

# WEST OF THE PACIFIC

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ILLUSTRATED

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## PREFACE

THIS is an account of the journey of a delegate to the Second Pan-Pacific Science Congress, held in Australia, at Melbourne and Sydney, in August, 1923. It is not a consecutive narrative of what I did day by day. It is merely a book of impressions. I spent a month in Japan, a week in Chosen, three weeks in sailing to Australia, with brief stops in the Philippines, seven weeks in Australia, two weeks in Java, and five weeks in travelling along the Chinese coast from Canton to Shanghai and thence by rail to Peking and Mukden. Everywhere I tried to see as much as possible of the people, and to live with them rather than in foreign hotels. Here I have merely jotted down the things that especially interested me, and have tried to explain how some of them came to exist.

In the short time at my disposal, I naturally could not engage in elaborate research. Hence I give these impressions for what they are worth. If they have any value it is primarily because I am a geographer, and because I had exceptional opportunities. As a geographer I have for many years made it my business to travel, to observe, to ask questions, and to interpret the results. As to opportunities, in Japan I had the rare good fortune to be personally conducted by Mr. A. Tsuyusaki, teacher of English in the Fusan Middle School. He had translated into Japanese a little book

of mine called *Asia*, and was at work on a new translation of *Civilization and Climate* to take the place of the literal and difficult translation already published. Hence he knew just what sort of things I wanted to see. I also had extensive introductions to Japanese scientists and business men. Thus I was able to visit all sorts of people—farmers, priests, professors, lawyers, doctors, and business men. I stayed at their houses, and also at Japanese inns, at an engineers' club, and at a commercial club. I lived in Japanese style, used chop-sticks, and thoroughly enjoyed it. I saw Japan for myself, and I also heard all I could about it from the Japanese and from foreigners.

In China, Java, and Australia my general method was the same, although of course it differed from country to country. In China I had to rely mainly on missionaries and on Chinese who had studied in America. In Java I came into little direct contact with the Javanese, for practically none of them know English. I depended on Dutch officials and teachers, especially Doctor van Valkenberg of the Topographic Service. In Australia I went around as if I were at home. Until I betrayed myself by asking questions nobody seemed to know that I was an American. But I was also most fortunate in being guided part of the time by Australians of the widest information, such as Doctor E. C. Andrews and Professor Griffith Taylor.

This journey made me realize again that we get from a new country what we take there. Between 1915 and 1923 I made no long journeys. Previously my attention had been focussed on physical environment and its direct effects on human occupations, health, activity,

habits, and character. During the eight years when I stayed at home I gradually acquired a new conception of the importance of temperament. Without abandoning my old ideas as to environment, I was led to see these ideas in a new perspective. I saw how both physical and social environment often act as selective agencies which pick out special types of people for preservation or elimination in any given occupation or region. In *The Character of Races* I have set forth this line of reasoning in orderly fashion. Here I merely recount some of my observations, and explain what they suggested. Having broadened my mental outlook, I felt almost like a new traveller. In spite of nearly six years of previous travel and four years of foreign residence, I experienced the keen pleasure of seeing not only the old kinds of facts in new countries, but new kinds of facts, to which my eyes were formerly closed.

I have dedicated this book to the host of friends who helped me on my journey. I cannot name them, for the list would fill pages. I do not even know the names of some of them. They are a goodly company whose kindly interest made my journey extremely delightful and profitable. Some helped merely by a brief conversation, some were my fellow travellers by sea and land, some entertained me at dinners, clubs, and social functions, others were my hosts and hostesses for days or weeks. A score or so are people whose thoughtfulness, whose kindly efforts to show me the truth, and whose clear minds and sincerity of thought have placed them among the real friends whom I shall never lose. To all I tender thanks, and most of all to this last group.

There is much hope for this old world when one can find such people among the home-born and the foreign-born in Japan, Chosen, Manchuria, China, the Philippines, Java, and Australia.

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# WEST OF THE PACIFIC

## CHAPTER I

### THE VOYAGE OF A GEOGRAPHER

**Y**OKOHAMA lies more than thirteen degrees south of Victoria, the capital of British Columbia. Yet on the first day of June, 1923, the *Empress of Australia*, en route from Vancouver to Japan, set her course west-northwest at the mouth of Puget Sound. Not till she had made four degrees of northing did she turn due west, and then only to avoid bumping into the Aleutian Islands. In going north to go south, did the former *Von Tirpitz*, now a Canadian Pacific liner, give us a foretaste of the topsyturviness of the Orient? Not from the standpoint of a geographer. To him neither the course of the ship nor the life of the Orient seems topsyturvy. On a globe stretch a string from Puget Sound to Tokyo Bay. It will form part of a great circle whose centre is the centre of the earth. Such circles are the shortest sailing-routes. Because the great circle that includes Vancouver and Yokohama happens to lie well north, and because the sun's heat and the rotation of our round earth force the winds, currents, and storms to follow certain paths, our route was cold, foggy, and unpleasant, but it had the advantage of being short.

