port of Kobe I was in Japan's main island, called Hondo, which, although 800 miles long, has an average breadth of less than eighty miles. This one island is about the size of Great Britain. Kobe came as a disappointment after picturesque Beppu. The great earthquake of a few years ago completely destroyed this town and robbed it of all local colour.



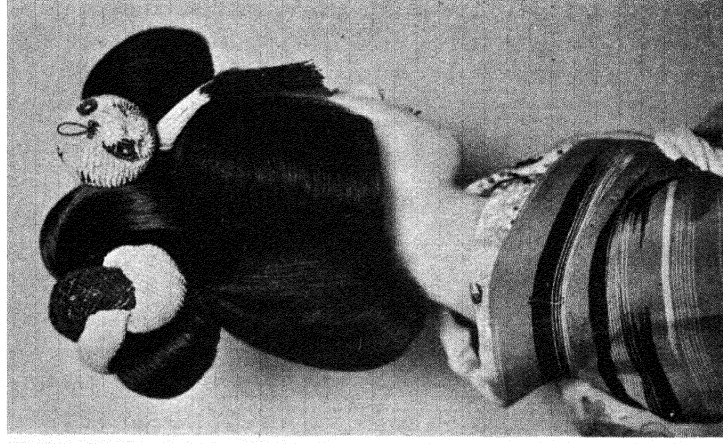
THE MOTOMACHI—KOBE



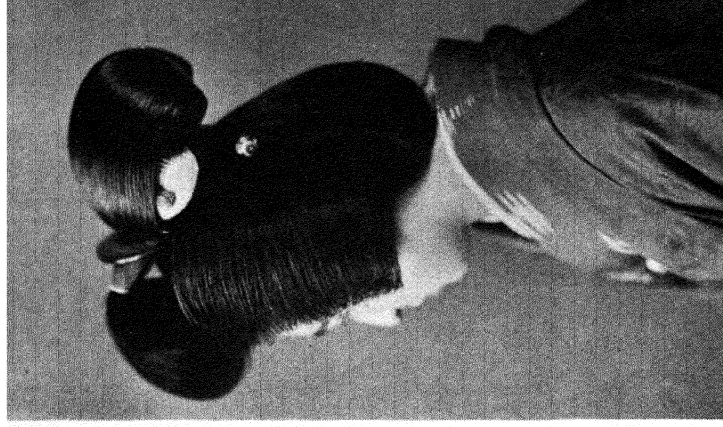
A JAPANESE TORII IN A KOBE STREET



COIFFURE OF A BRIDE, WITH
HEAD-DRESS OF WHITE SILK



CONVENTIONAL STYLE OF HAIR-
DRESSING FOR AN UNMARRIED



CONVENTIONAL STYLE OF HAIR-
DRESSING FOR A MARRIED

The new buildings which have taken the place of the old Japanese dwellings are of massive stone architecture, and are typically Western. There is, however, one street which is full of interest. This is the Motomachi, where the gaily decorated shops of old Japan can still be seen in a new setting. Perhaps the most fascinating things about this bazaar are the electric globes of the street lighting system, which resemble archways of miniature moons. At night the effect is decidedly Oriental. Although the main streets of Kobe have been modernised, and many of its people are now dressed in European fashion, I noticed, especially in the Motomachi, a considerable number of girls in the picturesque national costumes, complete with *obi* and sunshade. Inquiring why it is that the beautiful dresses of old Japan are being exchanged, in the cities especially, for Western attire, I was told that it was due very largely to a question of cost.

National and religious festivals still play an important part in Japanese life. This country is, in fact, unique in regard to the number of myths, legends and functions connected with them. It so happened that I was in Kobe for the *Hina-Matsuri*, or Doll Festival. This is a great day for small girls. Everywhere there are exhibitions of gorgeously dressed dolls, not of the ordinary type but specially made to represent the emperor and empress, court officials, nobles, court minstrels and dancers. These beautiful little images are dressed in the old-fashioned costumes of the days of splendour. They are made very largely by families with young daughters, and in charitable institutions. The motive is not only educational but also utilitarian. The sums of money received all over

Japan for the sale of these dolls is devoted to helping the children of the poor.

While on the subject of Japanese festivals, I may as well describe several other kinds of celebration seen in different parts of the country. The "Boys' Festival of Flags" follows upon the Doll Festival. Here again artistically clothed little images of warriors and heroes from Japanese history are made, complete with arms and armour. Ancient families assemble all the weapons used by their ancestors in battle and set these up in a place of honour. Iris and wormwood are placed together in a vase to avert pestilence. Outside each house where there are young sons a tall post is erected, from which is flown big paper or cloth kites representing the carp, which is considered to be a brave fish with a determined spirit, because it swims against strong currents and even surmounts cascades. In order to make this feast appeal the more strongly to boys from the earliest years of their life, special sweets are served, and all the local shops compete with one another in giving a special show of historic dolls.

One of the most picturesque Buddhist festivals in Japan is that known as the "*Bon*," which is a corruption of the Sanskrit "*Ullanbana*." It is intended to express the gratitude of the living to their dead ancestors for passing on the priceless gift of life. From a religious festival it has become an occasion of joy, and the Japanese people believe that on this day the spirits of the dead return to the house which they liked best during their earthly life. It is an evening ceremony, and in order to guide the returning spirits lanterns are lighted in every house where the service is held. Although made of white paper, these

lanterns are often of quite elaborate design, and add much to the picturesque nature of the folk-dances and religious rites performed on the night of the *Bon*. In rural Japan it is the custom to light thousands of small lanterns and place them on wooden blocks. These are then sent floating down the rivers, on ponds, and even on the open sea. This "Feast of Lanterns," as it is generally called by travellers, forms a most picturesque spectacle on a warm July night.

At a Shinto shrine close to Nara I once saw a gorgeous palanquin being carried by a large number of people up a long hill to a small temple near the summit. This wonderful gold and black chair, with curtains drawn, was preceded by the most appalling apparition wearing a mask with long nose, imitation white hair and beard, and carrying a big spear. Unfortunately, I could not discover the real significance of this curious little procession. Some idea of the extraordinary number of religious services which most Japanese families have to perform during the year will be obtained from the following extract from a Japanese publication. It also throws some light upon the curious beliefs of these people regarding a future existence. "Happiness of the spirit of the dead in the after life depends largely upon the prayers and offerings made by his family and friends left behind in this world. He might appear as another man, a woman, an animal, a bird, or even an insect. Whatever life he may be leading after death, those left behind are able to influence his happiness by prayers and religious services. If he be leading a miserable life, he can be saved and helped to a better existence. So the services after death are very

important to his happiness." For this reason a deceased Japanese is fêted by his descendants and friends for many years at fixed intervals. People who do not hold such festivals for their ancestors are considered unfilial and dishonourable.

While I was in Kobe the Manchurian war fever was at its height, and the mothers, wives and sweet-hearts of the soldiers at the front were making mascot belts for their loved ones. These Japanese women were standing about in the bazaars putting fancy stitches into the square yard of cotton or silk from which these belts were to be fashioned. Passers-by took the needle and coloured cotton from the hands of the workers and themselves made a stitch, each of which signified a prayer for the wearer's safety and a message of courage and good luck.

Travelling from place to place in Japan, I saw every roadway and station ablaze with little flags and the emblem of the Rising Sun. Troops were continually entraining for the front amid the silent acclamations of a flag-waving crowd. There was, however, an undercurrent of unrest, which burst into the fanatical assassination of moderate politicians just before my arrival in Tokyo, where I learned much concerning the aspirations of the Military Party.

CHAPTER XXII

NEW OSAKA AND OLD KYOTO

NOT caring to waste time in the Europeanised streets of Kobe, I journeyed inland to Kyoto, the ancient capital of Japan. Midway between these cities—the very new and the very old—stands Osaka, which is said to possess more factory chimneys than any other city in the world. With a population of about 2,500,000, it is the commercial and industrial metropolis of Japan. “In ancient times Osaka was called ‘Naniwa.’ It was here that the first Emperor of Japan stayed during his expedition to the Eastern Provinces in 661 B.C. Later, in the fourth century, Emperor Nintoku, one of the most benevolent rulers, made the city his capital. He constructed many roads and also opened many canals. After the introduction of Buddhism to Japan in 552, Osaka already held even in those remote ages a most important position for both domestic and foreign communication. But it was not until 1585, when Toyotomi Hideyoshi, the Napoleon of Japan, built a strong castle in this city, making it his permanent base, that the foundations of Osaka as an economic centre of Japan were established.

“With the organisation of the Tokugawa Shogunate, after the downfall of the Toyotomi family, Iy yasu transferred his headquarters to Edo, the

present Tokyo, and the centre of military affairs and administration of Japan was also removed to the present capital; but commerce and industry have continued to develop and prosper in Osaka.”

Needless to say, this city makes but little appeal to the traveller in search of the bizarre or the interesting, although in Sennichimae and Dotombori Streets one can study the people of industrial Japan far better than in any other part of the country. These two streets are almost entirely given over to theatres, shops, cafés and bars. In the Bunraku Theatre I saw the only puppet play produced in Japan. It was a curious performance. The weirdly dressed little figures, unlike the ordinary marionette show, are operated directly by the hand in full view of the audience, and the movements are accompanied by the *yoruri* reciting. Although essentially Japanese in character, it really appeals more to those foreign visitors to Osaka who expect to see in this great and industrial city of stone buildings, broad streets, numerous canals and factories something typical of old Japan.

This city is surrounded by an enormous mass of shacks with corrugated-iron roofs, in which dwell a large proportion of the industrial population. There are, however, several attractive temples in the vicinity; one is the Shitennoji, a Buddhist shrine built about 1,300 years ago, which is celebrated for its five-storeyed pagoda and huge bronze bell, the largest in Japan. Osaka Castle, the building of which marked the beginning of the modern city, has been almost entirely destroyed by fire, and its present interest lies very largely in the huge stones used for its inner walls. They are said to have been brought here from a very

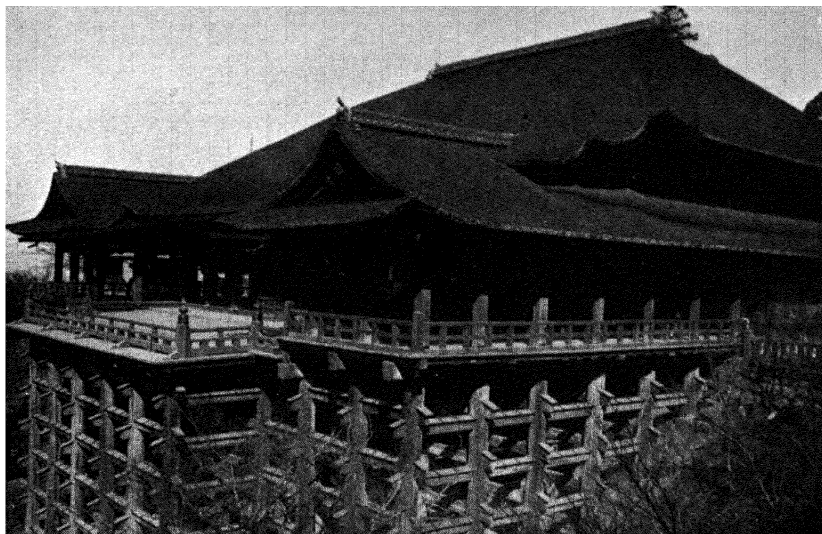
long distance by the retainers of the feudal lords who owned the surrounding country. The view from the ruined donjon extends far over the plain upon which the city has been built.

While in Osaka, I learned something of Japan's industrial activity. Ignoring both agriculture and mining for a moment, spinning is one of the largest industries in Japan. "The coarser yarns are used in the manufacture of Japanese cotton goods, the cotton being imported. Of the total output, about seventy per cent. is sold for home consumption and thirty per cent. is exported, principally to China." The effect of the boycott of Japanese goods among the agricultural millions of eastern Asia was already having a marked effect on this staple industry. "The largest cotton mills are in Osaka. Silk spinning is also an important industry. The leading districts for the production of silk goods are in Kyoto, Shiga, Fukui and Ishikawa prefectures. Toys of all descriptions are manufactured in large quantity to supply the home and foreign markets. Their manufacture is now fast passing from a household to a factory industry, centring in Tokyo, Kyoto, Osaka and Nagoya. Each of these places has its speciality. Tokyo manufactures celluloid, tin and rubber toys mainly, besides a lesser output of wooden and cloth toys; Osaka is noted chiefly for its cloth toys, paper and celluloid novelties. Kyoto is famous for its exquisite porcelain toys as well as for its artistic dolls. Japan is noted for its manufacture of matches, the average annual production of which is ten million gross of boxes—a trade which in volume exceeds that of any other nation in the world except Sweden. The varied fine art productions of Japan are known the

world over. Japanese porcelains, lacquer and bamboo ware, silk and embroideries, kimono brocades, cloisonné, damascene and other works are distinctive in their characteristic designs."

The most artistic fine art products in lacquer are made in Kyoto and other prefectures; the manufacture of dynamos, electric motors, steamships and railway rolling stock for the principal heavy industries are specialties of Tokyo, Nagasaki and other centres. Fishing is also extensively carried on around the Japanese coasts, as there is a large and constant home demand for this form of food. A considerable quantity of Japanese tea is annually exported to America. Rice, on which the Japanese live, is the staple agricultural crop. Unfortunately, although every available patch of arable lowland amenable to irrigation and all uplands that can be watered are planted with rice, an insufficient quantity is raised to supply the home demand, and importations have to be made each year. Raw silk is the principal and most important export of Japan, constituting about thirty-seven per cent. of its foreign trade. Japan supplies about sixty per cent. and China thirty per cent. of the world's raw silk requirements.

I was glad to leave the bustling and noisy city of Osaka. Arriving in the old capital of Japan, which is only about twenty miles distant, a cursory glance told me that here, at last, was the true soul of this Oriental land. Lying in a semicircle of green hills, its temples and palaces glitter like jewels amid the foliage. Kyoto is, however, the fourth largest city in the country, and has a population of nearly 800,000. "For over a thousand years, until 1868, Kyoto was the capital of Japan. The city and vicinity are rich

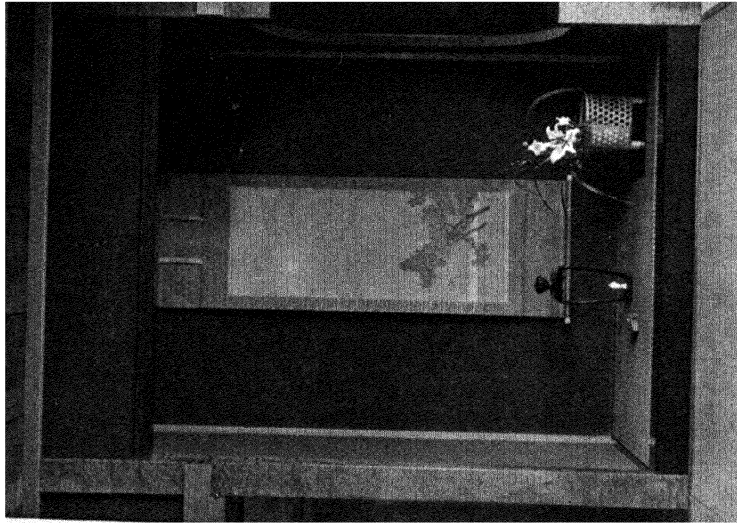


ONE OF THE OLD TEMPLES—KYOTO

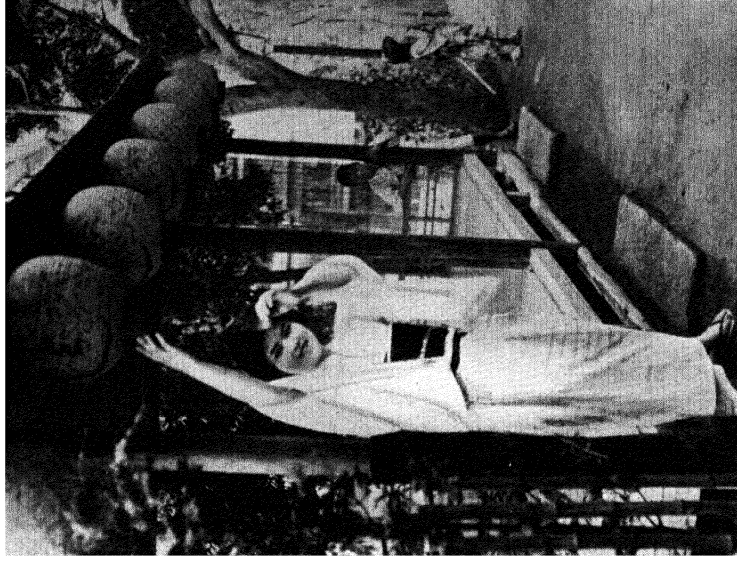


GOLDEN PAVILION—KYOTO

Facing page 154—5.



