

Impressions of the Far East

(Continued from page 1.)

were the original inhabitants of the Philippines and are still living the simple lives of their people, right alongside the highway of the ships.

White-sailed native catamarans and bancas—the Filipino native boats—are seen ahead, where wonderful groves of coconut palms lean down to the water which is the main sea road to Manila, passing the doors of Zamboanga, a few miles along the coast. Here the prison of San Ramon is situated, where a benign American Government attempts the reform of less vicious criminals. This is 500 miles from Manila. From here the liner will pass by magic moonlit seas that skirt fairy lands and reach Manila at dawn.

THE lifting of the morning mists on Manila Bay was like the raising of a curtain, through which the sounds of a great city had been coming fitfully. After the smart white launches of the Customs, Immigration, Postal and port medical officers had come alongside, and their smiling Filipino occupants had attended to the ship and her passengers, one began to realise how fast the East is developing. All but the pilot were Filipinos, and this strikes one everywhere in Manila, even the executive officials of the railways are Filipinos. The Americans exercise a quiet supervision only, otherwise the Philippines are working out their own destiny, and the people hope some day to be in full charge of their country.

To-day there are three cities at Manila. First, there is the old walled city, backed by the fort of Santiago, which was used to fight off the attacks of Chinese pirates during the 300 years of Spanish occupancy. The moat that once surrounded the walls is now filled in and made a golf course, the only one in the world, probably, that is in the very heart of a city. Here is now the American centre, including the Manila Hotel, Luneta Park, Dewey Avenue, the modern clubland, palatial as only Eastern clubs can be. Then further away, on the Pasig River, is the more or less modernised business part of Manila, with the Escolta as the main business street, and trams and carriages carrying Filipinos in their thousands to and fro, with only a few European faces, and many of them Spanish. The police, the tram-men, shopkeepers, all are Filipinos, and a drive to the great central railway station, where modern American tracks and equipment are seen, will reveal the heart of the country people coming to town, their worldly goods carried in string bags, jars, boxes, everything it seems except a bag or suitcase. But that will be found all through the East.

The standard of currency in the Philippines is the peso, worth about two shillings, and the centavo is the one-hundredth part of the peso, with 10, 20 and 50 centavos notes and coins.

The Filipinos are pleasure-loving people. They are fond of sweets and sweet food and drinks, and rarely touch intoxicants. Dancing, boxing and athletics are their recreations—and cock-fighting. Every man has his pet fighting rooster, which he carries with

him when he visits his friends, in case a friendly wager might be offering.

There are few theatres in the Far East. Clubs and cabarets provide the night life. Dance halls are numerous in Manila. The best known is Santa Anna, two miles out from Luneta Park and pier, where the largest dance floor in the East is found, and about the best music, the Filipinos being excellent musicians. The floor is divided into two, one third being for white people or half-castes of Spanish blood, and the other portion for the Filipinos and others who wish to go there. The ballerinas are Filipinos, and are expert dancers. It is the custom for the people from the liners to visit Santa Anna on the night the ship stays at Manila on the way to China. After leaving the dance hall, they drive to Tom's Dixie Kitchen, which is a grill room in the centre of the city, run by

distance, while the city conveyance, similarly drawn, is the carmatta, or car of death, for so bad were the roads before the Americans came, that people often suffered injury in these carts. Yet the conservative Filipino sticks to them on the score of cheapness, and to-day the taxi is only beginning to be allowed a footing.

A greater contrast than that between Manila and Hong-Kong, only 86 hours distant across the China Sea, could not be imagined. In Manila the Filipino works as little as possible manually. In Hong-Kong there is not a horse-drawn cart, and very few motor lorries, for the Chinese know that every horse deprives at least seven men of a task in hauling goods or passengers, and he will not have the horses. Untiring energy is the characteristic of the Chinese. They love work, and they love gambling and en-

and Kowloon, with Aberdeen boat harbour, which is safe from typhoons, on the opposite side of the island. The currency in Hong-Kong is on a silver standard, the dollar being usually worth

The medley of humanity in the streets of Hong-Kong will never cease to interest, huge Sikh police along, the Chinese constables, smart Chinese girls dressed in European fashion, but a charming ones in native costume, a stout merchant being pulled and pushed in his rickshaw by uniformed boys, coolie women chattering along with six bricks as a load in their tiny baskets which sway on a pole, a huge wagon being urged along by a dozen men, with one unfortunate at the pole to steer, the grunts of the rickshaw boys clearing a way, the jingling of silver by the money-changers who swarm in Queen's Road, Chinese carrying scraps of food in string bags, from the markets, Europeans striding along or hailing rickshaw—it all makes an ever-changing kaleidoscope of life and colour.

