

## It's a Way They Have in New Guinea: Quite Odd

There used to be German New Guinea. It was the middle part of the mainland together with hundreds of coastal islands. New Guinea is a large island with many coastal islands lying west of northern Australia and separated from it by Great Barrier Reef. West of New Guinea lie the Celebes, and northward are the Carolines. Some three times a year, a ship plies between Hongkong and the capital of the quondam German New Guinea touches at Manila, both on the outward and homeward voyages; and the territory is developing so rapidly that there is said to be a good chance for trade between it and the Philippines. Anyway, it is a strange land; and as it lies in our part of the world, it is particularly worth knowing something about.

When the World War broke out in 1914, Australia took over German New Guinea. It remained under military administration until May, 1921, when it was mandated to Australia by the League of Nations. An expropriation board created by Australia thereafter took over all the old German interests and set up headquarters at the capital, Rabaul. Quite a decent attitude seems to have been maintained toward the German owners. If they were married to British subjects, Australian or Samoan women, they were allowed to retain their plantations and remain in the country unmolested. The sons of Germans who had died were also allowed to retain their inheritances. All other German properties, however, were taken over by the board, to be sold off to bona fide British subjects.

The Returned Soldiers' League, corresponding to the American Legion, asserted its influence in the drafting of the regulations. In June, 1925, the first of three groups of the German plantations were offered for sale on terms. Returned soldiers were to pay 5% with tender and 10% upon allocation of the property to them; all others were required to pay 30% with tender and 10% upon allocation; and both soldiers and nonsoldiers were given 20 years in which to pay the balance of the purchase price, in equal quarterly installments. Some tricksters got in their work, which brought a probe commission from Australia; they organized finance companies and bought some of the soldier-purchasers' rights. It is reported that by this device some of the plantations fell back into the hands of Germans. Soon, however, the law was clamped down.

Prior to the war, Germans had developed a very successful type of plantation on which cocoa palms were planted between coconuts, the latter giving the former shade and protection from winds. This was done on the coastal island of Witu, where there are four plantations and abundant virgin lands for more like them. It seems that the Germans were not successful with rubber on New Guinea.

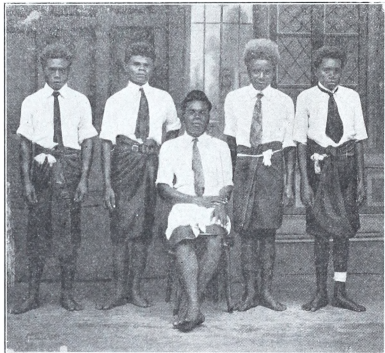
Kanakas are the native of New Guinea, varying greatly in their advancement toward civilization—from the very low and backward bush Kanaka in the Sepik river region (inland) to much higher types in the Manus and Western Isles groups, and also the Anchorite islands. The Anchorites are dying out; they have marked European features and are said to be the descendants of men of European stock, marooned seafarers, perhaps. Their customs and laws are distinctively their own. Cannibalism still exists on New Guinea; and as in Mindanao, the coast peoples prey upon the peoples of the interior, levying toll upon their petty commerce, exacting tribute for passage to the trading posts, etc., the old coast-tribe game throughout Malaysia and the whole southern seas.

Christian missions are yet very scattered. American Lutherans have succeeded to the work of the German Lutherans; their missions are practically if not quite supported by the plantations the German Lutherans developed. Methodist missions are found at some of the coast points, while Roman Catholics have established some industrial missions. The mission work is being extended. The country is large, and largely undeveloped. The native Kanakas have always fought among each other,

hunted and fished when they had to have meat, but planted and traded little. They now bring in *trade* copra from wild palms, but the missions are teaching them to dwell in regular settlements and plant fields of their own.