Day after day, on that northern route, the clouds

hung low, the fog-horn tooted, the temperature hovered between 40° and 50° F. We tried to read on deck, but the air was too chilly. Nevertheless, the sea was so quiet and our boat vibrated so little that sometimes the lady at our table could hardly be persuaded that we were moving. After we had passed the Aleutian Islands and were running rapidly southwestward a fellow passenger asked me why they kept taking soundings in midocean, and why the sailor heaved up a bucket of water at every sounding. What he really did was dip up a canvas bucket of sea water and take its temperature. No, the ocean did not have a fever. We merely wanted to sail where the water was cold. If the temperature was too high, we shaped our course a little farther west toward sterile Kamchatka and the Kurile Islands. The cold coastal current, flowing southward there, helps a south-bound ship, whereas farther east the Japanese current in the opposite direction warms things up. But that cold current sets winter in the lap of summer. On June 10 we had a morning snow-storm in a latitude no higher than that of Chicago.

The voyage of the *Empress of Australia* was typical of man's relation to his geographic surroundings. Just as it is natural, nay, almost inevitable, that ships should follow the shortest route, even though the passengers get cold noses when they sit on deck, so it is natural that the Japanese should live on rice, have few cows and horses, and conquer the Koreans. It is equally natural that the northern Chinese should be more phlegmatic and conservative than the southern; that the Javanese should be a slight, pleasure-loving people; and that laborers should be more efficient and

labor-unions more powerful in Australia than in Great Britain.

Our steamer was a good-sized boat of 22,000 tons, not so fast as some, but very comfortable. German signs still told us how to set the wash-basin "zu" or "auf," and the "imperial suite" reminded us that all good German boats were formerly built with the hope that the Kaiser would some day take a trip in them. In the first and second classes the ship carried little more than a tenth of its full complement of 700 passengers, in the steerage only 150 out of a possible 950. Ours was the least popular trip of the year, for we were approaching Asia just as the warm, enervating rainy season began. Missionaries and their friends rarely want to arrive in Japan or China at this disagreeable period; it is not a good time for business; and the tourist hastens to lands that are cooler, drier, and less debilitating.

Missionaries, business men, tourists—that is the right order. On the Canadian Pacific line about forty per cent of the first and second class passengers are either missionaries or their friends. Another thirty per cent are travelling for business purposes. The remaining thirty per cent are tourists and "miscellaneous." This last term doubtless includes the retired English top sergeant, now accountant of a firm that sells pills—let us call them liver pills—all over China.

"The trouble with China," he said, "is education, too much of it. You Americans are to blame. You take the Chinese to America, coddle them in your homes, and make them believe they're as good as white men. When they come back to China they're so big-

headed that we have to teach them their place. They're all right in their place, but they have no business to associate with white men. We have to treat 'em rough, and that makes 'em sulky."

Another type of passenger was the American business man who gets incoherently angry about prohibition. How he must browbeat the "natives," and how they must scorn his lack of self-control! With him belongs the shrewd yet curiously ignorant merchant in a Chinese port where the foreign community consists mainly of missionaries. He talked lengthily about the extravagant luxury of the missionaries, and darkly hinted that they get more out of it than is generally known. The second charge is true: the missionaries not only get salaries of about \$1,600 per year for married men who could easily get \$10,000 in business, but they get an immense degree of satisfaction out of their work, and out of life in general. Luckily our ship also carried high-grade business men, whose views have helped in moulding the opinions expressed in this book.

One significant fact about our passengers was the prosperous Japanese merchants who travelled first-class, and the Chinese students second-class. This contrast between rich merchants and poor students is more or less typical of the difference between Japan and China. Japan has achieved a position among the nations; China is striving for such a position.

The most intelligent group of passengers was interested primarily in missions. One was a delightful old lady who had long been president of a girls' college; another a prosperous manufacturer off with wife and son for a holiday and a visit to a missionary daughter;

a third the supervisor of industrial work among boys at a large Y. M. C. A. Another type was represented by two Irish Catholic priests from Australia. One, of a retiring, thoughtful disposition, was accused by the English and Canadian passengers of having been pro-German during the war; the other, one of the jolliest souls in the world, big, florid, and sociable, was very good company as he told a funny story and pinched you to emphasize the points. A young woman who travels independently to take part in missionary conferences and special classes represents the same spirit as the priests, although the mode of expression is different. And so does a zoologist whose contribution to missions is a life devoted to the scientific study and improvement of methods of raising silk.

