

*New stories starting in September*

# The Rattle Snake God of Chichen Itza

A Story of the Ancient Maya

by MAUDE MEAGHER

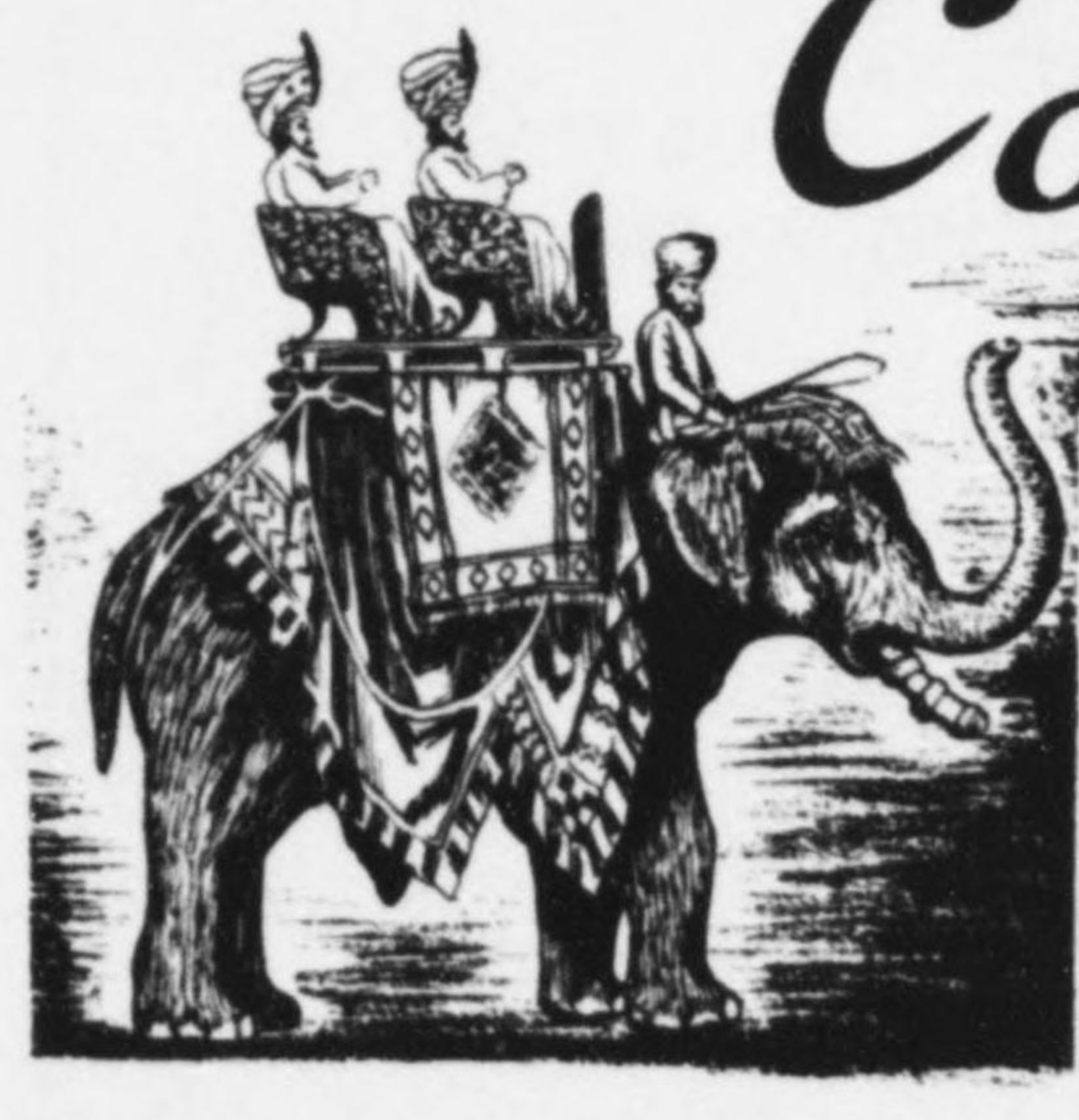
Do you think of Mexico as a land of happy, friendly folks, fine craftsmen, kindly people, with modern cities here and there, a progressive government now striving to right age-old injustices, to educate its rural population and bring Mexico into the forefront of the community of nations?

So it is. But how clearly do you visualize also the mighty empires, the rich cultures from which this modern land derives much of its thought, its feeling and its arts?

Beginning September and running through ten months, World Youth will present a modern adventure story, picturing both modern Mexico and the Maya civilization, which is thought by many to have been the most brilliant cultural expression of ancient America.



## The STRANGE and WONDERFUL Country of INDIA



A HOUSEBOAT IN KASHMIR

THE KHYBER PASS



Read the Thrilling Adventure Stories of India and its People

— Also —

STORIES OF ADVENTURE

in

SWITZERLAND — JAVA — EIRE — CHINA — THE AMERICAS

LAPLAND — DENMARK — AFRICA — and other countries

PASADENA CITY SCHOOLS  
ADMINISTRATION BUILDING  
351 SOUTH HUDSON AVE.  
Pasadena, California

The copies of "World Youth" have given me a great thrill.

The whole atmosphere and spirit of the publication seems to me to be of a quality that should guarantee its success.

I will bring these copies of the magazine to the attention of school and library heads with whom I come in contact, and you are at liberty to use any portion of my letter that might be of any value in your publicity. I have never before allowed my name to be used for promotional enterprises, but this publication, "World Youth," seems to me to be on a wholly different plane from others I have seen, and I believe the time has come when all people of good will should unite in support of efforts of this kind.

The urgency of using every possible means to bring about mutual understanding among the youth of the world is the basis of my interest in this publication.

The quality and variety of the writing, the art work and the printing seem to me to be worthy of the great purposes of the magazine. The photographic illustrations are delightfully selected.

I believe there is a real need for periodicals in organized education to supplement books, and there are not too many now available.

In my judgement portions of this publication would be useable by the fifth or sixth grades, but in general I should think it would be more applicable for the seventh grade and the beginning of the secondary schools.

All good wishes and my thanks for bringing this publication to my attention.

Cordially  
GERTRUDE LAWS  
DIRECTOR  
EDUCATION FOR WOMEN

# Some Comments on World Youth



## THE KNOX SCHOOL Cooperstown, New York

I thank you for your letter and the copy of WORLD YOUTH. I gave this to the head of our lower school and she had several of the Eighth Grade students write letters regarding it. As you can see by these letters, which I enclose herewith, the students are very much interested, and we shall be very glad to subscribe to the magazine.

You are doing a very worthwhile piece of work in editing the magazine which will bring the rest of the world nearer our youngsters and help them to appreciate the fact that children in other lands are not very different from themselves. Our children all mention that the stories are most interesting and tell them more than the geography texts can possibly tell them. I am sure that you will be pleased with their response.

Yours very sincerely,  
Louise Phillips Houghton, Principal

I enjoy World Youth. It gives me stories about countries we have studied in geography class. In my mind I can see the location of the country and I can put the story in a definite place. It makes the reading more interesting.

Jo Ann Smith

## WEBB SCHOOL of CALIFORNIA Claremont, California

*World Youth* measures fully up to the promise of its subtitle as a magazine of 'Thrilling Adventure Stories and Authentic Tales from Distant Lands.' Moreover, it offers a wealth of excellent illustrations—a feature that makes it especially attractive to all ages. We have found *World Youth* both instructive and stimulating, and believe it could be used very effectively in class work to arouse and hold interest.

Sincerely yours,

THOMPSON WEBB

*Headmaster*

WEBB SCHOOL FOR BOYS

## IMPORTANT FACTS

ABOUT

### "World Youth"

1. No connection with any movement or organization.
2. No politics or religious propaganda.
3. The *Adventure Stories* are based on authentic backgrounds.
4. The *Pictures* are authentic.
5. The purpose—to build in the minds of boys and girls an understanding and an appreciation of people different from themselves.
6. A magazine exciting enough to encourage boys and girls in good reading.
7. World Youth is owned entirely by Maude Meagher and Carolyn D. Smiley.
8. World Youth is a Massachusetts corporation, established in 1936 for education.

### WORLD YOUTH

*Thrilling Stories of*

### Adventure and Friendship

all over the World

*telling*

### Customs, Costumes, History,

### Geography

*Illustrated by*

### Authentic Photographs

\* \* \* \* \*

### WORLD YOUTH

ADVENTURE STORY MAGAZINE

Published monthly

(except July and August)

by World Youth, Inc., Los Gatos, California

\$2.50 a year



CASA TIERRA—EL QUITO ROAD, LOS GATOS, CALIFORNIA

**T**his is the house we built ourselves  
 — AND —  
 where we now print and publish **World Youth**

MAUDE MEAGHER and CAROLYN SMILEY

*EDITOR AND WRITER*

Maude Meagher has written several books dealing with short periods in history:—"White Jade" (China during the T'ang dynasty); "Portrait in Mosaic" (Sixth century Constantinople); "The Green Scamander" (13th to 11th century B. C. on the Black Sea shore); "Fantastic Traveller" etc., and was Foreign Correspondent for the San Francisco Chronicle at London for about nine years. She also wrote adventure serials for the Children's Newspaper of London for over eight years.

*BUSINESS MANAGER*

The business department is headed by Carolyn Smiley, who is co-publisher with the editor, Maude Meagher. She has lived in India and many other parts of the world as educator, lecturer and photographer.

WORLD YOUTH IS \$2.50 A YEAR

# WORLD YOUTH



THRILLING ADVENTURE STORIES  
and Authentic Tales From Distant Lands

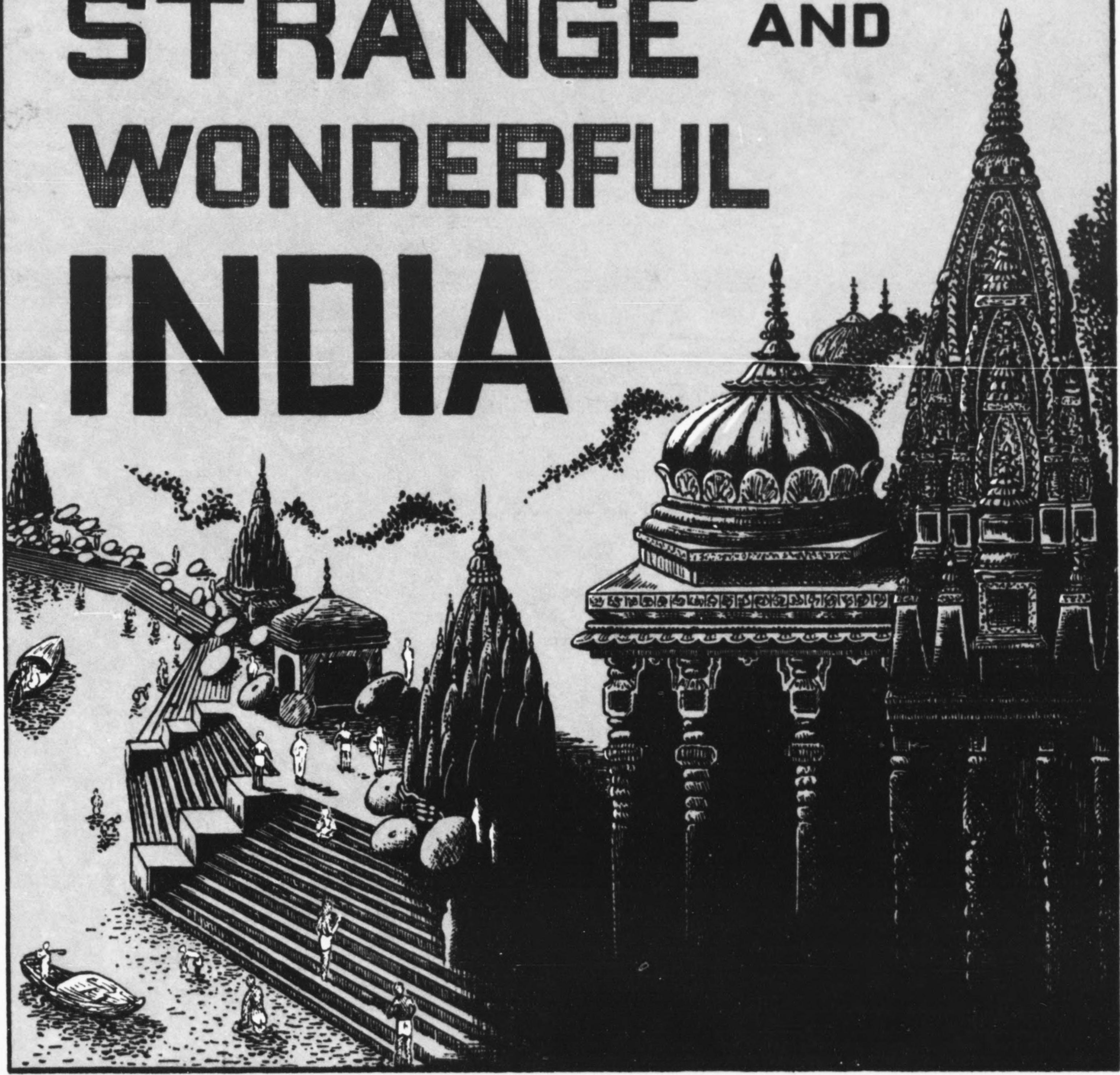


Vol. VII. No. 4

Twenty-five cents

April 1948

## STRANGE AND WONDERFUL INDIA



# World Youth

## Contents for April 1948

	Page
MYSTERY OF THE ONE ARMED SAILOR .....	2
A STORY OF FINLAND— <i>Marion Tomlinson</i>	
THE METAL MIRRORS OF ARANMULA .....	14
A STORY OF INDIA— <i>K. P. P. Tampy</i>	
SCIENCE KNOWS NO NATIONAL BOUNDARIES .....	18
AIR—SEA LEVEL AND UP— <i>Raydelle Josephson</i>	
THE RATTLESNAKE GOD OF CHICHEN ITZA .....	22
AN HISTORICAL ADVENTURE— <i>Maude Meagher</i>	
MY FRIENDS— HANSEL AND GRETEL .....	32
A STORY OF RACCOONS— <i>Era Zistel</i>	
STRANGE AND WONDERFUL COUNTRY OF INDIA .....	36
THE BABY ON THE GHAT— <i>John Holden</i>	
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR .....	20
INFORMATION QUIZ .....	48

WORLD YOUTH is published monthly (except July and August) by World Youth, Inc.  
 El Quito Road, Los Gatos, California, U.S.A.  
 25 cents a copy, \$2.50 publishing year—ten months  
 "Entered as second-class matter January 13, 1947  
 at the post office at Los Gatos, California under the Act of March 3, 1879."  
 Copyright 1948 by World Youth, Inc.  
 WORLD YOUTH is not connected with any organization or movement.  
 MAUDE MEAGHER ..... Editor      CAROLYN SMILEY ..... Business Manager

# The Mystery of the One Armed Sailor

*A Story of Finland*

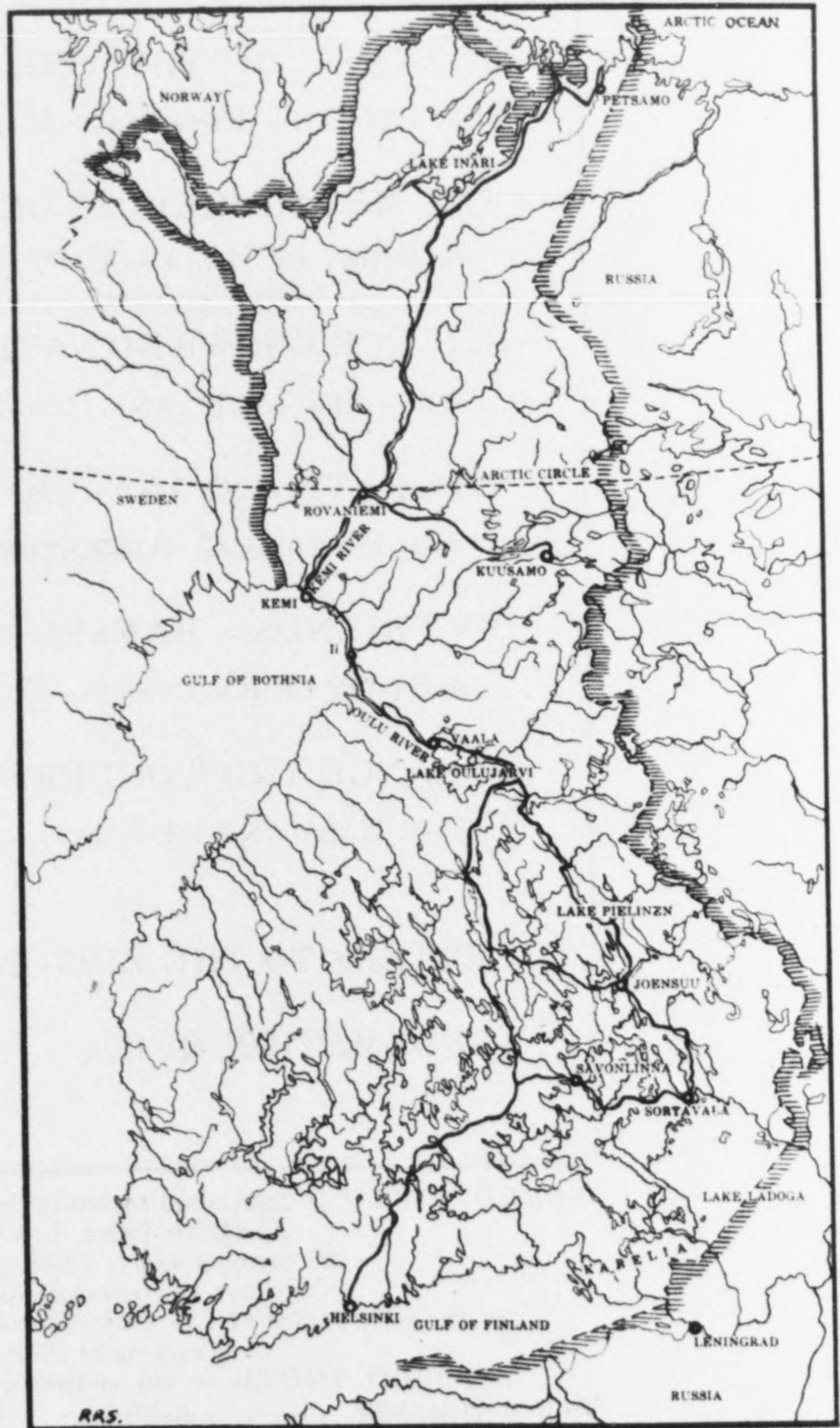
By MARION TOMLINSON

**J**OE Mikkelsen touched the accelerator lightly with his foot and the singing note made by Susie's tires on the gravelled roadway ran higher in key. There seemed to be no other sound in the world but that, a contented, singing hum of speed through a vast empty world of sunny sky and sparkling lakes. The air that blew through the open windows of the car was clean and fresh and just cold enough to make him feel wonderful.

