

Recreative Interisland Trips

- The middle and southern islands of the Commonwealth have always had a special lure, and now good comfortable ships give access to them.

If you only knew Iloilo years ago, you would not recognize the place now; and if in the early years of a long sojourn in the Philippines you had some acquaintance of Cebu, you would not recognize that bustling port city today. All through the Bisayas and Mindanao and Sulu such changes are visible on every hand—who for example the veteran who knew his Lanao under Pershing who would believe that he could now motor in ten hours from Keithley to Davao? And where is the man who knew his southern Mindanao even five years ago, with the flagging down of an occasional trading boat steaming along, either to buy your hemp and copra at its supercargo's price or leave it ashore, who can possibly think of a motor highway through Cotabato and along this fertile coast without seeing it?

We can swear by experience that the whole country is worth another look, and some friends say that you can no longer have the low-down on Manila unless you have made the circle of the provinces beyond Luzon. What is important, if it could be impressed, is that such travel is utterly comfortable nowadays, if not almost luxurious; and ashore too, the hotels and lodgings, while in no wise modern, are perfectly satisfactory as to mere creature comfort: clean rooms and beds and wholesome appetizing meals, about what you would get in Kansas before it spruced up for Landon's presidential candidacy.

Honeymoons to Baguio? Sure, very fine. Yet here's a ship, a good new ship, steady, swift, spacious of deck and cabin; and her schedule takes you to places that are just like places in the tropics—because that's just what they are. Perhaps you'd like that, who wouldn't?

The good ships are many, and we are going to name as many as our list contains, but there is general agreement that the *Mayon* of the Dollar agency queens them all. Leave Manila Tuesdays at 2:30 p. m., have a day in Iloilo, another in Zamboanga, another on the way back at Cebu, touch Iloilo again, and get back to Manila Sunday morning—P100 with cabin, P70 without, third class P34.40 which deprives you of a place at the cabin tables. The ship makes any time she pleases, keeps her schedule easily, you revel in the cloying beauty of inland tropical seas and behold a hundred islands that fulfill all the requirements Gable lays down for scenes of poetic isolation in the picture *It Happened One Night*.

On deck on nights, you can reach up and toy with the stars. And there is a man in the moon, when you see it full, and a woman with him: in island legend they are angels, lest you misapprehend.

No one ashore is precisely angelic, all the ports are mundane and attractive. Don't imagine everything exotic is over in Bali (worthy as that remarkable civilization is) or down around Bangkok. There is a mountain people far back in the wilderness of Cotabato whose dances executed by girls tell a history of long migrations, *overseas*; this people has never seen the sea, for centuries, yet that's the story, so well told in the clever evolutions of the mystic dances that even the stranger fully understands. Drums accompany; their eloquence is such that only men past their prime dare play them.

Younger men cave in at the drums. It is the most unique illustration of the something that's in barbaric rhythm we know of. You can dodge into the wilderness for it if you wish, at Cotabato, but you'll have to inquire of the school superintendent for its whereabouts; we know only one American, a supervising teacher a few years ago, who has witnessed it, and he was the second pale face the people had ever seen, a Spaniard being the other. At that time this people did not know that Spain had ever possessed the Philippines, and that America had come afterward had no significance.

Money meant nothing, but tinned foods meant everything; not of course the food, immediately thrown away, but the tin containers that could be polished and converted into ornaments. Salt was the only lack, and game was traded for it. The teacher told us that the long dance told of storms at sea, and even battles; he was not spoofing, and such are some of the mystic wonders of the Mindanao wilderness, soon to pass and give place to new roads and new settlements. The dance was an all-day affair, its intensities made the girls' ankles bleed, but the trance moved them and they danced out the whole tradition. This people neither reads nor writes.

Of course the hastening traveler will not care for this sort of thing, but you feel it round you in the mystery of night at very quiet places.

On the *Kemao* and the *Legaspi* of the Everett line managed by the genial and capable G. P. Bradford the sea food is a specialty much praised by trippers gratified by the first rate service and accommodations on this remarkable route, 12-1/2 idyllic cruising to just the places you have always been curious to see: From Manila to Cebu, Dumaguete (visit Silliman University, and great coconut plantations), Bais, where sugar is the attraction, Zamboanga lazing away its whilom activity under our Lady's blessed protection, Cotabato sprawling just as keen Chinese traders would have it at the effluence of a sluggish river watering magnificent hinterlands fit for every tropical crop, Port Holland on Basilan, where there is lumber, and Jolo—then a doubling back over the same route—all for P90 first class.

