

## Motoring to Lukban: A Hundred Miles of Wayside Beauty

We entered upon our trip to Lukban with the greatest avidity. First, we found that it was just a hundred miles from Manila: three bewitching hours, then, of motoring with a Philippine morning all about one, and from valley to mountainside, with not only Philippine topography, but the very seasons, a year itself, passing in miniature. The calendar would be, as indeed it proved, as contorted and folded up as the vales and dells and hills and crumpled ranges lorded over in the grand manner by Mount Cristobal, Mount Makiling and Mount Banahaw.

At Calamba, the peasants would be harvesting; the fields of yellow rice would appear to the traveler's swift glance as if shadowed brightly with an animated rainbow, industrially employed; and farther on, the rice would be full headed but still green; and farther on, it would be halfgrown only, wantonly spreading its leaves to the sun while hurrying gurgles of water through many ditches kept dampening the silt at its roots and retrieving its ill judgment about sunlight; and farther on still, though seemingly not much farther than across the road, the peasants would all be in scant raiment, as gray and dreary as the fields of muck into which they would be sticking myriad slender green seedlings—from a pale, thickly studded bed, with a field boss brooding over the efforts of busy children, and a moody carabao standing by to haul the seedlings to the planters by the cart-load.

Where it was planting time, it would be showery; but we should soon leave it all behind, and be in the midst of the hills, the corridors of the lordly volcanoes, mansions of the ancient gods. If the gods were kind, there would be no storm; if not, we should hear the rustle of storm racing madcap-manner through the palms.

The meaner moods of the mountain gods are never prolonged: the more irascible ones are quickly overawed by the holy hosts of *Bathala*, god of gods as well as men.

*Bathala*, too, liberally rewards for tasks well done, or obligations dutifully performed: culture, of a real sort, aids dexterity in the planting of

these rows of rice, with geometric exactitude—with no sort of measure employed, only the swift accuracy of the peasant eye. The rhythm of music is in such souls: they may, indeed, be planting to the soft, enchanting melody of a *kundiman*. We should see the *matandang bulag*—an old blind musician—comfortably seated on the dike, round the field where the planters were busy, playing the lively folk tunes on a guitar that suffers somewhat from asthma on account of the gusty weather, sweeping occasional wisps of rain



under the edge of a big blue umbrella, which, poised high overhead in the natural socket of a bamboo stake cut off between joints, serves the man as a sufficient protection.

Accompanying the blind old minstrel thus quaintly engaged in recounting to the present toiling generation the folk sagas come down from antiquity, we should see a little brown lad, in trousers and naught else; or we should perhaps see a bare-limbed little girl, having only a faded calico *camisa sola*—though always a cheap handkerchief of some dubious texture beside, which will prove a light protection to the throat when the breeze cools with the evening, and will afford that necessary covering for the head of girl or woman when at their devotionals in the village chapel or the town cathedral.

No one so lowly, be very sure, as not to value a proper decorum.

Where harvesting was in progress and the merry reapers had credit to command, there we would see temporary cloth markets improvised from bamboos and palm shades. Fronts of these little stalls for the harvest-field trade would be so arranged as to lower upon rattan-thong hinges and fit, quite snugly, too, into the cupped-out tops of stubby bamboo stakes and thus form a bench where prospective customers might examine at ease the meager wares the tiny shops would offer; a gala assortment of cheap imported calico prints with many figures in red and yellow and green. Silk *tapis*—from Baliuag, which are aprons made conventional by tribal inheritance and without which it is immodest to go in public; and besides these silks and calicoes, jusi and piña and sinamay *camisas* and *pañuelos*. Waists and kerchiefs hand-loomed from hemp and silk fiber, *jusi*; or pineapple and silk fiber, *piña*; or hemp fiber alone, skillfully macerated and dyed, which is the ordinary *sinamay* that, as the whim of western fashion changes, sells on occasion at premium prices to Paris milliners for confectioning costly chapeaux.

Here we see it serving peasant girls for costumes good enough for any public occasion—making into both waist and skirt, or either, and billowing and rustling with the graceful sway of the body as a proper material for feminine wear should.

Few places in the world can be more worth beholding, more filling to the eye.

