

1920

THROUGH THE PHILIPPINES

the wharves. The earth removed was dropped on the old shore, building up hundreds of acres of new land. This area is now the site of warehouses and other buildings, and parks, among them the Luneta, a promenade along the waterfront, where the people come in the evenings to listen to the military bands. The hotel where I am writing this letter, a huge four-story building of reinforced concrete covering perhaps half an acre, is built on this made land, and across the park are to be seen the homes of the Army and Navy Club, the Elks Club, and other conspicuous structures. Farther down on the other side of the Pasig are the great piers that have risen to accommodate the commerce at this principal gate to the Philippine Islands. The piers compare in length with those of New York, and a half-dozen ocean liners were lying at them as we came in. Among these was a Cunarder, whose seven hundred passengers, including one hundred and ninety-eight widows, are all making a trip around the world.

12



CHAPTER III

THE PHILIPPINE CAPITAL, OLD AND NEW

TO-NIGHT I have been sitting in the Luneta, the great breathing place for Manila. As the sun dropped behind Mount Mariveles, the headland at the north entrance to Manila Bay, the sky flamed with a gorgeous colour. Gentle breezes from the ocean swept over the park and the lapping of the waves mingled with the murmur of talk or gave way before the stirring music of the military band. All Manila was out in full force, strolling about, chatting between numbers, sitting on benches or in cars and carriages. I have seldom seen so many motors parked at any Marine Band concert in Washington and I know that no ordinary occasion in our national capital would bring out such a crowd.

Among the throng were a few American soldiers, and now and then I picked out an American civilian. But I should say that there were not altogether more than a hundred or two of my fellow countrymen, whereas there were thousands of Filipinos. They were a well-dressed lot. Most of the men wore shoes and suits of white and smart straw or Panama hats. The women and girls were of all ages, from small tots to kindly faced old ladies whose skinny arms showed plainly through the big *piña* cloth sleeves of the national costume. I noticed that, while most of the girls were dressed like our own young women of the States, their cheeks were not painted and

13

AMERICAN HISTORICAL
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THROUGH THE PHILIPPINES

their hair was not bobbed or frizzed, but was generally worn in a thick, shining black braid down the back.

I noticed, too, that quite a number of the men and women wore tags bearing the colours of the Filipino flag, and when a pretty brown-skinned maiden urged me to buy one, I asked what they meant. She explained that they were "liberty tags" and that the money realized from their sale would be spent in helping the cause of Philippine independence. The badges cost from ten to fifty cents and I bought one, more because the saleswoman was charming than because I had yet been able to make up my mind on the great problem of the hour in these Islands.

When I was first in Manila all was political turmoil. A few years before that, almost on the spot upon which I sat listening to the music to-night, scores of insurgents against the Spanish rule had been led out to be shot down by a firing squad, while the people of the governing classes, ranged along the driveway in their carriages, looked on. In 1896 the patriot and poet, José Rizal, was executed near the place where his monument now stands. This evening its steps were crowded with well-dressed Filipinos enjoying the concert. The throng of Spanish men and women who witnessed that execution cheered, laughed, and waved their handkerchiefs when the fatal shots went home. In 1899, the Stars and Stripes flew over the city, but the people were still inflamed over their fight for freedom from Spanish domination and there was much smouldering resentment against the American occupation. When I see what that occupation has done for Manila alone, it seems as if the Filipinos must concede that it has its good points.



The Luneta is the favourite promenade of Manila. In the late afternoon thousands gather here to listen to the band that plays at the base of the statue of Rizal, the national hero of the Philippines.



In the business section of Manila the automobile is fast crowding out the native two-wheeled *calesa*, the drug-store fountains serve ice-cream sodas, and things are pretty thoroughly Americanized. Traffic, however, still keeps to the left, European fashion.