Some half remembered lines from Lewis Carroll came into his mind and he began to shout them above the sound of the speeding tires.

"The sun was shining on the sea  
Shining with all his might;  
And this was odd, because it was  
The middle of the night . . ."

The time was, in fact, about forty minutes past midnight, and the great red-gold disk of the sun was already well above the horizon, throwing long black shadows across the grey road. As he rounded a slight bend he saw up ahead a herd of several hundred reindeer ambling slowly across the highway, and slackened his speed. Reindeer have for automobiles the contempt these mechanical newcomers to the Arctic deserve. Reindeer know they were there first and yield no inch of ground. For the next few minutes Joe was very busy indeed, dodging infant reindeer whose curiosity got the better of them, stopping while mother reindeer butted their offspring out of the



FINLAND IS SHAPED LIKE A DANCING GIRL

path of danger, and warily circling father reindeer who were prepared to dispute the right of way with this shiny monster who had no business on the Great Arctic Highway, which traversed territory which had been theirs alone for thousands of years.

At last he got through them, and the Great Arctic Highway stretched southward before him, empty and serene under the midnight sun, while the reindeer continued their journey toward the North Pole and Santa Claus, cropping a wayside breakfast of moss among the bright ephemeral flowers of the Arctic Circle.

Joe was on a serious mission, and during the next few days his life was going to be in extreme danger, but at that moment, in the exhilarating air of Finnish Lapland, he did not feel serious at all: he felt immortal. He stepped once more on the accelerator, and sped southward toward Rovaniemi.

At Rovaniemi he stopped for a sleep, although the sun was high. He was tired, although he could not be said to have driven day and night, because in North Finland between May 22 and July 23 there is no night. The sun does not set at all, and the twenty-four hour days are hot. He had come down from the region around Lake Inari where refugees from the Petsamo region and other northeastern sections of Finland ceded to Russia were being resettled on Finnish government land. Joe was one of an international youth group organized by the Quakers to help in the building of houses for these homeless people.

For a year, first in the blizzards and darkness of the Arctic winter, and later in the perpetual sunshine of the Arctic summer he and the others had worked with the Finns to build new towns in what were known as the Petsamo Triangles. — triangular chunks of government land which had been given to the refugees. Now he was on a quick trip south to Helsinki to arrange about a shipment of warm clothes and food sent by his club in Minnesota, for he was Finnish-American by birth.

At Rovaniemi, which he remembered as a very smart capital of the international

skiing world (for he had visited many times before the war its streamlined skiers' hotel of shimmering glass and concrete), he looked about him heartsick. Little was left of the city but the tall red-brick chimneys the Finns call "Hitler's Monuments". The city was totally destroyed in the vicious punitive retreat of the German army in 1944.

When Finland signed the armistice with Russia, some 100,000 Nazi troops were trapped in the North and East of Finland. Russia demanded that the Finns drive them out. The Finnish armies re-formed along the Oulu river and drove the Nazis northward and out of Finland. On their way the Nazis devastated the entire country, setting fire to every farmhouse, barn and haystack in their path, and leaving mines to kill any home-comers who might return to the sites. More than 175,000 people fled, and these were the people Joe was helping to resettle in new homes.

There was much in devastated Rovaniemi to give one hope, however, as Joe noted on his way through the town toward the inn where he was to sleep. The indomitable Finnish government had turned the wrecked town over to Finland's famous architect, Alvar Aalto, and a new streamlined city was rising under his direction, the most modern city in Finland, a jewel of glass and concrete set right in the Arctic circle to become once more a paradise for skiers from all over the world.

Next morning Joe followed the Kemi river southwest to the seaport town of Kemi. He almost made a detour to the inland town of Kuu-



REINDEER MEETS AUTO ON FINLAND'S GREAT ARCTIC HIGHWAY



samo, called the "City of *korsus*", for, since all his waking hours were spent in construction of new homes, he wanted to see for himself how they were getting on in that terribly devastated city where for years the people had lived in underground huts built as barracks, first by the Finnish soldiers fighting the Russians, then by the victorious Russians. He knew that a fine new hospital had already been built there to take care of the illness caused by these insanitary, airless, underground rooms which, nevertheless, had been the people's only shelter against the blizzards and artillery fire that raged back and forth above their heads.

Joe took out his road map and considered taking the highway eastward to Kuusamo and then continuing inland down to Helsinki. His map, which was prewar, showed the shape of Finland like that of a dancing girl with her head toward the North Pole, her arms upraised, her skirts swirling to east and west, and the toe of her ballet slipper poised on Leningrad in Russia. He knew that the ceding of lands to Russia had taken off her right arm to the east (the Petsamo region), thinned her waist on the east of Kuusamo, and taken off her ballet slipper (Karelia). But with these adjustments to the map in his mind he could read it easily enough.

Joe shook his head and folded the map. "Better not take time for the detour," he told himself, little knowing that if he had followed his impulse, and gone by way of Kuusamo instead of Kemi, he would have been spared several attacks on his life, lost a chance to save the life of someone else, and bring a criminal to justice.

However, feeling utterly secure, for there is very little crime in Finland, Joe sped down toward Kemi, exulting in the clean invigorating scents of the pine, fir and spruce forests that came down to the river on either side, and the delicate pale green and silver trunks of the birches. Finland is seventy-five per cent forest: it is her greatest source of wealth.

At Kemi the salty breezes blowing from the Bay of Bothnia mingled with the forest scents, and there was the keen smell of ships and fish. Joe parked his car and got out for a stroll down one of the wooden wharfs to look across the sparkling blue water which would be stiff with ice in a few months' time. Everyone was reveling in the sunlight now, and Joe himself felt so full of vitality he could have shouted.

So when a one-armed sailor, evidently newly

come ashore from one of the tramp freighters in the harbor, approached him for a lift to Helsinki, he responded with enthusiasm.

"Sure you can come with me," he said. "I thought I'd drive on to Ii this afternoon. I've been told of a farmhouse there that takes paying guests. Then get on to Oulu in time to shoot the rapids tomorrow. I've always wanted to do that. They say it's great sport."

The sailor, who had spoken to him in a low voice, almost furtively, when he had asked Joe's destination and then requested a lift, turned from his examination of the car.

"This is a good car," he remarked. "Almost new. A pleasure to drive, I think, no?"

"Sure," said Joe. "Susie does fine. How come you speak such good English? It's better than mine."

The man shrugged. "I went to school," he said. "I have not always been a sailor."

"You're not Finnish, are you?" asked Joe curiously.

The man's face froze. Then he smiled, but with his lips only.

"Oh yes," he said. "Why not? May I enter your car? How soon shall we leave?"

"What the heck," thought Joe momentarily ill at ease. "He's no Finn. Why doesn't he admit it? There's a little bit the air of a Prussian about him . . . but still, what would an educated Prussian be doing on a tramp freighter?" The thought vanished, blown away by the invigorating air and Joe's general sense of well-being and security.

"Pile in, brother," he said heartily. "We're off. And, by the way, my name is Joe Mikkelsen. What's yours?"

The sailor hesitated barely a second. "Paavo Murto, at your service," he said.

"Well, that's a good Finnish name, at any rate," thought Joe unsuspectingly. "I guess the guy's all right. Anyway, what can I lose? Maybe he'll turn out to be good company on the drive south. There's still a lot of it."

Paavo Murto (if that was his name) certainly put himself out to be good company on the run down to the little town of Ii. For a sailor, he seemed to know a good deal about automobiles, and insisted on taking over the wheel from Joe. He handled the car cleverly with his one hand.

"One man cannot drive fifteen to eighteen

hours a day as you have been doing, my friend," he said. "If we take it in turns we can make better time, no?"

"Are you in a hurry?" asked Joe carelessly.

The sailor looked at him sharply. "Naturally. I have only a short leave."

"What are you going to do—regain your ship at some southern port?"

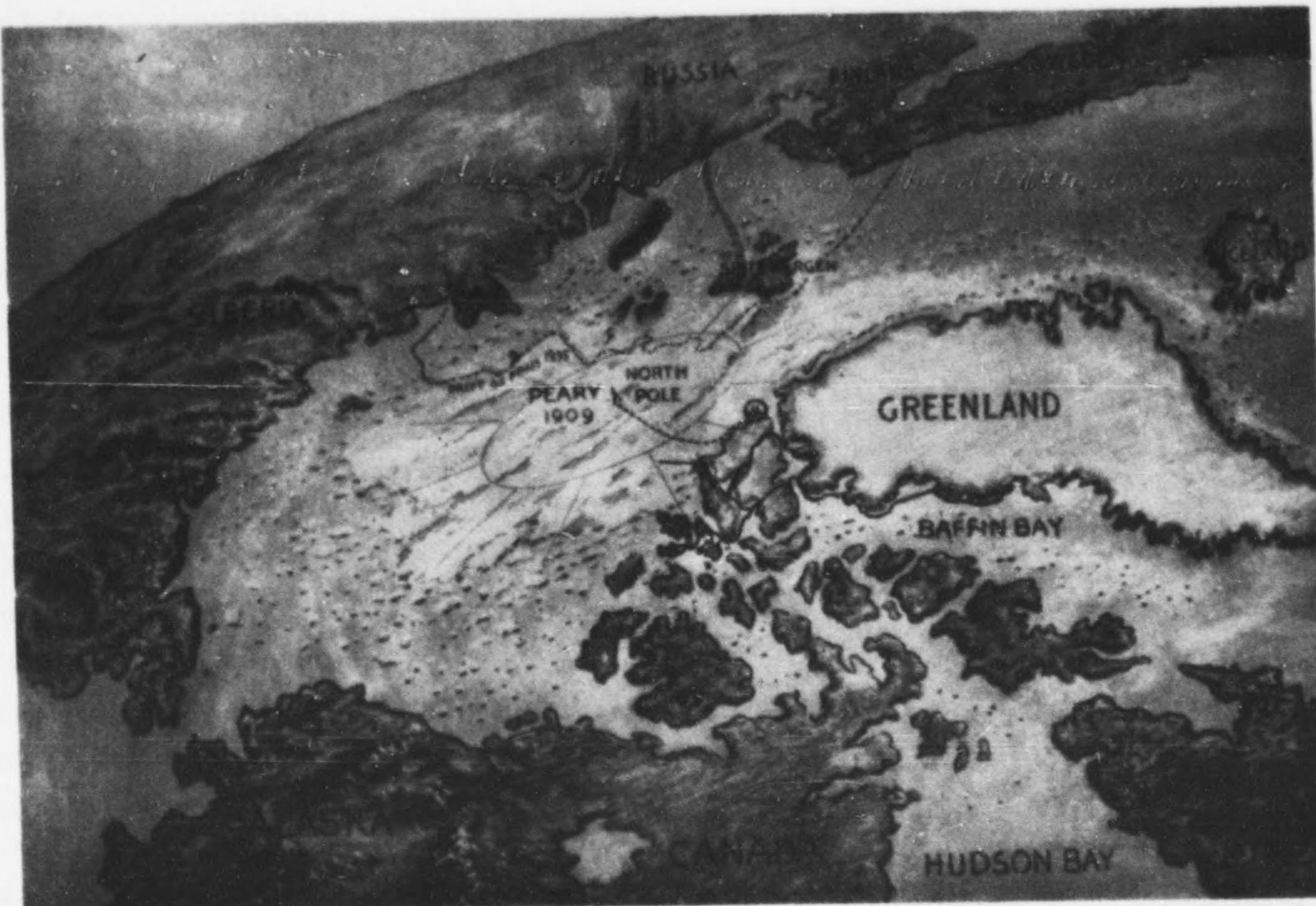
The sailor seemed about to tell him it was none of his business, then controlled himself with an effort. But a scar on the side of his face glowed red. Joe paid no attention. It was really too glorious a day to bother. He put back his head and went to sleep, only waking when they stopped beside a well-built log cabin on the outskirts of Ii.

"I propose that we do not stay with these peasants," said the sailor, and Joe thought with amusement that he seemed to have taken over direction of the trip. "I suppose that you Americans do not know about the Finnish steam bath, called the sauna. It is quite refreshing, and if we order these peasants to prepare one for us in that bath house over there, we can then push on without sleep."

Joe contemplated his travelling companion lazily, and a brief feeling of resentment passed through his mind. There was something arrogant and contemptuous in the way the fellow had pronounced the words "these peasants", and Joe, who loved and admired the Finns fervently for their indomitable "sisu", which he translated almost literally as "guts", had a momentary impulse to pin this fellow's ears back for him. True, the same contempt had sounded in the words "you Americans", but Joe never noticed that. He had no inferiority complexes of any kind, either national or personal, so it was impossible to insult him.

"It's a good idea," he remarked, repressing his belligerent impulse. "I'll ask the lady of the house if it will be convenient for her to have a steam bath prepared for us, and how much it will cost."

"They won't charge us anything," said the



FINLAND STRETCHES NORTHWARD TOWARD THE POLE

man.

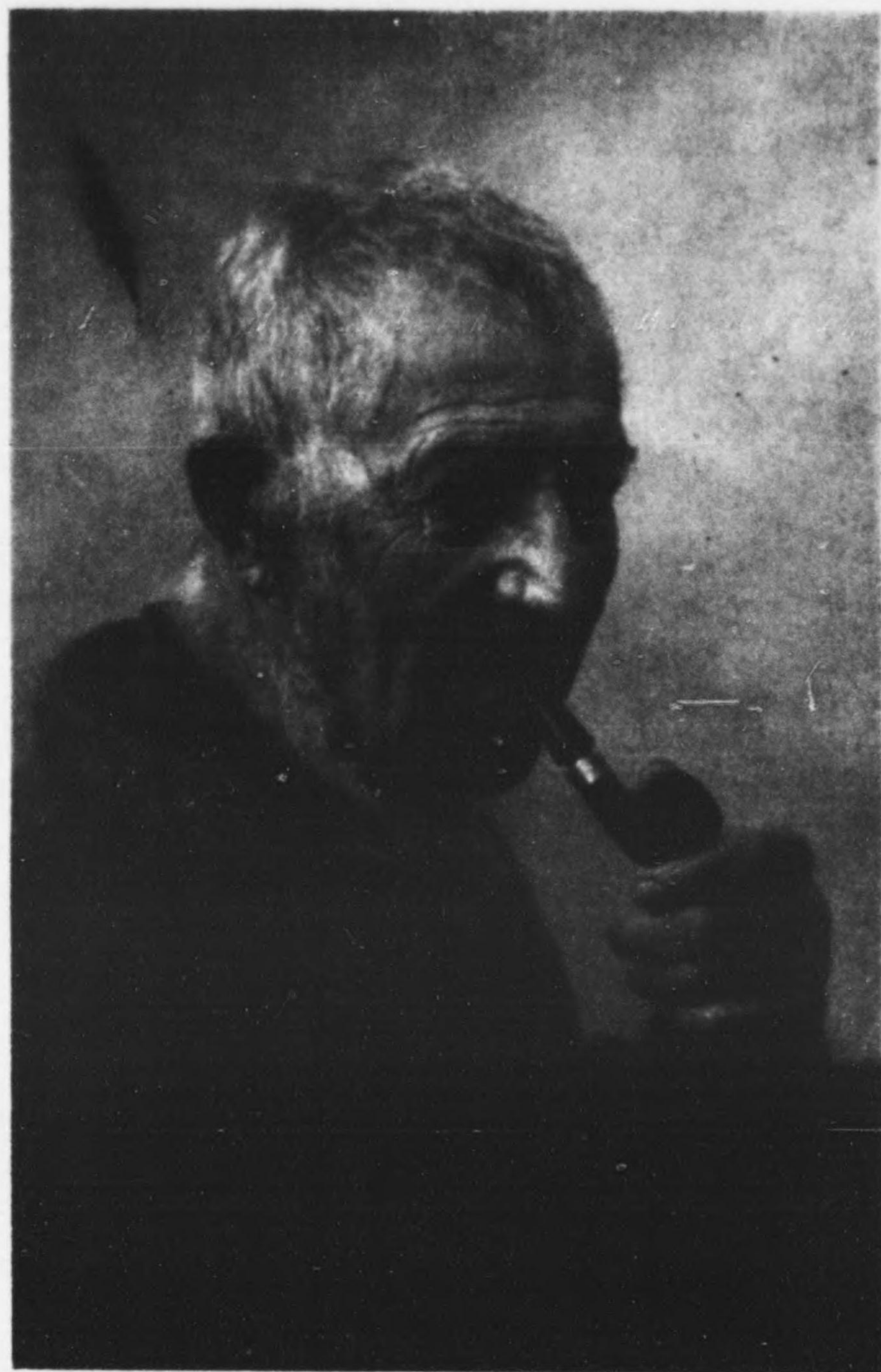
"Then we'll make them a nice present," said Joe. "We both will. You have money, I presume. The Finns aren't any too well off these days, you know. They're paying their debts like honest people."

