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Foreign  
Subscription:  
\$3.00 U. S.  
Currency, per  
year

# THE AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE JOURNAL

December, 1937 Vol. XVII, No. 12

Single Copies:  
35 centavos

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Entered as Second Class Matter May 25, 1921, at the Post Office at Manila, P. I.

## Just Little Things

● We write from Hongkong, where we arrived by the *President Taft* November 29 from Manila and are awaiting Blue Funnel accommodations on the *Patroclus* Monday, December 6, to Shanghai—where the *Taft* would not go. One of the littlest of things is our vacation, to last three weeks or so—as welcome as if it were ever so long. Every day, here, some Soongs come to town. This week, T. V. Soong has been in and out, or possibly just in, and last night another brother flew in from Hankow with ten members of his family, stay indefinitely. These flights of flurried statesmen from mainland China make Hongkong a good deal of money, but presently place her in an unwonted predicament because Japan blames her first with one ulterior design, then another, while all the stranger can see is that she is just another British trade outpost trying to get along.

Maybe the agitation that fetches to Hongkong so many Soongs, noted as they are for prudent wisdom and ability to safeguard the welfare of the Soongs, is favorable to peace between China and Japan. Conversations are in progress at Hankow, the newspapers say, and both sides deny any willingness to come to terms. Surely a promising sign.

● Hongkong would welcome peace, though it booms her entre-pot business for the time being to have merchants passing through her harbor, to China via Canton and Hankow, what they can no longer route through Shanghai. She could, she feels, get along with more regular business—more regularized. She is a bonny port, an

aggrandized stevedores' establishment wherein all is the routine of the movement of goods: invoices, drafts, etc., but her streets are wide and clean, her police discipline thorough, and her enormous trade is effected in an atmosphere actually suburban in its quietude. This extends to the shops and hotels, in short pervades everything. If there is noise and disorder, it is in the roadstead where the ships of all nations lie—discharging and reloading.

● Japanese bomb Canton every day, the railway being a special objective, the usual time being early morning. Emergency crews hasten repairs, and the trains soon resume schedules. Hongkong herself even anticipates such visitations, on grounds that she furthers commerce in articles the contraband of war. But how could the attacks be justified, until Japan formally declares war and enforces a blockade? For until them, surely, China has the right to buy what she wants where she can get it. However, Hongkong conceals her misgivings admirably. She has built no cellars, and vacillates between teaching the populace to abandon buildings for open spaces in case of aerial bombardment, or to stay indoors where it is thought the first floors would be places of real security.

● Hongkong is as substantially built as she is beautiful. Principal materials seem to be granite and brick, with marble and wood for embellishment. You can sense at first glance that all building is carefully planned, and  
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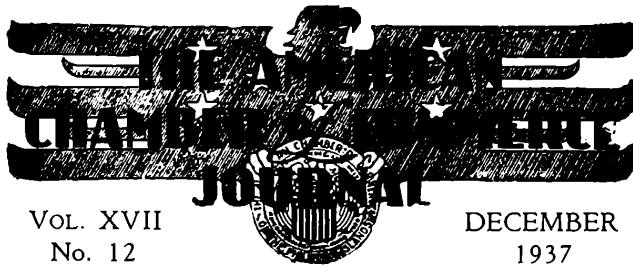
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VOL. XVII  
No. 12

DECEMBER  
1937

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But to get back to the zone. Among the members of the Paez committee is A. de Castro, director of the commerce bureau where a foreign-trade zone for Manila has been advocated for years past. From one viewpoint, please; namely, a viewpoint looking exclusively to the future: our old Manila is passing, and a new port city aspiring to her rightful place among the greater ports of the world is rising from her traditions.

This is written from Hongkong, the editor is on a bit of a vacation. It seems that Hongkong, when she congested the scarp over which she is built, found a natural port area at Kowloon that could all be developed under the impartial discriminating eye of the government. Therefore here, where this is written, in the British Leased Territory, but on the lip of the harbor, rises not only a busy city but a beautiful one. Everything from the very gutters up is presentable, there is plan and purpose behind it—the public weal is paramount—and Kowloon's commerce as a consequence, as well as Hongkong's, is carried on in an atmosphere actually suburban in its expansive quietude.

Since at Manila you observe much the same thing in the Port Area south of the river, facing the piers at the bay, there is sound argument for a like area north of the river under restrictions limiting its use to such purposes only as would benefit the port.

It is possible, we think, that a considerable commercial structure might rise from such a foundation. Once the city had it, projects not obviously feasible now might resolve into the practical. Not everything, nor even one thing, would necessarily have to be done in a day; and certainly there should be no leaping at conclusions. Yet the day may come, and sooner than expected, when the manufacturing western world would rejoice in the existence of a foreign-trade zone at Manila with a stable and friendly government, justly ambitious, behind it. And now, what do our readers think.

## FOREIGN TRADE ZONE

Interest in the project for a Foreign Trade Zone at Manila has been thrust upon us and we would value the help of our readers should they extend it, to sound conclusions on the subject. President Jose Paez of the railroad, that should of course tap the zone, is President Quezon's shrewd choice to head the foreign-trade zone committee. It is our understanding that Malacañan backs the project with enthusiasm. And that is about as far as our understanding goes, save that we know that elaborate plans were worked out for such a zone on the Tondo foreshore fifteen years ago—land was to be reclaimed and freight piers built in conjunction with a railway terminus.

In general it can be said that the reclaiming of foreshore is justifiable in itself. All land reclaimed from the bay at Manila is a means of modernizing the city. Why not the Tondo reclamation proceed, independently of the use for foreign-trade zone purposes to which it might be put? For if never so used, at least it will be well utilized in a city that grows so rapidly and enjoys such consistent ocean commerce as does Manila. The Port Area south of the river, well drained and with wide streets, is warrant in itself for effecting a similar project north of the river. As we recall, the Tondo reclamation involves even a larger tract than the Port Area. Then go ahead, it would be well to have such land in the ownership and management of the government.

## Just Little Things

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presentability insisted upon. Hongkong therefore has a *finished* appearance almost wholly wanting in Manila, where the authorities seem never to have decided precisely what type of building to approve nor what materials and decoration to require. Hongkong approaches the prospective builder more formally, and he her—to their mutual advantage in the end. What will Shanghai be?

● In many ways Manila surpasses Hongkong, and some Hongkong business men envy Manila her vast contiguous hinterland as well as her convenient geographical and political connection with the whole Philippine archipelago. It is mainly a matter of building up, and especially, building up a character in Manila attractive enough to induce visitors to the Far East to wish to see the place. Hawaii has her beach, Hongkong her shops and hotels where you are happy merely to ramble, buy, and take your ease. Manila has her evening dancing, but ought to have a daytime supplement. She will get hundreds more tourists when she solves this little problem. They roll through Hongkong, positively gay in being left to their own devices.

—W. R.