Men at Work is the infallible attraction throughout this sort of voyage. All over Cebu with her too congested population, men at work at every conceivable task, and women and children with them, to cover their backs and satisfy their hunger. Here are hundreds of thousands of peasants fit in every way for pioneering Mindanao as the new highways give access to its wild acres; access however hazardous, to a fertile wilderness. And here, however hard the work, are patience and happy faces. Cebu has some mineral wealth, thank goodness, supplementing to a degree the productivity of her fields, many of them yielding niggardly. But Cebuanos have irrepressible spirits. Cebu is gay and cordial.

Hard by Dumaguete stands Silliman within its handsome grounds and surrounding a campus already traditional to thousands of Bisayan graduates. There is not another minor port quite like Dumaguete, because of Silliman; though Central Philippines College at Iloilo has claims, there are other schools there and it is not in

a unique environment. You will also like the highways into the mountains at Dumaguete, and through the groves of coconuts certain corporations have developed with a view to dividends.

Bais is sweet with sugar, men at work! men at work! Yellow cargoes of cane on trains of flatcars, yardsful of these golden argosies at the mill whose yawning maw fed by gargantuan mechanical forks hoisting the cane to the dripping crushers is never satisfied. Men at work! Steamy rows of jacketed boilers, bibulous and audible, drunken with potent sap; and quiet rows of centrifugals, gadgeted and gauged like the boilers but thoroughly deceptive, doing all their dervish mysticism out of sight—steel dancers behind curtains. It is a soiled process, but the residue, the dry pulp with the sugar squeezed and heated and beaten and crushed out of it, now being stacked near the fires by endless-belt carriers, is clean as wheaten chaff. Somewhere off in another part of the mill, granulated sugar: by the exact hundred-weight pours down glossy chutes, to be trapped at the bottom in gaping jute bags stenciled with the mill's heraldry. Attendants sew these bags shut quickly—men at work!—and conveyors take them off to the warehouses where they soon bulk to the very ceiling; tons enough of short-sweetening to supply the world, you would think, really but a portion of the Bais mill's quota, while all the quotas together will not suffice America six weeks.

But it's grand, it's grand industry, really; and thousands of Bisayans and hundreds of planters take their living from it. Men at work! men at work! They all like contracting best, a lump sum for a stint of labor, but much of it is wage work and a mill will outpay a planter when it comes to laying cash wages on the line: as in the west, so here.

Zamboanga has perhaps the Commonwealth's most open, most picturesque and attractive municipal park. In work, fishing is to the fore here, and in factories, men busy in lumber mills and more men busy winning tannin from cutch—the dark waxy tannin going of course to America.

Another factory turns out prime desiccated coconut meat, shredded or flaked. It's nice driving about, and bartering with Mohammedans for sarongs and the like. You can see Petit Barracks and the house that was successively headquarters of Leonard Wood, Tasker Bliss, and John J. "Black Jack" Pershing when they, by turns, from 1903 to 1913, governed as dictators the Moro Province of that period. Pershing left the more gallant traditions behind him, Wood the fondest memories. There's a lot of Wood about the place, and equally in Jolo. Wood invited and encouraged the American pioneers, even those at Davao, and they bucked the jungle with the feeling that he was backing them—as in fact he was.

There is club of course, all the ports have these pleasant oases. See too the penal farm at San Ramon if you wish, penologists praise it because tilling the soil is regenerating, living in the open restores physical health, and prisoners so handled not only tend to reform, but their combined production relieves the state of the expense of their detention. Men at work! men at work in gray!

Lumber is the thing at Port Holland on marvelous little Basilan, where at another point the large rubber plantations have headquarters. Yards here are not jammed with cane cars, one is jammed with logs, the other piled with lumber from which the seasoned part is selected for shipping. The logs are monsters, a meter, two meters in diameter and sawed to decent milling lengths since in the forest they have stood eighty, a hundred, and a hundred fifty feet high. In the yard, many of them are huddled as if they had some animate spirit, as if they feared the saw heard yonder under the hood of the millshed: they are huddled like wild elephants in a kraal, and they do not escape. Men at work! Men at work with canthooks and cranes manœuvre them with ease, and a long line moves ever toward the saw. They are moved up with chains, slipped when they reach the carrier and are made fast. There they go! truly like elephants, gigantic

and pachydermatous, like elephants on a frieze at Angkor; and the saw whines for them, and transmutes them into slabs for the world's handiwork boards with an incredible deftness.