The sailor turned on him with a snarl, quickly suppressed, and nodded.

Joe did not tell him that he knew the sauna very well indeed, having taken hundreds of them even in the dead of winter in the Arctic, when the hot steam bath and rub down were followed by a roll in the snow or a quick run through a howling blizzard. He just didn't want to talk to the fellow, and remained silent while directions were given him as they entered the tight little log cabin with its pile of glowing hot rocks in the middle and its benches on tiers to the roof. The peasant's wife had furnished them with bunches of fresh birch twigs with which they were to whip themselves lightly while the perspiration flowed from the pores of their skin, cleansing them completely, while the broken leaves left their skin smelling sweet and fresh.

"You are to climb up on the benches near the roof and lie there while I throw water on these hot stones. That makes the steam rise and fill the room. It will be hot, but this is good for you and makes you perspire," said the sailor.

"Don't you want me to attend to the water?" asked Joe politely.



"WATCH YOURSELF, YOUNG FELLOW"

"No. I will do it. I know how much water to throw."

Joe nodded and climbed up on to a middle bench. He could not insist lest he seem to be noticing the other's handicap.

"No, no. Higher up. Lie on the bench just under the roof," said the sailor, abruptly.

"Don't throw on too much water, then," remarked Joe, lying down on the top bench, crossing his arms under his head and staring at the ceiling just above his head. "This is the hottest spot in the room."

"Ah, you know that, do you, stupid fellow," muttered the sailor in a guttural language Joe did not understand, but the tone made him turn his head just in time to see the sailor pick up a pail containing two gallons of water and empty it on the glowing stones. At the same time he threw himself flat on the floor.

Clouds of scalding steam rose to the ceiling, and if Joe had not, the instant he saw the pail lifted, rolled off his bench and down to the com-

paratively cool floor, he would very likely have been scalded to death. Finns never throw more than a few cupfulls of water on the stones at a time.

"What on earth are you thinking of," he gasped as the scalding steam eddied above their two prostrate forms. "Don't you know better than that?"

The man turned his head, abject contrition on his face.

"I am so sorry," he said. "I had no idea the stones were so hot."

"But of course they're hot," returned Joe crossly. "You darn near scalded me to death." He considered the matter silently for a while. Had it really been an accident? But it was really too fantastic to think the man had deliberately tried to kill him. Why should he?

"We can finish our bath on these lower benches," he said finally, rising, "but from now on, I regulate the steam."

"Please do," said the sailor, his face contorted with apologies, "I greatly regret the mishap." Joe surveyed him for a moment, then shrugged.

The bathhouse was on the edge of the bay, and the sauna was finished by an invigorating swim in the cold salt water. Later, as the two men dressed, Joe noticed that the sailor's eyes were on him as he took some bills from his wallet.

"He couldn't be meaning to rob me," thought Joe, and deliberately flicked over the paper notes to show how few they were. What never occurred to him was that his driver's license and other papers were in that same wallet.

The peasant woman and her daughter were friendly but shy, and it was hard to make them accept any payment for their hospitality. They offered food of their poor best, crisp tunnbröd fresh from the oven, and the more substantial sour rye bread. This bread, slow baked in big home ovens, is made in wheels an inch thick and twelve to fourteen inches across, with a hole in the middle on which the flat loaves can be strung on a pole laid across the rafters. It is good, and nourishing, but not very exciting, and the woman lamented that she could not offer her guests, as always before the war, hot tea in tall glasses, with lemon and sugar and plenty of pastries. The Finns are doing without such luxuries today while they strain every nerve to pay heavy reparations to Russia and to continue payments on their war debt to the United States, an obligation left from

the first world war which they alone, of all the debtor nations, continue to meet.

Joe's travelling companion rejected the coarse rye bread brusquely, and went back to the car to wait while Joe drank his mug of milk and chewed heartily on the bread, trying his best to like it. The old grandfather had sat silently with his pipe in the corner of the clean bare kitchen.

He spoke as Joe was about to leave. "Watch yourself, young fellow," he remarked, his shrewd old eyes fixing the young American. "I've seen you ugly face before, or something like it."

"Where?" asked Joe.

"I wouldn't like to say," returned the old man. "Not liking to do the man an injustice, 'case I'm wrong. But remember there were in this country not so long ago people who came, we thought, as friends, and who laid our land and houses bare to the ground before they left. Remember that, young man."

Joe went thoughtfully back to the car, and found the sailor at the wheel.

"Move over," he said curtly. "I'll drive from now on."

The man looked at him sullenly for a moment, but Joe's straight glance did not waver. Then, instead of moving over, he climbed into the back seat. "I'll sleep, then," he muttered.

They passed through Oulu rapidly and turned inland along the highway beside the Oulojoki river, for Joe was eager to get to Vaala, which lies on the outlet of the river from Lake Oulujarvi at the point where the famous rapids begin. As they drove up river from the little tree-shaded station of Muhos, the long narrow boats shot by them through the foaming ten-mile stretch of the "Holy Rapids" and Joe, who had begun to persuade himself he should not spare the time, succumbed again to the temptation to experience the thrill of being carried skilfully through the boiling masses of water which represented

200,000 horsepower of unfettered energy.

At the hotel in Vaala, Joe's companion again attempted to take charge.

"If you ride the rapids down river, I will drive the car from here and pick you up at Muhos. Just give me your driver's license and papers so that no one will question me."

Joe looked at him. "I've arranged for a chauffeur from the hotel to drive down and pick us up. I thought you wanted to ride the rapids."

"In that case I will," said the man, and added, fixing Joe with his hard eyes, "It is your decision, remember. You have only yourself to blame."

"Now what the heck did he mean by that?" thought Joe, and soon forgot the matter in the thrill of dashing through the famous rapids. Next him sat the sailor, looking rather bored and contemptuous. Suddenly, when the narrow boat was poised on a foaming crest of water, and all the passengers were carefully obeying the order to sit quietly, the man threw himself violently to one side. It looked like a deliberate attempt to upset the boat. Joe, as he saw the man's action,



THE PEASANT WOMAN AND HER DAUGHTER WERE FRIENDLY BUT SHY



SHOOTING THE RAPIDS ON THE OULUJOKI

instinctively threw himself to the opposite side and the balance was kept.

"Hey there, sit still," shouted the guide anxiously.

"Excuse me. I was nervous," said the sailor, with a venomous glance at Joe. Joe noticed they were passing a salmon weir. The sailor was no doubt a strong swimmer. He could make it easily, even though others drowned. For that matter, Joe was a strong swimmer himself. He noticed, however, the knotted fist of his travelling companion. One to the jaw of a struggling man under water, and the body would be swept on down the current, a victim of "accident".

"But why, why, why?" thought Joe. "There's simply no reason. Maybe the guy really was nervous."

Whatever his purposes might be, Joe had by now begun to dislike the fellow intensely. But being fairminded by nature, this feeling of dislike made Joe all the more scrupulous not to be prejudiced against him to the point of injustice. However, as they left the boat and walked toward the waiting car, Joe made a half-hearted attempt to get rid of him.

"How'd you like to go on from here by rail?" he asked tentatively.

The man looked hurt. "Do you blame me still for my unfortunate mistake in the sauna? I assure you, you are unjust to me."

"I just thought . . ." began Joe, "maybe you'd like . . ."

"No, I wish to drive with you . . . unless of

course you no longer desire my company."

Joe did not reply, and the sailor took his silence for consent.

"Very well. Since we have a long journey through the empty countryside before we reach the next town of any size, which is Joensuu, I propose to sleep in the back of the car for a few hours while you drive, then I will take over."

"Look here, whose car is this?" began Joe, annoyed.

"I am very tired from the excitement of shooting the rapids," said the sailor firmly.

"I must be the first to rest. I am older than you."

The odd thought came to Joe that instead of the worn cheap clothes of a sailor from a tramp freighter, he saw the man before him in dress suit with decorations . . . and a monocle in his eye above the sabre scarred left cheek. The thought amused him so that he chuckled and slid good-naturedly under the wheel.

"All right, then, have your sleep. I'd just as soon drive. Sooner, in fact."

He swung Susie into the long empty highway and for hours he heard nothing but the shrill song of her tires as they ate up the miles, and the snores of the sailor behind him. The snores ceased as they were passing along the tree girt shore of Lake Pielinen. The scenery was so beautiful, and the air so fresh and keen, that Joe did not feel sleepy. Nevertheless he had driven a long way, and he thought he would like some sleep before arriving at Joensuu. He half turned to ask the other if he was ready to take the wheel for a while.

At that moment he felt the unmistakable round hard pressure of a gun in his left shoulder. Instantly he pressed the accelerator to the floor and the car shot down the straight highway at seventy-five miles an hour.

"Slow down or I shoot," hissed a voice in his ear.

"If you shoot we both go into the lake, car and all. I'll have just time enough to twist the wheel that way, and I'll do it," returned Joe.

calmly. "Besides," he continued, drawling, "I know you'd shoot me if I did slow down. This is a nice spot to hide a body. What is it you want, fellow? Is it the car, or my papers, or don't you like my face?"

The gun moved from Joe's shoulder to his head as the man in the back seat began climbing cautiously into the front. The roadway had left off hugging the lake shore and was running through a meadow in which sheep were grazing.

If only, Joe thought, the sheep did not decide all of a sudden to cross the road and wreck him. He took his foot off the accelerator. The car obediently began to slow down.

The pseudo-sailor, now seated beside him, spoke triumphantly.

"You see I shoot you, then I take the wheel. There will be no trouble. And as you have remarked, there are doubtless fine places along here in which to hide a body."

Joe dropped sideways and forward over the wheel. The gun went off deafeningly, singeing his hair. At the same time he threw up his right hand and caught the other's wrist in a grip that made him scream and drop the gun. Joe put his foot on it. The car swerved and came to a stop.

Joe twisted the wrist he held and the man slid down off the seat on to the floor, beads of sweat bursting out on his forehead.

"Now, what's this all about?" said Joe. "But before you tell me the story of your ignoble life, I'll just see what else you've got on you."

There was a short, razor-sharp claspknife in one pocket, but no other weapon. Joe put the knife in his own pocket, and tossed the gun into a reedy marsh beside the road. On second thought, he threw the knife in too.

"Now we're even," he remarked, turning back to his prisoner and releasing his nerve-shattering pressure on his arm.

"Ju-jitsu," he explained with a grin. "It's a good game in a pinch . . . and I do mean pinch. I've an idea

you're wanted by some police somewhere, and wanted badly. I don't like mysteries, and I'll be glad if you'll proceed to clear this one up."

The man stared sullenly at the floor.

"Won't talk, eh?" said Joe. "I could make you, you know." The man cringed. "But I guess I won't. We'll just sit here, all cosy, side by side, until I get you to Helsinki. The authorities there can look up your record. I'll bet it's a beauty."

"No record," said the man. "I only wanted your car."

"You've had chances to steal it. Or why not just knock me out? Why kill me for it?"

"You'd have given the alarm," muttered the other. "My business is personal and private. I want no Finnish or American noses poked into it."

"Okay, okay," grinned Joe, as the car started smoothly on its way once more. "You'd be surprised how completely uninterested I was in your affairs until you started your fun and games back there in the sauna. What were you going to do, leave me writhing on the top bench for old grandpa to find, while you nipped out with my wallet and papers and drove away in my car?"

"It would have been a solution to my problem, yes," returned the man coolly.



IN THE MARKET AT SAVONLINNA



AN OLD RUNES SINGER OF FINLAND

"But, man! There are hundreds of busses and dozens of railways, in Finland, not to speak of the lake and river steamers that will take you everywhere. Why risk a murder rap?"

The one-armed man said nothing. Joe contemplated him for a moment.

"Look here," he said finally, "Why don't you tell me your problem, if it's as desperate as all that. Maybe I could help you."

The man turned on him a glance of unfathomable contempt in which there was a sardonic amusement.

Joe shrugged. "Oh all right, if you think I'm just a dope. But don't try anything, will you? You missed several chances, and now I'm warned, and your weapons are gone. I wouldn't find you much of a handful if it came to a scuffle."

They drove on in silence, passing through Joensuu without stopping. After several hours of silence Joe's prisoner appeared to make up his mind to be friendly.

"We will soon be in Sortavala," he remarked. "And not far from there, I understand, at Savonlinna, is the famous Olaf's castle, the best preserved medieval castle in the northern countries. You have seen it, no?"

"No," Joe echoed him shortly, preoccupied in listening to the sound of his car. Every now and then there was a queer noise in the engine.

"Then why do we not drive there for a sight of it? I assure you it is worth while, or so I have been told. They say that thirteen thousand can-

dles were burned each year to light its many dark stone rooms."

"Is that so . . . Boy, what's going on here? The town is jammed with people."

They were entering the outskirts of Sortavala, and it was apparent that one of the traditional music festivals was in progress, for Finland is a land of music and song. The Finnish composer Sibelius is accorded international homage. Joe guided Susie, who was coughing badly, into the square where he could hear the noble strains of "Finlandia" being sung by many trained voices.

"If this is a general holiday," he thought, "I'm sunk. I need a garage and I need it now. Susie's got trouble."

Ordinarily he was quite competent to give Susie any attention she might require, but he dared not take his eye off his prisoner, and to take out his tool box, and put its heavy spanner within reach even of a one-armed man, would be dangerous.

The car had stopped, and ignored his attempts to start it again. They sat on the outskirts of the crowd and listened to the magnificent music of several hundred voices. As the last notes of the chorus died away, an old runes singer stepped out in front of a group of younger people and began to sing some of the traditional songs of Finland. These were obviously well known to the listeners, who gave him rapt attention.

He ended with the haunting strains of "Suomi's Song", written by a Finnish poet to express the magic and sorrow of Finland's history, the melancholy wilderness of her great forests, the clear sparkling beauty of her 60,000 lakes, the delicacy of her silver birches and the calm glory of her midnight suns. Suomi is the name the Finns give to their country, and when they speak it, one can hear in the syllables the sound of the wind in the forest.

Joe lost himself in the beauty of the song, and although he heard his prisoner stir cautiously beside him, he was too absorbed to turn his head. Even after the song had ended he sat a while mo-

tionless, listening to the memory of it in his mind, and when he did turn his head he saw that the seat beside him was empty, and the car door swung open.

"Well, good riddance," he thought. "Whatever the guy's crazy idea is, he'll now try to get where he's going some other way." He felt a little guilty, for the man was certainly dangerous and desperate. However, Joe had disarmed him and the Finns are well able to take care of themselves in a fair fight.

