The Javanese Theatre,

Java Village,
Midway Plaisance.

World's . . .
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Containing also a Short Description of

Java

The People, Languages,
Customs, Food, Products, Etc.

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The Island of Java (Dutch East Indies).

JAVA has a population of about twenty-five million, while the area is but 51,960 square miles. The population may be divided into three principal races.

1. The Soendanese who live in West Java or the so called Soenda-Lands.

2. The Javanese who inhabit Central Java. The (in name) independent states of Soerakarta and Djokjokarta belong to this division.

3. The Madoerese who come from the island of Madoera, and who are found in East Java.

On the coast are found the Malays proper, who speak the Malay language, which is a sort of lingua franca in the Archipelago; that is, it is more or less generally spoken, or at least understood everywhere. The Soendanese have their own language, which is related to Javanese and Malay in the same way as English is to French. It has a very peculiar feature, which is possessed also by the Javanese language. There are two distinct languages in it, a high and a low one. The low language is spoken by the lower classes among themselves, and by the higher class people towards the lower class. The high language is spoken by the inferior to his superior (it was introduced by the Hindoos during their reign, it still contains many Hindoo
THE MOHAMMEDAN CHURCH OR MISSIGIT.
elements). Sometimes there are more graduations than these two, and the rules governing the use of these expressions are very closely observed, for the Javanese are a very ceremonial people.

The Malay is a very simple and easily acquired language; the Soendanese and the Javanese, however are very difficult. The Hollanders in Java take good care to be well acquainted with the language of the part of the country they live in, as the amount of respect shown by the people to their masters is in a great degree dependent on the master’s ability to speak the high and low language correctly.

Java and the rest of the Archipelago are Colonies of Holland and absolutely ruled by the Holland Government, for the independent princes are independent in name only, though they enjoy a more than royal income and keep up a great state. The Dutch resident is always near the palace, and his approval is required for every decree of any importance issued by the Sultan.

Formerly, when the Government assumed all the power and responsibility of the deposed princes, it made use of the right of making the natives work in the coffee gardens without pay, instead of levying a tax. This, however, has been gradually abolished, and also the Government monopoly of coffee. The planters now grow a yearly increasing amount of coffee.

The tea and coffee have been introduced on the Island by the Hollanders, just as they did in Ceylon, and since that time the coffee has won the undisputed honor of being the best in the market. The tea, of which more than a million pounds a year are grown on the Sinagar and Parakansalak estates each, aspires to reach the same honor by its purity, strength and flavor.

The soil in Java is marvelously fertile, no other country has its luxuriant tropical vegetation, its
splendid produces, coffee, tea, vanilla, cloves, nutmegs, rice, pepper, sugar, tobacco, kapok, cotton, chinchona, etc., etc.

The soil is formed on the coast by the deposits of the numerous mountain torrents on the mountains by the action of rain and sun on the volcanic stone. There are no less than 42 volcanoes in Java, of which several are always more or less active. These volcanoes form a part in the chain of mountains, which begins on the Malay Peninsula, continues over Sumatra, Java, and the islands Bali, Lombok, Soembawa, etc. The highest is the Semeru, 12,024 feet high. The terrific explosion of the Krakatau mountain in the Straits of Soenda will be fresh in everybody's memory.

Though Java is densely populated, there are still many parts uncultivated and wild, they are the haunts of the wild bulls or bantengs, the tigers, the rhinoceros, the deer and the wild boars.

The climate is not unhealthy, because the variations in temperature are very slight in most parts of Java, on the average not more than 22 degrees Fahrenheit. On the coast the average temperature is about 79 degrees, in the mountains, however, it is much cooler. The seasons are a wet and dry season, or west monsoon and east monsoon, which last respectively from November till March, and from May till October. The hottest time is in April, the coolest in January.