Heavy work! and men are at it! for man can do anything. But the saw, driven at many revolutions a minute, does not grant this concession. The carnivorous saw whines the refrain, "I am master here! I am master here!" and men handling it, always terrified of its temper, keep their distance as it devours elephant-logs all day long; and if shipments are brisk, at night as well. The saw whines high and hungrily as it starts the cut, and grows deeper, still whining, its teeth muffled in kerf, as it cuts through to the end. But toward the end the whine rises in scale once more, and when the slab falls away the men are quick to shift the carriage and give the saw another hold.

The most startling sight of all is how that carriage shoots back with its weight of log and is set over instantly just the precise inch, or fraction of an inch, then jammed into the champing saw again.

Now on to Jolo to the Chinese pier, one of the world's primary pearl markets and the greatest rendezvous for gala Mohammedans known in the Islands. Some pearl-here men are well powered and send their men down in diving suits; others however, filling the little harbor, the traditional vintas with striped square sails that belly to the wind in arcs as brilliant as rainbows. Jolo is redolent with color, primary color marking strong character in the people who love them. Nearly everything the divers bring up is commercial shell, for the button trade, and will come to Manila or go to Japan, but there is always a pearl occasionally, and fairly priceless ones are not uncommon. Joloanos dicker in pearls as Manilans do in stocks; for a generation, one or another of the Kornitzer brothers—once finally wrote a book about it—was stationed at Jolo for nothing else than to pick up choice pearls; and they could do it because their cabled descriptions were accepted in Paris, London, and Amsterdam among the great

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No divers in the tropics can stand more punishment in the water than Suluanos, these fellows round the dock at Jolo among them; none goes deeper or stays longer, or has better technique against sharks and sword fish. You will like all manner of trinkets from Jolo, and you will like the garden-like cultivation of the island seen conveniently from the first rate roads leading everywhere. Men at work! men at work in hemp, and men at work over the sides of vintas as you cross Sulu sea and Basilan channel—men at work where sharks look for prey, men who may at any moment have to wait for the strike, when the shark must turn backwards up, then lunge with their pearly knife for the shark's heart. It is all so quiet, unobtrusive, utterly deceiving; and it may even seem monotonous, but not if you were doing it. Anyway, it is pearling.

If you have an evening here at Jolo, walking about the streets you may come upon an occasional taint in the air, acrid yet somehow sweet. Behind that door close-bolted for the night an opium seance is in progress. The costly pills have been rolled and cooked, and now the alchemical fumes have been inhaled and young Chinese sojourn for a few hours, till their hard work shall overtake them again, in a land of powerful dreams where they are masters of their fate and captains of their souls. Pass on, no use citing the police: Jolo and all Sulu is a region of weird ways and much illicit traffic, equally in personal indulgence as in commerce in goods.

The first thing to do, should a man settle at Jolo, is to learn to wink at ways that don't concern him. But there is work enough, with all the curious play; the more than 70,000 persons on Jolo must keep regularly busy to earn their keep and support their numerous hierarchy topped by the sultan and his suite.

Now it is time to double back toward Manila and bring to close this fortnight's well-compensated recreation.

We have told you in some detail of two schedules to the Bisayan and southern islands. We can't repeat and tell you of a number of others, but it is legitimate to acquaint you with the ships and the routes they make; the ships are but recently in service here, and some are new, and all of them resourceful enough to assure comfortable travel to all the places, full of interest, at which they call.

Estaban de la Rama runs the new *Don Esteban* between Iloilo and Manila. We learn that a larger boat is coming on from Europe for similar business, and even that two may be built—or are they actually in the building?—in Italy for highseas service out of Manila.

A word or two about *Compañía Marítima* interislanders, prides of young Carlos Fernandez following his father's footsteps in the local shipping business:

The *Corregidor* advertised the Far East's fastest ship leaves Manila at 3 p. m. Tuesdays, gets you to Surigao and the new gold country there at 10 p. m. Thursday, and back to Manila Saturday at 2 p. m. with stops both ways at Iloilo and Cebu. She has a bar and airconditioned cabins. (There's no space for Surigao this time, but we recently ran some true yarns about the place, and will of course have more to say recurrently as mining progresses there—more particularly some comments on the iron the Commonwealth may exploit there on its own account).