THE HOUSE OF A JAPANESE
HOUSE



DECORATING FOR THE NEW YEAR
FESTIVAL—TOKYO

in historic association with the ancient life of the Empire, and the hundreds of temples still remaining attest to the vigour of its religious life. In 794, Emperor Kammu selected Kyoto for his capital seat, planning the city on lines similar to Sian-fu, in China. The city, once occupying a much more extensive area than at present, became the centre of the country's civilisation and culture, and æsthetic art flourished ; but when the *Samurai* became the actual ruling power, Kyoto was often ravaged by battles, fires and massacres. Known as the Classical City, the Historic City, the Fine Art City of Japan, Kyoto still retains its ancient prestige, for here the emperors of Japan are crowned, and its atmosphere still carries the impress of its glory and splendour. It is the centre of the fine art industries of the country, its hand-made products being renowned. Some of the shops selling these artistic goods invite inspection of their factories and processes of manufacture. The water of the Kamogawa River, flowing through the east part of the city, has the quality of fixing colours in dyed goods." *

Even the fine Kyoto Hotel, in which I made my headquarters, is not like the usual establishment of its kind. It combines those quaint little attentions to art and effect which are typical of Japanese life with all the modern amenities. The whole of this country struck me as being a nation in miniature. Its distances are short, its temples are model-like, its people small, and here, in this great square hotel, I found miniature furniture, and almost every apartment complete with bathroom, entrance hall and bed sitting-room—a flat in miniature.

* "Pocket Guide to Japan."

My first night in Kyoto I spent in Theatre Street, amid the sound of hundreds of pairs of wooden *geta*, or stilt-like clogs, clattering across its cobble-stones hour after hour. The scene was an amazing one. All down this long thoroughfare, in which wheeled traffic is prohibited, there were festoons of Japanese lanterns and archways of electric globes. The fantastic light fell upon thousands of quaint little moving figures in the gay silks and cottons of this flowery land. From behind the gold and silk screens of tiny theatres, cafés and dance-halls, came the sound of the *samisen*, a musical instrument very much like the guitar. Entering one of the paper-windowed little tea-houses, I squatted on the floor at a minute table, and was served by a dainty little *nesan* with an equally minute pot of tea and a very sweet cake. How can I describe painted panels, sliding doors of carved cedar-wood, scrupulously clean matting, queer little electric-lighted Christmas trees, and tables of a satiny wood which supported a lacquer tray and dainty procelain? Such things do not lend themselves to description, they must be imagined. Out amid the glowing lanterns of the street there was the eternal rattle of the wooden sandals. One particularly bright glare of light, coming from a mass of artificial flowers, flying banners and signs, proved to be the entrance to a modern cinema, and I was told that only pictures in which there is much action are really popular in Japan. The shops of this great bazaar of Kyoto were showing the inlaid silver, gold, copper and gun-metal damascene work, the hundreds of quaint dolls, the dainty fans, the embroidered slippers, the pictures on silk, bizarre china and pottery, the decorated screens, the carved and

lacquered woodwork, and all the wares of Oriental Nippon alongside the far less picturesque and more stereotyped products of the modern mills and factories. Even in old Kyoto there is a determined effort to introduce Western dress and customs.

Armed with a pass from the Royal Household, I approached the Mikado's palace, which was the home of the imperial family up to about sixty-three years ago. It is situated in a park of about twenty-eight acres, surrounded by a lofty tile-roofed wall. Its gardens and lotus ponds are generally considered to be the most beautiful in Japan, but the apartments of the palace itself are very modestly furnished and chastely decorated. Simplicity is, in fact, its principal charm. Fires, following earthquake shocks, destroyed all the older buildings, and this present structure dates only from 1858. In striking contrast to this simple abode there is Nijo Castle, built in 1569, where the Tokugawa Shoguns lived. Here, and in the beautiful Temple of Higishi Hongwanji, there is the true gorgeousness of the East. I walked on the polished "nightingale floors," where the boards slipped on one another and sang plaintively as my weight passed over them. Here, also, are the poetically named Chrysanthemum Room, Stork Room and Peacock Room, which I can only describe as gems of interior decoration with painted panels which suggest so much more than they portray.

In the great Temple of Higishi Hongwanji, a Buddhist edifice erected in 1895 at a cost of seven million *yen*, obtained by gifts in money and kind from the surrounding provinces, I saw, in great glass cases, the hawsers used for lifting the immense timbers into place during the work of building. These ropes are

thicker than a man's arm, and many cases are required in which to store such extraordinary relics of religious devotion. They are made of human hair—a votive offering by thousands of Japanese girls at the time when the temple was constructed.

Kyoto seems to have a peculiar love of festivals. One of these, which takes place each year in the middle of May, is said to be the most stately and refined of its kind in the whole country. Its origin dates back to the year A.D. 540, and it is called *Aoi-Matsuri*. Hollyhock leaves (*aoi*) are offered to the gods, and the thousands of worshippers wear these leaves in their hair. On the day of the grand procession, at about 8 A.M., a chariot appears, drawn by a black bull and guarded by courtiers and warriors in full dress, representing the imperial cortège of ancient times. It starts from the palace and makes its way to the Khamo Shrine. The dresses of the old court nobles form the most interesting spectacle in this quaint festival.

On the slightest provocation, thousands of lanterns make their appearance in the streets, and fires are lighted on the hills around Kyoto. Towards midnight, on the last day of the year, the people of Kyoto ascend to the Gion Shrine to obtain a spark of “the Sacred Fire,” passed down through the centuries. The priest hands out straw ropes lighted at the Holy Fire; these flambeaux are carried back to the homes of the people to kindle the first “good-luck fire” of the New Year's Day, upon which is cooked the customary dish, called *ozoni*, a kind of broth containing cakes and vegetables. In the Maruyama Park there is a cherry tree over 400 years old. When in bloom this veteran is illuminated with coloured lights, and people assemble round it carrying lighted torches.

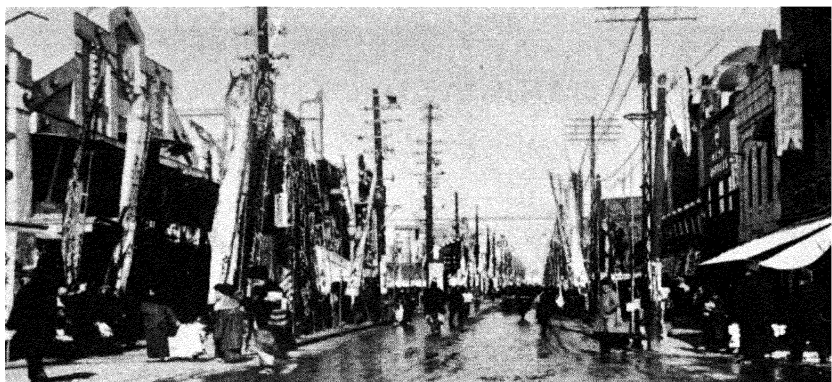


AIO FESTIVAL—KYOTO

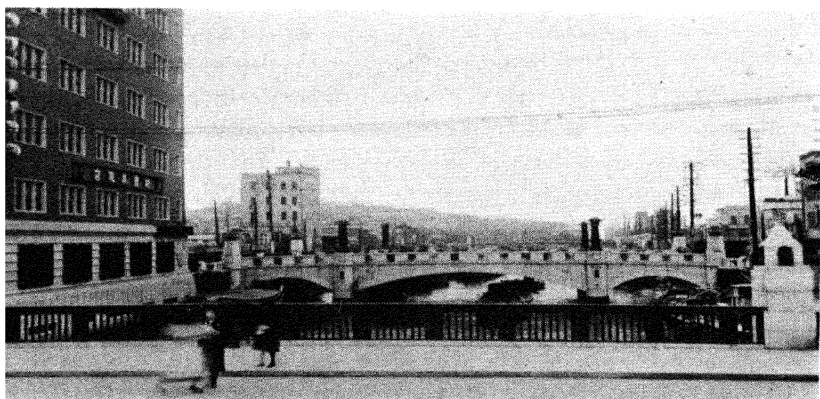


A CHERRY BLOSSOM PARTY IN JAPAN

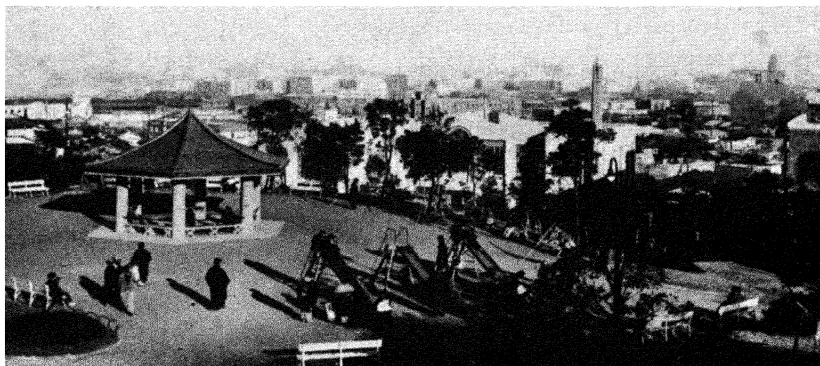
Facing page 158—5



THEATRE STREET



MODERN BUILDINGS IN THE COMMERCIAL CENTRE



CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUND IN A PUBLIC PARK -THE NEW
YOKOHAMA

Here are just a few of the remaining carnivals which take place during the year in Kyoto. A horse-race, with the riders in costumes dating from its inauguration in 1093 ; a bean-scattering ceremony, during which the priests of the Buddhist temples and the people in their own houses throw dried beans first inside and then outside their places of abode, exclaiming repeatedly, " Fortune in, devils out " ; an historical pageant, with some 300 performers in the costumes worn during the last 2,000 years ; a tournament of fencing, jiu-jitsu and archery in the " Hall of Martial Virtues " ; and a No-dance in old-world costumes, which takes place in the Nishi Honganji Temple, the headquarters of the *Shinshu*, a most influential sect of Japanese Buddhists, numbering over seven millions. There are, of course, many other religious processions, cherry-blossom dances and chrysanthemum shows that add to the colour and gaiety of this city which still preserves, in large measure, the spirit and art of old Japan.

At one place in Kyoto there is a sacred waterfall under which one must stand to pray, but as the water is usually cold and the devotee's clothes have to be first removed, there is now very little religious activity at this shrine. Then there is the statue of Binjuri, the face of which must be caressed by sufferers from all manner of diseases if they would be cured. Everywhere one sees tiny images of Jizo, the God of Children ; and there is a mysterious shrine of Inari, around which centres the curious fox-cult.

Walking along Teapot Lane, which is entirely lined by shops selling earthenware cups and rice bowls, which are known as *Kyomizu* ware, I climbed to the top of the Kyomizu Temple, dedicated to the

Goddess of Mercy, with eleven faces and a thousand hands, and obtained a fine view over the entire city, with its many pagoda-like roofs, and down on to the cherry trees and maples of the hill slope upon which this temple stands. The Bazaar Street of open booths, surrounded by quaint signs, and each one step higher than its neighbour, vies with Theatre Street for characteristic interest. Then, as the day was warm and the sun shining brightly, I drove out to a thick forest lying to the north-west of the city. To reach this beauty spot I passed through the centre of the famous *Nishijin* silk-weaving industry. In the midst of the forest, and on the edge of a beautiful lotus pond, stands the Gold Pavilion. It is a three-storey pagoda, erected in 1397. Although the interior of its upper floor was once covered by gold-leaf, very few traces of its past glory remain to-day. Nevertheless, this little temple is surrounded by a fine example of Japanese landscape gardening, and the scene on this summer afternoon was one of tranquil beauty.

Until I visited the Chion-in Monastery the idea had been growing that the old Buddhist and Shinto faiths were beginning to lose their hold on the people of this country as they have already done in China. This temple of the *Jodo* sect is one of the largest in Japan. Although it dates from 1211, fire and earthquake have destroyed the buildings on several occasions, and those now standing were built as recently—for Japan—as 1639. Its immense time-stained front gate, the tall temple roofs, and the crowds of worshippers coming from and going to this shrine, soon corrected my former impression regarding the decline of pagan beliefs in modern Japan. In a near-by tower there is a bell, cast in 1633, which is

said to be the second largest in Japan. It measures twelve feet in height and weighs seventy-four tons. It is, therefore, much smaller than the great bell which I saw on the banks of the Irrawaddy in far-away Burma.

Among the many temples of Kyoto there are only two others which impressed me with any sense of individuality. One of these is the "Hall of 33 Ken," so called because of the thirty-three spaces between the front pillars. It is a Buddhist temple, erected in 1252, and is justly celebrated for its amazing collection of 1,000 images of the Goddess Kwannon and many old statues which have been declared "national treasures." Then there is the Silver Pavilion, built about eighty years after the Gold Pagoda. It was once coated with precious metal, but is now a two-storeyed structure of very ancient design. Here, again, it is the garden which surrounds this little pavilion which forms the principal attraction.

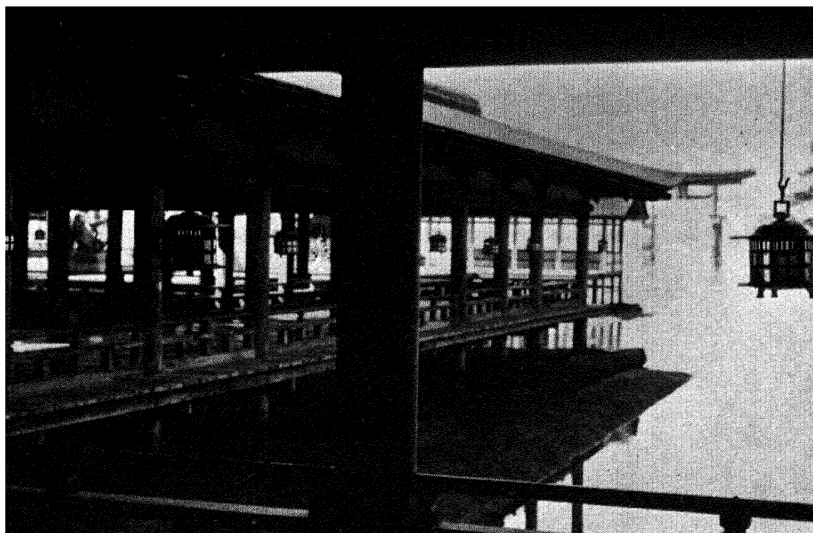
When I had grown tired of the never-ending crowds of gaily dressed people and smiling happy faces that one sees in Shijo, Sanjo and Kyogorku streets, I journeyed out into the country by motor car to the Hozu Rapids. From Yamamotohama landing-stage I glided for eight miles over rapids and through rocky gorges in a flat-bottomed Japanese boat. Although the scenery is beyond reproach, there are few places along this stretch of river which can be called exciting, and I much preferred an exploration, made a few days later, of Lake Biwa, the largest of the Japanese fresh-water lakes, which has an area of 267 square miles. On its shores stands an old pine tree of grotesque shape, which is declared to be over a thousand years old.

CHAPTER XXIII

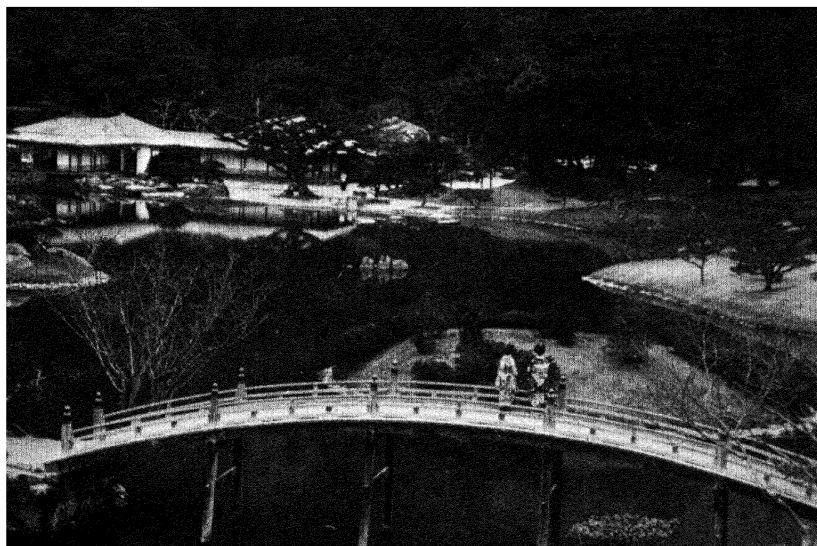
THE AWAKENING OF JAPAN

KYOTO faded into Nara with the passing of twenty-six miles of bamboo and pine forests. Distances in Japan seemed very insignificant, and the way of progress through the country very comfortable and easy after the vast areas, difficulties and discomforts which had to be overcome in crossing China. Often I passed from one place of beauty or interest to another almost without being aware of the change. Nara was the first permanent capital of Japan, and held this position during the seven reigns, from A.D. 710 to 784. This is regarded as the period in which the nation's arts, crafts and literature started, and during which were compiled the first written histories of Japan. "At the height of its glory, Nara covered a much more extensive area than at present, and was much more populous. Fire and time have wrought ravages on some of the city's great religious edifices, but the temples and shrines in its eastern part remain practically as they were originally, and in Nara are found many rare old treasures."