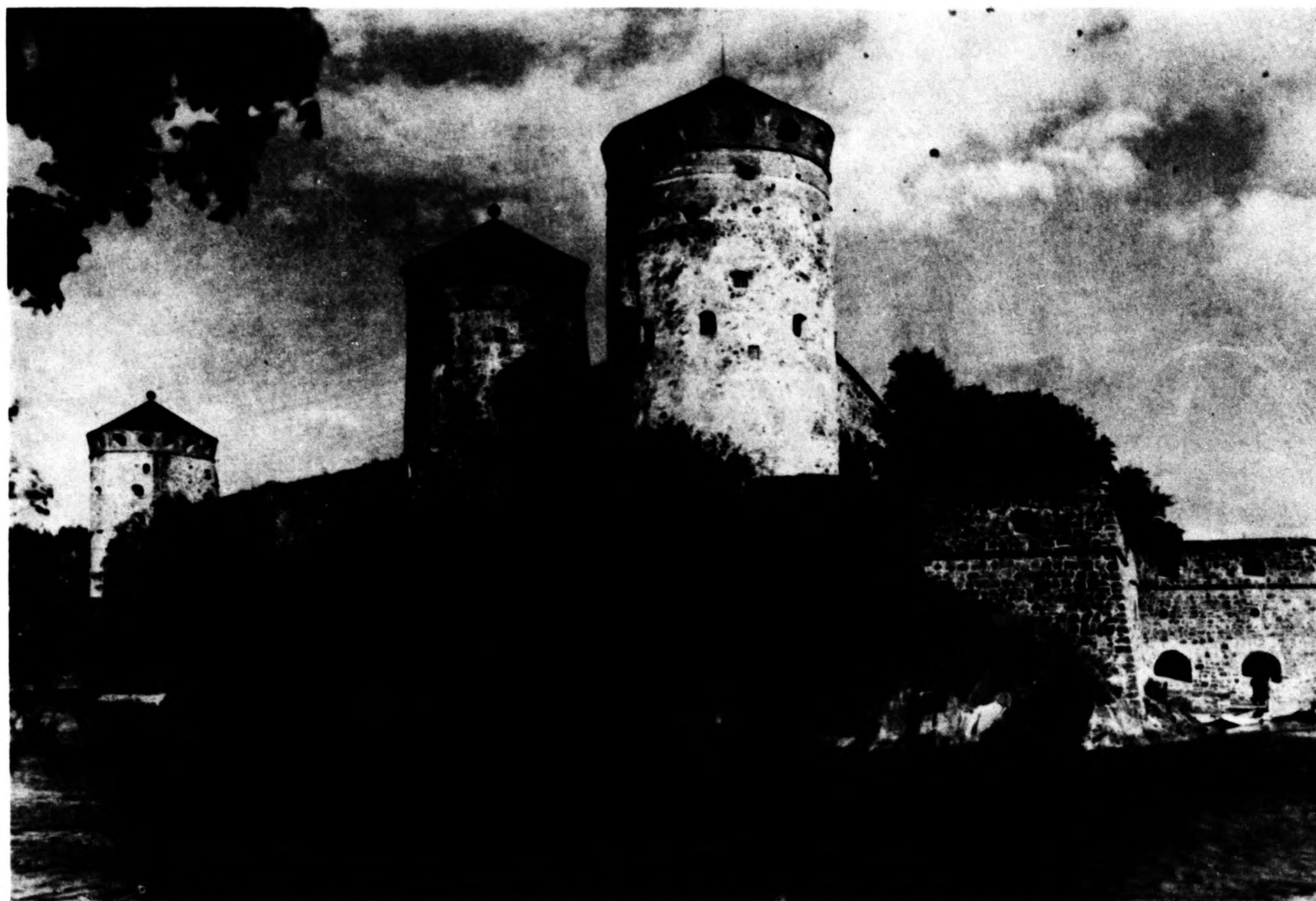
Having left his car to be overhauled, he took a bus for Olaf's castle at Savonlinna. The lake surrounds the castle like a moat, and as the little steamer chugged toward the landing, Joe noticed that the current was exceedingly swift. It looked to be what it was, a mighty fortress with a long history of battle. It was built, his guide book told him, by the Swedes, for Finland was once a part of Sweden. Then it was taken by Russia, ceded to Finland, retaken by the Czars, besieged by a Finnish-Swedish army and finally handed over to the Duchy of Finland by Russia a century ago. Its value as a fortress has fortunately disap-

peared in an age of bombing planes, so that it is now one of the chief tourist attractions of Finland and little more.

Joe followed the guide through the dim stone rooms, of which there seemed to be hundreds, climbed winding stairways, admired the view from the round windows at the top of the towers, and finally separated himself from the party of tourists to wander among the trees outside the walls and dream of the days when knights were bold enough to fight man to man, and were not clever enough to send planes through the sky to drop bombs on defenseless farmers and refugees.

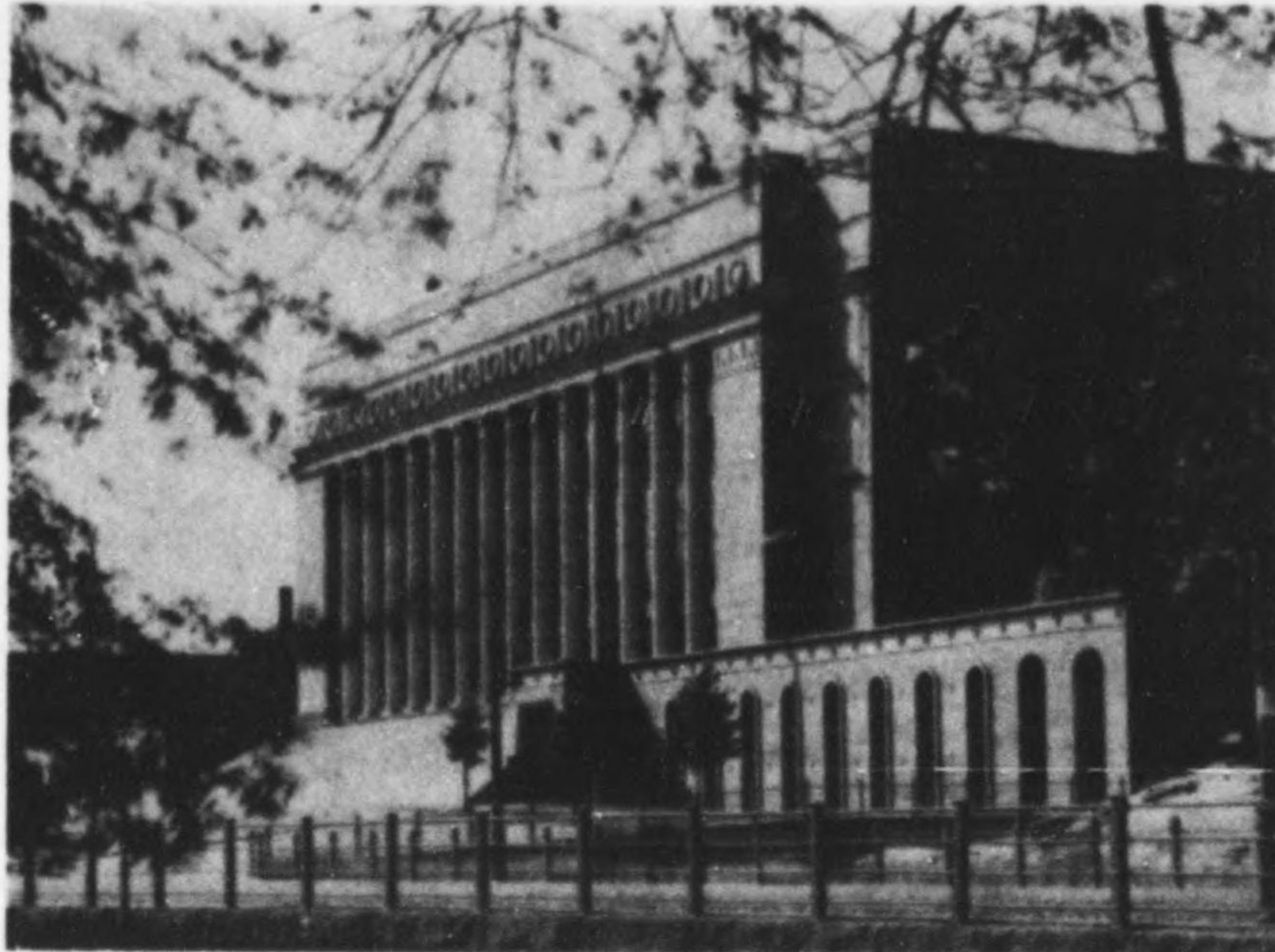
A slight disturbance in the bushes nearby startled him out of his thought, and he turned to see a very ragged man dart into a hole in the ground at the base of the thick stone wall. Out of idle curiosity he followed. The hole was nothing but a small cave, screened by bushes, and the man was soon cornered. He stood with his back to the wall panting with terror and brandishing a small club.

"Don't come any nearer," he gasped, in broken English. "Leave me alone."



OLAF'S CASTLE AT SAVONLINNA





FINLAND'S IMPRESSIVE PARLIAMENT BUILDING

"I won't hurt you, friend," said Joe. "What's eating you? You look scared."

The man turned his head and listened anxiously. There was a sound of stealthy movement among the bushes. He put a finger to his lips for silence, and with his other hand, dropping his makeshift club, pulled Joe farther into the cave. Joe, putting aside the screening bushes in spite of the man's protests, peered out to see what was the danger he feared. To his amazement it was the one-armed sailor, armed now with a heavy billet of wood. A wave of annoyance followed the surprise in Joe's mind.

"The man must be a maniac," he thought, "going around attacking people like this. Unless, of course, it's still me he's after."

"Do you know him?" he whispered, turning to the ragged man at his side.

The man nodded, his eyes big with fear in his thin face.

"What's he after?"

The man looked at him a moment, decided to trust him, and pulled from under his ragged shirt a small leather bag that hung on a string.

"Is it his?"

The man nodded. "In a way," he admitted.

"Then why don't you give it to him?"

The ragged man opened his mouth to reply when the one-armed sailor, whose ears must have been very keen, suddenly whirled around and plunged through the shrubbery toward the cave's mouth. Instantly the little man at Joe's side dropped to his hands and knees and scuttled out along the edge of the wall. He moved so silently and swiftly under the leaves that Joe saw he had had a good deal of experience in avoiding attention. He wondered about that for a second, and

then forgot it as he found himself face to face with the angry eyes of the one-armed sailor.

"Still interfering, eh?" he gritted through his teeth as he recognized Joe.

"Yep," said Joe. His hand shot out and caught the hand that held the billet of wood just as it was being raised to strike. "You know, I'm really getting curious about . . ." He broke off with a gasp, for the sailor had let go of the heavy weapon so that it fell across Joe's wrist, momentarily paralyzing it. In a second the man was off, crashing after the little ragged fellow who had taken to his heels.

"Uh-uh," grunted Joe, rubbing his wrist and watching, "he's driving him toward the water. Does he mean to drown him? The little thin guy wouldn't be strong enough to swim much in that current."

Coldbloodedly the sailor drove the ragged man over the edge, and as he fell, reached out and snatched the leather bag that hung around his neck.

"So now we know," remarked Joe, crashing down the slope and throwing himself at the sailor to drag him back from the little man. He was able to spoil his aim at the leather bag and throw the sailor off balance, but a powerful arm went around his neck and they both went into the swift and icy current. Joe heard the ragged man struggling feebly near by, but before he could attempt to rescue him, he had first to get himself free. A well directed right to the chin quickly ended his unequal struggle with the one-armed man.

"Hated to do that," muttered Joe, as with powerful strokes he got the limp weight to shore. "Wouldn't strike a cripple ordinarily. It isn't done."

As soon as he had got the sailor to shore he stood, breathing heavily, looking for signs of the other. At last he saw his head rise out of the water for the last time. Apparently he either could not swim at all, or was too weak to make much effort against the strong current. Joe dived and in a few long strokes was beside him. The man was conscious and clutched his shoulder.

"Now," said Joe firmly, as they sat shivering in the sun beside the still unconscious sailor, "I want to know what this is all about. Who is this guy and why?"

"He very important man in Nazi government," said the ragged little fellow in his broken English. "I know him well. In the war I was his orderly. He lose arm by shell. I wait by him

for doctors. He delirious. Talk. Speak of key in bag. I learn this key to vault where hidden many papers now wanted by Allied Commission. I am very sick of war. I was seeing many good people, poor peasants, killed and tortured by our armies in retreat from Finland. I stole the leather bag from around his neck. I am thinking maybe it is key to vault where is maybe evidence that will make him and others like him punished for the things I see them do. I desert the army and make my way back through the Finnish lines to here. I am fearing very much and I hide myself."

"You must have been hiding here for a couple of years or more, then," said Joe. "How do you live?"

"I catch fish. Sometimes tourists leave a little bread behind. Always I think someday I get back to Berlin somehow and give key to Allied Commission. I read sometimes about things in newspapers tourists leave."

"What do you say you let me take care of the key from here on out," suggested Joe after think-

ing the matter over in silence for a while. "You say this guy here is wanted by the Allies. He must have some influence to get himself taken on as a sailor with one arm, even on a tramp freighter."

"He had great power," agreed the ragged man, his teeth chattering with cold. "These papers in the vault belong to many high Nazis. That gave him power."

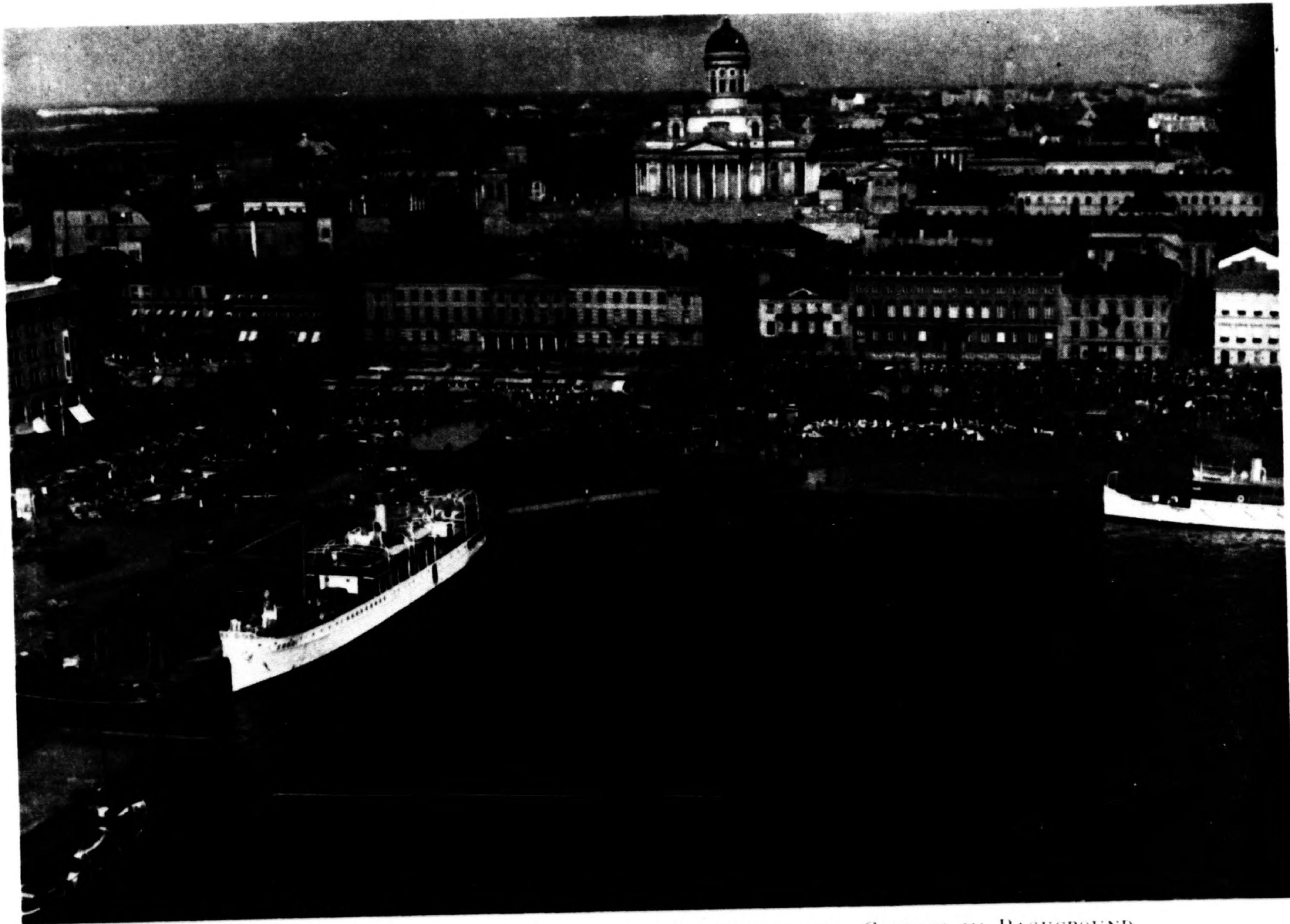
"Blackmail, eh?" Joe glanced down at the unconscious form beside him. "You got any rope?"

"My fishing line," said the man eagerly. "I unraveled my socks and made it. It is strong."

"We'll wrap it around his waist and his one arm and he won't be able to do much when he comes to. You come along with me to Helsinki and we'll hand him over to the authorities."

"What will they do to me?" whimpered the little man, weak with cold and long starvation.

"Why, brother, they'll reward you," said Joe heartily. "From what you say you're doing the Allies a favor. Nobody's going to hate you for it."



HELSINKI: SOUTH HARBOR AND MARKET PLACE: SUURKIRKKO CHURCH IN BACKGROUND



## Metal Mirrors of Aranmula

BY K. P. PADMANABHAN TAMPY

Trivandrum, Travancore, South India

**A**BOUT ninety-two miles to the north of Trivandrum is the ancient village of Aranmula idyllically situated in the Thiruvalla taluk on the left bank of the river Pamba. Famous for its old temple consecrated to God Parthasarathi, and the spectacular annual snake boat regattas, Aranmula is the home of the unique bell metal industry carried on by a select band of hereditary master craftsmen who alone know the secret of casting bell metal mirrors from their special alloy of copper and tin.

ARANMULA KANNADI (Aranmula Mirror), which has gathered around it a tradition and sanctity and has been hailed as the finest and rarest example of bell metal casting, is considered to be one of the most treasured curios of the world. Inspired art and impeccable craftsmanship combine to render the manufacture of this mirror one of the most wonderful achievements

of indigenous art-crafts, as remarkable as the mummification in ancient Egypt.

The history of the origin of the industry is lost in obscurity. Tradition and legend aver that nearly four centuries ago, the Chief of the principality of Aranmula, a patron of arts and crafts, brought down a few families of KANNANS, professional casters in bronze, to settle down in his principality and make the ceremonial utensils, decorative lamps, bells and such other articles required for daily use in the temple.