It is the Laguna-Tayabas coconut region, without rival in all the Indies, East or West. It embraces the easy slopes of a piedmont terrain (the war-engrafted term seems to be *littoral*, but we don't fancy it), and far away into the hovering clouds, the steeper, more elevated slopes of great volcanic peaks, all now as dead within as Vulcan and the popular memory of him, and as alive without as an ideal climate and deep ash-loam can make them.

The road is coral-surfaced. The reader knows, of course, that the

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palms with which the slopes are groved are all gray-trunked and green-fronded, with huge clusters of green and saffron nuts nestled in them, whose size in their thick fiber coats is about that of the full moon in the cold sky of a temperate-zone winter.

What an untoward comparison, too suddenly broached, at the wrong place, at the very point where the reader has joined us in skimming along the salubrious heights of the new tropics, just pleasantly cool, mod-

ern road-building in the Philippines has created.

Well, pardon please; but that is about the size of the coconuts—as you will see for yourself when that man who is toe-climbing a palm an hundred feet high, reaches the top and begins tossing the nuts down... We can beat the train to the crossing, perhaps; it rumbles along with twenty cars of unhusked nuts billed to the desiccated coconut plant at Candelaria. If we stop for a moment's looking about under the grove beyond the track, then some one will surely come up to us smiling diffidently, and offer to bolo into an half-

ripened nut so we can have the milk. It is refreshing and wholesome; if we drink it—and why not, so as not to offend?

The world uses billions of coconuts, the United States most of them, just for soap-making and cake-making and candy-decking. Five hundred thousand a day are trundled from these groves to some four or five mills that shred and dry the meat for cake-making and candy-decking; the mills all ship their entire output to America, hardly keeping up with the annual increase in the demand.

The making of a fine confection only consumes a fraction of the coconuts of this region, the larger portion are dried as we have seen the men drying them, and in the form of copra—which in the tropics is wheat in the mill—are bundled into jute bags and bartered to Chinese general-store men, selling to the buyers for the soap-makers. Coconut meat is more than two-thirds oil. This is the ingredient that makes the soap, and the meal which is left fattens American beef cattle or enriches the milk of prize dairy herds. There are extraction mills in Manila, though most are maintained in connection with the soap factories, as in Cincinnati or Port Sunlight. Thus did at least one great English Lord, Leverhulme, and now his heirs, like his millionaire compeers in America, find the peculiar interest of a thrifty industrialist in all that we see about us on the coral road to Lukban.

This makes the peasants happy, for it gives them pesos for a harvest that ripens during every month of the year. Since America has been teaching them industrial ways, they have pesos where they formerly had only pesetas. Before, this road did not exist, nor the railroad either; and instead of trucks and trains to cart the crop away, it was a case of packing for dreary miles by pony-back, to some point on Laguna de Bay, and transferring the sweaty stuff there to bancas plying to Manila down the Pasig. Today we see how the railway has threaded its way through the groves, at least how it appears to have done so. It has really nosed a little ahead of the husbandman, who, wherever it has gone, has followed it up and taken up the land and set out new groves, pushing the jungle farther and farther up the mountains.

The highways connect the plantations and farms with the villages round about, supplementing the rail-

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way and converting the irksome past into the comfortable present.

With such gossip and comment we have whiled away the three hours, nearly. Still skirting the slopes of Banahaw, we have passed Lucena, the quite pretentious capital of Tayabas, and the several minor towns beyond it, and we are even now rounding into Lukban, where the first sight to catch our eye is the old women, washing, in the open aqueducts at either side of every clean little street, the fine *buntal* fiber-hats for which the place is locally famous.

Here is fine craftsmanship, not surpassed among far better known orientals—among the Chinese or Japanese, for example.

American merchants, in New York and Boston, buy these fine Lukban hats through Manila houses.

We shall not visit even the Lukban church and plaza before motoring on across the stone bridge just beyond the place and spreading our lunch under what seems the most perfect coconut grove of all. Though perhaps this impression comes from the grove's partial isolation, still we wonder if anything could be more ex-

quisite. It is a young grove perhaps not more than twenty years old, we can tell from the sleekness and girth of the palms.