The principal food of the population is rice, which is eaten with some fish or meat, and plenty of red pepper and fruits. The stalks of the rice are cut off one by one, with a small knife; cutting them off in bunches or with a machine, would be a gross insult to the Goddess of the rice, Dewi Sri. The first bunches of rice of the new crop are brought to the village in a procession. A couple of men carry big ornamented bamboo
poles (rengkongs) on their shoulders, from which the bunches of rice are suspended with two sticks, which swing on the bamboo pole, producing a weird sound, which is accompanied by a sort of flute. Four men carry each a frame, in which four bamboo sticks are loosely attached; by shaking these instruments a curious rhythmic sound is produced. These are called Angkloengs, and are always accompanied by two small drums or Dogdogs.

The Europeans in Java also eat rice. At 12.30 or 1.00 o'clock the "rystlafet" is served, which consists of rice as a basis. To this are added all sorts of meat, fish, hash, dried beef (dengdeng), fried bananas, and last, but not least, a number of pickles (sambals) made from fruits, young bamboo, red pepper, small red fishes, etc.; all this is mixed together with the rice and eaten with a spoon. It makes a really very good meal, though it is at first somewhat trying to the palate of a novice.

Java may be reached from Europe direct by the Netherlands steamship lines, and by all other lines via Singapore, from where a regular steamer conveys passengers to Batavia in two days.
WOMAN PAINTING CLOTH (CATIK).
Tea Plantations in Java.

The Java Tea is not so well known in America as the Java coffee, but it is sure to gain popularity in the American market before long. The importance of tea growing in Java increases every year; many planters, who formerly devoted themselves only to coffee, have now tea gardens.

The introduction by the Hollanders of tea plants has proved a great benefit to the people. In the tea districts the population always look well-to-do and cleanly. Cleanliness is a well known characteristic of Holland, and the Dutch tea-planters take care to have their gardens and factories scrupulously neat. The examples set by the masters have a very good influence on the people. Not a particle of dust is allowed to remain in the shops and store houses or goedangs.

The tea plant belongs to the same class of plants as the camelia, but its white flowers are small and have no perfume. The plants are trimmed so as not to grow over four or five feet high. The Assam tea plant, introduced directly from the home of the plant, Assam, is allowed to grow higher and has leaves of a lighter color. It produces a better quality of tea than the older Java plants.

The leaves are picked by women. On the large plantations, for instance, Sinagar and Parakansalak, from
WITHERING THE TEA LEAVES IN THE SUN. PARAKANSALAK TEA ESTATE.
1,500 to 2,000 women are employed for this work. This picking requires considerable skill, because the leaves have to be of a certain age and color to get the different grades of tea. The young top leaves produce the finest grade of tea. The flavor and appearance of the prepared tea depend very much also on the time of the day on which they have been picked. On Parakansalak, the best tea is made from leaves picked before 9 a.m. At 2 p.m., the natives quit work in the gardens, but they start very early in the morning.

After the leaves come into the factory they are inspected and sorted by women, then withered in the sun on shallow bamboo baskets or lambirs.

After this they are rolled by rolling tables and dried in drying machines. The motive power is mostly water, which is very abundant. It is conducted through canals (selokkans) from the mountains to the water wheels or turbines.

The rolling tables have done away with a good deal of hand work, but the leaves are not so nicely preserved as was the case with the latter system. The tannin, which is squeezed out, colors the fine down on the leaves yellowish or reddish. Some expensive teas, however, are still rolled by hand, as the so-called "white-tipped" tea, in which the fine white down is uncolored.

Java tea in all its varieties is always strong, and a smaller quantity is required for a certain amount of tea than would be the case with Chinese tea; besides, it is absolutely unadulterated with drugs or flowers, while, however, an earthenware tea pot used some time for Java tea will have a delightful smell, as if perfumed with tea roses.

