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INDONESIA

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CHINA

SEA

PACIFIC

KOTABADIA

BRITISH NORTH-BORNEO

SUMATRA

PADANG

SINGAPORE

MUSI RIVER

TELUK BETUNG

JAVA SEA

DIJAKARTA

BOGOR

BANDUNG

SOLO

DJOKJAKARTA

SEMARANG

MADURA

SURABAJA

MALANG

SIKIL

LOMBOK

SUMBAWA

SUMBA

KALIMANTAN

PONTIANAK

KAPUAS RIVER

BANDJARMASIN

BARITO RIVER

MAKASSAR

WEST

MENADO

KALMAHERA

BURU

AMBON

CERAM

WEST IRIAN

AUSTRAL. NEW-GUINEA

PAPUA

ARU ISLES

TANIMBAR ISLES

AUSTRALIA

FLORES

TIMOR

PORTUGUESE TIMOR

--- RAILWAY LINES

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Introduction

If you are looking only for “the romance of the East”, if you are thinking of “dusky maidens, palm trees and tropical moons”, we would advise you to look elsewhere.

You *will* find romance in Indonesia; you *will* find lovely women whose skin is darker than the European's; the cocoanut palm is one of our commonest trees; the moon *does* shine in our skies; and our climate *is* tropical. But all of these things add up to something vastly different to story book glamour and gloss without anything else; ours is no purely utopian existence, neither are we savages.

“The Wild Man from Borneo” is all too often called to the mind of English-speaking people when one talks of the island Borneo, now called Kalimantan. All too often, because the actual “wild man” of those parts just isn't like that, and isn't representative of the place, anyway. It is true that large areas of this largest of all Indonesia's islands are not yet developed, and it is true that some of the peoples are primitives. But it is also true that cultured and cultivated people are born and bred there, and that the island has valuable products whose preparation is well organised according to modern standards, and that one can find there many homes differing widely from the sort of palm leaf shanty “The Wild Man” was supposed to inhabit, when he slept in anything other than the bough of a tree.

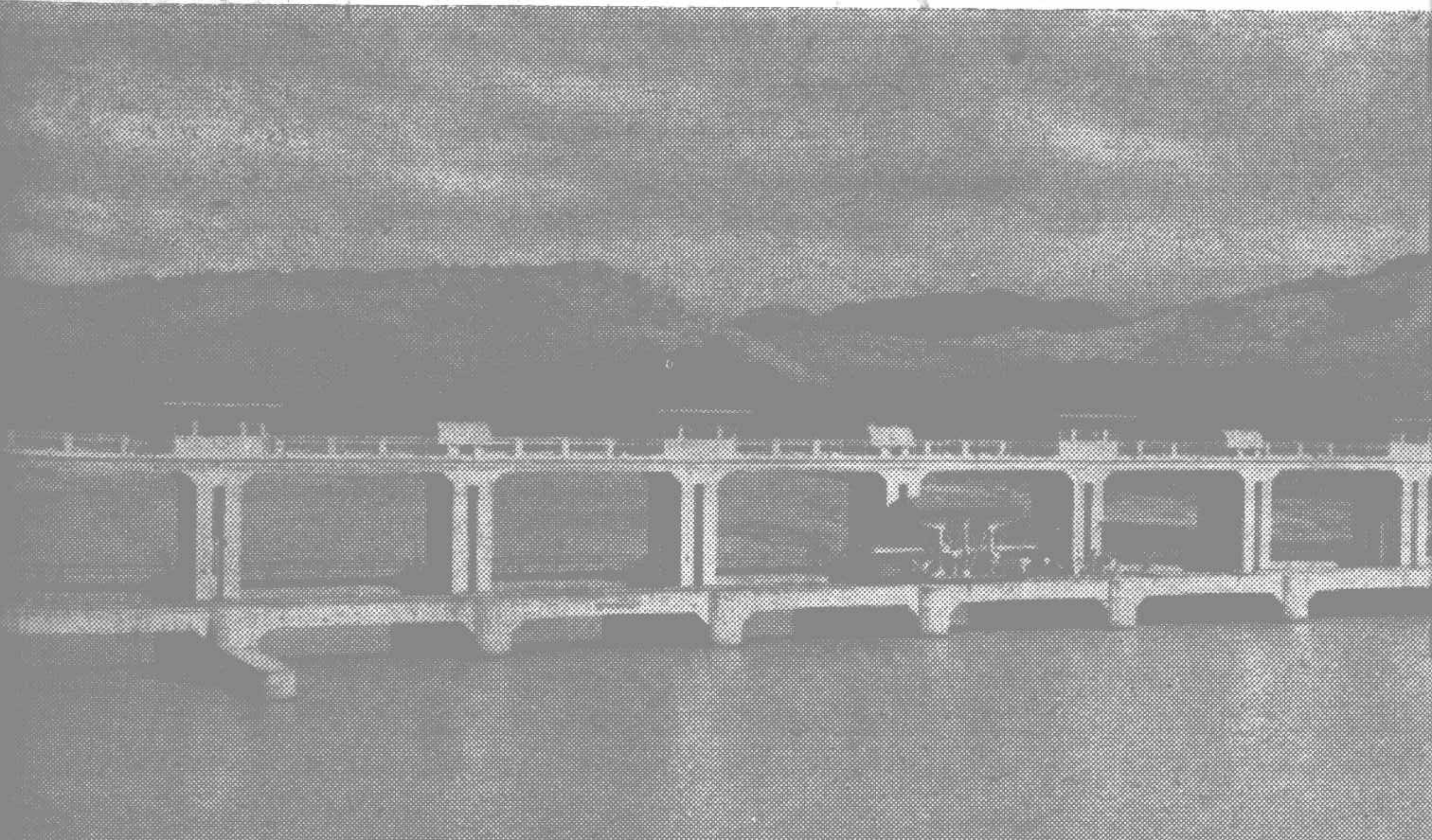
Similarly, the island of Bali is not all bare-breasted women, flower-decked ceremonial and trance dances. Nor does Java consist entirely of wayang, serene dancers and Hindu temples — no more than it consists of radical extremists. And so on.