THE PHILIPPINE CAPITAL, OLD AND NEW

I find here a new city. The ragged, dirty, scrambled municipality of 1899, with its mud roads, moss-grown buildings, and multitudinous shacks, has largely disappeared, and in its place has risen a modern metropolis. Some of the best of the old Spanish walled town still stands, but the new is as conspicuous as a patch of fresh wall paper. Our American forces found Manila a haphazard place, with streets wretchedly paved or not paved at all. In some sections the lights used were still kerosene lamps or even burning wicks in dishes of coconut oil; almost the only electric lights were those along the river where steamers tied up at night. On the two street-railway lines the cars were tiny affairs each drawn by a single pony and the drivers heralded their approach by tooting tin horns. We took over a city without adequate sewage disposal and one of the filthiest of its size in all the Orient. We rolled up our sleeves and did not stop until we had made it one of the cleanest places east of Suez.

To-day the streets are well paved and well lighted, and electric cars whiz by me almost everywhere I go. Twenty-five years ago all of the freighting of Manila was done by drays dragged through the mud by American mules and the native water buffaloes. Then the chief means of getting about was a *calesa*, a tiny two-wheeled carriage with the main seat resting on the axle, and a little seat in front for the driver. Now there are motor trucks and automobiles everywhere, and we have here one of the best motor-vehicle markets of the Far East. There are more than fourteen thousand automobiles on the Islands, and several thousand right here in Manila. Practically all of them are made in the United States.

THROUGH THE PHILIPPINES

The carabaos and the ponies are still in evidence, however, and one can hire a rubber-tired *calesa* for about fifty cents an hour. The ponies, which are not bigger than three-months'-old calves, remind one of Cinderella's rats before her fairy godmother turned them into the magnificent steeds that took her to the ball.

Manila is built around the old Spanish town called the Walled City, or Intramuros. As it began spreading out beyond the walls and along the flats of the Pasig, it gathered in outlying villages and settlements, which are now municipal wards or districts, each with its distinctive Spanish or Filipino name, such as Tondo, Binondo, Ermita, Santa Cruz, and the like. In a sense, there are three Manilas: the Spanish city within the walls; the native, more or less Malay, town of *nipa* palm shacks, carabaos, and fishing boats; and the modern American Manila that is being developed according to plans that will some day make this one of the beautiful cities of the East.

The Pasig River, which is only twelve miles long from its source in the big Laguna de Bay to its mouth in the harbour, serpentine through the middle of the town, passing close beneath the northern wall of Intramuros. Crossing it are a number of bridges, the oldest being the many-arched Bridge of Spain, close beside which is the fine concrete Jones Bridge. This structure was named for Congressman Jones, framer of the Jones Act of 1916, which gave the Filipinos so large a hand in running the affairs of the Islands. Threading through the city are a number of tide-water creeks, or canals.

The old city, built while the Indian wigwam was the only sort of home on our Manhattan Island, is girdled

THE PHILIPPINE CAPITAL, OLD AND NEW

by a great stone wall two and a half miles in length, and takes one back to the Europe of the Middle Ages. The wall is pierced here and there by sculptured stone gateways.

When the Americans took possession, the fortifications included a moat surrounding the old city. It was slimy and foul with stagnant water and the drainage of years. It is said that a Spanish commission once recommended cleaning it out, but the authorities hesitated to disturb the accumulations of mud and rotted vegetable matter for fear the fetid odours and the miasma breathing out of the mass would bring on an epidemic. Our people went at the job with a will, draining the moat and filling it with material dredged from the harbour. To-day the sward on what was once little more than a cesspool is kept shaved like a millionaire's lawn, and it carpets a park and playground for the people. You may see white-coated, brown-skinned men and women chasing golf balls here every day. Another improvement was the cutting of wide avenues through the Manila of 1899. This was part of the plan for modernizing the old city made under the direction of Daniel H. Burnham, who aided in replanning the city of Washington.