In this little old-world place—one can scarcely call it a town because of its scattered nature—there is a famous park, or natural forest area, of about 1,200 acres, situated on the slopes of a hill. Roaming about



A SACRED ISLAND-TEMPLE—JAPAN



IN THE DEER PARK—NARA

Facing page 162—5.



STROLLING PLAYERS IN A JAPANESE VILLAGE



ITINERANT VENDOR SELLING SINGING INSECTS

among the trees are several hundred tame deer, which are fed for the edification of visitors after a hunting horn has been blown to collect them from afar. Here, also, are many temples and shrines, as well as the Imperial Fine Arts Museum, which has an excellent collection of wood carvings, engraved jewels, paintings and other objects of what is called the Nara Period.

After poking about among the quaint old shops, full of curios, carvings and other queer things, situated in the long straight road which leads to the principal shrines, I ascended by way of the Avenue of Stone Lanterns—each the offering of a devout pilgrim—to the Temple of Kasuga Wakamiya, at the foot of Mount Mikasa. Here I was fortunate enough to witness a sacred Shinto dance by the “Temple Virgins,” most of whom were mere children dressed in white. The dance was accompanied by chanting; but what I remember most about this pagan ceremonial was being hastily removed by a priest, with courtesy and firmness, from a position which I had taken up on especially holy ground to watch the amazing evolutions of these pathetic children who had been dedicated body and soul to the Shinto faith.

Walking down several flights of broad stone steps between the beautiful trees, I came to four other buildings painted bright red and hung with numerous bronze lanterns. It is difficult to describe the striking effect produced by these ornate old scarlet temples and curiously elaborate metal lamps against the background of green firs.

It was during my stay in Nara that I learned something of how the printing art developed in the Far East. Paper was invented in China about two

centuries before the Christian era. It was then made of vegetable fibres, and was introduced into India, Arabia, Persia, and, lastly, into European countries. Previous to this, engraving was done on tiles during the Babylonian Age, and writing on papyrus was common. In early times, therefore, paper was known in the Orient, although it did not come into use in Western countries before the thirteenth century. According to Japanese records and to specimens which exist to-day, it was in the year A.D. 764 that the Empress Koken, after a victory over a rebellious subject, ordered a million small pagodas to be built, and had four kinds of *Dharani*, or religious formula, specially *printed* to be enshrined in these edifices. Three years later these models were completed and distributed among the ten great temples then existing. Although this occurred nearly 1,200 years ago, these little pagodas have been preserved in perfect condition, and the sacred formula placed inside them was *printed on grass-fibred paper*. Some doubt exists whether these little designs were printed from copper or wooden blocks, although experts believe it was from the latter.

During the years from A.D. 782 to 1191, when the Imperial Court at Kyoto was at the height of its power and magnificence, literature flourished ; but as learning of all kinds was limited to the ruling classes, only hand-copied books were numerous, and even the Buddhist scriptures were seldom printed. Although this is an established fact, there is the *Seii-Giron* which is still preserved in the Zenringi Temple, and is believed to have been printed not so very long after the *Dharani* formula.

From 1191 to 1332 Japan was ruled by a military

caste, and feudalism prevailed. The Buddhist priests encouraged the belief that anyone who printed a religious book would be forgiven all his sins. In consequence of this edict the art of printing made rapid progress, and the sacred books printed by the temples at Nara, and now referred to as the "Kasuga-Han," as well as those produced in the Koya Monastery, on Mount Koya, and now called the "Koya-Han," are examples existing to-day of twelfth and thirteenth century printed volumes. For 200 years civil wars caused learning of all kinds to be abandoned by the warlike Japanese. Only the priests in the five great temples of Kyoto persevered with the art of printing. In the year 1364 ten volumes on the life of Confucius were translated from the Chinese and printed ; and during the early part of the sixteenth century, among the trophies brought back to Japan after an invasion of Korea were several sets of movable type and some books printed by this means. In 1592 "The Book of Filial Duty," an old Chinese classic, was translated and printed with movable copper type in Japan.

On the first day of September 1923 old Yokohama was almost completely destroyed by an earthquake and a fire. The same convulsion of the earth caused tremendous damage in Tokyo, the capital, but in the great seaport scarcely one stone was left standing upon another. The new Yokohama, which is slowly and almost reluctantly rising from the ashes, is a city of contrasts. Fine modern buildings have grown up alongside corrugated-iron sheds and open spaces still filled with the debris of the old city. It presents an extraordinary scene of mingled hope and despair.

Here is a graphic paragraph from a Japanese Government publication which, in a few words, tells the story of the heroic construction of the new city :—

“ Its buildings razed by the earthquake and the subsequent fire having spent itself, there was ‘ no Yokohama,’ as some of its dazed citizens dejectedly stated to amazed inquirers everywhere. But now, only a few years after its destruction, all the reconstruction works, which embrace the widening of streets and many other improvements, together with the reconstruction of breakwaters, piers and other harbour equipments, have been completed by the joint efforts of Government and Municipality as well as the citizens of Yokohama, with the expenditure of more than 200 million yen. Meanwhile the boundary of the city limits was extended by the amalgamation of the neighbouring towns and villages in 1927 to meet the projected enlargement of the harbour, the total area of the city being now more than fifty square miles—three times larger than the old area.”

Modern history is one of the weak spots in the educational systems of every nation, and it came as a great surprise to learn from a Japanese friend the story of the awakening of this Oriental country. Up to the year 1853—little more than three-quarters of a century ago—Japan was a “ forbidden land ” to foreigners, and all that has since been accomplished in this amazing country of the farthest East is the work of one generation ! Here is the romantic tale of its awakening as I learned it from official records : “ Great, indeed, was the stir when the so-called ‘ black ships ’ of America made their appearance off Uraga Bay, Japan, in the year 1853. The whole

country was suddenly awakened, and the curtain rose, ushering in modern Japan and Commodore Perry, who was the leading figure in this drama of Japan's joining in the sisterhood of nations. Townsend Harris, the first Minister Plenipotentiary from the United States, arrived three years after Perry's squadron, and Japan's foreign intercourse was re-instituted." This occurred after an isolation lasting for nearly two centuries, during which time only the Dutch and Chinese were allowed at the one port of Nagasaki.

"The English, the French and the Russians followed in the track of Perry and Harris. The social pressure, both foreign and domestic, became too heavy for the time-fatigued Tokugawa Shogunate to bear, and its collapse was at last brought about. The old exclusion policy was overthrown, and a new epoch dawned brightly on the national life. The fifteenth Shogun, Tokugawa Yoshinobu, resigned the Shogunate in 1867, and the supreme administrative authority was restored to the Throne in 1868, which established the Imperial Restoration and was an epoch-making year in Japanese history, and perhaps also in the world's history. Feudalism was abolished, and the seat of the Imperial Court was removed to Tokyo, the old name of Edo being changed at this juncture. The governmental organisation was entirely rebuilt on a constitutional model. *Kempe*, the Constitution, was promulgated in 1889, and the following year saw the first session of the Diet. The Sino-Japanese War in 1895-6 and the Russo-Japanese War in 1904-5, which forced this still young country to stand up for her national defence, came to prove her sterling qualities, and further placed her on

the line of the world's leading Powers. An Anglo-Japanese alliance was concluded in 1902, and the annexation of Korea took place in 1910.

“Not only in foreign intercourse, but also in national life, the progress she has attained in a single generation surely deserves the adjective ‘remarkable’ in its fullest sense. The Tokyo-Yokohama railway line, the pioneer of railways in Japan, was opened in 1872, and to-day we see efficient railway facilities provided all over the land. Dress, furniture, accommodations in general—all were changed for those of European style at an enormous speed within half a century. Foreign languages, science, art and industry were introduced and zealously studied, leading the people's minds to consciousness of Japan's international position ; and of her place in the comity of World Powers. Indeed, her tremendous strides in all spheres of life well deserves wonder and admiration.”

I stepped ashore in Yokohama and found myself in a city of heavily reinforced concrete—a city determined that another earthquake and fire should not find it unprepared. Broad rectangular streets and avenues flanked by buildings of magnificent proportions, which looked as if they had come to stay, were all around me, together with the amenities of a fine Western city and port—one must not forget this latter accommodation for, notwithstanding the severe competition of Kobe, the oversea trade of Yokohama has almost recovered from the set-back it received when the city was totally destroyed. I walked through the Yamashita Park and along the Bund, gazing in admiration at what has been accomplished. Trees, ornamental waters, shipping and docks comprised my view in one direction, and in the other a line of

magnificent buildings, including at least one of the finest hotels in the Far East. Making my way inland, shattered foundations and piles of debris lay scattered about between the great buildings which had already grown up among the ruins. A little farther, however, and new Yokohama burst upon me in all its Western modernity. Honchi Dori, Nippon Odori and Benten Dori were all new thoroughfares with white concrete buildings, but there was a lack of both people and traffic in these beautiful streets, for confidence has not quite returned, and other Japanese ports secured many of the prizes which belonged to the old Yokohama. Then I turned into the Isezakicho Dori, which may be termed the popular street of Yokohama, and throngs of Japanese as well as foreign sailors from the ships in harbour were buying at the many shops or passing in and out of the theatres, cinemas and gay little cafés. Here is the heart of the new city, beating so strongly that in the course of a few years it must send the life blood of confidence and industry streaming through the great arteries which have already been prepared so well for its reception.

There was one thing which struck me forcibly in this new Yokohama—the absence of Japanese dress ; and in the few instances where it did appear, its utter incongruity amid such up-to-date and westernised surroundings. Rickshaws, too, are becoming vehicles of the past in modern Japan. In old cities like Kyoto and Nara they are used extensively, but in Kobe, and especially in modern Yokohama and Tokyo, one sees only foreign travellers being pulled around the streets in these comfortable wheeled chairs of a more leisurely age.

From among the 600,000 people who have returned

to this city, I passed into the quaint countryside along the shores of the Pacific Ocean. On the old Bluff new bungalows have been built and occupied by foreign residents, many of whom lost the major portion of their possessions in the great earthquake and fire. Then the road which I was traversing twisted and turned amid some beautifully wooded hills, with little carefully irrigated rice-fields in the hollows, and passed through the centre of typical Japanese villages. The effect of a great catastrophe on the mentality of a people is always extraordinary, and while passing along this road to old Kamakura a kind of fête of the village fire-brigades was in progress. Little engines drawn by hand were being raced by enthusiasts along the roads in all directions. The desire for efficient education was another noticeable feature in this country surrounding a new and modern town—the more so because it did not appear to extend with the same fervour into those quarters of old Japan through which I had so recently travelled. The finest building in every village seemed to be the school, which invariably stood in a trim garden, and pupils on the road greeted me gleefully with a few words spoken in English. Then I arrived in Kamakura and was back once again in old Japan.

The thing to see in this old capital of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries is the great Buddha, an impressive figure of bronze, fifty feet in height and just one hundred feet in girth, which has been sitting in its present position for nearly 700 years. It is possible to climb up inside this famous Daibutsu and to see the solid gold image of Buddha contained in the inside, and also the four-feet-long strips of gold forming the eyes which look down upon the world.

The boss on the forehead, which is supposed to shed a radiance over the world, is of silver, and lumps on the head represent the snails which are said to have crawled up on to the head of Guatama Buddha to protect his bald crown from the burning sun.

From this impressive image I walked up a long avenue of beautiful trees, passed over a camel-back bridge and watched some children wash themselves before climbing up a long flight of steps to a popular shrine. Following reverently in their wake, for this temple at Kamakura is much venerated by the country people, I stood before two grotesque images holding what must surely be the Oriental equivalent of the Sword of Damocles. A Japanese mother was lifting her baby from the ground so that a little bunch of flowers could be placed on the altar by its small hands. This was the only temple or shrine in all Japan where the worshippers watched me curiously to see how I would behave in the presence of their ancient gods.

On the way to Miyanoshita I obtained my first view of Fujiyama, the most sacred mountain in all Japan, the perfect snowy cone of which rose above the cloud-dappled waters of Lake Hakone. A night in the Fujiya Hotel and a morning bathe in its swimming-pool enabled me to enjoy to the full the surrounding hot springs and the peerless beauty of Japan's highest mountain. Never have I seen such a perfect snowcapped peak catching the morning fires as that of the 12,467-feet-high Fujiyama at the break of dawn. Although there are no less than six trails to the top of this mountain, and *gorikis*, or mountain guides, can easily be obtained, it is only

during midsummer that the slopes are sufficiently free of snow to enable this climb to be accomplished, and a night has invariably to be spent in the stone huts which have been erected for the pilgrims who worship this extinct volcano.

CHAPTER XXIV

IN TOKYO

THERE are two capitals of Japan. The modern commercial city, which is so much like any big European or American town that it needs but little description, and the maze of surrounding streets which cover an area of about forty square miles and provide shelter, work and amusement for well over two million people, to whom the Tokyo of their ancestors is more lovable than the great and handsome squares, German type of buildings and imposing streets which surround the old moated palace of the emperors.

Tokyo is not the largest city in Japan although it is the capital of the country, and ranks sixth among the cities of the world. In population, however, the great industrial centre of Osaka comes first. Unless one looks carefully at a map, it is easy to obtain the impression that Tokyo is an inland city, whereas it stands on the great Musashi Plain and borders the sea. Centuries ago this town was called Edo, a name derived from a famous military leader. The first castle was built at this spot in the thirteenth century, but it was not until 1590 that it became the capital of the mediæval Shogunate. Up to the year 1868 Edo remained the capital of old Japan, and its ruler compelled the *daimyo*, or feudal lords, with

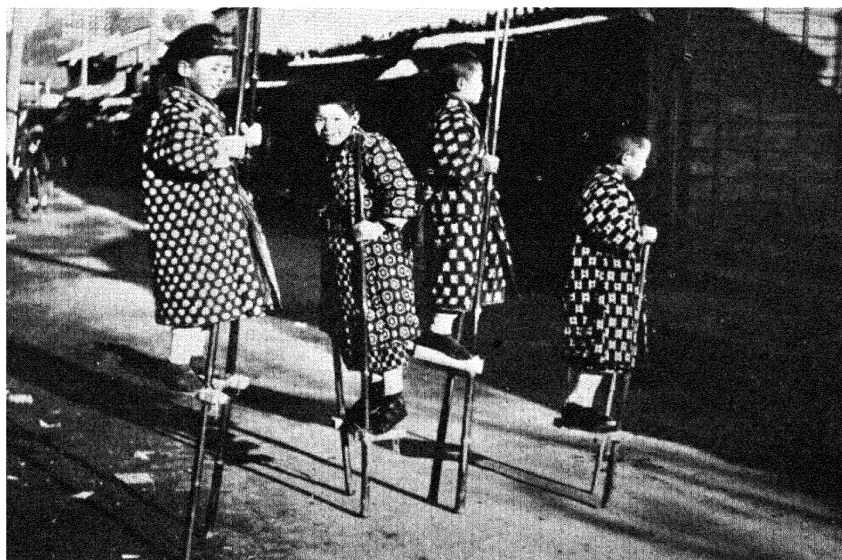
their entire families, to reside in the city for a certain period every three years. After the restoration of the power to the emperor, whose capital had been Kyoto, the imperial centre was removed to Edo, and its name was changed to that which it bears to-day, meaning "Eastern Capital."

I am walking down one of the gayest, busiest and most flamboyant streets in all the Eastern world. It is the Ginza, the great shopping thoroughfare of the Japanese capital. Departmental stores displaying all the wares of the Orient stretch away on either side, and it is curious to see the hundreds of Japanese, many in national costume, kicking off their shoes at the doors when entering these modern edifices and replacing them again when they leave. To imagine the scene here, or in the stately Nihon-bashi, you would have to choose the busiest street you know, at the busiest hour of the busiest day, dress all the people in the flowered silks and cottons of the East, place black-haired wigs of Japanese style on the bobbed and shingled heads, take away all signs of millinery from both the shop windows and the street, hang out all the weird flags and signs of an Oriental character that you could invent, and, if you could then hear the noise and see the colours, you might have some idea of this Broadway of Tokyo.