Indonesia is a real country, beautiful and ugly by turn, like any other; its people are real people, good, bad and indifferent, like any other. But it has some characteristics, some customs, some thoughts, some arts and some products which are unique; it also has some qualities, some habits, some ways of thinking, some values



Indonesia — a beautiful country.

Rivers are dammed for irrigation and for power.



and some processes which are just the same as you may find anywhere.

The group of islands, first called "Indonesia" by Professor A. Bastian in 1884, include, from west to east, Sumatra, Java, Kalimantan, Bali, Lombok, Sumba, Sulawesi (the Celebes) Flores, Timor, the Moluccas, the Halmaheras, Irian (part of New Guinea), and innumerable hosts of smaller islands and islets in between.

Geographically, this is the largest island group in the world. It is situated across the equator, extending for well over 3,000 miles between the continents of Asia and Australia. There is, therefore, no winter, no spring, no autumn — only a wet season and a dry. But in spite of its tropical position, only a part of the land areas suffers the sweltering heat usually associated with the equator. The islands are largely volcanic, and high mountain chains, plus small land areas between large stretches of sea in the monsoonal belt, ensure a very livable climate, a deep, fertile soil, and a wide range of productivity.

Not all products, especially the export products, are natives of the islands. Rubber, quinine and tobacco, for instance, have all been imported from other lands, but all flourish here.

It was spices which first brought Indonesia to the notice of Western traders, and these same spices were the lure which brought here the Portuguese, the Dutch and the British. Perhaps it was also spices which brought here the earlier immigrants, the Hindus and the Mohammedans — no doubt it was the wealth of the islands in one way or another. Probably it was the fertility of the soil which led to the successful settlement by the still earlier invaders from Asia who populated the islands with the present stock.

Indonesians are brown skinned as are also the Malays, inhabitants of part of Madagascar off the coast of Africa, and some other island peoples.

Successive invasions down the centuries, the agricultural pursuits of large numbers of the people, and the seas which separate one island from another, have produced many different physical types, a number of languages and a greater number of dialects, and a

great variation of custom, dress, and folk-lore in different localities. But every wise man knows that diversities serve to complement one another, and so the idea of a common nationality is nothing new in Indonesia.

The idea has been a lode-stone to our leaders for many centuries, and has found practical expression on at least two past occasions, both recorded in history. We have not been successful otherwise probably only because our means of communication and transport were too primitive. The times have changed, however; Indonesia still feels itself to be one people and one nation, and colonial dominions belong to an earlier age.

