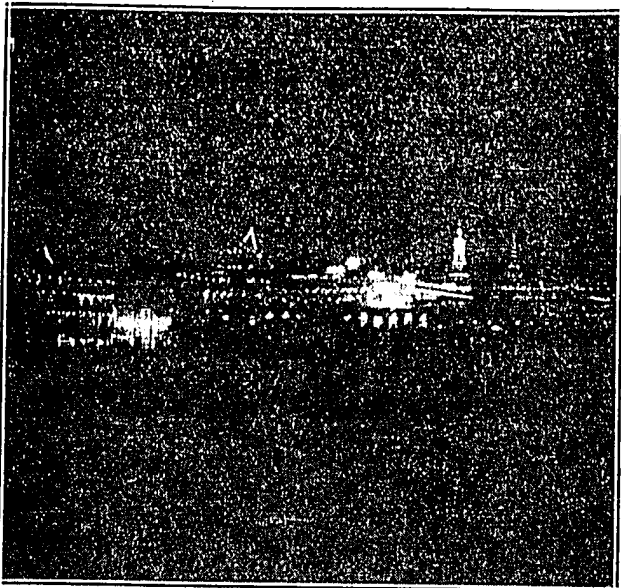# Oddities About Town

The Great Bright Way

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Three Years Ago Shanghai Was A Rather Dull City By Night—Today Its Lights Vie To Dim The Stars—3,500 Neons Here

Shanghai's own "Great White Way"—only its also red and blue due to myriad of Neon lights—is pictured above from a vantage point on Nanking Road.

The "a million lights shine brighter there, a million hearts beat lighter there" part of a once popular song might have been written about Shanghai where the glamorous skyline lit up by Neon lights gives fair competition to the legend of the "topless towers of Ilium."

Less than three years ago Shanghai was not particularly impressive at night. It was not until 1929 that the Claude Neon Light Co. ushered in a brighter era and changed the turrets which sulked behind a few electric bulbs to a fantastic fairyland of color and gaiety.

Now there are some 3,500 Neon lighted establishments in Shanghai. The originator of the happy inspiration is the only foreign dispenser but there are some four or five Chinese companies all doing a thriving business with lights. The Claude Neon Light Company alone has some 300 men working in its factory on Baikal Road. So the work goes on apace.

The Chocolate Shop was the first in town to install Neon lights. The Little Club did a close follow up. Now every establishment that is any sort of an establishment at all has a Neon light equipment.

Now to get a little technical: Neon is one of the rarer constituents of the air and when electrically excited, the light created is like the intense red glow of sunset concentrated in a glass tube. By a special process the color may be changed to a clear, cold blue or other colors. Neon light penetration is the greatest known. It is the only light visible through fog, for one thing. This fact has resulted in its use in marking the plane routes from London to Paris as well as the great landing field at Croydon, England. It is being used by Great Britain for lighthouse beacons and craft plying on the fog-laden English channel.