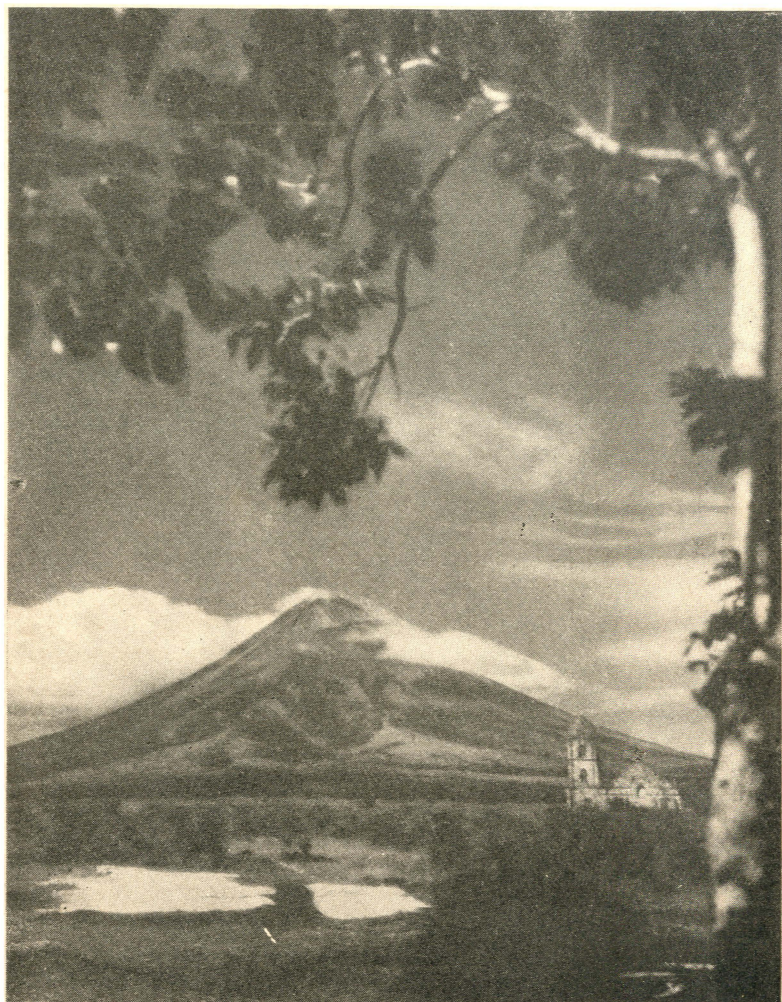


Panorama of Philippine Life -



Majestic Mayon



One way to travel



Another way to travel



The - vase

The presentation of letters of credence by a new ambassador is an extremely formal ceremony. The new ambassador is received quite alone. None of his staff enters. He advances, bows three times, and reads his letter. The Emperor then reads his reply. After this there may be a few moments of conversation. The Emperor speaks through an interpreter, who must keep his eyes on the ground, and who whispers. The new ambassador then bows again three times, and departs backward.

When the Vice-President of the United States, Mr. Garner, visited Tokyo enroute to the Philippines, he told friends in his jovial way that, when he was received by the Emperor, he was going to take an American dollar watch from his pocket, and say, "Your Majesty, here is one thing you folks can't imitate and undersell!" Horrified, all the Americans in Japan told Mr. Garner that he must under no circumstances do this, since, if he did, the Emperor's aides in the room would consider that the Emperor had been insulted and would have to commit suicide. In any case Garner gave up the idea—after finding several Japanese watches that *were* imitation American watches selling for thirty cents.

Twice a year, however, the Emperor gives a large garden party—a cherry blossom party

in April and a chrysanthemum party in November—to which journalists are invited, among the 7,000 other guests. This is at variance with the tradition of other royal courts; for instance, newspaper men are as a rule excluded from garden parties at Buckingham Palace. The invitation contains no R.S.V.P.; it is a command. Guests assemble in formal afternoon dress, and the Emperor and Empress walk slowly through the garden from the imperial pavilion. Hats may be worn by gentlemen (of course they are doffed as the Emperor passes), but not overcoats, no matter how cold the weather.

Very occasionally the Emperor gives a dinner party, for instance if a distinguished visitor like a British royal prince is in Tokyo. At a big banquet, the Emperor sits alone on a small dais, higher than his guests. Guests at an imperial party, by universal Japanese custom, must take food away with them. In the old days they were supposed to carry away fruit or rice, as symbol of the Emperor's hospitality; now a small box of cake is given each guest. This should be carefully preserved. Food, any food, is precious in Japan; historically it is a hungry country, and the custom derives from this.

The Emperor plays tennis and golf—persistent rumors

describe a nine-hole golf course inside the palace wall, but no one has ever seen it—but his chief hobby is marine biology.

He is up at six as a rule, and retires early. He neither drinks nor smokes. His health is stated to be good, though he was frail as a boy. He is, as everyone knows, short-sighted. One curious item is that he never wears any clothes twice, not even underwear. The used clothing is given to minor officials, provincial administrators and the like, and is a precious gift.

From one point of view, even though traditionally he never handles money, the Emperor of Japan is beyond doubt the richest individual in the world. This is because he owns Japan. The entire country is his.

The Empress is an exceptionally pretty woman. Between her betrothal and marriage she made a good many public appearances, for instance at such functions as art exhibitions, teas at the Tokyo Woman's club, and so on. In those days she usually wore native-style kimono; since the enthronement she appears almost always in western dress. But her public appearances nowadays are very rare. The Empress was born

in 1903, and thus is two years younger than His Majesty. She is an accomplished musician and tennis player.

Six children have been born to the throne. The first three, one of whom died, were daughters. Vast pleasure surged through Japan with the birth of a boy, the Crown Prince Tsugu, on December 23, 1933. Since then another boy, Prince Yoshi, has been born.

By terms of the Japanese Constitution promulgated in 1889 the Emperor has legal powers far exceeding those of a normal "constitutional" monarch. But the point is also severely established in Japan that the Emperor is outside politics. He may not, by the rule of unchallengeable precedent, participate activity in political affairs.

Thus a paradox. Japan is ruled, not "by" the Emperor, but in the name of the Emperor. The Emperor is a man, as we have seen; he is a God, as we have seen; he is a symbol, as we have seen; he is an embodiment, a projection, of a conglomerate mass of theories and traditions and influences; but is *not* a dictator. He is no Peter the Great, no Stalin, no Cromwell, no Mussolini.—*John Gunther, condensed from Harpers Magazine.*

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