He endowed the artisans with liberal grants of lands and special privileges. For some reason the craftsmen proved unsuccessful in their efforts to turn out the required articles to the satisfaction of the connoisseur Chief. The indignant Chief threatened the KANNANS with eviction. The craftsmen, who were at their wits' ends, offered special sacrifices and prayers to the deity

"ONE-ARMED SAILOR"—Cont. from Page 13.

"I just want to get back to my little farm in Saxony," said the man. "I was a good farmer once before they made me go to war. I want to go back home."

"All right, fellow, I'll see what I can do. This guy is coming round. Look at him glare. It's lucky we've got him well tied up, because he doesn't like us one bit. We'll walk him back to the boat landing. Here, help me fasten him into my overcoat, so no one will see he's tied. He won't want to attract attention, but we'll have to watch him. He's a sly one, and he'll get away if he can, on the way to Helsinki. I hope Susie's fixed up so we can leave at once."

Susie was ready to go and purred pleasantly down the highway toward Helsinki, the sullen prisoner silent beside Joe, and the little man, whose name was Hans Fischer, curled up asleep

on the back seat. Joe had found in his suitcase sweater and slacks, which, though they were too big for the little man, were at least warm and dry. The sailor, whose real name was Fritz Meyerhold, Colonel Fritz Meyerhold, was truculent when Joe gave his best sweater to the former orderly, and made the officer wear the only other outfit he had with him, oily from tinkering with the car.

"I wish you to understand," he said haughtily, "that this fellow was my servant. It is for him to wear the old clothes. I will take the good pair. You cannot expect me to appear before the Commission in these filthy rags of yours."

Joe laughed. "I'd let you wear your wet ones and get pneumonia," he said, "except I want to keep you healthy for your trial. The Allies will fix you up, for free. In stripes."

(THE END)

Photos: Courtesy Suomen-Matkat, Helsinki, Finland.

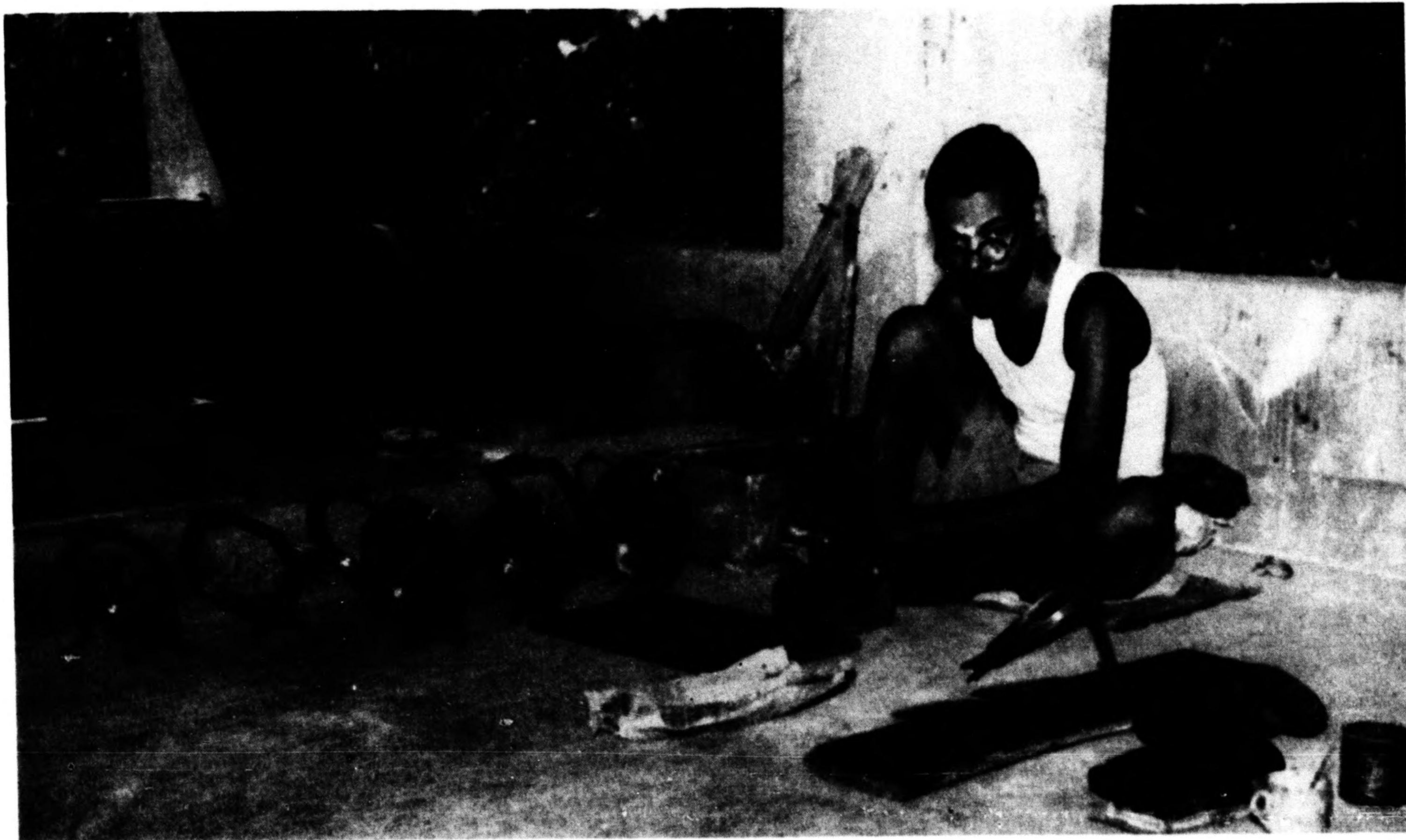
in the temple and decided to make a unique crown for the image in the shrine. The women folk of the KANNANS threw into the melting pot all their tin ornaments, accompanied by prayers and entreaties to the God to save their husbands from disgrace. The crown made out of the combination of copper and tin, the exact proportion of which was at that time unknown to the casters, was a marvel of art and craft. Silverlike in color, and brittle like glass, it shone with rare brilliance, and when cleaned acquired the quality of reflection. The *makudam* or crown known as "*Kannadi Bimbom*" (Mirror Image) is even now preserved in the Aranmula temple and worshipped.



THE ANNUAL SNAKE BOAT REGATTA AT ARANMULA

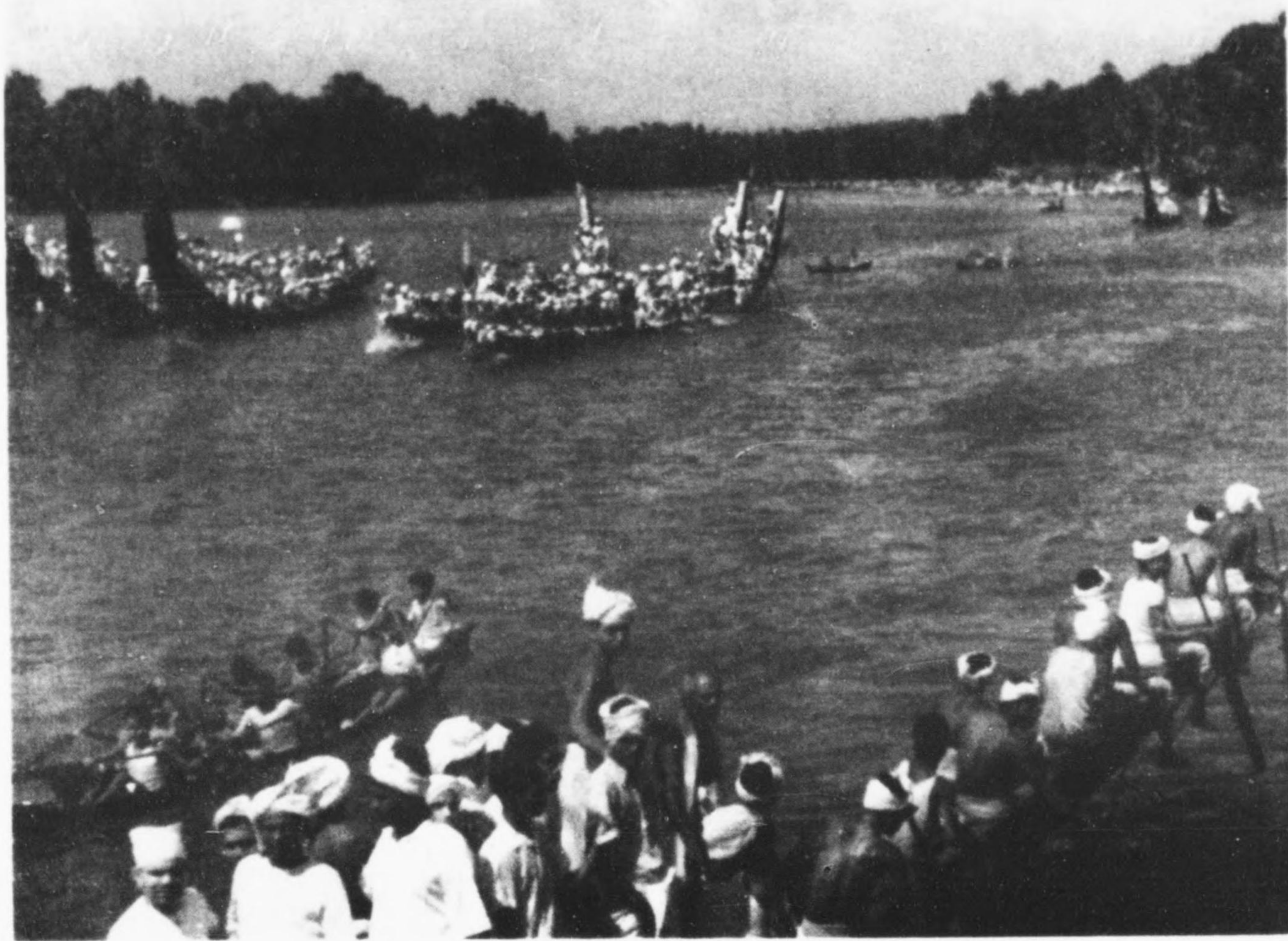
This startling and fortuitous discovery was immediately put to use by the intrepid Chief and the talented craftsmen. The casters worked out

the proper proportion of the different metals and manufactured mirrors. The Chief liberally patronized the craftsmen in developing the industry.



A MASTER CRAFTSMAN AT WORK

in the temple and decided to make a unique crown for the image in the shrine. The women folk of the KANNANS threw into the melting pot all their tin ornaments, accompanied by prayers and entreaties to the God to save their husbands from disgrace. The crown made out of the combination of copper and tin, the exact proportion of which was at that time unknown to the casters, was a marvel of art and craft. Silverlike in color, and brittle like glass, it shone with rare brilliance, and when cleaned acquired the quality of reflection. The *makudam* or crown known as "*Kannadi Bimbom*" (Mirror Image) is even now preserved in the Aranmula temple and worshipped.



THE ANNUAL SNAKE BOAT REGATTA AT ARANMULA

This startling and fortuitous discovery was immediately put to use by the intrepid Chief and the talented craftsmen. The casters worked out

the proper proportion of the different metals and manufactured mirrors. The Chief liberally patronized the craftsmen in developing the industry.



A MASTER CRAFTSMAN AT WORK



SACRED METAL MIRRORS

He proclaimed that the metal mirror was a gift of God and laid down that it should form one of the eight auspicious articles used in all Hindu religious rites. By observing this rule himself, he gave the lead, and the prominent people in the village followed suit. The ARANMULA KANNADI thus became an article of every-day use in the Hindu household and was invested with a halo of sanctity.

The metal mirror is cast from an alloy of copper and tin, the exact proportion of which is a closely guarded secret of only two surviving families of KANNANS at Aranmula. The metal mirror is usually oval in shape, six inches by four inches, and about one-fifth of an inch thick, and has a bright and polished surface as that of cut

glass mirrors. The polishing of the surface of the mirror is a difficult and delicate job demanding consummate technical skill and patience.

A rich paste of rice bran and laurel or *Maroti* (*Hydnocarpus Wightiana*) oil is used for this purpose. The polished plate is fixed with a mixture of lac and wax on an artistically engraved brass frame. Scientific skill and mastery of craftsmanship of the most advanced type are required for casting these mirrors. The mirror elicits both the envy and admiration of modern metallurgists. The cost of materials required for casting these mirrors is small compared with the extent of highly skilled labor which the complicated process of manufacture demands.

Master craftsmen prepare the mould, the alloy and the wax, and attend to casting and polishing. The making of a mirror involves the strenuous efforts of a whole family for four days. The price is about Rs. 15. Although Aranmula Metal Mirrors may not be able to compete with cheap glass mirrors, they are prized very much by collectors of curios, especially connoisseurs hailing from foreign countries. There is every scope for the manufacture of metal mirrors flourishing as a cottage craft.

*Photos: Courtesy K. P. Tampi, So. India.*



TROPICAL SOUTH INDIA



AN INDIAN HOLY MAN

## SCIENCE KNOWS NO NATIONAL BOUNDARIES



# OUR ATMOSPHERE

## AIR...Sea Level and UP

By Raydelle Josephson

### What is air?

Air covers the surface of the earth, and provides the atmosphere in which we live. This atmosphere is a gas, and as in all gases, the particles, or molecules, of which it is composed, move about freely and with enormous speed. Collisions with one another and with the sides of any container in which they happen to be produce a continuous pressure in all directions.

Air pressure amounts to about one ton on each square foot of area. If a container filled with air is evacuated, the air outside pushing against it will collapse the container unless the sides are strong enough to resist the pressure.

Air is actually a mixture of gases, mostly nitrogen and oxygen. Air over the water picks up salt and water, and air over busy cities picks up exhaust gases from engines and gases from factory smokestacks. In the one case, fog is produced, and in the other, a dusty haze.

As one climbs a mountain or goes up in an airplane, the surrounding air is found to be less compressed by the weight of the air above. About three miles away from the surface of the earth, there is only about half as much air compressed into each cubic foot of space as at sea level. This means that there is less oxygen present, and breathing becomes difficult. At this height the temperature drops to about 5 degrees Fahrenheit or—15 degrees Centigrade. (The Fahrenheit thermometer, by which temperatures are measured in the United States, represents the freezing point of water at 32 degrees and the boiling point at 212 degrees. The Centigrade, or Celsius, thermometer, used in

most of the other countries in the world, represents the freezing point of water at 0 degrees and the boiling point at 100 degrees.)

### Is air everywhere the same?

The earth is known to be slightly flattened at the poles and to bulge slightly at the equator, and the layer of air nearest the earth also assumes this irregular shape.

The region of the atmosphere starting at the surface of the earth, extending up about 5 miles at the latitude of the poles and about 10 miles at the latitude of the equator, is called the *troposphere*. Flying in this region may be disturbed by wind currents and storm, and since this is the region where most flying is done, a pilot learns to watch constantly for unexpected occurrences.

The outer region of the atmosphere is called the *stratosphere*, and is separated from the troposphere by a boundary region called the *tropopause*. Before planes were built which could fly in the stratosphere, its behavior was studied by observing shooting stars and the Aurora Borealis, and by measuring the length and color of twilight. Later, balloons were sent up into the stratosphere, and it was found that the temperature up to a height reached by the balloons remained the same for the whole extent of the region, at almost 100 degrees below freezing. It was believed then that in the stratosphere the radiation absorbed into the air exactly counterbalanced the radiation emitted by the sun.

### How does the sun affect air?

Air is not perfectly transparent, and the rays from the sun are scattered so widely and are so



greatly absorbed by the molecules of the air, that only about half of the rays sent out from the sun reach the earth.

Of all the colors of light which make up the sun's rays, blue is the most greatly absorbed by the air, and the sky therefore appears blue to us on earth. The light that does get through to the surface of the earth is mostly yellow and red. These colors are known to carry more heat than blue, and after they have reached the earth, they heat the air above it, the regions nearest the earth being heated the most. This is why it is warmer near the surface of the earth than it is several miles nearer the sun.

*What else affects air?*

Although it was believed for many years that temperature through-out the stratosphere was constant, on February 2, 1947, it was officially announced in the United States that experiments making use of rockets and radio-equipped balloons had revealed the existence of two isolated regions of high temperature in the stratosphere.

In a region between 30 and 40 miles away from the surface of the earth, the temperature had been found to be 170 degrees Fahrenheit, of 77 degrees Centigrade. In a region about 70 miles away from the surface of the earth, the air was found to have suddenly become so hot that it actually boils. It is even more surprising to learn that between the two regions the temperature was found to drop below zero on both scales.

And how does this discovery fit into the scheme explained above? First of all, it was discovered that over the region 30 to 40 miles away from the surface of the earth, where the temperature first rises suddenly, that there is a layer of almost pure ozone, which is a form of oxygen capable of absorbing and holding more heat from the sun than the air below it.