The mandate government administers native affairs very conscientiously. The territory is divided into districts under district officers who have patrols of native police boys commanded by themselves and their assistants. They are officers of justice as well as administration; they make the rounds of the settlements regularly, exposing themselves constantly to malaria and black water fever. They hear complaints and administer summary justice, but the natives have an appeal from them to tribunals of higher and final jurisdiction. Under this system, the original hearing is always at the point where the crime was committed or the civil dispute arose. The hearings are open. Fortunately, though the tribes all have their distinct dialects, pidgin is universally spoken. It is a conglomerate of dialect, English and other languages; it is fairly easily mastered, so it has become the means of understanding between the government and the people.

Tobacco is the native's chief incentive for intercourse with the whites. It goes into the



Squad of New Guinea Police "Boys"

country as *trade* tobacco and takes the place of money, having a fixed value. It is Virginia tobacco, reaching New Guinea via Australia and the Australian and New Guinea customs; and therefore it is an important source of revenue to both governments. It is moist and black, in twists six inches long having the value of a shilling. The Kanakas got to know the German mark, and the British shilling has taken its place; but other denominations are not familiar to the native, who might be grossly cheated in them, so tobacco is an expedient of commerce. The natives cut it into bits with their trade knives and make it into cigarettes, rolled in newspaper. These cigarettes are large ones; they are passed around and smoked in common in the cold hill villages, where the natives feel they impart warmth to their naked bodies.

Tobacco has no value in New Guinea save in the form described.

Kanakas are recruited for the plantations. Labor agents visit the villages and sign up the young men, who know not what they are doing, with the permission of the chiefs or headmen. The contracts run from one to three years, the agent getting 12 pounds for a three-year man, 7 for a two-year man and 5 for a one-year man. At the end of his contract a boy must be returned

to his village at the expense of his employer, and remain there three months before he may be signed up again. Upon going to a plantation a boy is given a *trade* box, of standard size and make, charged to him (the law can not prevent this) at 10 shillings. The box is provided with a lock and key; it is prized above all other possessions; into it go a blanket, a spoon and a bowl. Tobacco is also kept in it.

When a district officer or his assistant visits a plantation, he says, when the boys are all lined up before him:

"Have you any complaint to make against your master? And let me see your trade box."

These trade boxes are carefully inspected periodically, in order that the government may know at all times that the boys are not being ill treated. Moreover, the questions about complaints are not idle or perfunctory; the officials really wish to know of any grievances the boys may have. Nevertheless, an abuse has developed relative to returning the boys to their villages; there has been carelessness about this in some cases, boys have been put off of coast boats and left to continue their journey home alone—with the consequence that they have been waylaid in enemy villages and either killed or robbed, perhaps both. These abuses have been resented and they have made recruiting difficult in the villages affected.

"Three years ago we gave you 50 boys," says a chief, "and 20 of them have not returned. Where are they?"

Wages are six shillings a month, with which go, in addition, 1-1/2 pounds of rice per day, one tin of cheap salmon per week, and one new lava-lava per month. The educational tax of 12 shillings per year (taken out of each boy's wages because the law can not prevent the shifting of the obligation) must also be added to the labor expense. This tax goes to the support of an industrial-academic school at Rabaul, enjoyed by Kanakas recommended and selected by the district officers. It has an enrollment of 150 to 200 pupils and the matriculation lists are filed for years ahead. Education is not general; aside from the little provided by the government, some is also provided by some of the missions. There is little tendency to wean the natives away from their native customs and habits of life.

The Germans were wont to pay no wages at all, and the Germans who are left in New Guinea still have the least trouble of any of the planters in getting and keeping native labor. Instead of paying any wages, the Germans filled the boys' trade boxes at the end of their contract with everything the boys wanted to take back to their villages—up to a maximum amount; and then they carefully saw to it that the boys got back to their villages safely. Thus the boys had, for their three years' work in the valleys, presents for their parents, their sisters and brothers and their sweethearts. The Germans today continue this practice, while paying the fixed wage stipulated by the government.

On other plantations things are different, the thrifty Chinese (who are middlemen in New Guinea just as they are in the Philippines) get in their work. The boys are paid off under the eye of the district officers, everything is regular so far as this goes, but, money in hand, they step over to the neighboring Chinese general stores to stock their trade boxes, and up go the prices of everything they wish to buy. Trinkets priced at one shilling, sell to the home-going boy for four and five shillings.

