

Speeches

Shanghai, China, March 30, 1936.

NOTES FOR "HOME AND ABROAD" FROM SHANGHAI OFFICE.

Submitted by: A. Bland Calder, Assistant Commercial Attache.

Commercial Attache Julean Arnold left Shanghai March 25 for a trip to Amoy, Hong Kong (British Colony), Canton, and possibly other South China points in our territory. In order that Home-and-Abroaders may better appreciate the size of the territory for which the Shanghai office functions, this trip is about the equivalent of a voyage by ocean going coasting steamer from Washington to Savannah, Georgia, thence to Mobile, Alabama, and back by sea to Washington. The China Coast line between Shanghai and Canton, the capital of Kwangtung Province in the South, is about the same in contour as would be the American Coast line between the Virginia Capes and New Orleans, if Florida were lopped off. No railroads yet connect us with South China, but links now being closed up will, within one year, we expect, make it possible for us to journey from Shanghai to Canton by rail, a distance by coasting steamer of about 1,000 miles. The rail distance will be about the same when finally complete. On the other hand we have ultra modern airplane transportation between the two points, operated under Sino-American auspices, with latest American equipment. Even now it would be possible to make the trip by motor car but the journey would present pioneering circumstances and a time element which we are not in position to undertake in connection with official travel as yet.

En route to the South Mr. Arnold's steamer will stop for a few hours at Keelung, Formosa. He was American Consul in Formosa nearly 30 years ago, and has never revisited the Island until now. Old timers in the

Bureau will recall that Mr. & Mrs. Arnold while stationed there climbed Mount Morrison (over 14,000 ft.) located then and now in a region populated almost exclusively by savage tribes of the Polynesian race, remnants of which are scattered in the islands of the South Seas from Madagascar to the Marquesas and Northward as far as Formosa. Certain of the Formosan tribes are renowned for their head hunting propensities. While it appears fairly well established that they have been isolated from contact with others of their race for nearly 2,000 years, being now mountaineers, hunters, fishers, and trappers, rather than voyageurs, some of the tongues spoken among them are similar to those spoken by certain of the hill tribes of the Philippines and Borneo.

Seldom do Foreign Commerce Service officers visit Formosa. Possibly only two or three of those now in the service have ever set foot on that island which is off the usual beaten path of world trade, though it is the world's chief source of camphor supply and produces also vast quantities of sugar, consumed mainly in Japan but also a factor in world sugar trade. Formosan Oolong tea is also an important product of the Island. Your scribe and Mrs. Calder visited Formosa in 1926 en route from a 3-year assignment at Tokyo to a re-assignment in China. We travelled the length of the Island by rail, about 200 miles, made two forays into the hill country under Japanese official guidance. One of these trips was up to an elevation of 11 thousand feet on the Mount Ari logging railway which passes through 91 tunnels and traverses at about 9,000 ft. level a forest of trees of Formosan cypress which would give the big trees of the California national parks decided competition were they more in the public eye. Trees 10 feet in

diameter appeared to be common, while the two largest, now designated as sacred trees, stand side by side and are 26 ft. in diameter each. It is quite possible that these two trees are more entitled to fame as the oldest living things in the world than the "Grizzly Giant" in the Mariposa Grove of Big Trees near Yosemite which is rated at about 4,000 years of age. Formosa is of course not in our territory though it lies only 100 miles off the China Coast, half in the Torrid Zone and half in the North Temperate Zone. Japan gained control over Formosa in the Sino-Japanese War of 1895. About $4\frac{1}{2}$ million Formosan Chinese, 200,000 Japanese and possibly 25,000 savages, descendants of Polynesian wanderers, constitute the inhabitants. The head hunting tribes have been gradually driven higher and higher up into the mountain fastnesses and have been surrounded by electrified barbed wire and a cordon of armed Japanese police who keep constant watch to prevent their descending into the lower mountain villages and valleys to take heads. Only three or four years ago a savage band stealthily managed to get through the ring of steel and police and made a successful raid on a Japanese village, taking several heads. The customs of certain of these tribes prescribe that the young brave who would seek a wife must first qualify by taking at least one human head, which after shrinking in tanning fluids to small proportions, he wears as a trophy dangling from his belt.

At one of these hill stations we saw numerous savages which had been captured and "tamed" and visited a school which had an enrollment of about 40 savage children, many of them orphans, undergoing civilizing processes. Some of their parents had been killed in engagements with the police. Others were probably still at large. A Japanese policeman in uniform was

mother, father and teacher to these youngsters. It was a touching experience indeed to witness the genuine affection and trust manifested by these children in their Japanese policeman friend. I arranged to take a picture of these kids who were simply dressed, many of them in the type of scanty garments worn by their parents and was invited to return to the school at 9 o'clock the next morning for this purpose. Imagine my surprise and disappointment when I arrived at the school the next day to find that the children were all arrayed in the characteristic garb of Japanese school children, proud as punch. Thus, my hopes of securing an ideal picture of these children of nature in their forest habitat were dashed. The photographic result might well have been mistaken for a picture taken in the uncivilized atmosphere of Osaka or Tokyo, except that a close examination of the faces readily shows that their features are not Japanese, Chinese or Mongolian, but a distinctive quasi-Aryan type.