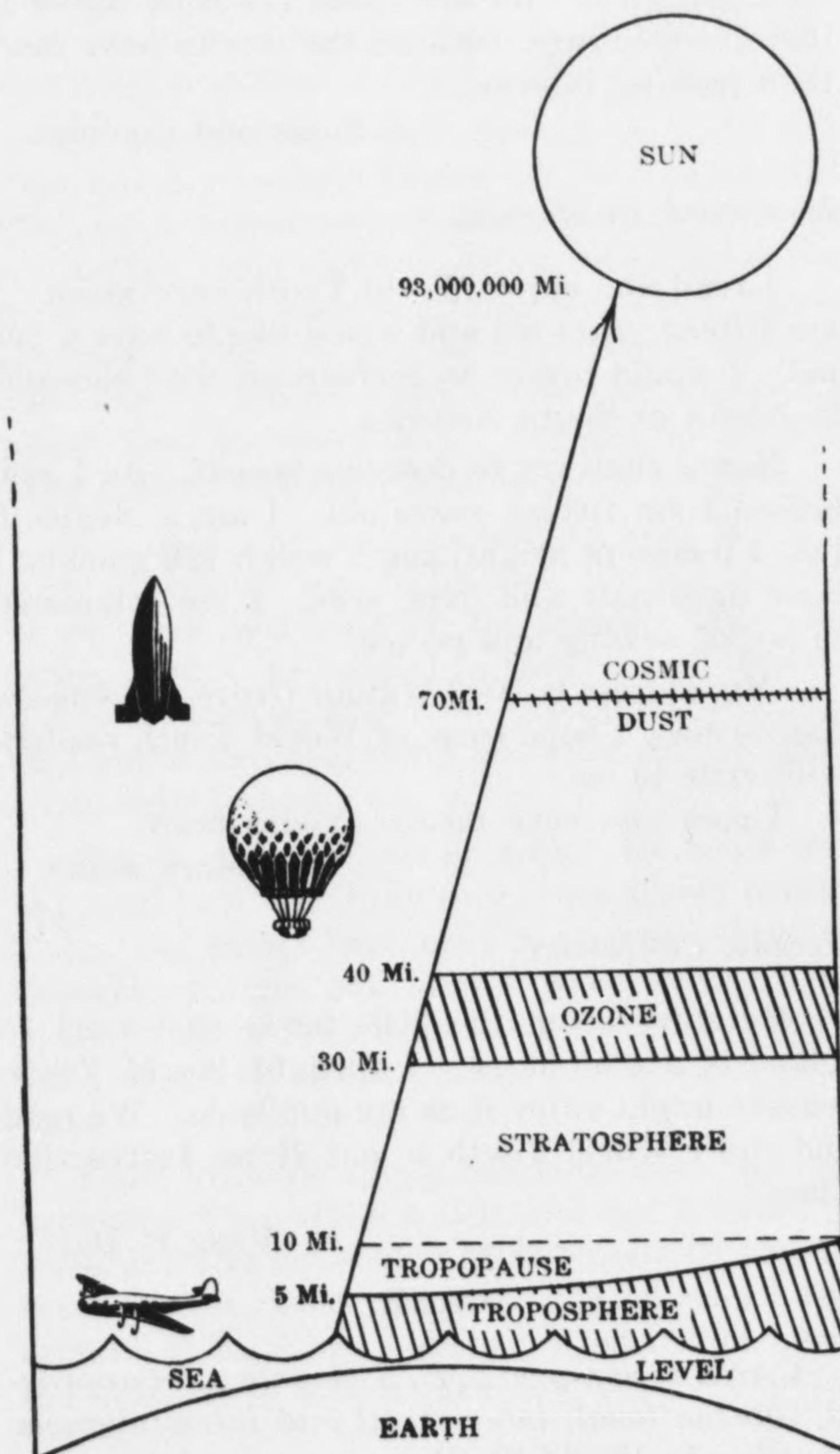
Similarly, at the region about 70 miles away from the surface of the earth, where the temperature again rises suddenly, there is a second layer capable of holding more heat than the air below. This layer is made up of particles, affected by rays from outer space among the stars, many times distant from our sun, and known as cosmic dust. Scientists know very little as yet about the nature of these particles.

We have seen that, starting at the surface of the earth and proceeding upward, the temperature of the air gets closer and closer to freezing, and finally, in the stratosphere, settles down to around

100 degrees below freezing, with two exceptions. At a distance 30 to 40 miles up, and at 70 miles up, there are "hot spots" in the atmosphere of the earth!

We have seen, too, that the presence of cosmic dust may raise the temperature in the stratosphere. What happens when dust particles from the earth are forced into the stratosphere? Science history tells us that after the volcanic eruptions of Krakatoa, near Java, in 1883, of Mont Pelee on Martinique in 1902, and of Katmai in Alaska in 1912, a reddish halo was seen around the sun which dimmed the sunlight and was found to consist of dust particles.

We see then that dust in the air near the surface of the earth can greatly reduce the light and heat which the earth may obtain from the sun, not by serving as a blanket, but by rising into the stratosphere itself.



# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



*World Youth's Pen Friends Write in From Many Countries*



*Belmont Day School  
Belmont, Massachusetts.*

World Youth is an unusual contribution to good understanding of all parts of the world for boys and girls. We are filing the back copies in the school library, because the stories have more than passing interest.

Rosamond Coolidge.

*Rosemead, California.*

I read and enjoy World Youth very much. I am fifteen years old and would like to have a pen pal. I would prefer to correspond with someone in Africa or South America.

Now I shall try to describe myself. As I said before I am fifteen years old. I am a Negro, 5 feet 4 inches in height, and I weigh 120 pounds. I have dark hair and dark eyes. I am interested in books, sewing and people.

My address is 2008 Walnut Grove, Rosemead, California. I hope some of World Youth readers will write to me.

Thank you very much. Yours truly,  
Mary Jones.

*Fresno, California.*

My story about the little burro that went to school is a true story. I thought World Youth readers might enjoy it as my pupils do. We read and enjoy World Youth in our Home Instruction Class.

Viola P. Day.

CARE

*CARE is non-profit, U. S. Government approved, international, inter-racial and inter-religious. That is why World Youth can recommend it.*

*From San Francisco*

Through World Youth I have a pen pal in France. Her family lost a lot in the war and I would like to send her a present, because we have so much more than they have now because of the war. I don't know how to send it though, and I don't know exactly what to send. Can you tell me what to do so my pen pal and her family would be sure to get it?

Thank you a lot.

Betty Lampson

ED. NOTE: *This is a fine idea, Betty, and yes, we do know how you can send your present if you can raise \$10.00, which is the cost of any one of a number of packages containing things that people abroad need. These packages are sent by CARE, and delivery is guaranteed or your money back. It is true that packages sent by individuals are sometimes lost on the way, but CARE has everything streamlined and is absolutely efficient.*

*The packages are standard and are airfreighted to the CARE representative in the country designated, who takes care of delivery. So there is no delay. Some of the packages contain woollen or cotton cloth with thread etc. so that people can make themselves the dresses or suits they need. Some packages contain needed kinds of food.*

*Since your present would be for France, why not send the Standard Food Package which contains all sorts of good things to eat? Or you could send the Knitting Wool package so your friends could knit themselves warm sweaters. Just send \$10.00, and the name of the package you want sent, to CARE either in New York (50 Broad Street) or to the CARE office in San Francisco (444 Market Street, Room 209). I know ten dollars seems a lot of money, but the package will be tremendously appreciated.*

## The Little Burro That Went To School

Looking at Mike you'd think he was just like any other burro. He might have been a mite shorter than some of his relatives, but he had their same short-haired grey coloring, with a big white patch on his nose. He was the friendliest animal I've ever seen—a good worker and plenty smart. But Mike was different—guess it was because he'd gone to school.

Mike must have been about ten years old when we bought him and in lots of ways he was brighter than humans I know, and he had a remarkable memory. He never forgot people nor places.

We took him back into the woods with us to hunt gold—some eighteen miles from any neighbor. He stayed around camp without a hitch, a self-supporting animal if there ever was one. I'd have to grin to see him ferret into thick manzanita wood for choice bits of grass that cattle wouldn't bother to get. He sure looked funny, just his little backside showing and that tail swishing contentedly to and fro.

But pancakes and bread were his choice for food. Every morning he'd come close to watch me cook flapjacks, his eyes begging for a share. And if my partner got to gesturing and talking when he had pancakes on his tin plate, Mike would snatch those cakes so quietly that Bill wouldn't even miss them 'til his fork hit tin instead of cake.

All summer long Mike followed me wherever I'd go, carrying my pack and tools on his back. I never had to lead him until one day when he scented a bear. Now burros can live in a country where we'd kill a rattler a day; where all kinds of wild animals could be seen, but bear is one animal that scares them silly. This is how I found out:

I was walking on an old Indian trail one day when a voice hailed me. I ordered Mike to stop while I went to see what he wanted. There was a man, tugging at the biggest bear I'd ever seen and he as sweating and cussing and getting nowhere fast.

"You'd better skin that bear and cut it up before you try to haul him out of here," I advised.

"Nothing doin'. But I'll give you five dollars and some good meat if you'll have your burro help

haul him up to our camp," he said.

"Sure", I agreed. It looked like easy money to me. We rolled the dead bear to the creek and then I went back for Mike. Seems like Mike hadn't scented bear until then. One whiff—and he was off like a shot. I've never seen five dollars go up in dust so fast before nor since. There went all my equipment, too, so I left the man to figure out his own problem while I hunted Mike. And the next time over that trail I led Mike on a halter, fearing he'd remember bear and run away!

Mike's favorite literature was the Montgomery Ward catalogue. If Bill happened to leave it around, Mike would tear out the pages leaf by leaf, chewing or tossing them aside, as the articles listed appealed to him!

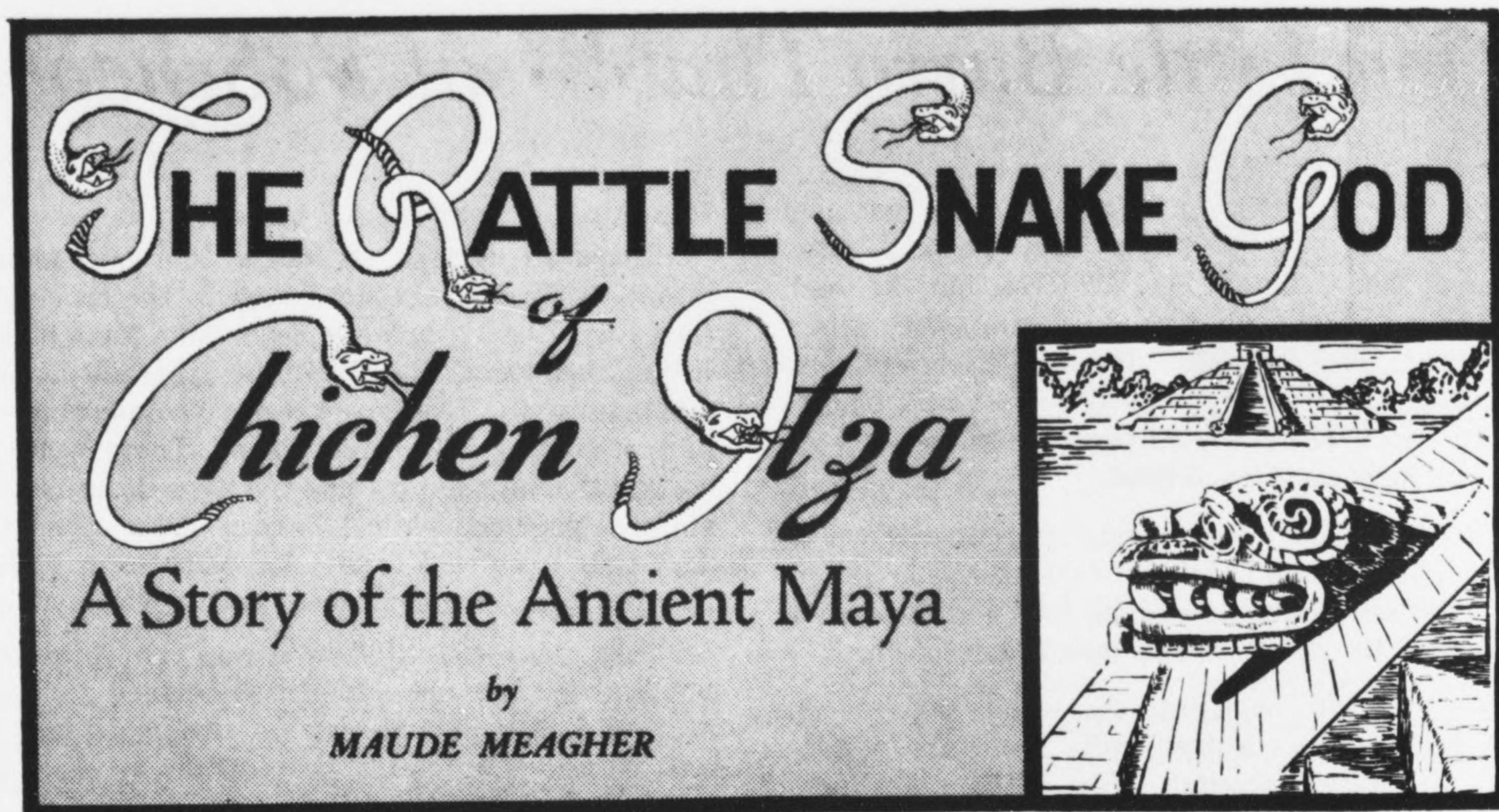
All summer long Mike served us faithfully. Then one day in early September, he disappeared. Bill and I hunted everywhere in vain. Finally we walked some eighteen miles into the nearest little jerkwater town and there we found Mike—at school. The kids said he was always there the first day of school, though how he knows it's school time no one knows. Anyway he liked to hang around the kids, trading rides for food.

The only way we managed to keep Mike in camp all winter was to tie him, for the moment he got loose he'd head for the school. Then suddenly, in May, he seemed to know school was out and he'd never wander from our campsite. I had that burro five years and he never missed going off to school once.

Mike's "larnin'" surely took. He could find any trail he'd ever been over. We tested him on trails that hadn't been used for years, where we thought all signs had been washed away or lost in the thickets. Maybe an Indian could equal him but I doubt it. Mike could find the trail every time.

I had to leave, so old Bill kept Mike that last summer. Then Bill got sick, and left Mike on the loose, and I've never seen Mike since. Of this I'm sure, though, when the first day of school rolls around, Mike, if he's able, will be at the door with the kids, ready to start the new term. This is a true story.

— V. P. MAY.



## SYNOPSIS

**THEODORA ORTEGA**, an American girl whose grandmother was a Maya Indian, visits Yucatan with her father who has a bubble-gum factory in New York. Yucatan is the main source of chicle, the sap of the sapodilla tree, and the basic material of chewing gum.

Theodora feels an urgent desire to see the Well of Sacrifice at Chichen Itza. She goes there alone, becomes dizzy, and loses consciousness, and is about to fall in when a Maya boy appears out of the forest behind her. When Theodora recovers consciousness she has gone back in time nearly 500 years and has become

**TEOSINTE**, a girl of old Chichen Itza, sentenced to be thrown into the Well of Sacrifice to appease the rattle-snake god. She resolves on flight and before dawn next day leaves her luxurious home without taking leave of

**KILKA**, the slave who has been a foster mother to her since Teo's own parents died. Kilka lies helpless with a broken hip, and her chances of survival are better if she knows nothing of Teo's actions—Teo's wicked guardian

**THE NACOM**, or sacrificial priest of the Temple of the Rattle-snake God, has affixed the temple seal to Teo's home as a sign that it has been confiscated by the rattle-snake god. While wandering aimlessly around the city of old Chichen Itza Teo meets again

**CHAC XIB CHAC**, embittered young descendent of the ancient ruling house of Chichen Itza, who has become a famous athlete. Teo first met him after a game of tlachli, or hip ball, when he had made the winning stroke for his team. They have fallen in love, but while walking together on the platform of the old Observatory, Teo is seized and carried off by priests of the rattle-snake god, and Chac, who tries to defend her, is thrown violently against a stone wall and lies senseless. Teo is carried away by the priests.

Chac manages to rescue Teo by means of a long tough vine let down into the Well of Sacrifice. He is greatly helped in the rescue by an old woman, a Yax Cocay Mut dancer on stilts, who distracts the attention of spectators who might otherwise have seen and reported him.

After a night in a tavern, where soldiers befriend them, they attempt to escape to Uxmal. Teo is disguised as a boy.

## CHAPTER EIGHT—UXMAL

**I**T SEEMED to Chac that morning as if dawn came racing up the sky. Teo asked no questions, but hurried along beside him. She did pause for a second or two as they passed the big ball court.

"I don't suppose we'll ever see it again," she said. "I'll just have one more quick look at where I saw you first, Chac."

Chac took advantage of the pause to look back over the open square dotted with platforms and monuments. The grisly platform of the skulls now stood out clear in the morning light, and the tumult in the city was increasing. A light breeze fluttered the great feather banners which gave the city a festive air, and crowds were beginning to gather.

"I wish I knew what those old foxes in the temple yonder were up to now," he muttered to himself. "They can't have discovered Teo's escape—or can they?"

The idea turned him cold, and he grasped Teo's arm roughly.

"Come along, my girl," he said. "There's no time for dreaming."

The two set off in haste to reach the causeway.

They had scarcely reached it when they heard the clip-clip of running stilts behind them, and the old woman dancer whom Chac had talked with at the Sacred Well caught up with them.

Chac whirled on her suspiciously, on guard for

treachery, but the beaming wrinkled face that peered down from the tall stilts disarmed him.

"What now, old mother?" he cried, cordially.

"What now for you, my son, —and yours!" She looked at the bewildered Teo and a delighted smile spread over her face.

"Salute her, Teosinte, with your heart," said Chac solemnly. "She is your good friend."