Kalimantan (Indonesian Borneo) has the largest area of all the archipelago with about 208,300 square miles of territory; its population is, however, only about $2\frac{1}{4}$ million. Sumatra has an area of nearly 182,870 square miles and a population of about $8\frac{1}{2}$ million, too few to develop it properly. West Irian (a part of Indonesia, which is occupied by the Dutch till the end of this year) covers a little more than 153,350 square miles and Sulawesi about 73,000 square miles, but together their populations are estimated at something less than 5 millions. The twin islands of Java and Madura cover only about 51,000 square miles, but some 50 million people live there.

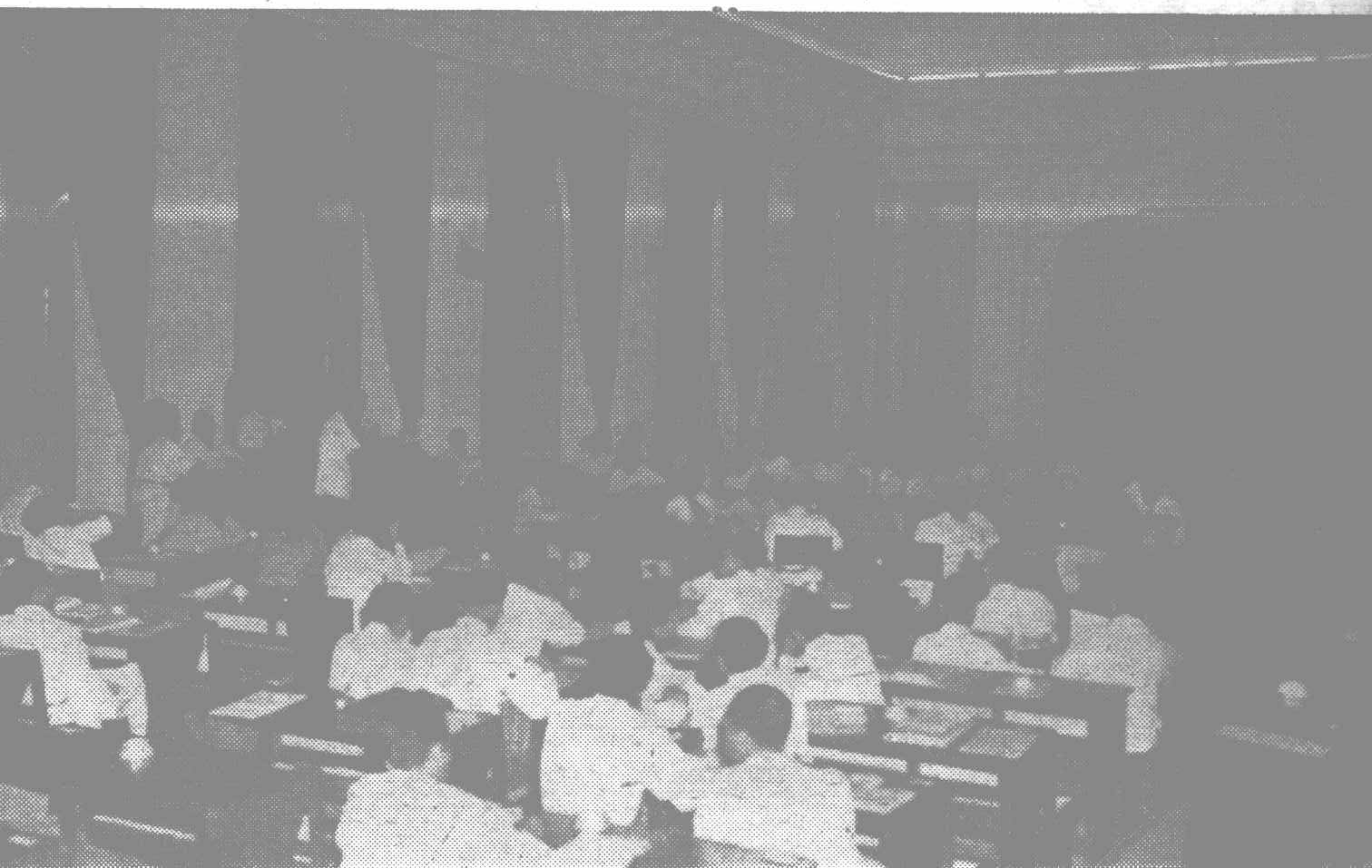
The total land area of the islands is thus only about one quarter that of nearby Australia, but the population numbers about ten times the population of Australia. Then remember that Java, whose area is only about one-fiftieth that of Australia, has a population seven times as much; yet this same Java exports some of its products!