Around the Nihon-bashi, or Sunset Bridge, skyscrapers rise up from among the lesser growth of office buildings, shops and markets. The names of few, if any, of the streets commemorate either military victories or other towns in the empire, such as Trafalgar Square and Oxford Street, London ; neither are they numbered and designated avenues and streets as in the cities of the Great Republic. Instead, they



A SILK STORE—TOKYO



A SILK STORE—TOKYO

Facing page 174—5.



BATTLEDORE AND SHUTTLECOCK STALL—TOKYO



THE DOUGH-MAKER—TOKYO

are picturesquely called after birds, flowers, animals, trees and trades. There are several *Chrysanthemum Streets*, a *Peony Street*, a *Pine Street*, a *Monkey Street*, a *Bamboo Street*, a *Furniture Street*, a *Theatre Street*, and so through the gamut of animal and vegetable life as well as retail commerce.

In the heart of modern Tokyo there is a vast open space crossed by wide drives and dotted with green lawns and pine trees. The centre is occupied by great stone walls rising from a deep and wide moat. It is a feudal stronghold in the centre of a new city, much of which has been constructed since the earthquake. A stone bridge with twin arches, which are reflected in the still waters below, leads to iron-studded gates, closed except on state occasions. Peeping over the top of the walls are the white watch towers, dense trees and the mellow green of curved tiles and copper roofs above the vast halls forming this old castle of the Tokugawa shoguns, which is now the palace of the emperor.

The stormy times through which Japan was passing had caused hundreds of people to collect round the massive gateways of the imperial palace with the hope that they might catch a glimpse of the Mikado. Officers in neat uniforms of blue-black and gold were on guard at every approach, and as the people took up their stand on the lawns surrounding this aloof building, they bowed to the *Presence*, invisible behind the grim mediæval walls.

Tokyo has been called a "City of Contradictions," because many of its streets are bordered by rows of dingy shops bearing enormous signs. This small property often appears top-heavy, and contrasts strangely with the magnificent arteries of the new

commercial centre. Despite the picturesque character of many of the smaller thoroughfares—especially when the cherry trees spread a confetti-like roof overhead to contrast with the odd little patches of blue sky—I could not help noticing the look of impermanence in many parts of the capital. Walking one day along the banks of the Sumida River, the number of little teashops, which were nothing more than decorated canvas booths, that I passed formed a typical example of the Japanese plan to obtain both utility and effect without costly solidarity.

Talking of teashops in Japan reminds me that I was invited to the house of a wealthy Tokyo resident in order to witness the ceremony of *Chanoyu*. This tea ceremony is an ancient Japanese observance which has come down through the ages. I was told that it can be traced back to the year A.D. 593, at which time Buddhism was first introduced from China. The priests who came over as missionaries brought with them a new beverage of a medicinal character, called green tea. The purpose of this quaint little ceremony, which is largely a matter of Oriental politeness and leisurely movement, is to teach precision, poise, contentedness and the principles of a fine courtesy and kindness. In the old days it was practised almost exclusively by the nobles and the Buddhist priests. It has been revived in more recent times as a training in etiquette for girls of wealthy families. Seated on the cushioned floor in front of a small table, raised only nine inches off the ground, the tea is passed with charming little gestures to each participant. The whole ceremony is too fanciful to be described in cold print, and is much the same as the formality

pertaining to an "at home" in London or New York.

During my stay in Tokyo I went to the famous "Sekai," which is typical of the better-class Japanese restaurant. Although somewhat unpretentious from the outside its interior is most attractive. As the floors of both houses and restaurants are made of soft and highly polished wood, I observed the usual custom on entering, and exchanged my street shoes for soft straw slippers. Greeted by the smiling host with many bows I was escorted to a table, not in a crowded and curious public saloon—which would have been the case in most other cities of the world—but to a small room on a second floor. From this little apartment one side wall had been removed, so that the view extended down to a small but picturesque garden. This restaurant did not extend round the patio in a circle or square. One side was formed by a rock garden which presented a wall effectually preventing my little room from being overlooked, at the same time forming a cool and pleasing view. A tiny waterfall cascaded down the rocks into a little pool in the centre of the flowers and shrubs. Two bright coloured mandarin ducks swam about in this tiny pond.

After I had sat on a cushioned floor, a waitress brought me a fan and a hot towel with which to wipe my face and hands. This was followed by the placing of a little table in front of me and the arrival of the first course. It consisted of fresh green beans and chipped ice, the equivalent of a *hors d'œuvre*. I soon discovered that the art of eating with chopsticks is rapidly acquired. Only one hand is used, and the sticks are manœuvred like a pair of pincers.

The beans were followed by a clear soup served in a lacquered cup; then came a baked egg, fish, bamboo sprouts fried in oil, rice, steaming-hot tea and, finally, a *sembei* or small rice cake. Each of these dishes was served as a separate course, and I thoroughly enjoyed this typical Japanese meal.

After a round of sightseeing in the city I went one afternoon to Asakusa Park, the playground of the "East End" of Tokyo. Here there is a long avenue of stalls selling the souvenirs one sees in country fairs and exhibitions at home. It is gaily decorated and illuminated at night with fairy lamps. This bazaar was thronged with people, all more or less in Japanese costume—unless they were in rags—as I walked between the line of booths towards the Kwannon Temple, dedicated to the Goddess of Mercy. In front of the altar and its huge dimly-lit figure there was a wooden shelf on to which worshippers were throwing coins in a seemingly endless stream. I looked round for some indication of what became of all this money, and discovered that it was being given for the erection of a new temple to replace the one existing, part of which had been destroyed during the fire that followed the great earthquake.

Turning into a portion of the temple garden I came upon quite a number of square white tents. Each of these had a small flap of thin canvas which hung down over an aperture or window. Curiosity eventually compelled me to lift one of these curtains and peep inside the tent. My surprise was considerable when, stooping to look into the interior, my face came within a few inches of a yellow, wizened old countenance with sharp eyes and a tangled mass of greyish-white hair. I closed the flap hurriedly and



SOUVENIR STREET IN ASAKUSA PARK, TOKYO



THE NIHON-BASHI TOKYO, THE COMMERCIAL CENTRE
OF THE JAPANESE CAPITAL

Facing page 178—5.



MATSUSHIMA IN WINTER



NARA IN CHERRY BLOSSOM TIME

passed on to where a kind of Japanese vaudeville was attracting a big crowd. I learned later that these little white tents each contain an old astrologer, or fortune-teller. These soothsayers are much patronised in the Asakusa Park.

CHAPTER XXV

JAPANESE PEARLS, SHRINES AND THEATRES

HEARING that I was interested in the method whereby pearls are “cultivated” in Japan, I was invited to a private cinematograph exhibition depicting this amazing process, which took place at the beautiful jewel store of the firm of Mikimoto, in the busy Ginza. After glancing at hundreds of strings of pearls and being quite unable to detect the cultivated from the natural, I was ushered into a little theatre and there learned the secret of how this Japanese pearl king, now an old man, succeeded in causing the oyster to produce these gems at his bidding. This story had, perhaps, better be told much as I heard it explained with the aid of a film in this pearl-farm store of Tokyo. “It was Mr Kokichi Mikimoto who first dreamed of how to increase the output of pearls from Japanese waters. In the year 1890 a Doctor Mitsujuri suggested to him the possibility of cultivating pearls. After repeated failures and many hardships, this pioneer of a new marine industry finally succeeded, in the summer of 1894, in producing pearls which were, however, attached to the shells of the obliging oysters. Experiment followed experiment, each one requiring the passage of years before

it was possible to tell whether or not any advance towards real success had been achieved. In the year 1905 there appeared a gleam of hope. The spherical pearl, which is the only one of real value, and to create which research work had been proceeding for fifteen years, at last made its appearance in an oyster which had been treated and confined to the waters of the experimental fisheries."

All over the world the news was flashed that at last a method had been discovered whereby pearls could be cultivated at will. Jewellers became concerned regarding the value of the stocks of pearls they held, and there was much consternation among private owners of costly necklaces. Here is the process which I saw in all its detail on the screen of its originator. The first requirement is that the pearl oyster should be reared in calm water. Its natural habitat on the sea bed off the coast of Japan, in a number of small and protected bays, proved an ideal location for the work of cultivation. The selection of the right type of oyster to perform the miracle also proved to be important. Besides the shells that are gathered from the ocean beds, the larvæ which come floating about in summer are collected in wire cages painted with lime. Countless oyster *stats* are reared in the open sea for three years. Then a tiny shell bed, which forms the nucleus, is inserted in the flesh of each living oyster by means of a delicate operation. Here lies the chief difference between natural and cultivated pearls. In the case of the wild pearl an irritant enters the oyster accidentally, while that which eventually becomes the cultivated pearl is placed there intentionally. After being so treated the oyster is returned to the sea bed for

seven years. Then the cultivated pearl makes its first appearance above the surface. Girl divers have a vital part to perform in the cultivation and collection of the domesticated oysters.

The most troublesome enemies in this industry are sea currents containing parasitic organisms, or of unduly cold water. When these sweep into the bay where the pearl beds are situated, the entire crop is destroyed. The octopus is also a destructive creature, and has caused many trying and exciting experiences among the girl divers. In order to prevent attack by dangerous undersea creatures, the oyster shells, which were formerly scattered on the ocean bed in a given spot, are now kept in wire cages suspended from rafts made of logs. When danger is foreseen from cold or hurricane, the cages are removed to places free from the harmful influence. About one hundred shells are placed in each cage, and several times every year these are hauled to the surface so that the weeds and barnacles, which hinder the development of the oyster and its pearl, may be scraped off the shells. It is a remarkable fact that growth of this kind often kills the oysters.

It was soon after the World War that cultivated pearls made their first appearance on the London market and created an immense sensation among dealers in London, Paris and New York. There followed a storm of protest and many declarations that cultivated pearls should be debarred from the world's markets. Leading biologists of England, the United States, France, Germany and Japan, after careful examination, claimed that cultivated pearls possessed all the qualifications and characteristics of the genuine article. This claim was hotly contested

by a hostile group of merchants in France, but the law courts of Paris decreed that cultivated pearls were genuine in every sense of the word. To this type of gem has been given the name of Mikimoto pearls. The girl divers at these Japanese pearl farms are much sought after as wives because their earnings are considerable from the Japanese standpoint, and, moreover, their work gives them plenty of time for domestic duties. I was surprised to learn that for ages past there has been a belief that the pearl, born of a living organism, differs from other inanimate gems, and that a necklace continues for ever to beat with the pulse of each wearer.

In and around Tokyo I saw so many temples and shrines that only a few words concerning each is possible here. In the Shiba Park there is the Zojiji Temple, founded in the sixteenth century, and now the headquarters of the powerful *Zen* sect. Here also are the tombs of the Shoguns, artistic examples of ancient Japanese architecture very similar to those which I saw later in Nikko. Farther towards the outskirts of the city there is the shrine dedicated to General Nogi, the hero of the Russo-Japanese War, and close by stands the old residence in which the General and his wife committed suicide in order to follow their emperor to the grave. The Imperial University is another fine building with grounds covering about eighty acres. The Imperial Museum contains a collection of more than 170,000 articles, of which 200 are the personal property of the Mikado. Here I saw some amazing examples of antique ceramics, carved jade and crystal, prints, bronzes and lacquer ware.

The scene of a sad pilgrimage which still goes

on despite the lapse of years is the old military clothing depôt on the banks of the Sumida River. It is recorded that "at the time of the earthquake-fire of September 1923, great crowds, with goods and chattels of every description, flocked into the compound, an open space of about eight acres in area, until every inch of the ground was packed. Flying embers from the surrounding burning buildings ignited the great piles of goods, and the fire, spreading rapidly, took fearful toll. It is estimated that 32,000 persons were burned to death there in that terrible disaster. In commemoration, the city has erected a Memorial Hall in the centre of the ground, in which, in huge urns, are gathered the charred bones of the victims. The place is visited by a constant stream of relatives and friends. The incense fire on the altar has never been allowed to go out since it was first lighted."

At almost every shrine I visited in Japan, whether orthodox Buddhist or Shinto, I found at least one of the ornamental gateways which in pictorial illustration have become a symbol of things Japanese. These decorated arches differ from those in China. The Japanese name for them is *torii*, a word derived from *toru*, which means "to pass through." According to mythology, the *torii* originated as a roosting place for fowls, outside the cave of the Sun Goddess. The cocks crowing at the break of dawn served to arouse the dwellers in the darkness of the earth. Another suggestion is that the form taken by the *torii* is merely the Chinese character for the word "heaven." Although it is recognised as the symbol for a Shinto shrine, the *torii* is also used by Buddhists. It consists of two wooden columns with an upturned beam across the top. Not every one of these arches is, however,

made of wood, some are of stone, bronze, and even iron, and many are painted bright red. They are usually erected by people who believe that their prayers to one or other god have been answered, and it would seem that there is a certain similarity between these monuments of faith and the pylons of ancient Egypt, the *torans* of India, and with the more ornamental arches of China.

Scarcely a day passes in Tokyo without the celebration of some kind of flower carnival. In February there are plum-blossom processions, in March, peach blooms are paraded, April is noted all over the country for its cherry-blossom dances and fêtes ; next comes the wisteria carnival, followed by that of the iris, the peony, the lotus, and finally by the chrysanthemum shows in September and October.

In the largest theatre of the capital the stage rests on rollers, and is turned round with the actors and scenery in position whenever a new set is required. In some of these places of amusement the audience still squats on the floor. Owing to the length of the performance, complete meals are sent in from restaurants. The stage of the new theatre which I visited while in Tokyo is one of the largest in the world, and the Japanese are great patrons of the Oriental drama. In this building, however, there were the latest patterns of tip-up seats and little to distinguish the auditorium from those of Western theatres in general.

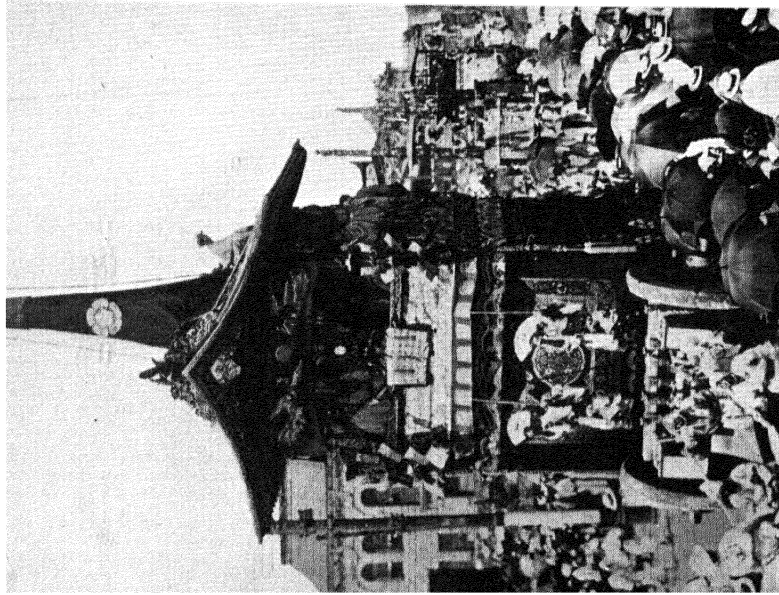
In a smaller theatre, however, the scene was more typical of the majority of such places of amusement. Perched high up in a little box, I looked down upon the crowded pit. Every one was sitting

on the floor in pens made to accommodate from eight to twelve people. The top edges of these, surrounding gay kimonos and black heads, gave the whole scene the appearance of an Oriental mosaic. On the stage the most extraordinary things occurred. Prompters, dressed in black—which was supposed to render them invisible—moved freely about whispering to the actors, who invariably imitated the old *daimyos*, and strutted about the stage in the most approved Elizabethan style. They spoke in high-pitched nasal tones, and drew their *tachi*, or short swords, on the slightest provocation.