A short description of a visit to the two largest tea plantations on Java may be of interest:

From Buitenzorg, the State R. R. brought us through the most exquisite mountain scenery to the
small station Paroengkoeda. Being invited by Mr. G. Mundt, the Director of Parakansalak, his carriage with two splendid horses, drove us seven “paal” (about six miles) over a fine road, up and down through tea gardens and quaint Kampongs (villages) to the beautiful lane, lined with large Damar trees, which leads up to the house. The house is exceptionally comfortably built of wood and plaster. Stone walls are out of the question in this country, where frequent earthquakes prevail. The house lies on the slope of the Salak, at an elevation of two thousand feet over sea level. Beautiful scenery in the distance, the big Mount Gedeh obstructing the horizon. The flower garden in front, tells of the refined feminine taste of the lady of the house.

The lower gallery is taken up by a gamelan, or native orchestra, which once a week affords amusement for the plantation hands. The wajang is also performed there by traveling actors.

On the higher gallery easy chairs and lounges show that the Parakansalak Director knows how to combine comfort with the hard work, which the management of a plantation of 5000 acres necessitates.

The factories or workshops are situated behind the house at some distance; they are very large and wonderfully kept. The cleanliness struck us most. The gentle Soendanese people all at work with their deft fingers, manipulating the leaves, without any fuss, quarrels or loud talking; with their black sparkling eyes and deferent manner, endeared themselves at once to us. The whole process is carried out in the large sheds with steep tile-covered roofs, and cemented floors.

One station further along the R. R., at Tjibadak (Rhinoceros river), we stepped out of the cars and found the carriage of Mr. E. J. Kerkhoven waiting. A three-mile drive through magnificent Assam tea gardens brought us to Sinagar.
The house at Sinagar is built in the characteristic Indo-European style, three feet from the ground, on small stone columns. The entrance to the garden is arched over by immense trees, all covered with a bright red guirlandes of a sort of liana. The house is decorated all over with hunting trophies of Mr. Kerkhoven and Baron van Heeckeren tot Walien, the Administrator of Sinagar and a mighty hunter before the Lord. A large snake skin and a wooden bell tell the sad story of a full grown goat which was swallowed whole by the reptile. Elephant skulls; tiger skins by the dozen; rhinoceros feet made up into cigar stands; wild bull’s horns; deer horns and boar tusks, show how Sinagar was before the woods were cleared and the tea gardens spread their green over the hills and ravines.

The tea factories in Sinagar are similar to those in Parakansalak. Another factory is on Moendjoel or Tjirohani, which forms the Sinagar the “Cultuur maatschappij Sinagar-Tjirohani,” about 5,500 acres in extent.

The large water-wheel is moved by a selokkan or water-course, led between high dykes from the slopes of the forest-clad Gedeh. It is interesting to see how thoroughly the natives have mastered the difficulties of machinery, pulleys, belts, circular saws, etc. The packing cases are all made from trees felled in the neighborhood and entirely cut and sawed on the premises. The tea is put in lead foil, carefully soldered to prevent the flavor from escaping.

The same cleanliness prevails here as at Parakansalak, and the nice, lovable girls in their bright dresses, the sturdy figures of the planters in their white linen riding suits, with a large sun hat or toedoeng and a riding whip, made us feel sorry that not yet one real artistic artist has reproduced a pretty picture like this with its wonderful effects of coloring and shade.
THE SERIMPIS OR DANCING GIRLS FROM THE COURT OF THE SULTAN OF SOLO.
Programme of Theatre, Java Village,
Midway Plaisance.

The performances in the Javanese Theatre are exactly like those given in Java at the Court of the native princes and noblemen. It is almost impossible to give an exact idea of what will be performed on the stage, as the plays are mostly taken from the Javanese Mythology, which is very complicated. It reminds the people of the glorious past, when their Kings were absolute rulers, their Courts were full of splendor, and when the gods were on speaking terms with the Kings and heroes.

There are different kinds of performances, which are related to each other. Originally, figures cut from paper or leather were moved behind an illuminated screen, so that their shadows were projected upon it. Hands and arms were moved by sticks, and the talking was done by the man who worked the marionettes. This man was the Dalang. Later on the audience sat also behind the screen, and the figures were painted and gilded to please the public. Then the screen was left out altogether; this caused the Dalang to use dolls instead of flat figures. These dolls were dressed like the ordinary people, but they continued to have the same extravagant profiles which were adopted to characterize each shadow. The color of the faces were different for the various characters, for instance, giants and devils were always dark brown or red, princes and nobles, white, etc. These
dolls were placed on a rack and moved into position by the Dalang. This play is still at present the theatrical amusement of poor people. The name of this performance is Wajang Golèk. Wajang, in fact, means "shadow".