The products of Indonesia consist, roughly, of spices, rubber, petroleum, tin, tea, tobacco, coffee, cocoa, sugar, copra, palm oil, sago, tapioca, rice, timbers, kapok, cordage fibres, and quinine. There is some production of manganese, coal, gold, silver and copper, but these are on a comparatively minor scale compared with petroleum and the products of the vegetable kingdom named above; for instance, Indonesia supplies about 60% of the whole world's



Presidential Palace in Djakarta

A session of the Indonesian Parliament





Interior of an Indonesian house built modern style.

Interior of a good village house.



requirements of kapok, 90% of cinchona bark from which quinine is extracted, 85% of the world's pepper and 29% of the world's copra. Some cotton is also being grown, but Indonesia remains almost entirely dependent upon other countries for its sources of clothing, just as it seems to have done for centuries past.

With such a formidable list of vegetal products, it is not surprising that the bulk of the people is agrarian, either working on small holdings of their own or their family's, or on big, usually foreign-owned, estates and plantations. Nevertheless, a number of considerable factories exist, and these are not confined only to petroleum, sugar and rubber refineries; they also include the manufacture of consumer goods in such realms as weaving mills, rubber-goods factories, cigar and cigarette factories, glass manufactures, soap factories, and the like.

Apart from such goods as are produced in accordance with modern standards of mechanisation and organisation, tremendous numbers of one-man concerns, or one family concerns, exist, which produce vast quantities of consumer goods by less well organised processes, often by hand, or with very primitive and often wasteful aids. Besides these again, there are the extensive crafts, nearly always of very high artistic standard, such as batik and woodcarving, silver and leather work, earthenware kiln goods, etc.

Culturally, too, one finds the same diversity, resulting from the absorption of many cultural patterns. In parts of the islands very ancient customs and traditions exist, that seem to take one back to the days of the wild tribe, to magic, and to witch-craft; then above that layer exists the gentle animism of the Hindu period, and the far grater civilisation above it which it aroused; Moham-medanism has contributed its share, and the part played by Christianity in moulding the attitudes of present-day Indonesian society is not slight. Ancient Hindu temples, Mohammedan mosques, and Christian cathedrals and churches are often all to be found in the one neighbourhood. There is no religious intolerance, and there is no racial prejudice.

Thus within the one region, there is diversity in all directions —



Indonesian national dress.

a climate from little below the frost temperature on the mountain slopes to humid and wetly tropical on some coastal plains; a people of many physical types in all ranks of society; a culture which draws at one and the same time upon the primitive, the Hindu, the Mohammedan and the Christian; a society which composes within itself tribal, feudal and modern forms; and a productive system which includes ancient arts and crafts of a high order, primitive agriculture and primitive industry, and modern agricultural and industrial processes.