The *Negros* leaving Manila Sundays at 8 a. m. lands you in Iloilo in 23-1/2 hours. (Compare with the old *Vicaya*, lumbering away two tossing nights at sea, one full day and two miserable part-days). This convenient round trip includes Pulpandan and the opportunity to motor through the sugar towns of Negros, where you have 23 hours. The estates and mills are baronial, bases of an economy unique to the province, and the capital, Bacolod, has a gaudy air that pleases while it twitches at your smiles: you laugh with these free-spending gentry, inescapably histrionic in all they do, and there are no better hosts anywhere.

The *Panay* leaves the river at 7:30 a. m. Fridays, and at 9:30 next morning, Saturday, quite the hour for a business round of the town, you are in Cebu. You make Dumaguete at 10 that night, Misamis Sunday at 8 a. m., leaving at noon for Iligan 2 hours away; then back to Dumaguete, back to Cebu Monday at 1 p. m., and on next morning at 7:30 for Manila, where you dock at 9:30 Wednesday morning, having had 4 hours at Iligan, and another four at Misamis—quite enough for considerable sight-seeing and pursuit of business.

The *Luzon* makes the Manila to Cebu run somewhat slower, in 35 hours. This ship takes you on from Cebu to Bugo, Oriental Misamis, site of Philippine Packing's pineapple cannery that has founded a new northern Mindanao industry and proved a profitable venture for California money. To see the fields, to watch the factory process—all this is intelligent observation. Boholanos go down to do the work, as it comes time to do it, and all the labor is altogether satisfactory.

The *Leyte* and the *Maclan* are other small ships of the *Compañía Marítima* line with a schedule somewhat similar to one already described: Manila, Cebu, Dumaguete, Cagayan, Dipolog, Zamboanga, Jolo, Cotabato; certain of these ports are touched twice during a voyage lasting from Tuesdays at 7 p. m. to Sundays of the following week at 7 a. m. Notice that both northern and southern Mindanao are included in the schedule. Two ships visit the eastern Bisayas regularly, the *Romblon* and the *Cebu*, while every ten days the *Masbate* calls at Bulan, Casiguran, Sorsogon, Catarman, and Laoang.

The *Bohol* and the queen of the Maritima fleet, the *Basilan*, offer other twelve-day cruises south that embrace flourishing little Davao, where a whole day is spent and affords time enough to motor to the great Ohta and Furikawa hemp plantations, or one or the other, and to some of the older American plantations now converted from Manila hemp to coconuts. In the course of such a day, it will probably be possible to look in at a hemp auction where small farmers get exactly the same prices for their hemp as the large plantations do. In town the club will be hospitable, besides any member of the community there, and should you stay over the lodgings are first rate respecting both meals and rooms. The *Basilan* is one of the larger and swifter interislanders (among which, as we have said, the *Mayon* is tops so far); the *Basilan* has spacious decks, including a sun-deck, spacious cabins, and pride in her cuisine, and the *Bohol* is much like her.

You can see from all that has been said here, too briefly for full justice either to the regions affected, the ports to be seen, or to the companies exhibiting the enterprise, that has brought it all about, that in very recent years interisland travel has been stepped up in speed and comfort and thoroughly revolutionized. The competitive rates are low, for illustration we have quoted some of them. If you have either

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occasion or opportunity to get away from Manila and actually see the provinces of the Commonwealth that are producing the greater portion of its wealth—its sugar, its hemp, its copra, its rubber and lumber—there is probably not a route in the list that would fail either your business designs or your pursuit of sheer recreation and personal pleasure. A number of the routes, and the ships plying them, offer returns veritably enviable. Nor will yesterday's knowledge of the Philippines suffice; changes are swift, some of them acute, and the salvation of the knowledgeable man is to keep his observation abreast of the swing forward.—W. R.

Our Hardwood . . .