The government does not permit the Kanakas to change their modes of dress to European fashions. They can not wear shoes, nor even shirts; they are restricted to the breechcloth called the lava-lava, a cotton strip three yards

long and wide enough to reach from the waist to below the knees. The illustration shows a group of Kanaka police boys posed for their picture; the shirts are the property of the photographer. Only about the mission settlements may Kanakas wear shirts and coats. There is a reason, which may be a sound one: it is said that even in those days when the native of the tropics is permitted to adopt the ways of Europeans, in dress and diet, degeneracy of the race ensues.

The strict regulation is, therefore, intended for the Kanakas' own good.

While old German New Guinea is an agricultural land preeminently, and copra and cocoa the principal crops, last year some very rich gold strikes were made and mining has already become very attractive, several wealthy companies, one American, being engaged in it. Gold had always been washed out by the Kanakas, but the genuine richness of the streams had never been realized until some Australians made bonanza discoveries on the Ramu, Markham and Warrior rivers at their headwaters in the

mountains of the mainland. The real El Dorado seems to be on Eddie creek and the Watut and Bululo rivers; indeed, the whole country appears to be impregnated with gold. Leaving his ship, a captain went gold panning in the region of the richest strikes and brought out 10,000 pounds in four months. It is reported that an American company gave a million sterling for one big property after their engineer examined it and made a report. To obviate the necessity of the tedious overland journey to the mines, consuming more than a week and exposing one to malaria and black water fever, the companies employ airplanes between Rabaul and their supply posts nearby the workings. One company is working a rich vein, other holdings are placer projects.

Such is a brief sketch of New Guinea under the mandate. The *Journal's* information is from Murdo N. McDonald, who was employed in the district police force. His duties familiarized him with the country and the people as well as the administration of public affairs.

always are operating there, our own included), when crises arise, the way to win distinction is to get out your nationals with the least amount of actual firing and loss of life, so that the minimum offense only is given to the Chinese, who would like nothing better than to build a Great Wall around the whole coast of their country—not against the Mongols, this time, but against western barbarians. When a modern people think like that there is nothing to do but remain patient until they come out of it, and our navy in the Far East is always under the command of a man who can be firmly patient and who knows his China.

This time it is Admiral Clarence S. Williams. However, it was not his business to be at Nanking last March. That was the business of a gunboat, the *Noa*, relieving the *Simpson*.

The British had the *Emerald* there under Captain England, and the Japanese had three destroyers. England was senior officer in command, the three powers were acting together and all had nationals in the city. The foreign settlement at Nanking lies along the bank of the Yangtze outside the walls, but for lack of space the foreign consulates are within the walls. The site of the city is hilly, one hill inside the walls is called Soocny Hill because it is occupied by the residences of American employes of the Standard Oil Company. The residence of the manager of this company's Nanking office is quite a pretentious house built flush with the city wall, a circumstance that saved many American lives on Thursday, March 24.

Two days before, the southern troops had poured into Nanking and began their systematic looting. It seems that at that time there were some 220 Americans in the city: teachers, missionaries, officials and business people, most of the men married and having their families with them. By the most extreme patience and military strategy, on March 22 no less than 175 of these beleaguered Americans were safely taken aboard the *Noa* and the *Preston*, the men going later on board a British hulk anchored in the river. That night several stragglers added to the number of the saved, but all these were from the foreign concession outside the walls.

## How the Navy Got the Americans Away from Nanking

When southern Chinese fall to fighting northern Chinese the fiercest combat always centers around Nanking, for which, of course, there is a reason. Perhaps it wouldn't be a reason in the West, but it is in the East. It is sentiment, the sentiment of old traditions. That is why things were so hot for Americans in Nanking last March, when the Cantonese forces of the South took the city and caused the hurried retreat of the northern troops that had been defending it.