The next stage in the development was the Wajang Wong, or Wajang Orang, in which the dolls were replaced by living people. In the Topèng, a variety of this, the people wear masks, which distinguish the historical character—for instance, the great hero Ardijena, the prince Dorna Doersasana, the high priest Kombajana, or the divine fools, Semar with his grinning face and solitary tooth, Petro and Tjepot. The Wajang Gedog treats of the heroic deeds of Pandji, king of Djenggolo; the Wajang Golèk proper treats of the heroes during the reign of Madjapahit, for instance, Damar Wulan.

In this theatre only specimen acts of some of the best plays are given. A whole play might last too long for an American audience, sometimes even four or five days.

The plot is mostly somewhat like this:

A king wishes to give his daughter in marriage to a certain prince, on condition that he shall accomplish certain extraordinary feats, and shall obtain for the king some very rare objects extremely hard to procure. He fails and a prince of a hostile dynasty succeeds. The princess in the meantime has been stolen by a giant. The successful prince attacks the giant, kills him, and brings the required objects. The first prince is furious and provokes the second prince, but the latter is victorious. The play ends with the marriage of the victor and the daughter of the king. Hanoeman, the king of the monkeys, plays often a leading part in the story.

The gamelan, or orchestra, is always behind the stage, and its curiously formed instruments form a suitable background to the stage. The leader plays a two-stringed violin, or rebab. There is only one blow
DOLLS OF THE MARIONETTE SHOW (WAJANG GOLEK).
instrument, the *salèng*, a sort of bamboo whistle. Then there are the *gambang*, a sort of xylophone, with wooden blocks, and similar instruments made of brass and silver—these are the *saron*. The *bonangs* are kettle-shaped affairs, placed on a rack of wood and rattan. Then there are two or three big *gongs*, whose deep, mighty sound forms what might be called a background to the music. There are also small drums, the *gendang*, and one big drum, a *bedoeg*.

The music is very highly developed, though it is formed on entirely different lines than our European music. In European music there are eight tones in an octave, in the Javanese music this distance is divided into seven for the *pélog* and five for *salèndro*. The Javanese say that the *salèndro* sounds like glass, and has a manly sound, the *pélog* sounds more tender and must have a metallic "timbre." It is possible to play European music on the gamelan instruments by changing the arrangement of tones somewhat. This will be shown at the end of the performance.

The *dancing* is, in fact, more a series of graceful posing, with slow, rhythmic movements of the hands and feet, than a dance as we understand it. The dancers are mostly very young, from thirteen to eighteen years of age.

The Soendanese perform first, the Javanese dancers (from Central Java) will appear at the end. Their dress and style are quite different. The Javanese show the higher art in the wajang, which mostly illustrates a fight between historical heroes. The "Serimpis," or Javanese dancing girls, are from the court of the Sultan of Solo, a part of Java, independent in name, but protected and ruled by Holland.

The American public are now able to judge of the Javanese art and industry in this village, and the
MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS ON THE STAGE OF THE JAVANESE THEATRE.
syndicate that brought it over expects that enough interest has been excited for this beautiful Island of Java and its twenty-five millions of inhabitants, that American capital and commerce may combine to develop the commercial relations between Java and the Great Republic.

PROGRAMME.

1. Lagoe Ramé, or musical welcome.
2. Soendanese dance, or tandak, performed by dancing girls from West Java.
3. Soendanese Wajang, representing an incident in the mythical history of Java.
4. Javanese Wajang, performed by the Javanese dancing girls from Court of H. M. the Sultan of Solo (Central Java).
5. American national airs, performed by the gamelan or orchestra.