The slope it shades is but a gentle one, overlaid with a coverlet of green down, such being the texture of the thick grass; and the stream, spanned by the old bridge, weathered and moss-grown with three centuries of storm and sun—the little stream is limpid and fresh from the clouds that have just sprinkled it upon the mountain. It is all that even Robert Burns could desire in purling water. It is a busy stream, hurrying to the lowlands to water the rice, which is never satiated though floating to its neck; and being a conscientious stream, it quarrels incessantly at the rough limestone and lava rocks that cumber its current and make natural stepping stones for gay bare feet of boys and girls out picnicking—of which they are extremely fond.

More than half way back to Manila, we may as well loiter half an hour or so, and gain insight into fundamental customary law, that of tenantry; for tenantry is inevitably the skeleton of feudalism, on which the flesh, waxed fat and comely, leans and feeds. A tenant labors a crop from a field, receiving a share of it

as compensation. The share depends somewhat on the nature of the crop, and also on whether or not the tenant owns work animals. The tenant by customary law, is the social inferior of the landlord and therefore cannot dispute with him, whom by the same law he is compelled to obey.

It happens that in this district there are landlords for whom tenants are raising sugar cane, and this sugar cane is milled at centrals getting half of it for the job (which, all told, involves financing, transporting and many incidental services), the other half, so far as the central is concerned, going to the landlord. But really from a fifth to a third of it is the tenant's share. Of this the central knows nothing, but keeping an eye on the market it advances to the landlord sums requested from time to time during the season, all against his ostensible half of the entire crop; and when he is careless of his stewardship and spends this money without giving the tenant the latter's fair share of it, as has happened at Calauan, then when crop settlement time comes he cannot pay the tenant at all.

This violation of customary law on the part of the landlord would, in

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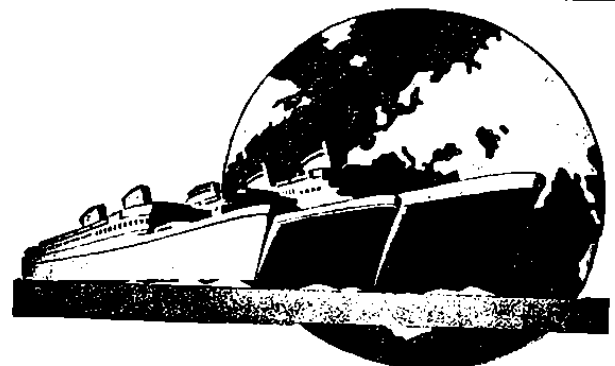
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ments went to Japan, Europe and Hongkong.

Shipments of minor products to China and Japan either dropped to a low level or entirely out of sight. The molasses shippers forwarded only 2,112 tons. Cigar shipments went up to 1,020 tons, probably for account of the Christmas trade. Shipments of gums, junk, kapok seeds, skins and catch were normal. Europe took 1,878 tons of tobacco, the total movement in the item being 2,534 tons. Shipments of embroideries, furniture, kapok, nuts, rope, rubber, margarine and vegetable lard were subnormal. The pineapple canners forwarded 1,442 tons.

The following figures show the number of passengers departing from the Philippines for China, Japan and the Pacific Coast for the month of September, 1937:

	First	Inter- mediate	Third
Hongkong .....	76	110	164
Shanghai .....	..	..	..
Japan .....	8	13	32
Honolulu .....	3	14	21
Pacific Coast .....	50	92	37
Europe via America .....	0	0	0
Total for September, 1937 .....	137	229	254
Total for August, 1937 .....	207	326	333

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former years, pass unscathed; for a great convenience of the law is that the humble must obey their superiors. Ostracism does not, as it should, always rebuke the rotter dealing unfairly with his tenants and neglecting his own obligations.

Today a tenant asks for his settlement, having books to buy for his children reentering school.

"Well, Juan, and how much do you want?"

"All, sir, please; it is P114.19."

"But what can a man like you want with so much money at one time: What will you do with it?"

Juan explains.