Inside the walls the city looks older than it really is. Most of its buildings do not date farther back than 1863, in which year there was a disastrous earthquake. The shock lasted only half a minute but four hundred people were killed, while many times that number were injured. Forty-six public buildings were utterly destroyed, and private homes collapsed by the hundred. The houses standing to-day are mostly of two stories, painted in all the colours of the rainbow, their balconies overhanging

THROUGH THE PHILIPPINES

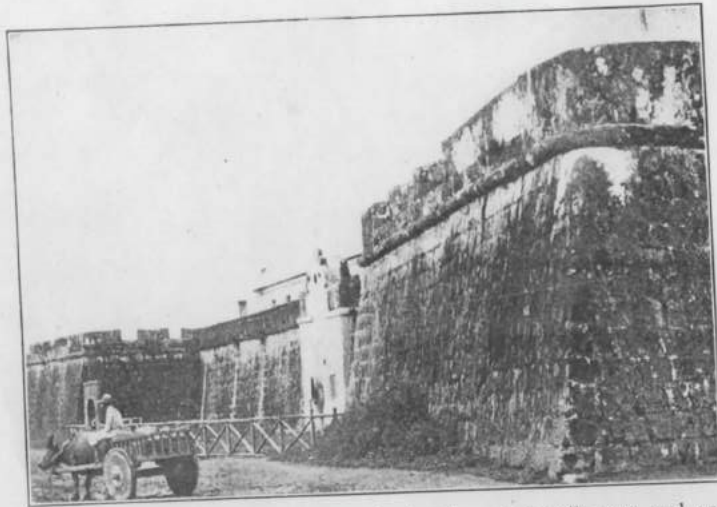
the narrow sidewalks. Their red-tiled roofs are corrugated like a giant washboard; and between the tiles are valleys of emerald green. The birds have dropped seeds in the hollows, and in this moist, hot climate they have sprouted and grown, and made, as it were, veritable gardens of the air. Grass grows also on top of the wall and the old city has many fine trees.

As children, we used to hear a lot about the "pearly gates" of heaven. In Manila I have seen no pearly gates, but everywhere I see pearly windows. The panes are pieces of sea shells cut into squares about half the size of a playing card and perhaps as thick as the blotter you use at your writing desk. They are fixed in a framework of wood, making a checkerboard of mother-of-pearl rimmed with black, or a crisscross lattice work set with these opalescent treasures from the sea. The shells are thin enough to let in the light, while they keep out the heat and the glare. There are hundreds of thousands of such windows in Manila. They wall the second stories of the better parts of the city. My hotel room has a great pearl-studded framework of this kind, which I may slide back on its grooves when I want to let in the winds from the ocean. These shells are now being used, besides, to make lamp shades and lanterns, and I understand they are being shipped to the United States, where it is hoped they will have a big sale.

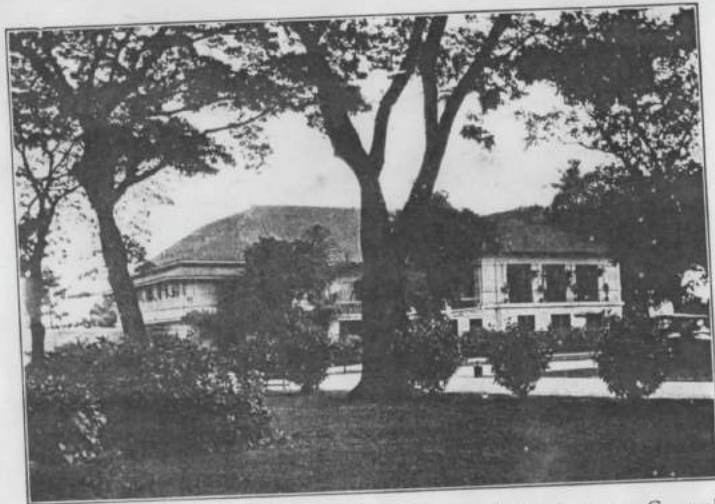
In the town of Kawit, a few miles from Manila, many of the people earn their living by fishing for these natural window-panes. When found, the shell is almost ready for use, as one half is flat and all that needs to be done is to square it off in a crude machine. At low tide the fishermen wade out waist deep and feel for the bivalves



As in the early days, carabao carts still creak through the gates in the wall of old Manila. Up to seventy-five years ago the gates were closed and the drawbridges over the moat were raised every night.