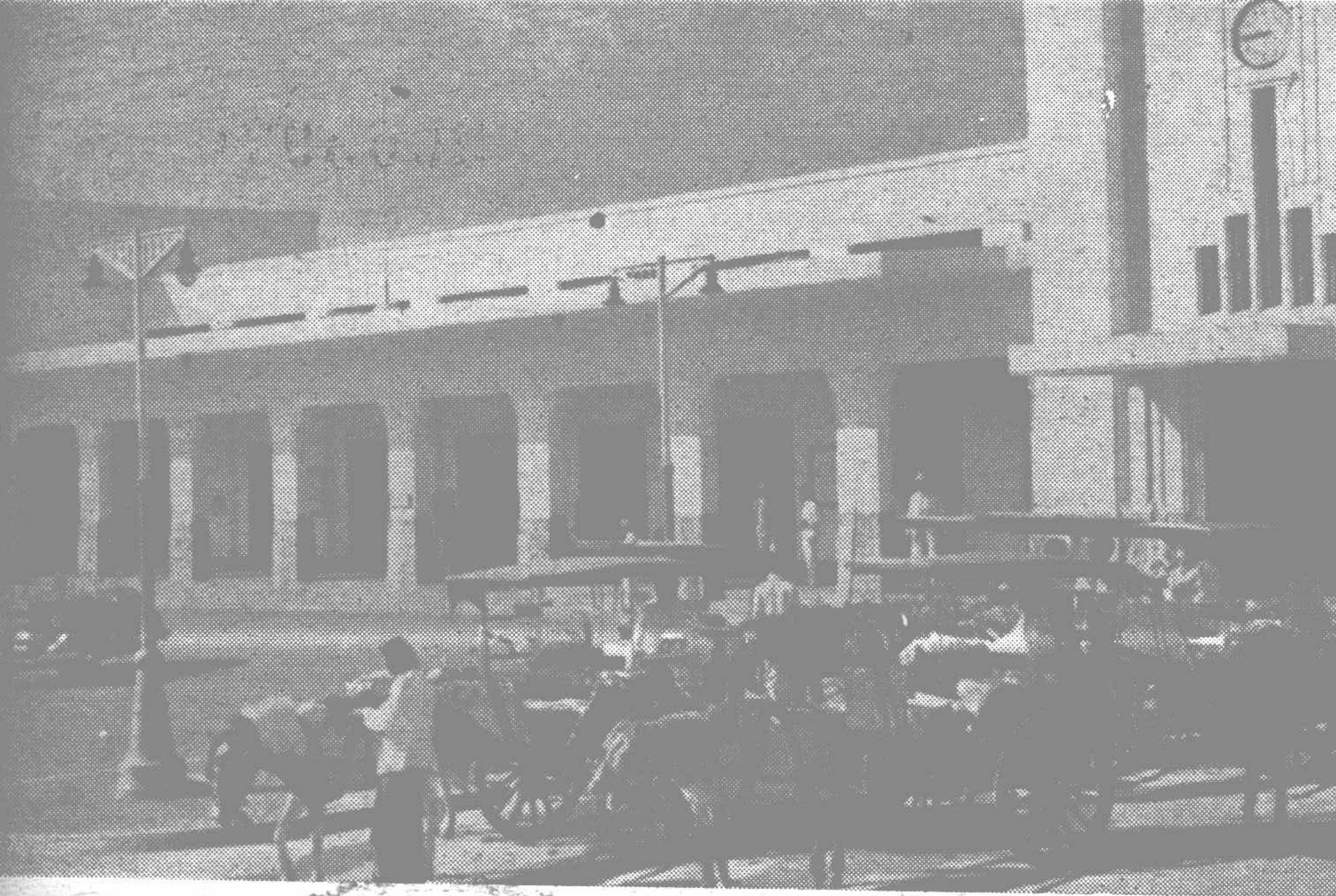
Several books have already been written about Indonesia. Maybe you have read some of them, may be not. But all that has been written about our country, has mostly dealt with prewar Indonesia, with that rich and beautiful country in the East, with those people whom the Dutch considered and pictured as "the softest people on earth".

Indeed, foreigners who have visited Indonesia during recent years with no hostile intentions have frequently remarked that we are so polite and so kind. But undoubtedly they have also seen that the Indonesian people since the Nationalist Revolution which flared to a head on August 17th, 1945, are conscious of their dignity, conscious of their right to better living conditions, to conditions not lower than any other people in this world.

If people overseas read about strikes in Indonesia and about numerous conflicts between Indonesian workers and foreign enterprises, it should be understood that these are but a natural consequence of the consciousness of the Indonesian people to struggle for better living conditions.

If you read about clearing actions against the separatist rebels in Ambon, fighting in Macassar, incidents between Indonesian troops and members of the Dutch army, you should understand that the Indonesians are conscious of the necessity to defend the unity of their nation, and to uphold the honour of their newly established state.

But you probably have also read about the new schools opened in our country, about Indonesian students sent abroad, about railway



*The "dokar" is an important means of transport especially in the villages.
Dokars wait here in front of a railway station.*