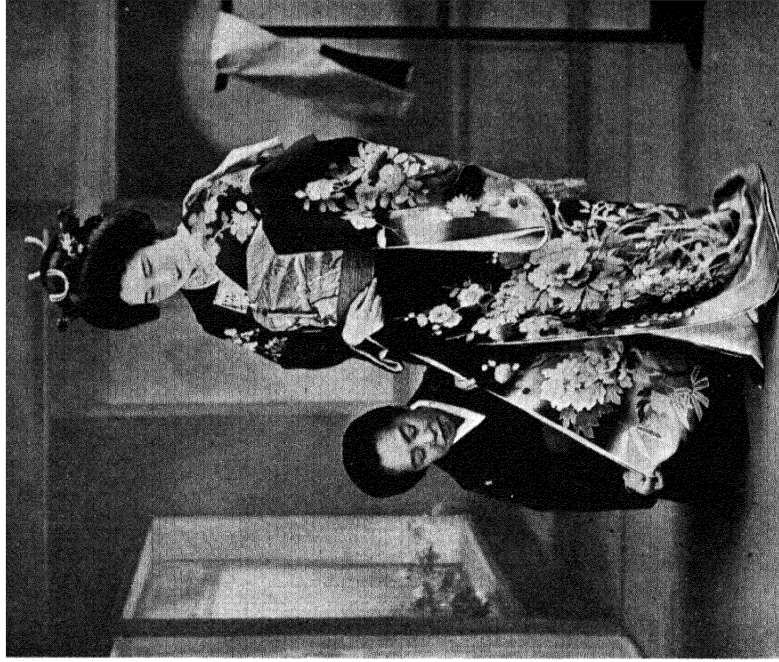
When it became necessary to illuminate the features of a certain actor, a man in black walked cat-like across the stage and held a screened light so that the rays fell upon the face and shoulders of the performer. The female parts were all taken by male actors whose ability to impersonate were really remarkable. Their dresses were gorgeous antiques, handed down from one generation to another. It is only during the last twenty-five or thirty years that actors have been regarded as human beings in Japan. Hitherto, when counted for the census or other official purpose, they were called *hiki*, or animals; and nobody of any consequence ventured inside a theatre unless heavily disguised so that he would not be recognised. The interval between the plays—and there were two on this occasion—was seized upon by the entire audience to produce little boxes packed with food and *sake*, a curious form of rice-alcohol. The first play was a tragedy, and ended with the two principal characters stabbing each other with swords. The second was a comedy, in which much fun was made of an old noble and a



FUJIYAMA, THE SACRED MOUNTAIN OF JAPAN



CARS IN THE GION PROCESSION—KYOTO



DRESSING A JAPANESE BRIDE

peasant, talking as they walked along the high road towards a city. Only in the Japanese plays is the old life of the country now rigidly preserved.

Living in Japan, after being worn out by the difficulties and hardships of travel on the mainland of Asia, proved so comfortable and interesting that I continually postponed my departure from that unique meeting-place for wanderers in the Far East—the Imperial Hotel, Tokyo. I was told that it had been built by an American architect, who came to Japan at the invitation of the Government to advise upon a scheme for the rebuilding of the city in the years before the earthquake. His plans for the reconstruction of the centre of Tokyo were considered far too drastic, however, and he returned to the United States. Then came the great catastrophe, which destroyed so many of the older buildings that nothing short of a complete scheme would cause a new capital to arise from the heap of debris. A cablegram was dispatched, and this maker of modern cities arrived for the second time in this centre of Japanese life and culture. The result was a new commercial Tokyo, and the remarkable but eccentric hotel from which I was loth to depart.

No effort will be made here to describe this curious building, with its bare, brick-like walls of curious colouring, its famous bar with little Japanese waitresses, its long corridors leading to a tea-room overlooking a central garden, its unique lanterns for illumination, its theatre, and, above all, its little temple for private weddings. Lounging in a corridor one afternoon, trying to make up my mind to depart on the following day for Nikko and its gorgeous shrines, I was approached by an official of the hotel, from

whom many items of local intelligence had been obtained in the past. He offered to show me the inside of the little private temple, which had been prepared for a Japanese wedding in the modern style.

Heavy curtains were drawn across all the windows and doors of this apartment, but the inside was brilliantly illuminated with electric light. At the end of the room there was an altar on which had been placed dishes containing an assortment of food. This was divided into groups, as it is part of the marriage ceremony for both bride and bridegroom to partake of food from the sea, from the air and from the land. Later, I watched the bride, thickly painted and powdered, totter into this screened chamber in all her silken finery. It is considered a sign of good breeding and becoming modesty for a girl to show great hesitancy while being led, and apparently supported, by two older women, into the temple to meet her groom. After the arrival of numerous guests, nearly all of whom I noticed were in European clothes, although the bride was gowned in the ceremonial dress of old Japan—a costume that is never worn again—the heavy curtains were drawn across the scene, and despite all my efforts, I could not obtain even a peep through the guarded windows and doors.

CHAPTER XXVI

HOLY NIKKO

ON the following morning I left for Nikko, which has been a holy place for nearly twelve hundred years. During my journey into the mountainous interior of this island of Hondo, I realised the truth of the ironical assertion that Japan is a country with an area of about 146,000 square miles, *fifty per cent. of which is vertical.*

Nikko is a vision of beauty, where the centuries fall away with startling suddenness. Here is the famous red lacquer bridge spanning the blue Daiya River, which races with foam-flecked impetuosity through a valley of misty green hills. The name *Nikko* means "Sunshine," and it is the combination of light, natural scenery, and some of the finest creations of ancient Japanese art, which makes this place so beautiful to behold. Standing near to the red and gold arch of the old bridge, constructed in 1638, over which only the Mikado is allowed to pass, the view embraces another span of brilliant green used by the ordinary traffic. On one side of the foaming torrent stands the sacred town of Nikko, and on the other the beautiful temples and shrines forming this centre of both Buddhist and Shinto worship.

Everywhere there are avenues of cryptomeria trees, with leaves of olive green and trunks of unpolished

black. They form an amazing foil for the stone *torii* and the white, gold and coloured lacquer of the fantastic buildings. These are also covered with carvings in high relief, and are so ornate that the gateway has been given the name of "Sunrise-till-Dark," indicating that anyone can spend a whole day studying its beauty without growing tired. The amazing buildings, stairways, images and gates, all lead to one or two tombs of bygone emperors, and twice a year there are spectacular mediæval processions. Pilgrims to the holy of holies are given a green robe and a sip of *sake* in a tiny lacquered cup of red and gold. Buddhas, bells, and dragons line the way to the Yakushi Temple, with its stone lanterns, its guardian tigers, and its white and gold lacquered interior, where priests chant while they beat time on wooden drums. Here, also, is the Monkey Temple, with its famous carving, coloured gold, black and grey, showing the three monkeys—"Hear no evil; speak no evil; see no evil."

I am standing by the "Goblin Lantern" at the Futarasan Shrine, founded over a thousand years ago, and one of the most elaborately decorated pure Shinto monuments in Japan. All around are the venerable and gigantic trees, and the guide is telling me why this lantern was placed in a wire cage. In the fourteenth century this little object suddenly assumed the form of a goblin and wandered abroad at night. It terrorised the country people until it was attacked and wounded one moonlight night by a Samurai. Becoming submissive, it thereafter refrained from roving over the countryside during the hours of darkness, but was placed in a wire cage to make sure that at some future date it would not resume

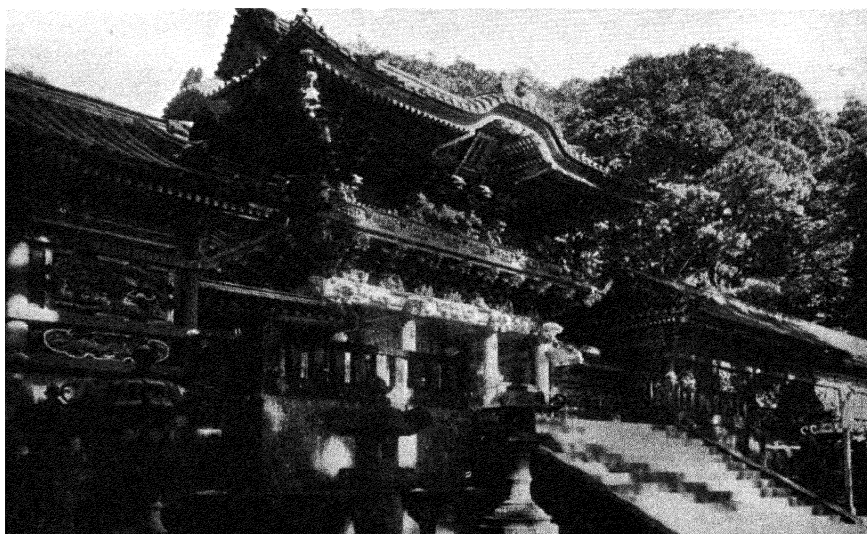


A FAMOUS JAPANESE MALE ACTOR IMPERSONATING A JAPANESE
LADY OF THE OLD REGIME

Facing page 190—5.



THE SACRED RED LACQUER BRIDGE—NIKKO



"SUNRISE TILL DARK" GATE—NIKKO

its old malpractices. A mark on the rim of this old lantern is pointed out to me as having been made by the sword of the Samurai ! This little tale is just an example of the curious traditions which attach to everything one sees in Nikko.

On the tree-covered hill, called Buddha's Rock, which rises above the swift-running Daiya River, stands the mausoleum of Ieyasu, the founder of the great Tokugawa Shogunate, and near by is the tomb of his grandson. These are undoubtedly the most gorgeous buildings in all Japan. During the twelve years that were occupied in the construction of the first of these mausolea, it is recorded that fifteen thousand men were daily engaged in the work, and that the expenditure, to which no limit was set, reached the enormous figure for those days of twenty million *yen*. All the gateways and buildings of these amazing tombs, which vie with the ancient monuments of both Egypt and India in magnificence, are so covered with carvings and paintings in gold and colours by renowned Japanese artists that it would be impossible to describe them in detail. Even the temple bell, which is supported by a dragon, may be struck only by an old priest. Nikko is unique in everything.

Down in the river valley I came upon some children playing the ages-old game, "War of the Kites." Quite a number of excited young people, with weird kites flying high above them, were endeavouring to cut the line of their rivals by means of their own string, which had been coated with ground glass. Apparently the best manoeuvre was to run round a selected opponent and then to pull on one's own kite-line with a saw-like motion. Although I watched

this battle for nearly half an hour, I saw only one casualty. So expert were these children in the correct tactics to save the situation when their lines had become entangled by an opponent, that the amount of energy expended seemed out of all proportion to the results obtained. On examining the string connecting the kites with their owners on the ground, I discovered that only a small portion was covered with ground glass, and that in certain instances wire had been substituted for the older form of cutting surface. In Nagasaki, kite-flying festivals on these lines are held once a year, in which hundreds of people, both old and young, join with all the enthusiasm of a public tournament.

One peerless morning I looked back from Yokohama Bay upon a Japan that was passing rapidly astern. Fuji was rising in spotless beauty above the early mist. Doubtless on its sacred slopes, lines of pilgrims were toiling to reach the summit of this holy mountain, proving the permanence of the old customs of Nippon. Away between earth and sky they would be climbing slowly and chanting the mystic ritual—"May my six senses be pure and the weather on the honourable mountain be fair."

CHAPTER XXVII

ISLE OF "ALOHA"

IT is here, in the middle of the Pacific Ocean—on the 180th Meridian—that each new day is born. This is the International Date Line, and anyone crossing it against the sun not only experiences an extra sunrise and a sunset during the voyage between Asia and America—making an eight-day week—but also passes in a moment from farthest east to farthest west. It is difficult, without occupying undue space, further to explain this nautical knot, although as the new day begins for me aboard a great liner with nothing but the blue bosom of the Pacific all around, it still seems that as yesterday was Thursday, to-day should be Friday, but it is called *Meridian Day*.

"Aloha"—it was to the haunting strains of this Hawaiian melody that I landed one blue-gold day in what Mark Twain picturesquely described as "the loveliest fleet of islands that lies anchored in any ocean." Honolulu's greeting was both musical and floral. Ukuleles tinkled from an alcove above the quay, sun-brown girls placed *leis*, or wreaths of heavily perfumed tropical flowers round willing necks. I gazed at the new scene. The East, with its indefinable mystery, had faded away like a dream, and now came this awakening in a beautiful Pacific island.

The welcome was appropriate and colourful, even if there was in it something of the atmosphere of make-believe, and I walked jauntily into this modern town, and the capital of American Hawaii, to begin my roving in the South Seas.

Honolulu is sophisticated. It has lines of shops, electric tramways, fleets of motor cars, luxurious hotels and even soda fountains, but its streets are clean and they occasionally part to disclose vistas of swaying palms, blotches of coloured blooms and acres of vivid green foliage. It is a large city, providing for all the necessities of about 138,000 residents, and for most of the requirements of hundreds of visitors from Canada and the United States. It is necessary to qualify this assertion with the word "most," because there are those who come to Hawaii forgetting that it is dry—far more so even than San Francisco, Los Angeles or New York. Nevertheless, there is a native drink which has a pleasant flavour and a name phonetically like "Ocooleehow."

It may be a great convenience to have a really fine town on a Pacific island, but somehow it failed to interest me. I wanted to feel the spell of the South Seas, to watch the white shadows of the coral in the sapphire depths, to revel in the warm sunshine beneath the waving palm fronds, and so I hurried away from the departmental stores, administrative offices and museums, to Waikiki beach and its outrigger canoes.

The narrow fringe of sand which has become famous the world over as the beach paradise of the Pacific is somewhat disappointing when one has seen so many of the fashionable *plages* of the world. It is narrow and bordered by the *lanai*, or little palm-

fringed promenade of the palatial Royal Hawaiian Hotel. The sea and the surf are, however, glorious. Hillocks of emerald and white water come rolling shorewards from the broad Pacific. Poised on their summits are long orange and black catamarans and arrow-like surf boards, with experts in the difficult art of water tobogganing, standing perfectly balanced as they flash shorewards.

The beach life of Waikiki is something quite unique. Its idol is an Hawaiian champion swimmer and surf rider, who is well known in the international realm of sport. To all who meet him on Waikiki beach he is known as "Duke." Unassuming and dark-skinned, he can tell many interesting stories of his battles with giant seas on the eight-foot long surf-boards that he has ridden shorewards, amidst a welter of foam, even when the great Pacific waves have been running mountains high through the gap in the coral reefs of Oahu Island. It was Duke who explained to me the mysteries of surf-riding as carried on in these seas.

There are, of course, boards and *boards*, some are more stable than others, and every one made has its own eccentricity. Unlike the tiny rafts with upcurved fronts used at Durban and Muizenburg, on the Indian Ocean coast of South Africa, these Pacific sea-sleds are heavy planks highly polished and trimmed. In order to swim out against the breakers, one lies face downwards on the stern end of the board and paddles with both hands. In this way it is possible, although often difficult, to negotiate the foam-capped summits rising ten, fifteen and even twenty feet above the normal surface of the water.

When this has been accomplished, however, the

board is turned round and one waits until a giant sea is roaring onwards from behind. A side-glance at the line of flashing foam, a few violent strokes to get momentum on the board, a hiss, a heave, and the sunlight and sea are flashing by as you scramble to your feet on the tipping sledge. If successful in maintaining your balance, then the sensation is like ski-ing over a storm-tossed sea, but should the board, through miscalculation, not be in exact alignment with the moving hill of water on which you are poised, then almost before the correct thing to do has had time to pass from your brain to your hands and legs, you will be deep under the surf and crystal-like water. To fall off correctly you must drop astern, simultaneously seizing the back of the board and twisting it on to its side, so that the wave will no longer exert its giant strength to carry either you or the sled on its crest. Failure to carry out this apparently simple rule means that while you are left half a mile out at sea, the vehicle intended to carry you home will be on its way shorewards alone.

For those who feel that their athletic capabilities are not up to the standard required by this fascinating but exacting sport, there are Hawaiian boys ready and eager to do all the hard work of getting your board into position and of teaching you the easiest way to mount, balance and ride. Then there are the outrigger canoes—heavy dug-outs some twenty feet long and manned by five or six native paddlers. Getting into one of these, the still water near the shore is skimmed over in a few minutes. Like a line rising up and cutting across the sky comes a mountain of sea. It flashes and sparkles in the sunlight, but on approaching closer it seems to tower up to a

height ridiculously out of proportion to the slender little craft in which you are sitting. For a brief second the summit turns emerald green with hate, then it foams and roars. The next instant you rise as in a swift-moving lift, and are poised giddily on a crest from which the whole blue ocean around becomes suddenly visible. Someone shouts "Paddle hard!" You dip your blade. Spray wets you with hissing showers, then you feel the breeze of passage and the beach which looked so far away seems to suddenly leap forward until you wonder if the frail craft will not be smashed on its yellow sands, blotched with the red, blue and orange of sun-umbrellas and the green of palms.

While I was on Waikiki beach there was much talk of a local crime of passion by Hawaiian beach boys. A firm but just rule is as necessary to-day in Honolulu and the Philippines as it is in India and other native countries where white people live side by side with the more primitive and passionate human beings born in the hothouse of the tropics. It is of equal importance, however, that white women should preserve an aloofness far more impenetrable than that which at times is necessary among the more primitive members of their own race. The healthy, open-air, sun-bathing girl, with her skin glistening with oil, and whose first acquaintance with the tropics and natives is being made in Honolulu, is not altogether to blame for the disrespect which anyone accustomed to living among native and half-breed races cannot help noticing as a marked feature of Hawaiian life. It is the authorities of these islands who appear to lack the experience necessary for administrative work among mixed

peoples. The native and half-native men who lounge in bathing costumes on this beach, smoking and chatting on terms of equality with belles from cinema-land in Hollywood, are equally blameless. That there are not more crimes of passion speaks well for the self-restraint of the young and vigorous half-educated Hawaiian of to-day, who, it should be remembered, is almost invariably crossed with European blood.