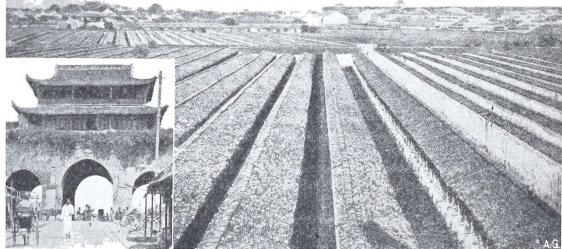
Nanking! Why does each side want so badly this *whosis* on the Yangtze? It is just the provincial capital of Kiangsu.

Nanking was not always thus. Between the 4th and 6th Christian centuries Nanking was the seat of six successive dynasties in China. In 1368 it was once more made the metropolis of China, lasting as such until 1421. In Nanking, through many centuries, young Chinese sat in their low-roofed narrow cells and studied the ancient classics in preparation for the examinations qualifying them for the service of the government and the title of manarist. See the rows of these youth-killing cells! Tradition preserves, and racial conservatism would even restore them! China has a glorious past, especially in the realm of literature and philosophy. Like other nations with a glorious past, she would, if she could, fashion the present in the mold of the past and live apart in splendid isolation.

She can't, because she has tea, silk, porcelain, beans and bakers' eggs to sell, and the world wants to buy—and will buy, too, whether China's rulers will or no. But nations are like individuals, so it isn't a bit hard to sympathize with old China. A gray but stubborn old baron lives his frugal days out in his castle, surrounded by a ruined estate, and wins one's pity and respect because he holds so fast to his cherished traditions and honors the teachings of his fathers.

China is just like the impoverished baron—impractical, unable to meet the world in a worldly way, but full of pride in all that she has to be proud of, her ancient past. Nanking is a big part of that past. When Europe was but a savage land of petty rulers warring with one another, and the only true authority was that of Rome, the Church, when the ambitious could not defeat their adversaries with the sword they sometimes chose the poison cup; and the envied had tasters at their little courts to sample both wine and viands before they dared eat or drink. But they had another means of detecting the poison, the celebrated cledons of Nanking. These porcelains, it was believed, were of such sensitive clay that when poison touched them they responded with a ring of warning. Pick one up and tap it over your fingers and it thump it ever so lightly, and it will ring like a silver bell. In medieval times these wares were priceless.

Besides its porcelains, Nanking has its damask silks and the famous Nanking fans; in the surrounding province is a great production of raw silk annually; in the traditions the Empress left her throne in Nanking every spring and enacted the ceremony of caring for the silk worms. Nanking has always been a political, educational and military center as well as an industrial and commercial emporium. Its walls are 32 miles in circumference and from 30 to 50 feet high. They are furnished with 13 gates, four of which are opened only for ceremonials. The magnificent tomb of Ming-hsiao-ling, founder of the Ming dynasty, adorns a venerated hillside inside Nanking's protecting walls, and all the virtues of



Drum Tower Gate, Nanking, and Ancient Examination Sheds, Dismal Monuments to China's Effete Past

the Chinese race can be traced in the classics that were preserved in Nanking and imparted to generation after generation.

Japan received her own culture from this fountain. Its waters ran freely over the Orient in the 14th and 15th centuries, making wild peoples gentle with the cultured learning of Confucius and his brilliant disciples. No wonder, then, that when the never-ending campaigns are on between North and South, Nanking is the particular goal of each army.

The fact made the situation of Americans in Nanking very dangerous when the southern troops poured into the city last March. It gave the American navy a chance to distinguish itself, and the chance was eagerly seized. If a foreign navy is operating in China (and several

There remained the grim situation of the Americans within the walls, who had gathered together to encourage one another and taken final refuge in the Manager's House on Soocny Hill. It was in the defense of this house and evacuation of Americans from it that the heroic work was done.

The *Noa* landed a squad of unarmed men under the command of Ensign W. Phelps. The squad was to be armed as the American Consulate, inside the walls, where there were 24 rifles and plenty of ammunition—and where it would be Phelps' wits and the men's against uncounted thousands of victory-mad Cantonese! The men were G. M. Townsend, T. C. Garbray, Electrician Charotte, O. M. Gree, E. H. Hater, D. L.

(Continued on page 11)