Teo, who now recognized the woman from Chac's description of her at the well, expressed her thanks so simply and warmly, that the woman's eyes filled with tears

She stopped her restless pacing on her stilts and leaned against a tall statue of Xaman Ek, Guide of Merchants, God of the North Star, which stood beside the causeway.

"Our God, Itzamma, may his name be blessed, has laid a treasure in your hands," she told Chac. "Guard her and keep her safe. She's known already too much terror for one young life to hold."

Teo laughed up at her confidently and slipped her arm through Chac's.

"I'll be all right as long as he is with me," she said.

"And that will be your life long, my Teosinte," said Chac solemnly, and the woman, as if she had been an officiating priest, raised her two claw-like hands and blessed them.

"And now, old mother," said Chac briskly, "tell me what I need to know. What's happening in the city?"

"You don't know?" asked

the woman surprised. "Where have you been?"

"Hiding," said Chac succinctly.

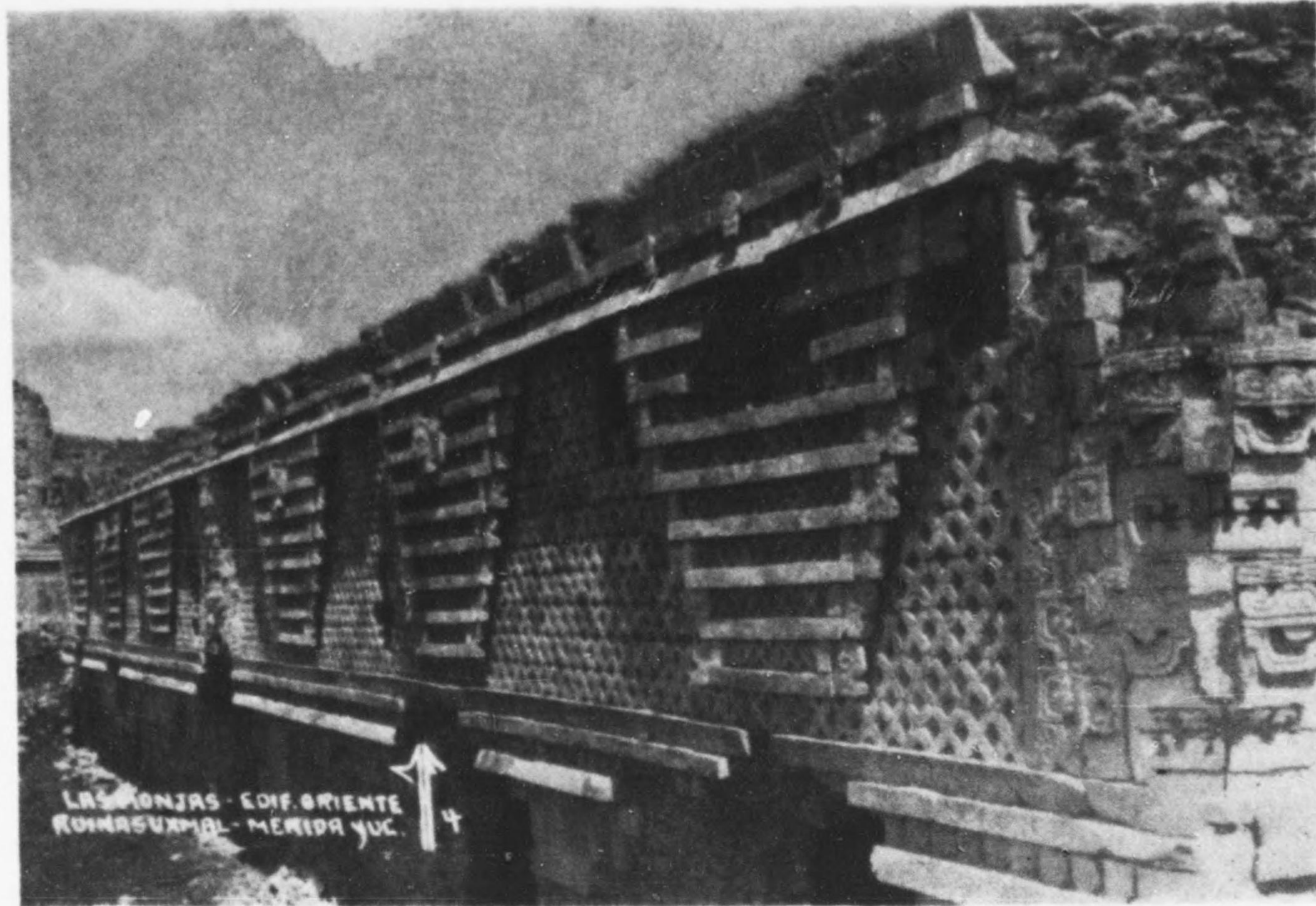
"Of course." The woman nodded. "Well, yesterday afternoon when I got back from the Sacred Well, with the crowd snapping at my heels, longing for me to stumble on my stilts and crack my ancient skull . . . . ." she twinkled gaily at them with her wise, aged eyes, and Chac laughed aloud as he remembered the scene which the day before, in his anxiety, he had not taken time to appreciate, "I noticed long lines of handsome litters moving down a street toward a certain great house which shall be nameless. The dignitaries and aristocrats inside the litters were buzzing with indignation, and I understood well enough why.

"Those Itzas who have remained in the city of their forefathers, and endured the insults and oppressions of the invaders have at last been pushed too far. One of their number, an orphan, whose parents had been highly respected (I will not name her) . . ." She smiled down at Teo. "One of their number had been sacrificed for rain. This was according to custom, not to old custom, but at least



YAX COCAY MUT DANCER  
Redrawn  
from Maya carving





A BUILDING IN THE NUNNERY QUADRANGLE OF UXMAL AS IT LOOKS TODAY

the custom of two hundred years, as brought into this unfortunate city by its conquerors, those who worship Kukulcan.

"But the law says that the victim so sacrificed shall have a sporting chance for life. So long as she was duly given her sporting chance, the people could quiet their consciences and say that whether she lived or died was according to the god's will.

"The Nacom's very obvious unwillingness to give her even that one chance for life by dropping the rope to her at noon roused indignation, for the Maya have always been a people with a strong sense of justice. I saw the feathered litters of the rich come out of that house, after their conference there, and travel in a long line up the steps of the Temple of Kukulcan to the top.

"Who knows what was said there, what arguments, what threats. I saw them come out hastily, and after them the Lord Serpent himself, in all his high regalia of feathered cloak and head dress, backed by the Nacom bearing in uplifted hands the obsidian knife of sacrifice, to speak to the rioting people at the temple's base.

"He told them to be in their houses by sunset on pain

of bloody death on the sacrificial stone. But when he had them cowed he changed his tone, and though the Nacom still brandished his great knife behind him, the Lord Serpent told the people that the rain god had honored them by receiving to himself the maiden they had given him as bride, and would surely send them rain to keep their remaining crops from withering in the drought. Then he told them sternly again to be off to their homes till morning, when a great festival would be held at the temple's expense to cheer them."

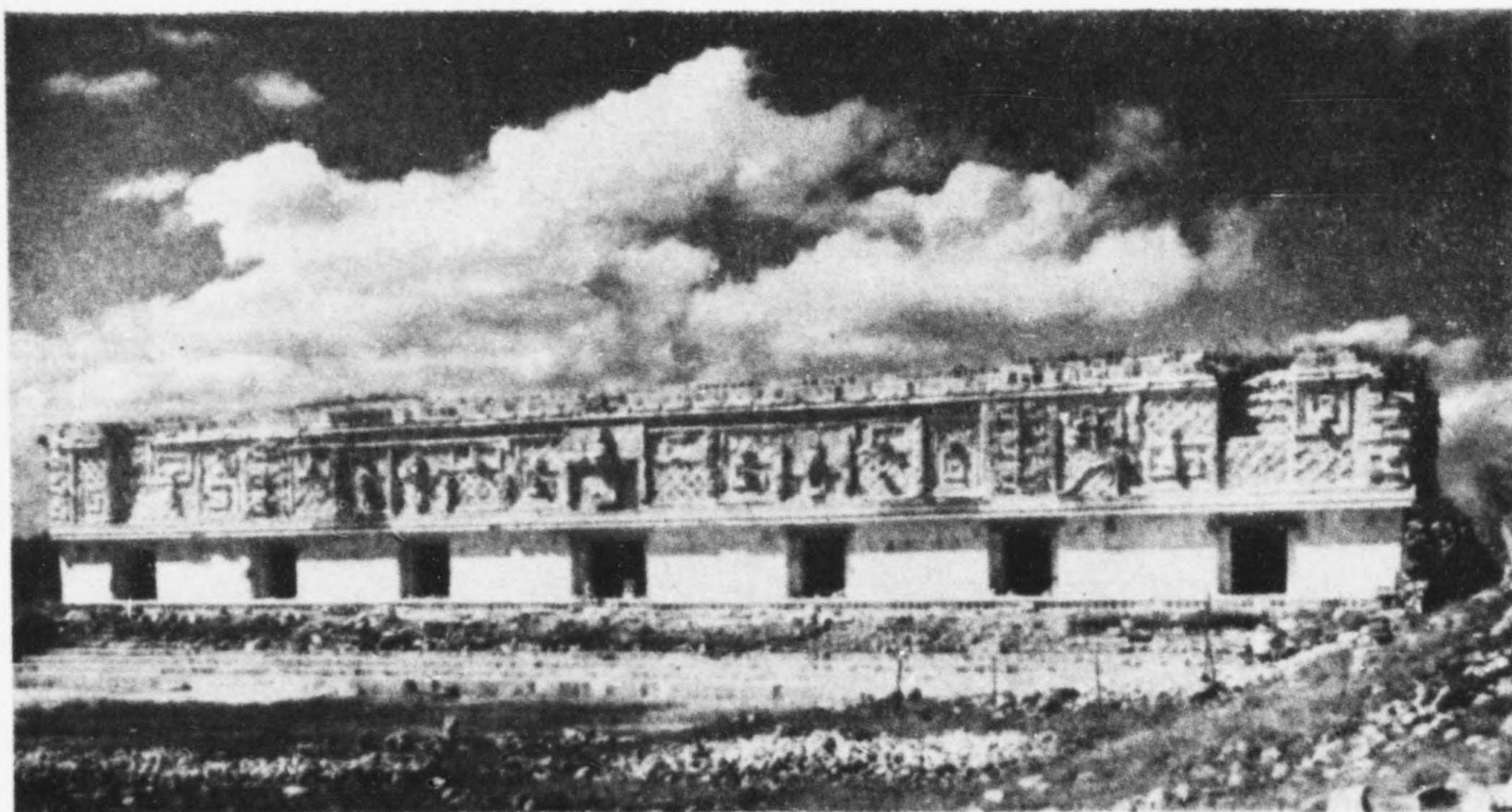
"At my expense," murmured Teo. "You know, don't

you, that the Nacom has seized my fortune."

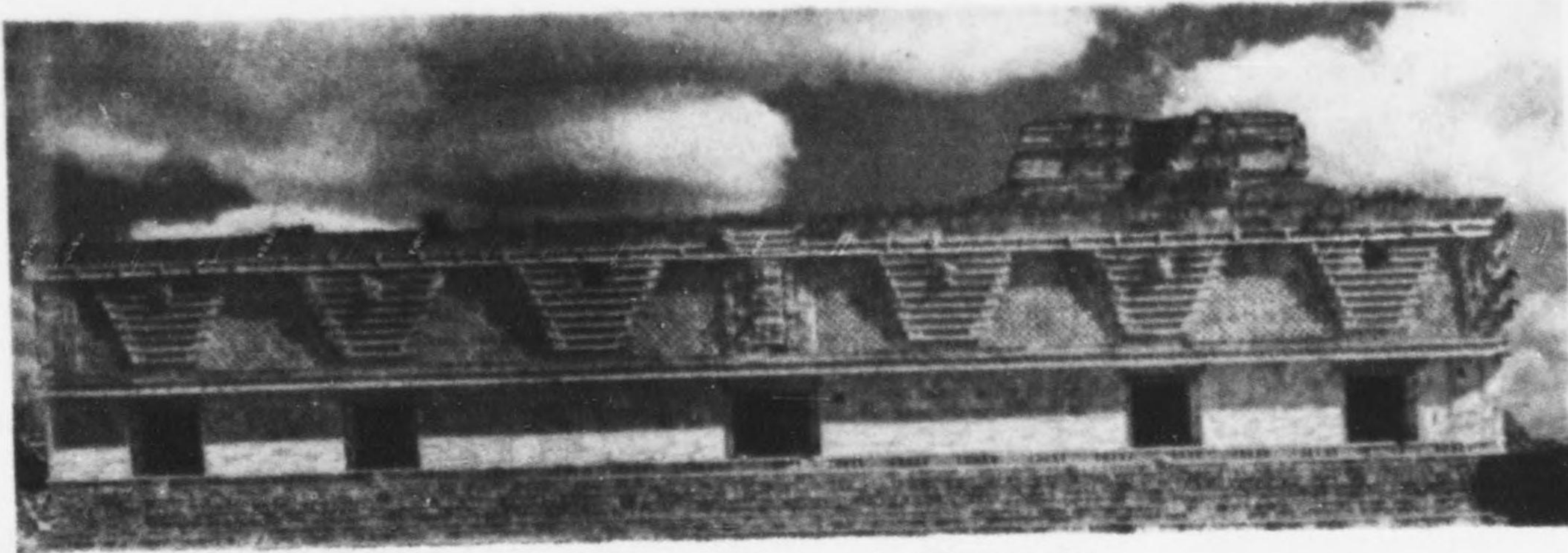
"Yes, I know," returned the woman, "and so does everyone in the city. But what can they do? You are presumed dead, and the temple has its soldiers to see that any grumblers follow you in death if they make themselves known. The priests are worried, but the Nacom made his point at last, after a night-long argument up there." She jerked her thumb backward over her shoulder toward the Temple of Kukulcan.

"How do you know what went on there during the night?" asked Chac curiously.

"Who minds an old woman, once a priestess, now a little cracked in the head," she grinned down at them mischievously, "if she hovers listening at



WEST WING OF NUNNERY QUADRANGLE



EAST WING NUNNERY TRIANGLE

the door. They send her away with curses, she cackles stupidly and disappears only to creep in elsewhere."

"You're marvellous," said Chac with deep conviction. "I love you with my soul. If I had not an urgent responsibility on my mind, I would stay here and work with you."

"I love you, too," said Teo, in a different tone, for Chac's, though sincere, had laughter in it.

The woman smiled and stroked her hair.

"Get ye gone, my children. You are the true blood of the Itzas. This city is doomed and its doom lies not far off along the road of destiny. Better things are in store for you. Get ye gone."

She turned expertly on her stilts, and without another word went back into the city.

"She's right," said Chac. "We must lose no more time."

The rising sun was at their backs as they walked swiftly down the causeway, hand in hand. It threw their shadows long before them, but these shortened steadily as they walked.

"I rather wish we had thought to bring some corn cakes with us, don't you?" remarked Teo as their shadows clung about their feet on the hot stone pavement at noon.

"We should come to a village soon, I imagine," returned Chac, "though judging from the people who have passed us on their way to the city, any village we find will be deserted. However, there'll be food, if only a few grains of corn to chew."

They did better than that, however. A roadside vendor had set up shop to sell bean paste and fruit to passers-by. Refreshed, they went rapidly toward Uxmal.