(continued from page 8)

tangle, apitong and all the commoner woods are delivered to Manila by the mills and actually sold to the yards at P32 to P45 per 1000 board feet, with the freight and incidental delivery charges running an average of P10 per 1000 board feet. On 1000 board feet of lumber, a mill pays forestry charges on at least 5 cubic meters of logs, often 6, these charges summing according to classification P2.50 to P6 and coming out of the P32 to P45 per 1000 board feet the yards pay the mills. What the mills get just now is therefore P32 to P45 per 1000 board feet in the local market, less P12.50 to P16. Labor employed is considerable, lowest wages P1.50 per day, graders getting P150 to P500 a month, and with such prices current locally and a very indifferent overseas demand, mills do not turn a profit.

Lumber in this Commonwealth is eminently an industry in which studies in taxation should look beyond the surface. It is

not enough that a large plant looks thriving and usually manages to keep operating, the fundamental question is the net return on invested capital during a period of years sufficiently extensive to average better times with bad times.

This has been done for the legislature by Messrs. DeWitt, Perkins, and Ponce Enrile (a work of Mr. Ponce Enrile's) in behalf of the Philippine Hardwood Manufacturers Export Association that has spent so liberally of its common funds to establish Philippine mahogany in the United States. It shows that no respectable income is being earned on the P52,696,775 invested in the industry. It also shows the forestry administration well remunerated, in the table on page 8.

Of capital in the milling industry, 31% is Filipino and 38% American; almost 70% is Filipino and American. This is vital in tax research, exploitation of Commonwealth forests by alien interests is absent from the situation altogether: if some Japanese capital gets out logs to sell in Japan, apparently this is but an additional sale of timber with almost no effect on domestic milling and the fortunes of the domestic mills. *Japan will not buy lumber*, but inclines to buy logs here to close the gap a bit between all she sells by way of manufactures and all she buys by way of products. But she won't buy lumber, and if forced away from our logs would find other logs equally suitable to her needs somewhere nearby, as in Borneo. We learn that she, like Australia, utilizes 75% of the logs she buys in veneers—the Philippines makes no veneers.

Last year exports of lumber and logs measured 593,620 cubic meters of which 429,657 went to Japan in form of whole

logs; only 163,693 cubic meters left the Commonwealth for other markets, and probably this went mainly in form of lumber. Forestry charges paid by logs taken by Japan and Australia contributed materially to costs of administration, a way in which a business in logs where lumber can not be traded helps maintain lumber in other markets actually accessible to the manufactured product. This is one of the reasons why higher charges on logs for export should be rejected by the legislature. Since a foot of lumber sold overseas is matched by 4 feet sold locally, using approximations, from metrage sold overseas as lumber last year a total cut for the year may be estimated at about 800,000 cubic meters. This is something less than twice the log exports to Japan *sapra*; so it is good to export logs, to markets where lumber will not be taken, the logs paying a third of the total forestry charges and taking up a charge of 33-1/3% that otherwise would be laid against lumber alone. Forestry charges topped P3,000,000 last year; that logs paid more than P1,000,000 is favorable to the lumber.

It is now only necessary to refer back to Borneo's distinctly lower charges in order to conclude that neither our lumber nor our logs should be taxed more than each now is. The lumber industry in its Ponce Enrile brief to the legislature goes farther, contending that scaling should be corrected to conform to what average log yield in sawn lumber actually is. There is now estimated 2-1/2 cubic meters of log to 1000 board feet of sawn lumber, but the industry claims that more than 6 cubic meters go into the production of 1000 feet of lumber; only 40% of the scaled measurement comes out as merchantable product, 60% is waste. (Here is no doubt a point on which administration and manufacturing will never reach an accord. If the forestry charge sums no more than the administration needs and actually uses in forest benefactions, the point is unimportant).

To preserve overseas lumber markets and foster log markets, and find new ones up to the total yearly cut the forests will provide without depletion of permanent stands where these are at all advisable, should deeply concern the Commonwealth administration. It is a big factor in the prosperity of our southern islands, and of great social import on Luzon. Last year, logs cut into lumber sold in the American market brought P31.05 a cubic meter, the customs report shows; and logs sold overseas to Japan brought only P8.14 a cubic meter. This difference of almost 300% in returns per cubic meter, in favor of lumber as against logs, largely went into additional employment of local labor. Finally, to an industry as hard put to it as our lumber industry clearly is, may be left, with all advisability, the problem of grading its own export product and disciplining its own members if any one of them grades deceiv-

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