"Jove, what luck! School books indeed, and for the second grade, too! It just happens that my daughter finished that grade last year and her

## 223 Dasmariñas, Manila

Rate Table No.	Line	VESSEL	Leave Manila	Leave Hongkong	Leave Saigon	Leave Singapore	Leave Davao	Leave Sandakan	Leave Salamaua
1	NYK	KITANO MARU	Oct. 26				Oct. 29		
2	BPCo	NEPTUNA	(Omits)	Oct. 31	Nov. 9			Nov. 14	Nov. 23
3		MERKUR			Nov. 3				
4	E&A	NELLORE	Nov. 2						
5	BF	GORGON				Nov. 9			
8	KPM	VAN REES				Nov. 13	Dec. 2		
6		NIEUW HOLLAND				Nov. 18			
5	BF	CENTAUR				Nov. 23			
9	R&O	TAIPING	Nov. 19	Nov. 16					
1	NYK	KAMO MARU	Nov. 29						
3	BP	MARELLA				Dec. 3			
4	E&A	TANDA	Dec. 6						
5	BF	CHARRON				Dec. 7			
9	A&O	CHANGTE	Dec. 20	Dec. 17					
6	KPM	NIEUW ZEELAND				Dec. 21			
1	NYK	ATSUTA MARU	Dec. 27				Dec. 30		
4	E&A	NANKING	Jan. 4	Jan. 1					
9	AOL	TAIPING	Jan. 16	Jan. 4					
		KPM NIEUW HOLLAND				Jan. 20			
1	NYK	KITANO MARU	Jan. 25				Jan. 28		
4	E&A	NELLORE	Feb. 1	Jan. 29					
1	NYK	RATE FROM MANILA—1ST					P65-		
		" " " "—2ND					50-		
2	BP	" " " "—1ST						P80-	£28.15.0
3	BP	" " SINGAPORE—1ST							
3	BP	" " SINGAPORE—2ND							
4	EA	" " MANILA—1ST							
4	EA	" " MANILA—2ND							
5	BF	" " SINGAPORE—1ST							
5	BF	" " " "—2ND							
6	KPM	" " " "—1ST							
7	"	" " " "—Acl							
7	"	" " " "—Bcl							
8	"	" " " "—B							
8	"	" " " "—C							
9	AO	" " MANILA—1ST							

books are here in the house—you can have them for a pittance."

The daughter is called, as well as the wife. The books are found, and Juan persuaded that they are just as good as new, while the pittance turns out to be within a fraction of their original cost which Juan does not know. Making the best bargain he can, Juan takes the books. The landlord is quite jovial and friendly with

him, but just happens to think before Juan gets clear away that there are no servants in the house that day—will Juan stop a moment and sweep up, and chop some wood for the kitchen?

Juan stops and chops, it is a part of the law.

So it goes. When Juan again wants money, this time for calicoes for school dresses for Nena, the landlord's wife has stocked up against just such a contingency. At dreadful figures the calicoes change ownership and another adjustment of the account is made in the books without Juan's really seeing any cash. He never knows clearly how his account stands: he remains in debt and is far from being a thrifty husbandman. At death his children assume his obligations. Such sordid methods are not the standard fixed by customary law, but it is the way of wily and careless landlords to resort to them, and ... every man's way is tolerated in the East.

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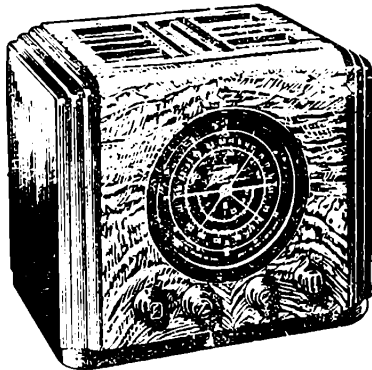




Alabang hills and looking straight into the glories of a Philippine sunset. By some occult legerdemain a Rembrandt has been brushing the canvas of the western skies. He has painted a king's dais there, in the midst of a roval court; and he has flanked it with halberdiers and gayly compared lords and lackeys. Into such resplendence the King himself steps for a moment, with flowing purple robes, golden bordered. The effulgence of mighty chandeliers sheds over the ensemble a matchless radiance ... for moments hardly to be reckoned, before Night's sable curtains shut it all away into shadow.



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## Registration Of Radio Receivers And Government Financial Aid To Broadcasting Stations

Many people are unaware that we have a law (Act 3397, as amended by Commonwealth Act 107) requiring that all radio receiving sets be registered under the supervision of the Secretary of Public Works and Communications. The Act requires that all sets with the exception of those operated for official purposes by the U. S. and Philippine governments, must be registered within 30 days after their acquisition.