A single glance at the men of colour lounging among the groups of white girls on Waikiki beach, often being lionised because of their swimming capabilities, should be a sufficient indication to anyone who understands native psychology that sporadic trouble of the kind indicated by past events is bound to recur every now and then. After discussing this burning question in the Hawaiian Islands with a number of residents, I am convinced, from what has come to my knowledge in many lands, that while no one need hesitate for a moment to go to Honolulu because of these facts, it would be for the ultimate good of this delightful spot and also of the friendly and usually charming Hawaiian natives themselves if the beach regulations, in so far as they relate to the promiscuous mixing of races, were drastically amended.

On one of those nights of velvet softness, for which Honolulu is justly famous, I sat beneath the palms and watched a number of girls, who, although not entirely native, were at least a product of the South Seas, perform a *Hula* dance. Their bodies and grass skirts swayed to the haunting rhythm of an old Hawaiian melody played on the ukulele and the steel guitar, with the occasional rattle of bean boxes.

The *Hula*, which appeals to many who have seen it danced as a mere relic of barbarism, is really quite different. Its significance was described to me during my stay in the neighbouring island of Hawaii. Every movement of the arms and fingers indicates something: it may be rain, wind, love, the rocking of a ship at sea, moonlight or swaying palms. This dance is, in fact, a poem in mime. It will always be the plaintive melodies, however, which act as an accompaniment to the movements, that will appeal to the European senses. There is more reason for this than most people are aware of. Towards the end of the seventeenth and early in the eighteenth century white missionaries established themselves in the Hawaiian Islands. The tunes of the old hymns taught by these men formed the basis of the Hawaiian melodies of more recent times.

The *Hula* one sees in the hotels of Honolulu, although fascinating as a spectacle, lacks the atmosphere of a native gathering in the old style. It is possible, however, to arrange for one of these performances in the hills of the interior. Let me try to reconstruct such a scene. In a small forest clearing, beneath the casuarina and the palm, a vast array of food is spread out on leaves upon the ground. The guests who are participating in this native feast seat themselves on mats in two long lines. Wooden bowls filled with *poi* forms the first course of this *luau*, or feast. *Poi* is made of cooked and pounded taro, a root-vegetable not unlike a sweet potato. This is eaten with the fingers and is followed by *kalua puaa*, or pig, which has been cooked in a hole in the ground. The faces of the guests convey the impression that this dish at least meets with their

approval. Then comes *la lawalu*, or fish cooked in *ti* leaves and bound round with raffia. I could discover no difference made by the *ti* leaves to the flavour of the same fish cooked in other ways, but the next course, *moa luau niu*, was certainly delicious. It consisted of chicken with taro tops and coco-nut juice. By this time my appetite began to flag lamentably, and I was reduced to sampling the baked sweet potatoes, the cooked bananas, the squid and coco-nut, the *kukui* nut, the Hawaiian punch, the seaweed and the fruit.

With the audience thus primed, the *Hula* dancers, wreathed in smiles, *leis*, or garlands of flowers and grass skirts, burst into the clearing with their string instruments and gourds. They told tales of love and war with the aid of waving brown arms and stamping, shuffling feet, all the time preserving the rhythmic step and swing. Seen beneath the blue skies of Hawaii it recalls a vision of these islands before the advent of the white man.

There came a day when great Pacific rollers swept the beaches and rendered life in the tepid water a little too precarious. Taking a car, I drove completely round the island of Oahu, a distance of some seventy miles. After leaving the business district of the town and climbing up by a beautiful road, bordered by trees with the most delicate mauve blossoms and flowers of all kinds and hues, I came to the sharp curves of the Nuuanu Valley. Passing the Royal Mausoleum, which contains the bodies of all the old Hawaiian royalty, the *Pali* was reached. Here, there is a wall on the brink of a precipice over 1,000 feet deep. The view extends down reddish-brown rocks to the tree-covered shores of a beautiful bay. Many

years ago this lofty height was the scene of a native victory. The warriors of King Kamehameha I., who conquered Oahu, drove their enemies over this precipice. It is interesting to recall that in bygone centuries these islands were known as the Sandwich group.

Descending from the *Pali* and skirting the seashore for about fifteen miles, I realised for the first time that the Pacific could become a fearsome monster even in these sublime latitudes. The wind was blowing strongly from the ocean, and the waves rushing through a gap in the coral reefs sounded like the roar of continuous thunder. The spray, like a thick white fog, swept across the thickly wooded hill slopes for miles inland. I stood for a few minutes on the sandy beach and looked up at ridges upon ridges of hissing foam. Although the sea in all its moods, from the oppressive damp calms of the Doldrums to the blinding spume of the Roaring Forties, is to me na open book, never before had it appeared quite so grand and awe-inspiring.

A few miles farther along this coast road I came upon "David" and his one-man village. Here there is a single middle-aged Hawaiian, who has been trying for years to collect the very few pure-blooded natives now living to settle in this spot and preserve something of the old simple life—at least, this is David's story. As a matter of fact, it appears to be the travellers who come to Honolulu for the winter sunshine and surf-bathing who concern him most. After inspecting the thatched hut in which he is supposed to live and the crude wooden utensils with which he is presumed to supply all his needs, in the true manner of the real South Seas, I came to

the conclusion that David—who is said to be the descendant of former kings—had long ago discovered the value in good American dollars, of being thorough in everything, including the simple native life, which is so picturesque when one is accustomed to endless miles of bricks and mortar and has never seen a real savage. However, David earns the little money he gets from delighted tourists by his happy smile and his knowledge of old South Sea customs, now seen only in the small islands thousands of miles south of this halfway house between Asia and America.

Near to a little place called Laie there is a Mormon Temple situated in a delightful garden. Although anyone who is not of the faith is debarred from even looking inside this edifice, the water evidently used therein flows through the walls and has been utilised to make a picturesque succession of pools and cascades surrounded by the most colourful flowers of this fair island. Mormon missionaries first arrived in Oahu in the year 1853, and have been firmly established there for well over three-quarters of a century. There are many believers in the Mormon creed living in this “Paradise of the Pacific.”

After passing through miles of sugar cane, worked with the aid of a light railway, I came to the fine Industrial School, where a real effort is being made to teach young Hawaiian boys a useful trade amid ideal surroundings. Further miles of sugar plantations led up to the central highlands and Schofield Barracks, the largest military post on United States territory. I heard that over 50,000 troops were assembled here, but this seems an unusually large garrison for such a small territory.

The hillsides all around are covered with the trim

lines and leaves of one of the largest pineapple plantations in the world. Most of the fruit, which has an average weight of about nine pounds, is preserved in the local pineapple canning factory and then exported to many different countries. Pineapple canning forms one of the principal industries of Honolulu. The deep vermilion-brown fields of this island, with the green of tropical foliage and the vivid hues of many coloured hibiscus, watered almost every day by a few minutes of warm rain, form pictures that are worth remembering. The road circles round Pearl Harbour, and one gazes down from these heights on to the United States Naval Station, a vista of green lands, blue lagoons and pale-grey warships silhouetted against the limpid background.

In the sophisticated splendour of the Royal Hawaiian Hotel I danced to the strains of a ukelele band and watched a native, with only his hands and feet, climb the perpendicular stem of the seventy- and eighty-feet high coco-nut palms to clip off the ripe nuts in order to prevent them falling on the heads of loungers in the tropical gardens around. Not far away is the aquarium with its fish of amazing shapes and colours—one fish carries a walking-stick over its shoulder as it swims about. I inquired of an expert in this establishment what he considered to be the true cause for the startling blue of the sea around these islands, and was surprised to learn that the ocean is seldom less than five miles deep in the immediate vicinity. Combined with the white coral reefs and the vivid sunlight, this great depth produces the beautiful shades, which vary from purple to emerald green, of the seas which roll on to Waikiki.

Although this island can no longer be considered a land of South Sea people, I visited the Bishop Museum to learn something of its Polynesian past. In ancient Hawaii there was no written language, not even picture-words, and in 1822 was published the first spelling-book of the aboriginal tongue. There are now only five vowels and seven consonants in the written language. From 1782 to 1893 these islands were under an Hawaiian monarchy which originated in the person of Kamehameha I., who conquered this island, and the dynasty ended with Queen Liliuokalani, who was deposed in 1893 and died in 1917. This last queen of Hawaii, in 1881, composed the famous melody, "Aloha-Hé"—which sounded across the waters like a plaintive call to return as I sailed out between the coral reefs.

CHAPTER XXVIII

HAWAII

A SNOW-CAPPED peak rising into the central blue from a lush green island, sitting on a sea that was all a-sparkle in the early sunshine, was the picture which Nature unfolded as we steamed towards the anchorage of Hilo, the quaint little unsophisticated capital of the largest island of the Hawaiian group.

Hilo is not laid out for the tourist. It is just its natural self, a trim little town largely inhabited by Japanese traders and surrounded by the picturesque bungalows of American officials, planters and business men. The whole island is volcanic. Smoking craters can be seen among its mountains, and the lofty snow cone which had attracted my attention from the sea was Mauna Kea, the highest peak in the Pacific (13,825 feet). Not far away another white summit became visible soon after landing. It was the crater of Mauna Loa, about 200 feet less in height than the former mountain. The object of my visit to this island was a journey by motor car to the glowing crater of Kilauea and the beautiful scenery of the interior.

Mounting quickly above the little township, the road became a picture of exotic beauty. Lilies of all sizes, from the cup-like *Arum* to little fellows

resembling the crocus, were growing wild among the tangled foliage of the hillside. African tulip trees ablaze with scarlet flowers, which formed a vivid contrast against the olive green of the feathery casuarinas, seemed to lead the way up to Onomea Arch, one of the culminating points of beauty in this enchanted isle. I looked down at the archway of rock against its background of blue sea, with the scent of a hundred flowers in my nostrils and only the light trade wind stirring the trees around. The thought came to me that it is a curious ordinance of Nature which, somehow, compels people to toil for the whole of their lives in the smoke and bustle of great cities when Nature provides such masterpieces as Hawaii.

A short detour brought me to the Rainbow Falls, a great pit in the green world, into which a mountain torrent sends an amber-coloured stream of angry water. These falls can claim but little beauty on their own account. It is the foliage around which makes them worth a visit. One of the most noticeable things in the life of Hawaii are the amazingly fine schools, which seem to occupy sites chosen for their beauty. The buildings are also a revelation to those accustomed to seeing the dingy and almost repellent establishments which exist in the heart of great cities.

After climbing rapidly through villages alive with golden-brown people and surrounded by fields of tall sugar-cane, the road inland traverses a forest of tree ferns, some of which are thirty feet in height. They grow here, not in isolated patches but over immense areas, which they cover so thickly that when one penetrates a few yards from the road the daylight is converted into a dim, green twilight. Fortunately

there are no snakes in the Hawaiian Islands, and these forests seem to be particularly free of biting or stinging insects.

When nearly thirty miles of the most beautiful mountain road had been covered, I arrived at a point from which a short walk through a fern forest brought me to the famous Lava Tube, a tunnel in the volcanic rock about 400 feet long and from fifteen to twenty feet in diameter. It was probably formed by a violent blast of gas in the days when the surrounding land was a mass of molten lava. Aided by guides carrying torches, I traversed the whole length of this tunnel, with its curious stalactites and moss-covered sides. The tube turns at right angles when half-way through, and emerges into another forest of big ferns. Not far away are the "tree-moulds." These were formed by lava flowing round the trunks of forest giants. Eventually the wood decayed, and has left these deep wells, with sides bearing the impress of the bark and even the branches, into which one can look down from the rocky surface of the old crater bed.

From this point to the great sulphurous desolation of Kilauea, the largest continuously active volcano in the world, the country is devoid of the beautiful forests of *koa*, or Hawaiian mahogany, and the tree ferns which cover many square miles of the lower slopes. One's first impressions of an active volcano, when looking down into the crater, are curiously mixed. There is always the thought that something may happen at any moment to awaken into fiery activity the smoking, bluish-grey expanse of lava hundreds of feet below. There is a feeling of insecurity, due largely to the many earthquake

fissures and to the great heat which can be felt just below the ground. Kilauea is always more or less active. I placed my arm very carefully down a crack in the lip of the crater, which was coated with yellow sulphur and from which smoke was curling lazily. Only a foot below the solid crust on which I stood the lava was too hot to touch. Down in the gigantic throat of the volcano—a sheer drop of many hundreds of feet—molten rock was bubbling and steaming.

Kilauea is 4,000 feet high, but owing to a broad depression, in which lies the crater, and to the outflow of lava from many vents in the slopes, the illusion is created of being on a vast plain. This mountain must have an enormous fire-mass in its core. In an interesting publication of the U.S. National Parks Service occurs the following description of the fire-pit: “Within the depression is a vast cavity, known as *Halemaumau*, the ‘House of Everlasting Fire,’ which for years has drawn travellers from the four quarters of the earth. This inner crater often contains a boiling, bubbling mass of molten lava, whose surface fluctuates from bottom to rim. Its risings are accompanied by brilliant fountains and flows of liquid lava, and its lowerings by tremendous avalanches, which send up enormous dust clouds.

“Nearly a century and a half ago *Halemaumau* became unusually active, and its violent blast of ash destroyed an Hawaiian army. From that time—1790—no rocks or ash were ejected until 1924. During the autumn of 1923 the lake of fire drained away, but gradually returned until the pit contained a fifty-acre lake of seething lava. Lava geysers travelled across its surface, sending up incandescent sprays 150 feet into the air. Again the lake dis-

appeared, and crumbling masses of rock fell into the smoking pit, choking the vents through which the volcanic gases had escaped. A few months later, when the gases unexpectedly returned, the vents were cleared by tremendous explosions hurling ashes for miles into the air. The violent disturbance continued for three weeks, and at the end of that time the fire-pit had been enlarged to four times its former size, the opening being 190 acres in area and 1,200 feet deep. A few weeks later, when all was quiet, a roaring jet of lava appeared at the bottom of the pit, sending up a steady spray 200 feet high, building up a small cinder cone and forming a ten-acre lava lake on the floor of the pit. After giving a brilliant display for a couple of weeks the fountain subsided, and the volcano became dormant.”

Overlooking the crater and in the midst of wild scenery stands a bungalow hotel, a military hill station, or rest camp, and a volcano observatory. By courtesy of this latter establishment I was given a copy of a publication called the *Volcano Letter*, issued weekly, which contains much interesting information, not only of Kilauea but also of volcanic disturbances in the mysterious Aleutian Islands, some of which come and go with surprising suddenness. While speaking to one of the officials here, I learned a new way in which to measure the height of mountains. He claimed that Kilauea was the most lofty mountain in the world, and explained that although it rose only 4,000 feet above sea-level its real height should be reckoned from the bed of the surrounding ocean, which added five miles to the height above water-level, and so made Kilauea more lofty than Everest! Very ingenious, but not convincing.