Our third-class passengers were a motley gang, clad in all sorts of mixtures of Asiatic and European garb. They, as well as the Chinese crew, played fan-tan or other gambling games day and night. One of them, a young Japanese, died of tuberculosis and was buried at sea. According to the ship's officers most of the deaths on shipboard are of this same pitiful kind—men who know themselves to be near death's door and try to get back to Asia, to die at home. If they are Chinese, their bodies are embalmed and carried home; if Japanese, a Christian service is read over them and they are committed to the deep. No matter how sympathetic the officers may be, it is to them a mere case of another poor devil gone too soon. Give him a last little dose of the West and wish him good luck. That boat of ours, with its conflict of East and West, business and study, selfishness and altruism, would solve a thousand per-

plexing problems if one could see into the hearts of its passengers.

As for myself, I do not know whether the purser classed me as "business" or "miscellaneous." It was my business to go to Australia as a delegate from Yale University and the Association of American Geographers to the Second Pan-Pacific Science Congress. But it is "miscellaneous" to be a professor of geography and to have a passport stating that the object of one's journey is "travel and research." The word "research" raised a question almost every time my passport was examined, but it puts me where I belong.

While we have been talking of the passengers, the *Empress of Australia* has slipped smoothly forward with scarcely a tremor. Two days before reaching Japan we went on deck to find that the air had suddenly become warm and sultry. Fishing-boats appeared, the first of any kind that we had seen since leaving Victoria. We were in the current from the south which bathes the southern and eastern shores of Japan and keeps them warm in winter.

Next day Japan was in sight. That first view was typical. A warm soft rain was falling straight down without wind. Through it we dimly saw blue mountains streaked with bands of pale clouds above a dull greenish sea dotted with white sails. But mists rolled in and left us solitary once more. Later the air again became clearer, and the land was near at hand. No mountains were now visible, but great inaccessible cliffs, slashed by steep-sided gorges, rose abruptly from the water. Behind the cliffs lay a maze of hills. Some were covered with trees, mostly pines, which broke the

sky-line with their dark clumps and groves, but a larger number displayed a paler tint like bushes, or thickets of tall, reedy grasses, as I later saw. Everything was green, green, green. Even the faces of the cliffs were green, except where yellow splashes showed that they were actually undermined by the waves. Only in emerald Ireland have I seen such greenness, but there it is a more uniform grassy green. Here it is a varied greenness of trees, bushes, and grasses, covering every slope and ranging from almost black to almost yellow. Between us and the green hills lay the pearly, misty, moving water, and groups of fishing-boats. Little wisps of clouds kept forming in the valleys and spreading out as bands along the hills, only to rise as shreds and tatters, and disappear in the great cloudiness above. But the greenness, with its many shades, was what impressed me—the wetness, the pearly mistiness.

But where is man in all this scene? The boats indicate an abundant fishing-population. That great headland ends in the fine white column of a modern lighthouse, but where are the houses of the fishermen? See that dark-brown patch at the mouth of the valley, with a bit of bright green behind it? Look more closely, to right and left. There is another and another. They are the villages, and the pale-green patches are bits of rice land. See how that village stretches out, a thin brown line of houses at the base of the cliff. Will not the waves of the next typhoon eat it up? Every speck of level land seems to be covered with houses or rice fields. How can so many people live where there seems to be only room for a road?

Then the mists and the drizzling rain shut us in once



more. The tiresome fog-horn revived its clamor. It seemed a useless annoyance out on the mid-Pacific, but here it is very necessary; not only fishing-boats, but now and again a tug or freighter peeps out of the mist and flits away. The mist becomes so thick that we run at half speed. It is after lunch, and we are walking on deck looking at the whiteness. Suddenly a hill looms out of the mist scarcely a quarter of a mile away and straight ahead. The officers shout, bells ring, there is the sound of running feet, the propellers are reversed, and down goes the anchor. Too late! Before the anchor takes hold the great ship comes to a shivering, gentle halt, and masses of muddy water boil up around our prow. We are fast aground, shipwrecked you might call it, five or six hundred yards from shore.

We were wise in our choice of a spot for our shipwreck. The only people to be pitied were the commander, who must bear the blame, and the old lady who slept through it all. A few hundred yards away we should have hit those jagged rocks just awash far out from shore. But here we have only soft mud. We are likewise fortunate in being close to a lovely bit of Japanese scenery. Directly in front a dainty little gorge opens its green jaws, with a bit of yellow cliff on one side for variety. A laughing waterfall surely lies hidden among the trees. On either side the sea is faced by green bluffs, not precipitous like those we saw this morning, but far too steep, it would seem, for habitation. They are shrouded in bushes and trees, among which crooked pines bent by the wind are conspicuous. Already we are becoming familiar with a large part of the elements that make Japanese art so unique—moun-