Excuse me. I shall now come back to earth. I set out to write some news items of the Bureau's Shanghai office, not an ethnological treatise on Polynesians. The divergence may illustrate something of the romantic which one is bound to experience now and then on the foreign trade front.

Radio Telephone Shrinks Earth's Crust. For the first time in history the Bureau's Shanghai and Tokyo offices were in communication by telephone - March 28, 1936. I'm sure that our industrial division chiefs and Bureau officers who commonly call Dallas, Boston, or even Havana on the telephone do not realize quite the thrill that such an event gives us. Shanghai is a link in the Bureau's chain of radio communication with Tokyo. We receive the Bureau's messages by Navy Radio without charge here in Shanghai and relay them by commercial cable to Tokyo office. On February 15 commercial radio

telephone services were inaugurated between Shanghai and Japan. The charge for a 3 minute call is Chinese yuan 15., equivalent to about U.S.\$4.50. Ever since February 15 we have been lying in wait for a Bureau relay to Tokyo which would cost more than \$4.50 to transmit. Our watchfulness was rewarded on March 28 when we received an 18 word message which at yuan 0.85 per word would have cost yuan 15.30 to send on to Tokyo, so we promptly put in a call, saving the Bureau 9¢ in U. S. money. We had intimated nothing of our intentions to Tokyo. In 25 minutes your scribe had Commercial Attache Frank Williams, 1,100 miles away, on the wire, or on the air, as you please, and was saying "This is Bland Calder calling you from Shanghai". Since this was one of those epoch making events in the world's history which make romance out of trade promotion, you can excuse Frank in his surprise for replying "The h--- you say!" We delivered the Bureau's 18 word message by word of mouth, and took down one which Frank was about to mail to us for transmission to the Bureau, thus killing two birds with one stone and starting his message on its way 5 days ahead of its normal schedule, for the mail takes on the average 5 days between Tokyo and Shanghai.

One of these fine days we hope to call the Bureau on the telephone, for radio telephone services between the United States and China are in the making and possibly within 30 days will be a reality. When Dr. Dye in Washington hears Julean Arnold's voice in Shanghai he will be entitled to make any sort of expression of surprise he pleases, without fear that the world will hear, as the voice is scrambled in the air by a miraculous machine which makes chop suey of the words to any radio listener, but at the receiving end unscrambles them into sense.

Our ability to call Tokyo on the telephone from Shanghai within a few minutes is in marked contrast to the situation which obtained when I was in Japan in 1919 in conjunction with W. R. Grace & Company's business there before entering the Bureau's service. In trying to call Tokyo from Yokohama, only 18 miles distant, it was necessary to notify the operator well in advance. For example, in Yokohama, at the old Grand Hotel we would get up early in the morning and "put in" or file our intentions with the telephone operator. This diligent person (often referred to as a moshi moshi girl) would work on the situation several hours and with luck would manage to get the call through to Tokyo some time before noon. Sometimes she would be unsuccessful in making the connection until about 3 p.m., so much in demand were the limited few wires available. This situation did not improve much until 1923 when the old manual telephone system in the entire Tokyo-Yokohama region was destroyed in the earthquake and fire, being later replaced with modern dial phones and adequate inter-city connections. It is now possible to long distance all over Japan fairly quickly, and that country is now connected by radio phone with China, Europe and the United States. All of this has come about in a short 16 years. China's 9-Province telephone system connecting leading cities by long distance lines is about to be inaugurated.

When telephone calls between the United States and Far Eastern points are reduced in cost from somewhere in the neighborhood of U.S.\$50. to four bits for a 3 minute conversation, it will give a mighty impetus to promotional effort for American trade in this part of the world, not to mention what effect it might have on future coordination agreements.

The Steintorf's visit us. Chop suey suggests this subject as today we are entertaining Trade Commissioner & Mrs. Paul Steintorf from Tokyo at a Chinese feed here in Shanghai. They are en route back to Tokyo from a round trip to Hong Kong on leave. They are used to raw fish, sukiyaki (the u is silent as in Polliwog) and tempura (fried octopus) in their Japanese dietary, so we are varying their menu today with ducks brains, pigeon eggs, sweet and sour pork, green plum wine and orange soup. Come out and see us some time.

Trade Commissioner Harold D. Robison, who spent part of a day with us about 3 weeks ago en route to his new assignment at Singapore was treated in like manner. It will be recalled that he put in 5 years in our China organization, 1928 to 1933.

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