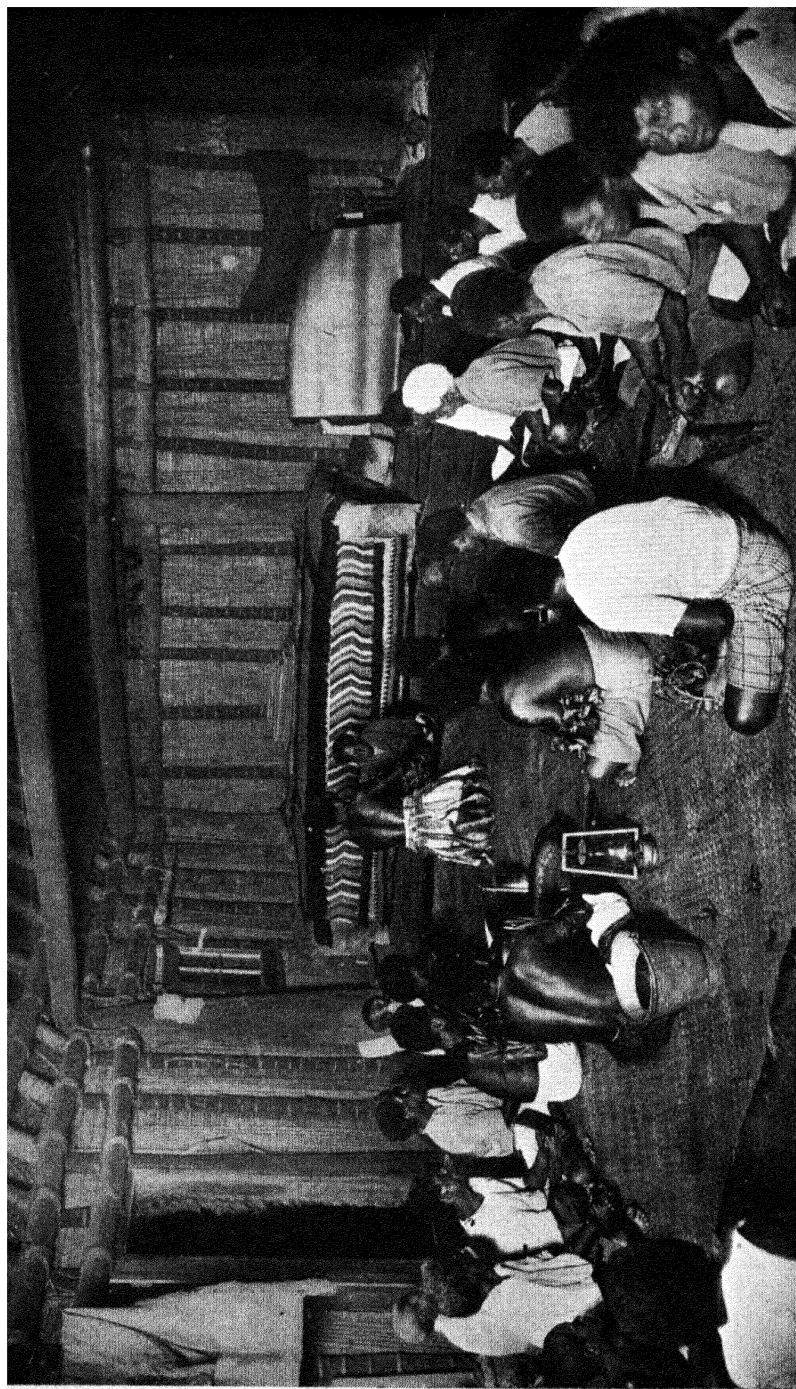
On the northern coast of this island the scenery is even more wonderful than that around Hilo, and there are several ancient Hawaiian temples and quaint native villages. A considerable area in the centre of Hawaii is occupied by large cattle ranches. It was the English navigator, Captain George Vancouver, who gave a bull and a cow to King Kamehameha I. in 1793. These have since multiplied and been added to. One of the largest ranches on the slopes of Mauna Kea possesses a famous herd of Hereford cattle. The native cow-boys of this island, where one can obtain a glimpse of the old Wild West, have on several occasions won championships at "Frontier Day" contests on the American mainland.



NATIVE FISHERWOMEN—FIJI



A NATIVE VILLAGE—FIJI



OFFERING KAVA TO A CHIEF—FIJI

CHAPTER XXIX

THE CALL OF THE SOUTH SEAS

COOK, Bougainville and Tasman have been my companions during the 2,780 miles' voyage south from the Hawaiian Islands, and now, with Fiji under my feet, I am absorbing atmosphere and romance together by alternate seeing and reading. In leisure moments I sail away into the blue waters of these South Seas with Robert Louis Stevenson in the *Casco*, or with Jack London in the *Snark*.

It is an island nation which surrounds this little capital of Suva, lying snugly ensconced in trees and flowers at the foot of purple hills of goblin-like beauty, facing the inimitable blue of the sea. About 200 coral islets encircle the reef-guarded Goro (or Koro) Sea, and in their midst rise the mountainous lands, Viti Levu and Vanua Levu, with an area of 6,544 square miles. The population of this mid-Pacific kingdom numbers 160,000—and it is about these people that I made a startling discovery.

Fiji is warm but healthy, and when I had cooled down on the balcony of the Grand Pacific Hotel I walked out, in topee and whites, on to the Victoria Parade to have a look at my fellow-islanders. Surprises came early. In the place of bushy-haired Fijians I found more than half the town occupied by turbaned Hindus, with their women and children

laden with jewellery and dressed in *saris* of local cotton. Although these people may add to the commercial wealth and even to the picturesque life of these islands, they seem a little out of place, and I wandered past the flower-covered bungalows of the white residents to the long thatch huts of the natives beyond the town. Here there were Fijians—a fine people, of mixed Polynesian and Melanesian descent. The 70,000 Hindus were imported from India to work upon the sugar estates, but many have settled permanently in the colony and become small shopkeepers.

After a day or two spent wandering about among the shops, public buildings and in the beautiful Botanical Gardens of Suva, which is scattered along terraces and slopes leading down to the picturesque bay, there came a desire to see something of the interior of this tropical isle with a savage story. I journeyed by launch up the broad Rewa River, past an immense sugar mill, and into the real Fiji. The villages of long huts, arranged in lines facing the ceremonial squares, where terrible scenes of bloodshed and cannibalism have been enacted in the old days, still remain heavily fortified against attack by walls of mud and thorns. Fantastic mauve-grey mountains rise up around, and everywhere there are thickets of palms, banana and bread fruit. Great clumps of frangipani, hibiscus and orange blossom adorn the gardens and houses of the planters. Tall, stalwart, fierce-eyed and bushy-haired people, often clad in white gowns, stride about the paths and villages. They appear to be a happy although somewhat dour and indolent crowd.

Once I saw a war-dance, with the Fijians dressed in amazingly full skirts of plaited and decorated grass.

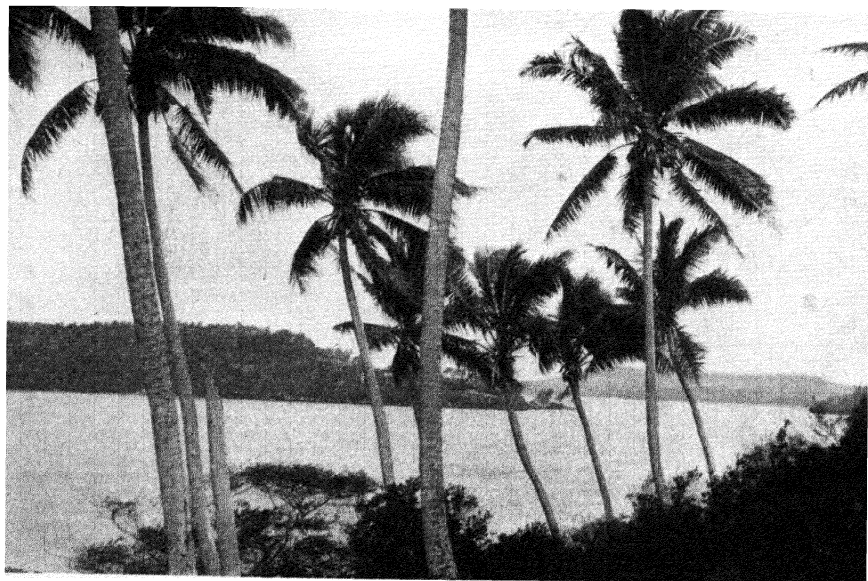


A FIJIAN DANCER

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FIJIAN GIRLS

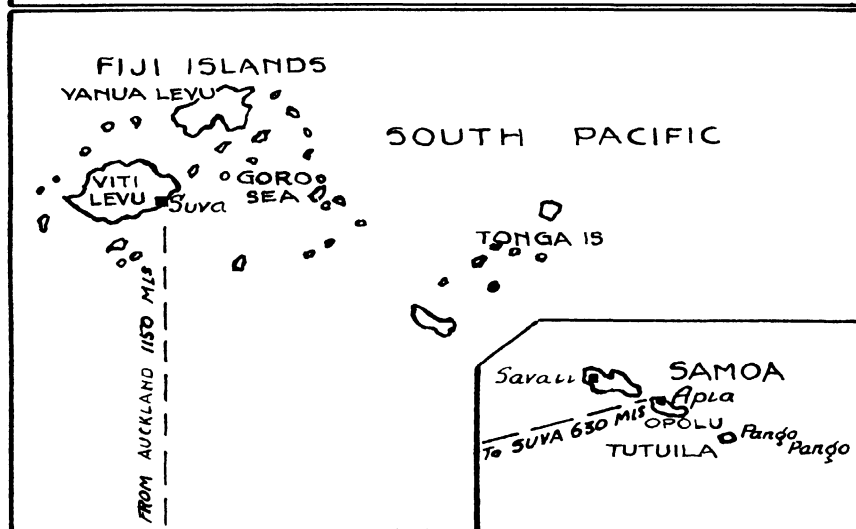
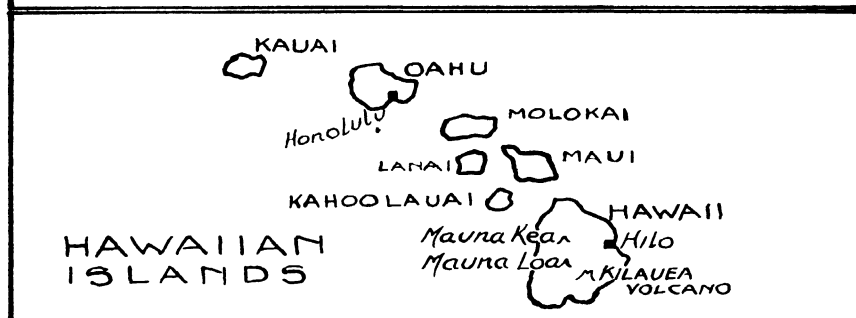
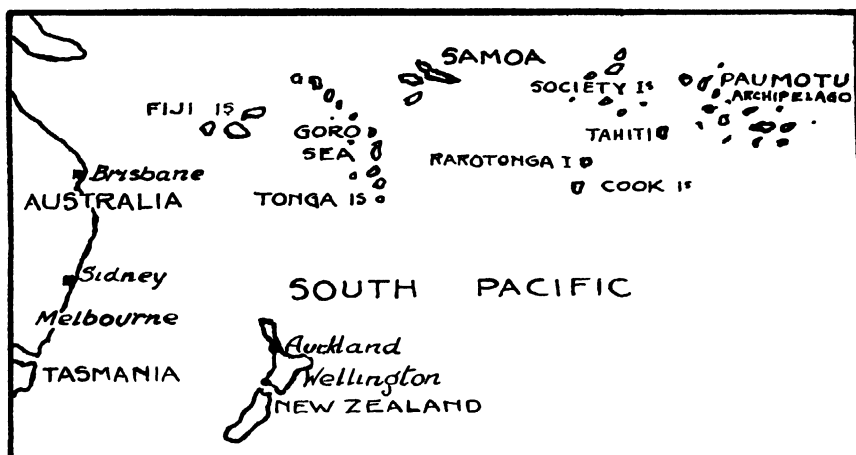


VAVAU HARBOUR

Lying off the east coast of Viti-Levu there is the small island of Ban, on which is situated the old native capital of Fiji. It is still thickly covered with trees and native dwellings, but can only be reached by launch from the Rewa district. It seems difficult to imagine anyone growing tired of Viti-Levu and its little town of Suva, but eventually the magnificent scenery of the island and the hospitable comfort of Suva's hotels and clubs set me wondering if I should ever have the courage to re-enter the struggle for life in the great world beyond its encircling reefs. The South Seas have a strange lure, and I hurried aboard a small but very comfortable and friendly steamer bound for Nukualofa, in the Tonga Islands.

The sea we navigated was full of little green specks and larger dots, which seemed to rise up in groups from the waste of blue waters and then fade into the sunshine. I talked with those to whom copra is the breath of life, listened to one who is absorbed in the work of caring for native children both in body and soul, and threw dice for long cooling drinks with those to whom the very name of coral is anathema, yet they all seem to have found a life of peculiar interest. They spoke rationally, but never excitedly, of going "home" to New Zealand, Australia and England. The modern restlessness seems not to have reached these South Seas, nor would it find there the same fertile soil as in the East, where the white man's burden has greatly increased in weight during recent years.

My first glimpse of the Tonga Islands was the smoking summit of a volcano far away in the blue haze. Then coco-nut palms rose up in another



Drawn by Thos O

SOUTH SEA ISLANDS

Facing page 214-5.

direction from the almost glass-like sea. When we came abreast of one little island it appeared to be no more than a large coco-nut plantation, with the gleam of lagoon water inside the green circle of fan-like palms. The Tonga, or Friendly Islands, consist of eight more or less important islands and about a hundred coral islets. Not all of these, however, are merely reefs which have been built up from the underseas, many are of volcanic origin and rise from the water in the form of gigantic forest-clad cliffs. The Tonga Islands are among the most diversified of the little lands of the South Pacific.

After threading our way through a maze of islands and reefs we reached the little white town of Nukualofa, in its setting of stiff pines which look like huge hairbrushes. Imagination, when it is allowed full play after much preparatory reading, is generally far more accurate than is popularly supposed. I had visualised the South Seas on many occasions, and must confess to being somewhat disappointed both in sophisticated Hawaii and in developed Fiji—not that these islands were either uninteresting or lacking in beauty, but they bore the unmistakable stamp of civilisation and of being keenly interested in the tourist trade. This applied, of course, only to the principal islands of these groups, which, therefore, did not fit in with my preconceived ideas of what life in general on a Pacific island should be. Landing in Nukualofa, the little wooden and pandanus-thatched capital of the island of Tongatabu, or “Sacred Tonga,” in the southern extremity of this group, there lay around me the South Seas of my dreams.

Architecture plays such a relatively small part in

the creation of this curious, remote, languorous, sun-sea-and-palm-fringed-beach atmosphere, that I scarcely troubled to look at the picturesque and typically native royal palace, in which resides Queen Salote and her Prince Consort, who succeeded King George Tabou II. in 1918. Although these islands form a British Protectorate, the Tongans, who are among the most intelligent brown-skinned people in the world, still retain a considerable measure of self-government. It is, in fact, one of the few remaining island-kingdoms of the South Pacific. The streets of toy-like Nukualofa are paved with close-cut grass which is delightful to walk upon, and each barefooted passer-by smiles as he exclaims "*Malolelei*," or "Good morning."

In Sacred Tonga there is no poverty, neither is the island volcanic. It is just a coral reef thrown up from the blue depths of the Pacific in some remote period of the past. It is now a land of coco-nut palms, although there are the cedar-like *avavas*, or sacred trees of Tonga, found nowhere else in the South Seas and familiar to all stamp collectors, the beautiful ironwoods with leaves as delicate as those of asparagus and wood as hard as the metal after which it is named; the luscious pineapples, pawpaws and bread fruit, as well as flowers of so many kinds and varieties that the native girls are seldom seen without a bloom in their neat wavy hair. Usually bare to the waist, the Tongan, both male and female, is really a fine specimen of Melanesian-Polynesian humanity. One of their many interesting customs is the weaving of tapa, or cloth made from the inner bark of the paper-mulberry tree. This is dyed into curious patterns and is worn as a kind of skirt by both men

and women. In the latter case it is supported round the waist by a girdle of leaves, which are sometimes made of tapa and on other occasions are real foliage.

The native houses are constructed of interwoven reeds, with roofs of cleverly thatched pandanus and palm. I secured one of these little dwellings situated on the edge of a sandy beach for working at my notes and photographs, and also for the hours I spent playing in the tepid shallows inside the reef. Although there were no windows, the room was never dark, the fierce light seemed to pass through and between the interwoven reeds. Even on the hottest day this native hut remained comparatively cool, because the heavy thatching of palm leaves acted as an insulation against the heat of the sun, and the breeze from the ocean passed through the same spaces as the light of day. It was in the neighbouring village—really a portion of Nukualofa itself—that I watched the Tongans pounding *kava* roots for the brewing of this curious drink. Although I tried on many occasions, it seemed impossible for me to cultivate a taste for either *kava* or coco-nut milk. The problem of obtaining fresh and pure water has always proved one of the most difficult to surmount during my travels off the beaten track.

About eleven miles from Nukualofa there is a sacred forest. The reason for its being *tabu*—a Tongan word which has spread all over the world—are the immense number of loathsome bats which hang upside down in the trees during the daylight hours of almost perpetual sunshine and fly in clouds across the island throughout the starry night, destroying the fruit of the plantations. It seemed to me extraordinary that an intelligent and likeable people

such as these South Sea islanders, living in such a paradise of Nature, should consider a disgusting creature like the bat, which destroys so much of their food during the year, to be sacred and inviolable. They think the Tongan kingdom would be destroyed if these bats and their little forest home were injured. In my opinion it is the one and only blot on the otherwise peerless beauty of this green isle of the South Pacific.

Another custom, or belief of these people, is a form of ancestor worship. At a little place called Mau, about twelve miles from Nukualofa, there are the *Langis*, or mausoleum of the ancient "Heavenly Kings." It would seem that these prehistoric remains, with their terraces of massive coral-limestone blocks, must have been the work of a people possessing a high degree of mechanical skill. Another mystery of this Pacific island is the *Haamunga*. A drive of about sixteen miles from the capital along a pretty road leads to this curious gateway of coral. It is seventeen feet high and sixteen feet across, and seems to bear some relationship to the *torii* of Japan and the *pai-lous* of China. Near by is the picturesque little native village of Kologa. Although I tried at this place to gain some information regarding the *Haamunga*, it remained a complete mystery, and in this respect can be likened to the immense stone idols of Easter Island.