On the harbour launches and sampans ply for trade, carrying people to and from the ships which anchor in the bay, there being no wharves except at Kowloon, where the new port is. And after visiting all the scenic and other places of interest, one leaves Hong-Kong with regret, as one would an completed play, though this play is one which will never end. And from there the traveller goes on to Shanghai and China, and afterwards to Japan. For this voyage the Empress liners of Vancouver connect with the Australian liners, which are often referred to as "The Little Empresses" so like are they to the big ships. Of Shanghai and Japan I will speak on another occasion.



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an American negro—where breakfast is provided, and more dancing and entertainment.

Relief from the summer heat of Manila is found at the mountain city of Baguio, 5000 feet above the sea, where cool nights are assured in the hottest season. From there come all the green vegetables eaten by Europeans in Manila. A night run in a Pullman, followed by a thrilling morning drive into the mountains by car, bring one to this oasis where golf and other recreations can be enjoyed. In the hot months, Baguio becomes the official capital, the Governor and Parliament adjourning there. All the members of Parliament are Filipinos. In addition to this trip, there are drives to Cavite, Los Banos and Las Pinas. At Las Pinas, the 300-year-old church and its bamboo organ offer an example of the zeal and courage of the Spanish priests who built this fortress of a church and held it against native rebels and Chinese aggressors. Gun emplacements and loop-holes testify to the armed mission effort which they carried out and which has helped to civilise and make the Philippines what they are to-day. The University of Santo Tomas was founded by the priests more than 200 years ago.

At Pagsanjan Rapids, another day's outing, a thrill may be experienced by hiring a banca and its boatmen, and shooting rapids. In all the country drives one sees the industry of the people in cultivation, using the massive carabao, or water buffalo, as the beast of burden. So quiet are these beasts that their drivers are usually very small boys. The country cart, which is drawn by small Timor ponies, is called the carratello, or car for the

entertainment. Nobody knows just when they sleep, for they appear to be awake all night. Entering Hong-Kong is a simple process compared with Manila. There are no medical or Customs inspections, no immigration restrictions. Hong-Kong has been a free port ever since it was founded 80 years ago, when, as an island much frequented by pirates, it was taken over by Great Britain "for all time." Kowloon, the new territory across the harbour, has been leased for a long period of years, and no doubt it will remain under British control. Hong-Kong is briefly a beach, called the Praya, with a towering peak behind it, yet it has a population of 600,000, of whom about 15,000 are Europeans.

The crowded life on the harbour will fascinate the new arrival, but best of all is the view of the city at night when the waterfront, the hillsides and the peak are ablaze with lights, which, rising from water level to a height of 1835 feet, seem to merge with the stars. Electric trams traverse the city from end to end, but the chief shopping street, Queen's Road, has no trams. In fact there is no room there for them, so congested is the traffic of pedestrians, rickshaws, and chairs, with Chinese gambling on the footpaths and a hurrying crowd everywhere.

Much interest attaches to the rickshaws, which run on the level roads, and in the two-men chairs which carry passengers up the hills. They are cheap, the fare ranging from 10 cents upwards. A cable tram goes up to the top of the peak. The view from the top, seen from a point to which rickshaws will carry one, is very extensive, and shows the size of Hong-Kong port

A New Maori Song

By Alfred Hill

TO COMPOSE a Maori song which retains sufficient of the Maori idiom to appeal to the Maoris themselves and at the same time holds a compelling interest for any average European audience may be counted a real achievement in the musical world. With "Waiata-Poi," "Waiata-Maori" and the sweet and haunting melodies of "Hinemoa" Alfred Hill demonstrated that he possessed the way, the will and the understanding to this end. In "E Moe E Tama E Moe" (Sleep, Little Boy, Sleep) Mr. Hill has featured his first Maori lullaby, and the song, which has already been sung with great success over the air in Sydney, promises to show as good a record as "Waiata-Poi." Chappells are the publishers, and the advance copies are expected to reach New Zealand at an early date.

The words of the song were written by Hori Makaira, a Wellington journalist. The author originally sent the verses to an Australian journal. A few weeks later, in the presence of a fellow journalist, he produced a "rejected" slip from the editor of that publication. The literary friend saved the poem from the waste-paper basket and persuaded Makaira to send it elsewhere. As a result it was featured in another journal, and a copy eventually found its way to Alfred Hill, who lost no time in setting the words to music, describing the verses as the most appealing of the kind he had heard. Reports suggest that Hill's enterprise is justified.