Modern Manila has outgrown the battlemented walls, two and one half miles around, which enclosed the old city. They were begun by Chinese labourers in the sixteenth century to keep out Malay and Chinese pirates.



Malacañan Palace is the official residence of the Governor-General. His salary of \$18,000, which is paid from the Philippine treasury, is said to be far short of his needs in keeping up the style expected of him.

THE PHILIPPINE CAPITAL, OLD AND NEW

with their toes. The shells are opened by the women on shore, who throw out the oysters inside, and pile up the flat halves for the machines. As Manila alone is said to require five million such window-panes in a year, the shell fishermen are kept busy. At Kawit, by the way, Emilio Aguinaldo lives the life of a Filipino farmer, though I suppose he sometimes dreams of the days when he was head of the short-lived Philippine Republic and leader of insurrections first against the Spaniards and later against us.

The government offices are still in the old city. The Philippine Legislature meets here in the Ayuntamiento, the cornerstone of which was laid in 1735. Back of the Ayuntamiento is the Catholic University of Saint Thomas, founded in 1619, the year, by the way, when the Virginia House of Burgesses first assembled, and a year before the Pilgrim Fathers landed on the Massachusetts coast. Saint Thomas is the oldest institution of collegiate rank under American sovereignty to-day.

In the northwest angle of Intramuros is Fort Santiago, built at the same time as the walls to guard the entrance to the Pasig River. There are many stories about people shut up to die in the dungeons in its thick walls. I do not vouch for their truth, but it is a fact that as late as August 31, 1896, sixty Filipino rebels were crowded into a tiny cell in it, and fifty-six of them died of suffocation. In the course of its history three flags have flown from its battlements—first the Spanish and now the American, while in 1762, when England was at war with France and Spain, the British raised the Union Jack over the fort and kept it there two years.

Yesterday I crossed one of the bridges beneath the

THROUGH THE PHILIPPINES

shadow of Spanish Manila and after a few minutes' drive along the north bank of the Pasig came to the Malacañan Palace, the official residence of the Governor-General of the Philippines. He is appointed by the President of the United States, but his salary of eighteen thousand dollars is paid out of the Philippine treasury. He lives in the palace rent free, of course, and light and water are furnished him, but servants' wages and other household expenses must come out of his own pocket. Burton Harrison stated that it costs a governor-general of the Philippines from twice to four times his salary to keep up the style and hospitality expected of the resident of the Malacañan.

I know of no chief administrator anywhere in the tropics who is provided with a home more delightful than this. The Malacañan has huge windows of shell that may be rolled back to let in the air and the spacious rooms have high ceilings. Some of the floors are of old hand-hewn mahogany, polished until it shines like a mirror. Over the Pasig is a wide balcony and surrounding the mansion are unusually beautiful and well-kept gardens, which are illuminated for evening parties by myriads of tiny electric lights.

The mansion was bought by the Spanish government about a hundred years ago to serve as an official country house. At that time the Spanish governors lived in a big stone structure in the Walled City. After this was totally destroyed in the earthquake of 1865, the governor of that day moved temporarily to the Malacañan, which finally became the permanent residence of the representatives of His Majesty of Spain. After the capture of Manila, Aguinaldo asked as his reward for helping the

THE PHILIPPINE CAPITAL, OLD AND NEW

Americans that the palace be turned over to him and that his troops be allowed a share of the loot from the Spaniards. He was much disappointed to learn that he could not have the Malacañan and that there would be no booty.