At one place in Tongatabu there are blow-holes in the coral through which the sea spray is driven high into the air by the swell breaking on the reef. It is not so very long ago that the Tongans, who are renowned among the peoples of the Pacific for their "swagger," were compelled to fight hard for their

existence. Canoe raids by the inhabitants of other islands occasionally took place on a large scale, and internecine warfare between one village and another was of common occurrence. At Houma I noticed one large village still surrounded by the old earth walls and bastions of the fighting days. There is a fine *avava* tree under which, it is said, Captain Cook addressed the assembled people of this island in the year 1777.

Eventually the time came for me to leave this beautiful Pacific island, where the wind sighs in the ironwoods and every one is friendly, for others dotted far and wide across the blue expanse of this tropical ocean. Before leaving the Tongan group, however, the steamer in which I sailed called at the island of Vavau. Early one morning immense cliffs rose up between the sea and sky. They were covered with dense tropical vegetation and formed a striking contrast to the coral and palm atolls which had been passed in numbers on our way across this reef-filled sea. A winding lagoon in the shadow of perpendicular precipices and forest-covered headlands led away inland to the little township of Neiafu, a number of white bungalows scattered about in the sombre green of orange groves.

Having only a few hours in which to explore this bold and picturesque volcanic island, I took a launch and proceeded for three or four miles down the lagoon, beyond the place where the steamer had come to anchor. Here, on the little island of Kopa, there are some caves of extraordinary beauty. The way in from the sea was only just large enough for the launch to pass. Inside, however, the subterranean lake became suddenly much broader, and formed the

floor of a cave about ninety feet in height and seventy-five feet in diameter. Suspended from the roof are stalactites of many sizes, and these were all reflected on the glassy surface of the water. The most curious thing about this cave is the effect of the sunlight coming through the narrow entrance. In the bluish haze the reflections of the stalactites on the mirror-like surface of the floor are outlined in rainbow fire, which is re-transferred to the roof in a maze of patterns of all the colours of the spectrum. Unfortunately I could not remain long in this hot and airless chamber. The colours of the lagoon-like bay, when seen from the top of Talau Hill, are rendered remarkable by the underlying coral. The waters are tinted green, blue, yellow and pink in streaks and patterns of iridescent sheen.

During the voyage north to Samoa, we passed close to Niuafoou, called by the navigators of these seas "Tin Can Island," because, as the steamer closes in upon the shore, natives swim out with the island's mail in sealed cans, which are placed in buckets dropped over the ship's side by ropes. The shoreward mail is likewise thrown overboard in tins, and is carried back by the swimmers. With the exception of an occasional schooner which crosses the reef, this is the only communication between Niuafoou and the outside world.

CHAPTER XXX

IN ROMANTIC SAMOA

THIRTY-ONE hours after leaving the Tonga Islands we reached Upolu, and after coasting along the forest-clad shores of this, the second-largest island in the Samoan group, dropped anchor off the little town of Apia. Although there are quite a number of islets in this area of the South Pacific, the only ones of importance are Savaii, Upolu and Tutuila, with a population of about 42,000, of whom 700 are whites and the remainder mostly Polynesian natives. Savaii is the largest island, having an area of over 600 square miles. Upolu comes next, with 340 square miles of highly fertile land. The other islands, with the possible exception of Tutuila, are comparatively small although thickly populated.

Discovered about 200 years ago by the Dutch captain, Roggeveen, and visited in turn by all the famous explorers of the South Pacific, including Bougainville, who named this group the "Navigator Islands" because of the expert seamanship of the natives, and Captain Cook during his voyages round the world, Samoa became the centre of an international dispute between Great Britain, the United States and Germany. In 1899 England, against the opinion of New Zealand and Australia, renounced all rights to these little Pacific islands, and the two largest,

as well as a number of small islets, became a German colony, with administrative headquarters at Apia. Tutuila and all the islands to the east passed definitely into the hands of the United States. Then came the epoch-making year, 1914, when New Zealand forces occupied Apia, and the ex-German sphere has since been administered by that country under a mandate from the League of Nations.

Scattered about in a kind of semicircle along the shore are the stores, houses and commercial buildings of the bright little town of Apia, and it was into this miniature Pacific world that I stepped one very hot January morning. Although there are many Chinese in this island, the natives themselves are said to be of pure Polynesian descent, and, according to tradition, it was from the neighbouring island of Savaii that this race of canoe-men migrated far and wide across the Pacific, reaching and settling in Hawaii to the north and New Zealand to the south. The Samoans are physically a fine race, and my first acquaintance with them was made among their thatched and boarded huts on the spit of land near Apia which juts out into the anchorage and is backed by the thickly forested mountain slopes.

The Samoans have gold-bronze skins and yellow hair! Every Saturday the people of these islands cover their really blue-black locks with lime, in order to bleach them yellow ready for Sunday morning. For one day they are white-haired with the lime, then they appear with yellow locks for the remainder of the week. The national garb of Samoa is the *lava-lava*, or kilt, which may be a striped bath-towel or a grass-fibred skirt of green, mauve, pink or yellow, harmonising with the light bronze skin of its wearer.

The girls of these islands are, for natives, extremely beautiful in face and form. They wear the *lava-lava*, and, in addition, a short-sleeved tunic of the most vivid colouring. Their hair is usually adorned with a scarlet hibiscus bloom or a starry cluster of *stephanotis*.

On several occasions I noticed one or two young Samoan girls, somewhat more elaborately dressed than the majority, who were walking about with old women in attendance. At first I thought they were the daughters of chiefs. So far my assumption was correct, but they were the renowned *taupo* girls of Samoa. Every town and village in these islands has a *taupo*, who is often the daughter of the local chief. She is chosen specially for her good looks, youth and character, and must also be skilled in leading a chorus of singers, in dancing and in making floral garlands. She is the mistress of ceremonies in her respective village, and her duties include receiving guests, making them comfortable in the guest house, providing them with *kava* and entertaining them with songs and dances. She takes the principal part in local festivities, and alone among women is allowed to wear the full dress of a warrior when dancing.

There is one place which in point of interest surpasses all others. This is Vailima, about three miles distant from Apia, and reached over a fine road bordered by palms, croton, the Samoan *fau*, and other trees and flowers. Robert Louis Stevenson chose this spot for the last years of his eventful life. The house in which he lived and in which he wrote "Vailima Letters," telling of his life among the people of the island, stands on a plateau 700 feet high

and looks down upon the reef-sheltered anchorage. A passage into this lagoon is always kept clear of coral by the fresh waters flowing seawards from the Vaisigano River.

Near the last rise on the way up to Vailima there is a beautiful grassy drive known as *The Road of the Loving Heart*. It was made by Samoan chiefs in gratitude to "The Teller of Tales" who befriended them during their imprisonment. These same chiefs carried the body of their friend up a track, which they cut in the mountainside, and laid it to rest in a wood inhabited only by pigeons and 2,000 feet above the sea. It is in this lofty spot, high above both Vailima and Apia, that Stevenson lies buried, "under the wide and starry sky" of far Samoa, in accordance with his last desire. Climbing up slowly and painfully, for the heat was great, to the slab of stone amid the dense foliage, I found lying on the step a little bunch of dead flowers tied round with grass. Who, I wonder, placed this memento on the grave of him who felt so strongly the lure of these South Sea islands, and wove it so dexterously in an "Island Nights' Entertainments"?

Beyond Vailima there is the Sliding Rock, a smooth, water-worn channel in the mountainside. When I reached this place, several Samoan children were tobogganing down into the waters of a pool at the bottom. In whichever direction one wanders hereabouts the beautiful forest-clad hills are seared by waterfalls. At Papaloloa there is a picturesque cascade amidst rocks, trees and flowers, resembling a natural, tropical rock-garden; and still farther towards the centre of the island there is the crater lake of Lanatau.

Like so many Pacific lands Upolu has its mysteries, and one of them is the stone circle, a prehistoric ruin called locally the "House of the Octopus." Absolutely nothing is known concerning its origin. It occurred to me while looking at these stone slabs what a rich find awaits the successful investigator who raises the curtain which hides from view the great mystery of the Pacific. The Maoris of New Zealand, the Aztecs and Mayas of Mexico and Central America, the Inca of Peru, the stone idols on Easter Island, the stone gateway on Nukualofa, the stone circle of Upolu and many other enigmas would, I venture to predict, have a central origin somewhere in or around the waters of the largest ocean. Many imaginative continents and peoples have been created to explain these mysteries, but the true story has yet to be discovered.

Samoa is not altogether happy, because of two great difficulties, which are common grounds for discontent in many Pacific islands. One is the reconciliation of Government and Missionary interests, so far as the employment of natives is concerned, with the needs of planters and commercial men; and the other is the enforcement of prohibition by the New Zealand Government in order to protect the Polynesian inhabitants. Having lived for so long in the tropics I can understand the resentment of the white residents and yet realise the responsibilities of the Administration. It is one of those peculiar problems which are always cropping up when endeavouring to hold the balance fairly between the white race and the brown, black or yellow peoples in a tropical land.

Although the lights of Apia were twinkling from

among the dark foliage and the Southern Cross was in the skies above when the steamer in which I was voyaging to Tahiti threaded her way through the dangerous coral reefs, catamarans full of fruit, curious shells, tapa cloth, mats, fans and tortoiseshell hovered round until the anchor was raised and the last possibility of a sale to the passengers had gone. If I were a poet it would be to the soft glory of a South Sea night that sonnets would be liberally composed. Instead, I will content myself with recording that even the stars were reflected on the polished surface as the gentle wash of the waves against the steamer's bow told me that the reefs had been passed and we were heading at full speed for Papeete.

CHAPTER XXXI

TAHITI

A LINE of jagged peaks rising from a horizon-wide expanse of the bluest of blue sea formed my first impression of Tahiti. Then came long hours when it appeared that we were getting no closer to this land, which is the principal island of the widely scattered French groups in Polynesia. Towards midday, however, the tall-pointed mountains, the forests and the white town of Papeete assumed definite form and colour. The anchor chain rattled through the hawse-pipe, and we were lying still in a mountain-encircled harbour.

Papeete is a delightful place, although its buildings have much unsightly corrugated iron in their construction. Its red and white bungalows are embowered in scarlet-flowered flamboyant trees, and its busy little main street faces the clear waters of the harbour. Lying on the grassy bank are many native canoes and old ships' lifeboats, while schooners, trading with the many coral atolls in the Society and Paumotu archipelagos, glide gracefully up and down the shimmering waterway. Although time has not stood still even in Papeete, there is in this little settlement, as in so many of these South Sea islands, an old-world air of the sea and the sailing ship: one talks naturally of schooners, brigs and luggers, of

taking passage in a fast-sailer, of yards and booms carried away in a hurricane, and old sailors look up at the sky and sniff rather than at a barometer with a shake of the head.

There are said to be nearly 6,000 residents in Papeete, of whom over 2,000 were born in France. I could not help noticing, however, quite a number of other nationalities, including Englishmen and Chinese. My first day ashore was a Sunday and, acting on local advice, I rose at five with the sun streaming into the open window and a cool trade wind blowing from the sea. My objective was the market-place, where all Papeete seems to congregate in the early hours of every morning, but particularly on the seventh day of each week. Every one talks, laughs and makes merry in among the stalls of flowers, fruit and fish of queer shapes and colours. The Tahitian native is particularly good looking, and is clad in the brightest and quaintest of attire. Both men and women make pleasing pictures. Here, as elsewhere in Polynesia, the children are usually naked, healthy and happy, although in the large islands many of them now go to school in hideous white nightgowns.

One evening I accompanied a party of natives fishing on the reef by torchlight. They use neither hooks nor nets but walk about in the shallow pools and spear the fish, which their sharp eyes seem to be able to detect from a few bubbles or a line of ripples. It is an exciting sport, but great care has to be taken against chafing one's legs and arms against the rocks, because nasty sores invariably result. Coral, containing a living organism, always poisons a wound.

In the daytime these reefs can be viewed from

glass-bottomed boats, but having seen coral gardens in the Bahamas and in the East Indies I decided to drive out through the vanilla plantations to the palace of Pomare, the residence of the native King of Tahiti, whose power has, however, been almost nonexistent since the French occupation.

Tahiti produces nearly half of the world's supply of vanilla, and Papeete is one of the focal points of the maritime trade of the Pacific. The island is about thirty-three miles in length, and has the double-peaked Orohena, 7,400 feet high, for its lofty centre. Although the coast lands are closely cultivated, and considerable quantities of copra, vanilla, oranges, sugar, cotton and various tropical fruits are exported every year, Tahiti is a land of mountains, forests, waterfalls and lagoon-like lakes.

I drove completely round this island, through the ferns, orchids, palms, flame trees and dense bush. At one place I watched the waters of a river take a leap of 670 feet over a precipice, and in one of the native villages, facing a gleaming beach of powdered coral, stood on the spot where Stevenson wrote "The Master of Ballantrae." The curious bird-cage houses, the beautiful scenery, the clear water and the good-tempered natives are the same to-day as they were when the famous R. L. S. dwelt among them—and even long before that date, when Captain Cook wrote of them as "surpassing all others in physical beauty." This great navigator observed the transit of Venus across the sun from Point Venus, the northernmost cape of Tahiti, in 1769. Taking ship I crossed the ten miles of placid sea lying to the westward of Tahiti, and landed for a few hours in Moorea, a fantastic little island which afforded me glimpses of a

beauty more idyllic, because it is mountainous, than anything I had seen before in the South Seas.

It is "Steamer Day" in Avarua, the straggling town on the beach of Rarotonga Island, one of the Cook group. I have just enjoyed an exciting ride amid sea and spray in a catamaran, manned by brown-skinned Polynesian natives, across a gap in the foam-covered coral reef which almost completely encircles this picturesque island.

Avarua, standing on the brink of a blue lagoon inside the reef, is somewhat overshadowed by lofty Ikurangi, and its pretty bungalows and long native huts seem lost in the tangle of coco-nut palms, pandanus, pink-blossomed vines, scarlet and yellow hibiscus and broad-leaved bananas. Its picturesque roads—one cannot call them streets—are thronged with natives wearing garlands of flowers in honour of the arrival of the inter-island steamer, which is made the occasion for a holiday in this happy isle where events are few and far between. Each little world that I visit in these seas seems more beautiful than its predecessors. The features of Rarotonga are undoubtedly its wondrous lagoon, its exquisite blends of mountain and forest scenery and its unusually handsome Polynesian people.

Rarotonga, which is administered by New Zealand, is one of the seven large islands in the Cook group, and is both volcanic and coralline in formation. Owing to a warm climate and an even rainfall, it produces large quantities of copra, pineapples, coffee, oranges, limes and tomatoes. From the lagoon, pearls and a considerable quantity of mother-of-pearl are recovered. The people, who were formerly a

fighting race and carried on blood feuds, which were passed down from one generation to another, have now been civilised largely through the efforts of the London Missionary Society. They speak a dialect akin to that used by the natives of Samoa.

The rugged grandeur of the mountain peaks and the variety and luxuriance of Rarotonga's vegetation combine to present some of the most fascinating scenes that one could possibly find even in the South Seas, where the romantic and the beautiful certainly abound. Having three peaks well over 2,000 feet high, the island is well watered, and a belt of rich soil, varying from one to two miles in width, extends all round from the mountains to the sea. The circumference of this island is just over twenty-two miles.

During a drive round Rarotonga I passed the fine palace of Queen Makea, the peculiar turreted building of the London Mission, skirted the shores of the gleaming lagoon and was soon among the extensive plantations of coco-nut, sugar-cane and banana. There are only 200 white people but nearly 4,000 natives in this island, and I passed through many villages of long communal huts spread out beneath the palms. In several places there are ancient burial-grounds, now much overgrown. On the east coast there is the little settlement of Ngatangia, where schooners used to anchor in the old days. Unless one is inclined to climb Te Atu Kura or its neighbouring peaks, there is only one thing to do in Rarotonga, and that is to enjoy the beautiful scenery, to laze away the sunny hours and to bathe in the blue lagoon.

Although the absence of the schooner, which maintains communication with the many smaller

islands around, effectually prevented me from visiting Aitutaki, I was told that it presents a most perfect example of the lagoon island. It is the second most important of this group, and is simply a ring of coral, upon which palms and other tropical vegetation grow luxuriantly, surrounding an immense lagoon of shallow and placid water. Within a week of leaving these seductive islands of the South Seas, I was standing in the busy streets of Wellington, New Zealand.

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