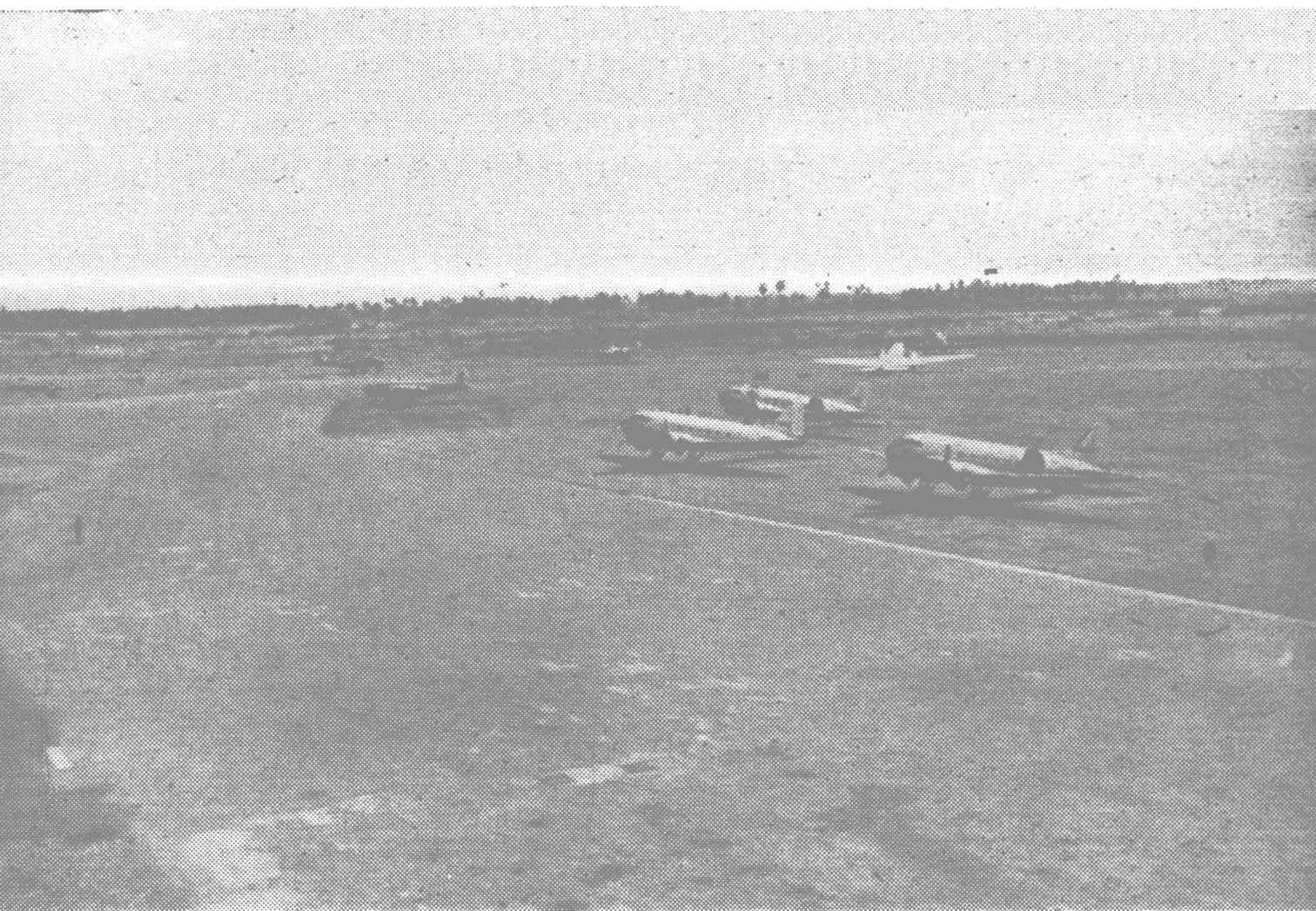
In Indonesia the betjak is very much used.





In the big cities there are buses and trams, linking different parts and some country centres.