The business part of this city of nearly three hundred thousand souls is also on the north bank of the Pasig. Here are big modern banks representing financial houses in the United States, Europe, and other parts of the world, and the Philippine Islands as well. Some of them are of four and five stories, and their equipment is equal to that of the best banks of the States. Near them begins the main shopping thoroughfare, the Escolta, which in many respects reminds one of Madrid or Buenos Aires. Here the signs are in Spanish, with now and then one in English. The old buildings are of Spanish architecture, their second stories having shell windows such as I have described. Reinforced concrete is becoming more and more popular, as it stands up through the earthquakes, and offers good resistance to the wear of a tropical climate. The first building of this material put up in the city was the Manila Hotel. The store fronts are of plate glass, and the iron shutters of my first visit are things of the past. Though the Escolta is well paved, the roadway is not more than thirty feet wide and the sidewalks are so narrow that they will scarcely accommodate more than two people walking abreast. Trolley cars run through the centre of the street, and almost scrape the sides of automobiles and trucks as they go by. Farther on in this business centre are intersecting streets given up to the Chinese, with shops like those of Canton or Hankow. The Chinese do much of the retail business

THROUGH THE PHILIPPINES

in the Philippines, and there are more of them in these Islands than in the United States.

In Manila I see few signs of actual want. The men and boys I meet on the Escolta and in all the better sections wear white duck or cotton, and the suits of most of them look as though they have just come from the laundry. The Filipinas wear dresses that cannot but be expensive, and you see on the streets long silk skirts of every colour of the rainbow that swish about pink or white slippers. In the business streets and indeed in most parts of the city, you will find a mixture of American and Filipino dress, especially among the women. The upper part of their native costume is a waist, over which is worn a gauze jacket with sleeves as big around as a three-gallon tin bucket. These sleeves reach to the elbow and enclose the upper arm in a network as stiff as wire. They look a little like elongated rat-traps. The jacket extends around over the shoulders and is fastened neatly across the bust. The coffee-and-cream-coloured neck and shoulders can be seen through the gauze, but the dresses are not nearly so décolleté as some I have seen on our American beauties. The girls and women have an appearance of cleanliness, such as one observes everywhere in Japan but seldom in China. Nearly every Filipino man, woman, and child has a daily bath.

Manila has its poor quarter, however, and the Tondo district contains tens of thousands of the lower classes. Even here the wider streets are of asphalt, but back of them on the outskirts one finds great warrens of houses made of bamboo and palm leaves, in which whole families live in one or two rooms. This district is subject to fires, but as it costs only a few dollars to build one of the



"One of the market women tried to sell me a Philippine stove, the clay bowl in which the poorer people do much of their cooking. They use charcoal for fuel."



In the Philippines coconut husks are sometimes brought into the market to be sold for fuel, though in other coconut-growing countries the fibre they contain is used to make cordage, brooms, mats, and similar articles.



In Manila markets one finds, among other native delicacies, small octopuses and *balut*, the most highly prized dainties of all. The latter are duck eggs incubated almost to the hatching point and then boiled in the shell.

THE PHILIPPINE CAPITAL, OLD AND NEW

shacks, they rise like magic from the ashes of every conflagration.

In Tondo the children are barefooted, and the women wear garments such as I have described, except that cotton takes the place of silk. The working men wear only shirt and pantaloons. The shirts are generally of the thinnest of gauze, a sort of cross between mesh underwear material and mosquito netting. The stuff is like that the Filipino ladies use for their dresses and is so delicate that it is often sold for party gowns in America. The shirts are of all colours—white, pink, yellow, and black, and are often embroidered. They are almost always worn hanging outside the trousers for the sake of coolness. Here in the tropics even the thinnest of woollen cloth seems as heavy as a carpet. Under the loose, gauzy clothing, the wind bathes the bare skin, and the shirt tails flap merrily in the breeze as the men walk through the streets. At first the effect is rather startling and one feels inclined to warn the wearers that they should go around the corner and tuck in their shirts. After all, though, it might be worse. They might adopt the suggestion of the scientist who has declared that the ideal costume for a tropical climate is an umbrella—only that and nothing more.