

# UP FROM GUADALCANAL

**G**UADALCANAL was almost the last island in the Pacific to pass under European sovereignty—a mere 50 years ago. But Saipan lies alongside the first Pacific island ever seen by Europeans—nearly three hundred and fifty years ago. New Guinea is the world's last stronghold of Savagery—Old Style; but the islands into which our troops will next step, having now reached New Guinea's farthest point, are the ones that lured Columbus across the Atlantic and Bartolomeo Diaz around the Cape. To them came Magellan's ships on the first voyage made round the world, and Drake's on the second. They were indeed the goal of both. And the king to whom they reported at journey's end became the envy of Europe for his wealth and magnificence.

In short, the dreadful two years of warfare among naked savages and stink-

## Scenes Change in the Pacific War: Says Our Correspondent A.M.R.

The Mariannas are primarily distinguished from the rest of Micronesia in being neither sea-level atolls nor densely-jungled volcanic peaks, but comparatively large, comparatively low, limestone dishes. Inside their sea-rims, edged with fern-trees, flame-trees, bananas and cocopalms, wild cattle used to roam among horn-high wild grass. They still do on Guam. But the Japanese, working with tremendous speed, have turned their Mariannas into sugar plantations. Accordingly, Saipan in particular has become a Land of Flies. Flies churn in with the cane entering the factory hoppers, and are barely strained out from the crystals spouting from the chutes. Flies billow with the wind over the waving fields. Flies pester the thatched huts of the loin-clothed Kanakas, the German-built stone houses of the Spanish-dressed Chamorros, and the mile of bamboo - and - paper shops, bonito dryeries, and geisha houses that make up Garapan township.

All flies look much alike. The people of Saipan play safe by tolerating all.

To sail south from the Mariannas to Yap means leaving Garapan's bustling main street, which—vegetation and oxcarts apart—might have been dropped complete out of some Japanese small-town, for a clothesless, shopless, hurryless tropic isle. The Japanese, of course, insist that young Yapians must go to school and wear clothes there. But as they leave the class room, each rolls up shorts or gym-frock and changes back to tan. Adult Yapians likewise cling to loin-cloths and voluminous grass skirts, even though the latter may weigh 30 pounds. This sounds surprising considering that Yap has been these 40 years one of the world's chief cable crossroads. Apparently what keeps the natives to their old ways is the observation that innovations and epidemics have gone together in the past — and a preference for their own complicated, if simply dressed, culture.

Yap has its own currency, too, which no invaders will rifle or World Monetary Conferences control. The "coins" are stone "life-savers," several feet or even yards across, which each household, knowing noiseless theft to be impossible, proudly banks at its front doorstep. Counterfeiting has been impossible, because only canoe voyages to a dangerous distant island can procure the correct type of stone. However, one early Irish adventurer caused wholesale inflation by indenting a schooner-load from that land literally made of money. Yap also continues its system of First, Second and Third-class villages. Lower-class men may not sleep in the First-class settlements. They merely work there, being, in fact, slaves to the latter. The whole body of free-

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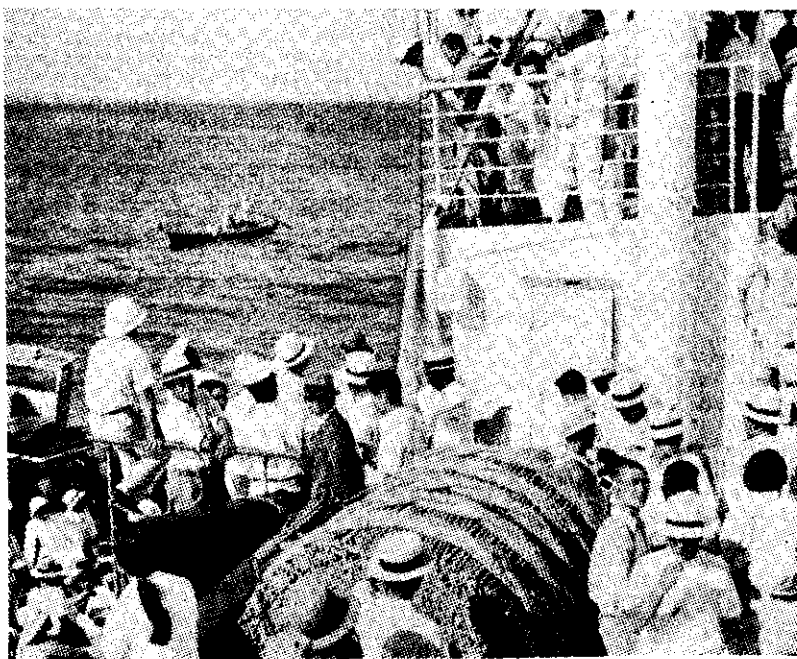


**STONE MONEY ON YAP:** Theft and counterfeiting are almost impossible

ing jungles—disastrous to standards of conduct as well as to health, as General Barraclough recently noted—are near their end. The world's most gigantic pincer movement has only to close on Yap and Palau the prongs that have already pushed through to Saipan and the Moluccas—and then Truk, Ponape, Kusaie, Rabaul, and, in fact, every single Japanese island remaining in the Pacific will wither on the stalk. The eastern war moves into a new phase, new scenes, and older and better conditions.

### The Isle of Flies

The Moluccas, the Palaus, the Mariannas—this is the new cutting arc of advance. What are these lands like that are so ancient in history and civilisation compared with New Guinea and the Solomons? It must surely have surprised many people to read, for example, that the U.S. forces had captured the "capital" of Saipan and offered safe conduct to 10 or 12,000 civilians.



**THIS SCENE** has certainly changed. A shipload of Japanese immigrants is seen landing at Saipan.