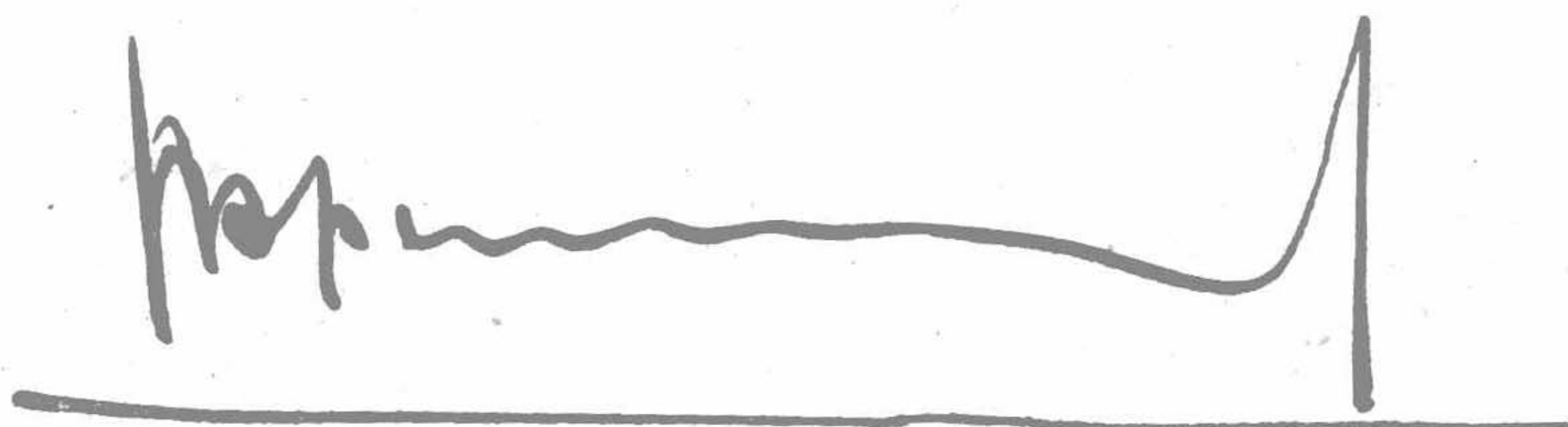
Indonesia has several modern airfields.



lines being repaired, about Government measures in the field of economy and finance, about political parties taking part in emergency elections for local councils of representatives. These things prove the awareness of the Indonesian people to their responsibility in building a sound and democratic country, not only for the sake of Indonesia, but also for that of the world in general. Indonesia is not only aware of her rights, but also of her duties as an independent nation towards the big family of nations in this world. We know that we are a young country, we know our shortcomings, but we are convinced that we can build up our nation by our own strength. We also know that many people abroad are anxious to help us, materially as well as morally, unselfishly, and not with the intention to make of Indonesia a bastion against some political current. To know Indonesia, you should understand all this. But a basic requirement to real understanding is to remember that we all belong to the one race — the human, whose physical, mental and spiritual capacities are much the same. We only occupy different parts of the world. Let us, therefore, work together for the sake of mankind. One of the conditions for good cooperation is that we know and appreciate one another. This book aims to give a little popular information about our country and people, and is intended as a starting point for an understanding of conditions in this part of the world. We are aware that this book is far from perfect, that there are many gaps in the information it contains. But we hope that it contains enough interest to give you a glimpse of Indonesia now.

Djakarta, December 1st, 1950.

Minister for Information

A handwritten signature in dark ink, consisting of a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke, followed by a vertical line at the end.

Djakarta

In the eyes of any continental people, the island of Java is so narrow you could almost throw a stone across, and only so long that you feel you could walk from end to end in a couple of days. In fact, it is somewhere about half the size of England, Scotland and Wales together, and so it is a small island. Small — yet big.

No country has a more densely settled population than Java; the average is about 850 persons per square mile for the whole island, while the really thickly populated parts are inhabited by more than an almost unbelievable 1,000 persons per square mile. That's one of the factors which make the island "big"; but there is another — the fact of Java's prominent position in the archipelago.

Java's economic and political importance are very old, and seem to have given mutual impetus to an increasing population, which in turn has heightened the island's economic and political potential. It's rather like the story of the chicken and the egg, trying to find out which factor came first, so we'll only state physical characteristics, and allow others to speculate on that problem.

Java is a long island in proportion to its breadth, with mountain chains more or less in the centre, alluvial plains to north and south running lengthwise, and many rivers crossing them. Most of the mountain peaks are volcanic, and many are active, with periodic eruptions of greater or less violence, which have been brought under as much control as may be.

Although there are one or two rather astonishingly arid areas, Java's tropical position, its heavy, but not too heavy, rainfall, and its volcanic soil together ensure a luxuriant vegetation and mineral deposits of value.

The climate is equable, for, although the sun is certainly very hot at midday, temperatures are lower in the shade, and it is cool enough early mornings and evenings for a long-sleeved jacket to be comfortable in areas along the coastal stretches, and a necessity on the mountains. The temperature in Djakarta has never risen