The purpose of this law is primarily to raise revenue through the collection of license fees. These are fixed at P10 per annum for tube sets, and P2 per annum for crystal sets. The Bureau of Internal Revenue makes the collections through the city and municipal treasurers. About 36,000 sets have been registered, and about P120,000 is collected yearly from this source.

This income is used for the purchase and distribution of radio sets among municipalities and government institutions, for financial assistance to "a station or stations which can serve satisfactorily throughout the Philippines for broadcasting, a minimum of 6 hours daily of government news, information and education, and other programs of interest or entertainment to the general public," and for general expenses.

Under this system, one station receives financial assistance out of the income derived from radio registration fees. The system has been criticised on several grounds:

First, it is argued that use of government money to assist any radio broadcasting station, whether privately owned or not, is discriminatory since the better-to-do only can afford to own radios and thus get the benefit of programs indirectly financed through this tax. Proponents of the system refute this by pointing out that radio stations should be helped here, since business houses either cannot afford, or have not been educated to the use of radio for advertising. While the number of sponsored programs has steadily increased, they do not yet bring in enough revenue to maintain first-class stations on the air. Also, it is argued, the registration fees also pay for the purchase and installation of radios in municipalities and government institutions—a direct benefit to the people.

Second, critics of the system point to the large number of radio receiver owners who evade the tax. It is estimated that not more than half of these people have ever paid a license fee. It is not to be denied that, if the system is to continue, it should be made more equitable by collecting all of the tax from everyone who should pay it.

The third argument is perhaps the most cogent. He who controls the purse strings, controls all, and, if broadcasting stations are dependent on government money for their existence, it will not be long before the government will be dictating the type of programs to be presented. In fact, it is entirely possible that government officials may present some or all of the programs themselves, in the end.

Those who visualize this possibility point to the fact that the National Information Board now broadcasts three out of the four news broadcasts going out over KZRM

daily. An assemblyman recently seized upon this fact as a dangerous omen when the budget of the National Information Board was brought before the Assembly for consideration.

Broadcasting by government agencies or bureaus is no new thing. In England the British Broadcasting Company has a monopoly over broadcasting, and it is a government agency. There the objection is not to the quality of the programs broadcast, but to their unvarying monotony. This business of uplift is all right, but too much of it can become obnoxious. The British people have no objection to education, and the finer things of life, but they frequently long for some good, plain, old-fashioned entertainment over the air for entertainment's sake.

Radio broadcasting in the United States has reached its present position of near-perfection through competition. There are so many stations, all competing for the ear of the public, and such a large number of business concerns using radio for advertising by means of sponsored programs, that the ingenuity of advertising men, artists, radio technicians and others in the game has been taxed to the limit to provide programs which will hold the listeners' attention. It is so easy to twist a dial and get another station.

Such magnificent programs as "The March of Time," presented over NBC's blue network once a week, the "Standard Symphony Hour," presented by the Standard Oil Company, the "Kraft Music Hall," with Bing Crosby as Master of Ceremonies, could only be possible where unrestricted competition calls forth men's best efforts.

It must not be forgotten, however, that these programs are also broadcast primarily to make money. Scores of other programs equally good that may be heard every night in the United States are profitable for broadcasting companies, as well as entertaining and informative to listeners. When "Time" first announced that it would broadcast "The March of Time," it stated frankly that it would drop the feature immediately it began to lose money. Until there is enough business here to pay the broadcasting stations for their efforts, it may be necessary for them to accept government money, and all that may go with it.

### Station KZIB Forges Ahead

The story of radio broadcasting station KZIB is a story of struggle, courage and public service. It was begun many years ago by Beck's Department Store, when radios were few in the Philippines, and it has broadcast its programs without interruption ever since its founding.

It is no secret that broadcasting stations here lost money for years after they were founded. Radio did not catch on here as quickly as it did in the United States, and the radio audience consequently remained small. Beck's was not discouraged; it had anticipated losses when the station was started, and it kept on, not only maintaining the quality of the programs, but constantly improving them.

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