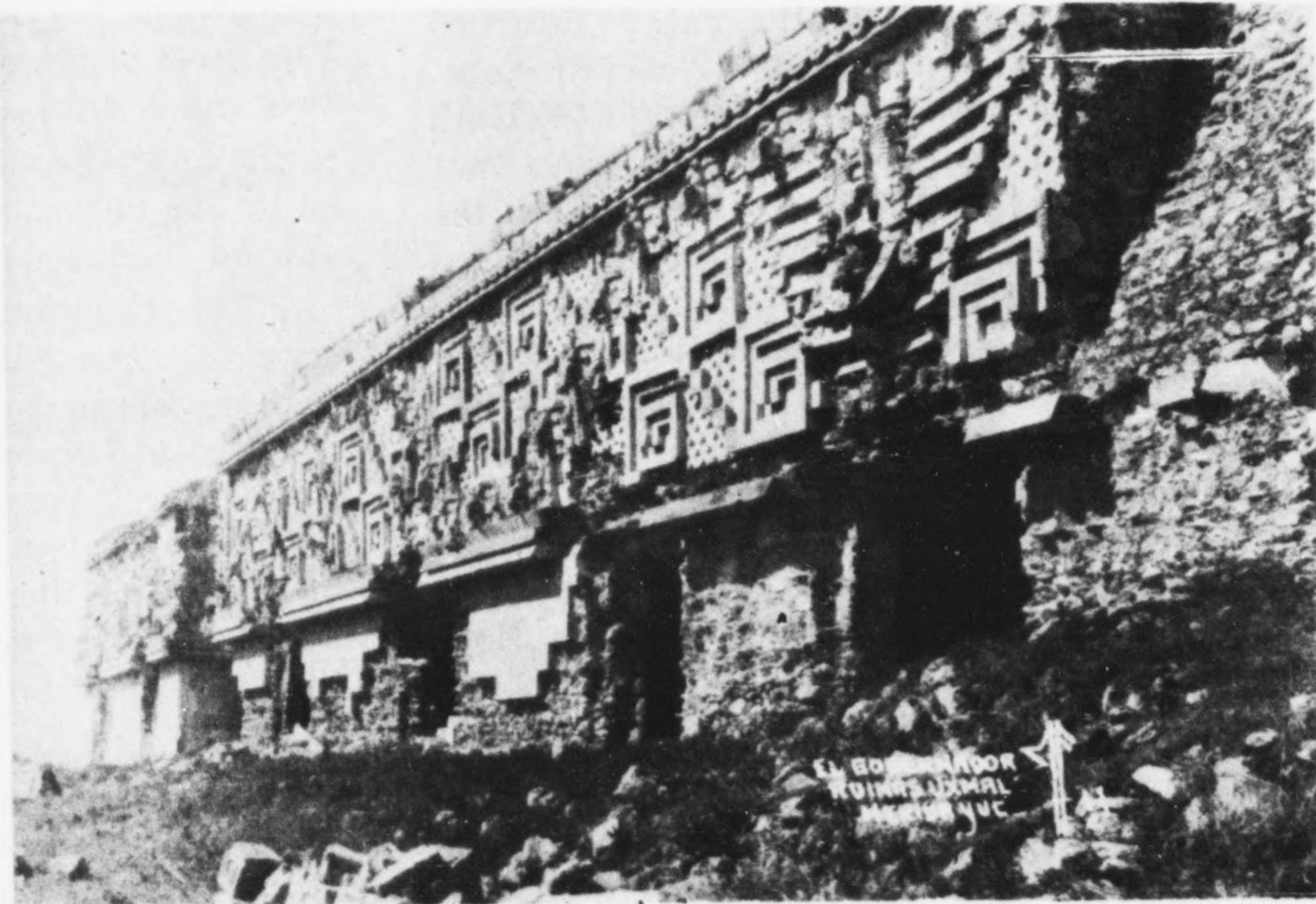
Teo exclaimed at the beauty of this city as they came in to it at last. They entered from the north into an open space paved with a lime cement that shone like silver un-

der their weary feet. The massive towering monuments and buildings arranged in groups shone like silver too, their carved facades being finished with a fine white stucco picked out with restrained color. The barbaric splendor and crude colors of Chichen Itza were not seen here. Here were no serpent columns, no horrifying masks; the faces on the stone columns had a sad and solemn dignity.

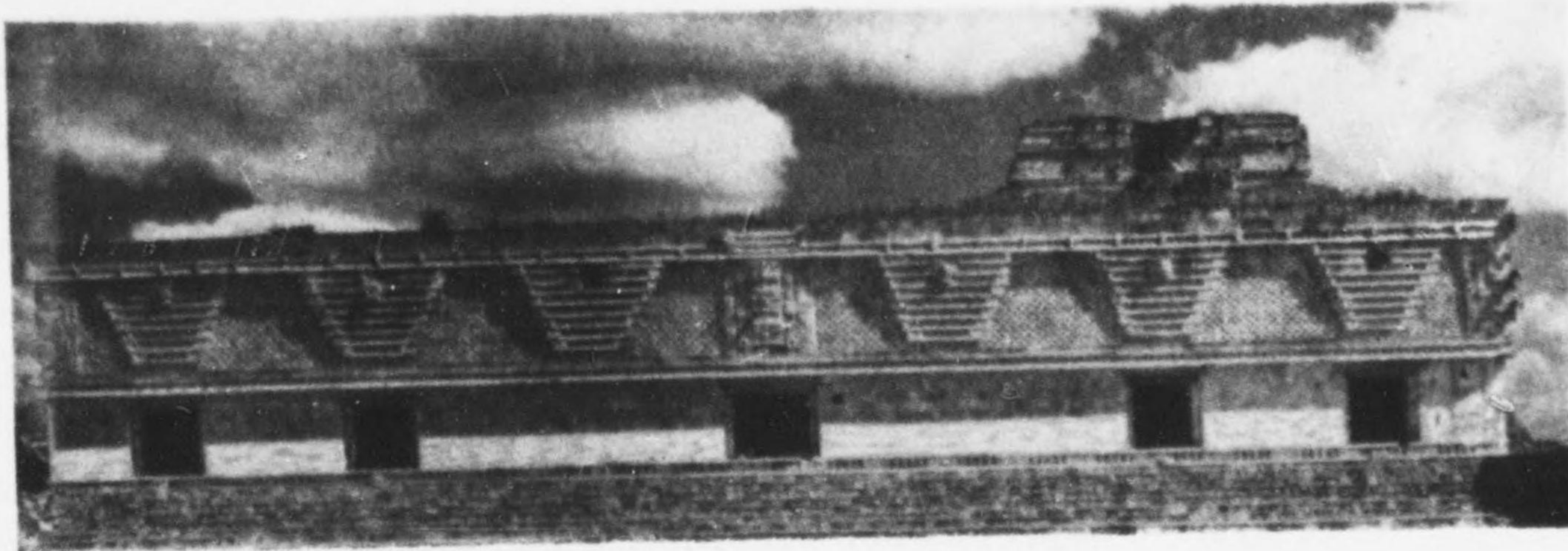
"Uxmal is pure Maya," said Chac looking about him as he felt at home. "The carving is not as good as that in the cities of the Old Empire farther south, nothing here in the North is, but it is magnificent, as you see, and beautiful."

They were hurrying down the east side of a great quadrangle toward an immensely tall temple, later to be called by archaeologists "The House of the Magician."

"That is the temple and residence of the High



RUINS OF THE GOVERNOR'S PALACE AT UXMAL



EAST WING NUNNERY TRIANGLE

the door. They send her away with curses, she cackles stupidly and disappears only to creep in elsewhere."

"You're marvellous," said Chac with deep conviction. "I love you with my soul. If I had not an urgent responsibility on my mind, I would stay here and work with you."

"I love you, too," said Teo, in a different tone, for Chac's, though sincere, had laughter in it.

The woman smiled and stroked her hair.

"Get ye gone, my children. You are the true blood of the Itzas. This city is doomed and its doom lies not far off along the road of destiny. Better things are in store for you. Get ye gone."

She turned expertly on her stilts, and without another word went back into the city.

"She's right," said Chac. "We must lose no more time."

The rising sun was at their backs as they walked swiftly down the causeway, hand in hand. It threw their shadows long before them, but these shortened steadily as they walked.

"I rather wish we had thought to bring some corn cakes with us, don't you?" remarked Teo as their shadows clung about their feet on the hot stone pavement at noon.

"We should come to a village soon, I imagine," returned Chac, "though judging from the people who have passed us on their way to the city, any village we find will be deserted. However, there'll be food, if only a few grains of corn to chew."

They did better than that, however. A roadside vendor had set up shop to sell bean paste and fruit to passers-by. Refreshed, they went rapidly toward Uxmal.

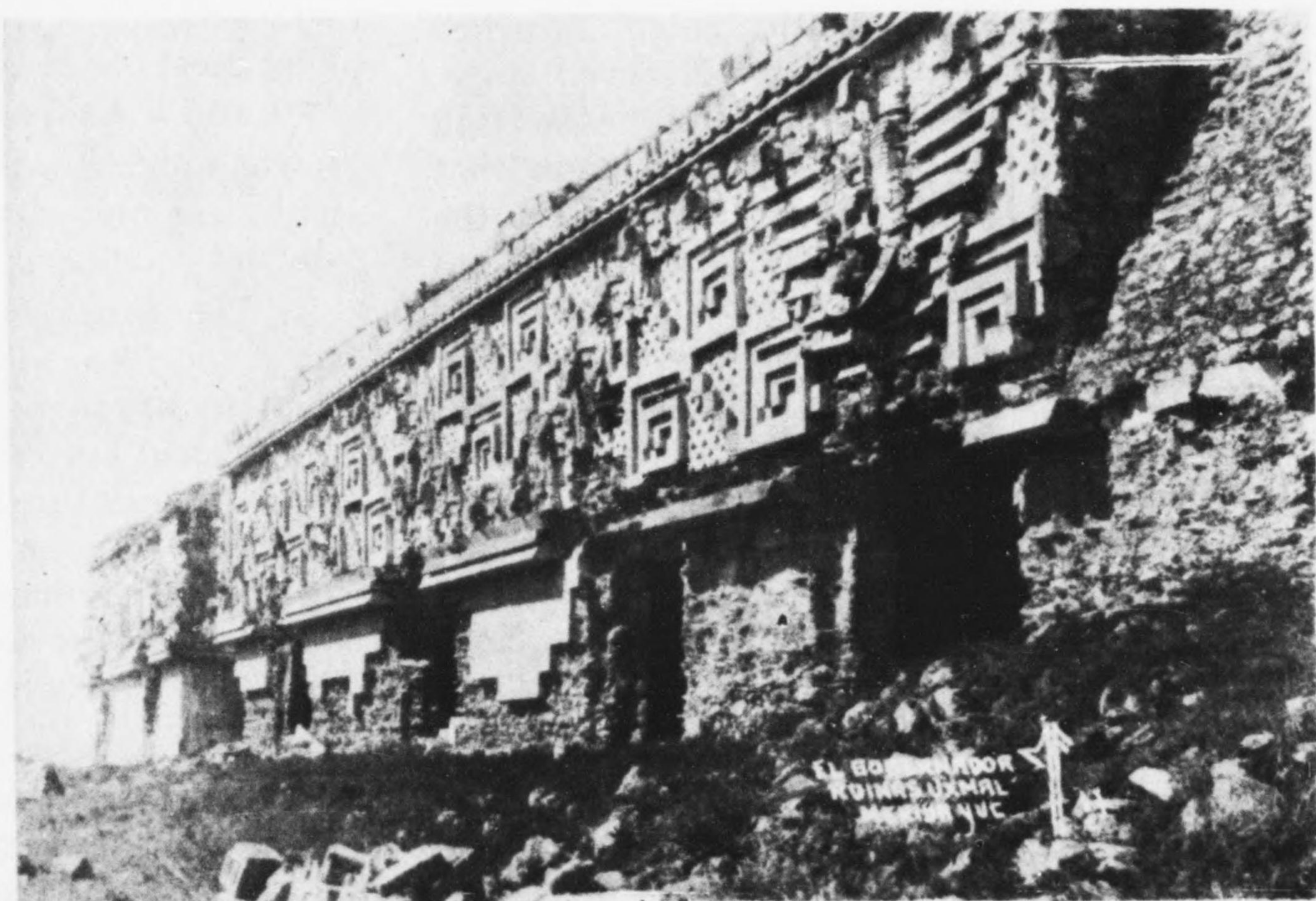
Teo exclaimed at the beauty of this city as they came in to it at last. They entered from the north into an open space paved with a lime cement that shone like silver under

their weary feet. The massive towering monuments and buildings arranged in groups shone like silver too, their carved facades being finished with a fine white stucco picked out with restrained color. The barbaric splendor and crude colors of Chichen Itza were not seen here. Here were no serpent columns, no horrifying masks; the faces on the stone columns had a sad and solemn dignity.

"Uxmal is pure Maya," said Chac looking about him as he felt at home. "The carving is not as good as that in the cities of the Old Empire farther south, nothing here in the North is, but it is magnificent, as you see, and beautiful."

They were hurrying down the east side of a great quadrangle toward an immensely tall temple, later to be called by archaeologists "The House of the Magician."

"That is the temple and residence of the High



RUINS OF THE GOVERNOR'S PALACE AT UXMAL



Priest of Uxmal. He is great-uncle of the present ruler of Uxmal, whose home is the Governor's Palace, which you can see down there to the south. He is a friend of my father's, but first I want to take you to my respected cousin, on my mother's side, the Mother Superior of the Nunnery."

Teo, while she listened, had been all eyes, both for the beautiful and imposing buildings that surrounded them, and for the people of Uxmal who passed. They wore the same richly feathered cloaks and headdresses, the same brilliant embroideries on their garments, but their faces were different. They had not the ostentatious bravado of those attached to the temple of Kukulcan at Chichen Itza, nor the cowed look of the common people there.

"Why is it this city feels so peaceful, so secure?" she asked.

"It is pure Maya, in its feeling at least, as I told you, although the Xius, who founded it, are Maya-Mexican in origin," explained Chac, guiding her around the corner of the Nunnery Quadrangle toward the great arched gate on its south side. "The present Lord of Uxmal, Ah Xupan Xiu, is a hostage, like my father, in Mayapan, a prisoner of the Cocom, and is obliged to rule this city by deputies. He leads the faction which I represent," added Chac, dropping his voice lest he be overheard even here in Uxmal. "My own father is too old to lead."

"To lead?" asked Teo, turning to look at him, questioningly.

"Sit here a moment by the gate," returned Chac, gesturing toward a bench of carved stone. "You should know more of my affairs, for the High Priest knows and the Great Nun. You know that Chichen Itza was founded by my forefathers, the Itzas. Uxmal was founded by the Xius, and Mayapan by the Cocom. These are the three great ruling families of the New Maya Empire here in the north of Yucatan, or were until the black traitor, Ah Nacxit Kukulcan, whose given name was Hunac Ceel, brought mercenary soldiers from Central Mexico to send against my city, Chichen Itza. This happened two hundred and fifty nine years ago—next year will make the full tzolkin of years. Next year is therefore the appointed time for rebellion.

"Hunac Ceel paid his mercenaries off by giving them the city of Chichen Itza to do with as they pleased, and he flattered them by taking the name of their rattlesnake god into his title. At that time they worshipped a debased form of Quetzalcoatl,

the Feathered Serpent of the Toltecs. Quetzalcoatl is a good god, and forbids human sacrifice, like our Itzamma. Perhaps he is Itzamma under another name, since there is but one good God. In that case Kukulcan, and the Aztec Huitzilopochtli, and the Toltec Tezcatlipoca, are all names for the same devil as our Maya Hunhau, Lord of Death and the Underworld.

"The Toltec followers of bloodthirsty Tezcatlipoca drove out Quetzalcoatl, and although the mercenary soldiers from the Toltec country brought the Feathered Serpent with them, he was not Quetzalcoatl. The good Feathered Serpent became as their bloody hands and evil minds depicted him, a great snake with poison fangs and rattles, not feathers, on his tail."

"I know," nodded Teo. "One sees him carved that way all over Chichen Itza."

"And they called him Kukulcan," said Chac. "And so for just on 260 years they have terrorized the city in his name, using Maya builders and stone masons to build the city great and terrible, and making the temple run with blood."

"That's why you were so bitter when you walked about the city, isn't it, Chac?" asked Teo. "You are different now."

"Uxmal escaped the worst of the fighting," continued Chac, unaware of her interruption. "The Xius have always been peaceful, more inclined to compromise than fight. But even they have by now had more than they can endure of the tyrannies of the Cocom of Mayapan. Hunac Ceel built a great wall around his city of Mayapan, and there he has kept most of the Xiu and Itza nobles hostages for two and a half centuries. They administer their towns and cities through deputies, always watched by the mercenaries of Kukulcan. I escaped, to spy out conditions in the other cities.

"The situation has become intolerable, and I trust you, Teo, with this knowledge which is more than my life to me: next year I and the Tutul Xiu, the Present Lord of Uxmal, now prisoner at Mayapan, will lead the other princely hostages, and will destroy Mayapan so that not one stone lies on another. We will execute the family of Hunac Ceel down to its least descendent, and purge the land of the idolatrous invaders and their allies."

Teo shuddered and was silent, knowing it was useless for her to protest; two and a half centuries of oppression spoke too strongly in Chac's proud mind for him to hear anything she might say in the matter.

"I'm tired," she said. "Couldn't we go in to the Nunnery?"

Chac leaped at once to his feet.

"I shouldn't have troubled you with such stern political matters now," he said contritely.

"You must do what you think is right," returned Teo in a forlorn voice, for these plans of Chac's depressed her more deeply even than the expectation of her own death in the Well of Sacrifice had done.

They went in silence across the great court of the Nunnery Quadrangle where men and women devoted to the service of Itzamma came and went in richly embroidered garments. Teo spared scarcely a glance at the exquisitely carved facades of the four buildings which enclosed the court, although they are generally conceded to be among the most beautiful structures ever built in the Americas. The fine lime stucco laid as a smooth finish over all the carved stone work, covered the joins in the vast mosaic and glimmered like the purest silver in the light.

"Here is the center of what remains of Maya scholarship," said Chac. "Chichen Itza is spoiled by the followers of Kukulcan; only a few impotent old scholar-priests still cling to their studies in the Observatory there. Mayapan is ruled by the tyrant Cocom and his mercenaries. But here in Uxmal there is still peace and here the old Maya wisdom is still cherished, by the priests and nuns who work in those hundreds of little rooms that open on this court. The lady who administers this great and busy place is my cousin, Chel Ixchel Xiu, for she took the name of the patron goddess of weaving as her name in our Maya religion.

"The head of the temple," Chac indicated the towering building beyond the Quadrangle, "is my father's friend, the High Priest Xiu Xib Xiu. We will go to him also for counsel, and his blessing."

The two had by now crossed the square and entered one of the doors in the building opposite the gate. Here a slave girl, recognizing Chac, took them at once to a great room comfortably furnished, with frescoes in subdued colors painted on the white walls.

A lady, who had been writing at a desk of carved and polished ebony wood, rose to meet them. She was strangely beautiful in her heavy, sumptuous brocade robes, and she smiled warmly at Chac who dropped on one knee to kiss her hand.

"I was expecting you, my cousin," she said. "But who is this youth with you?"

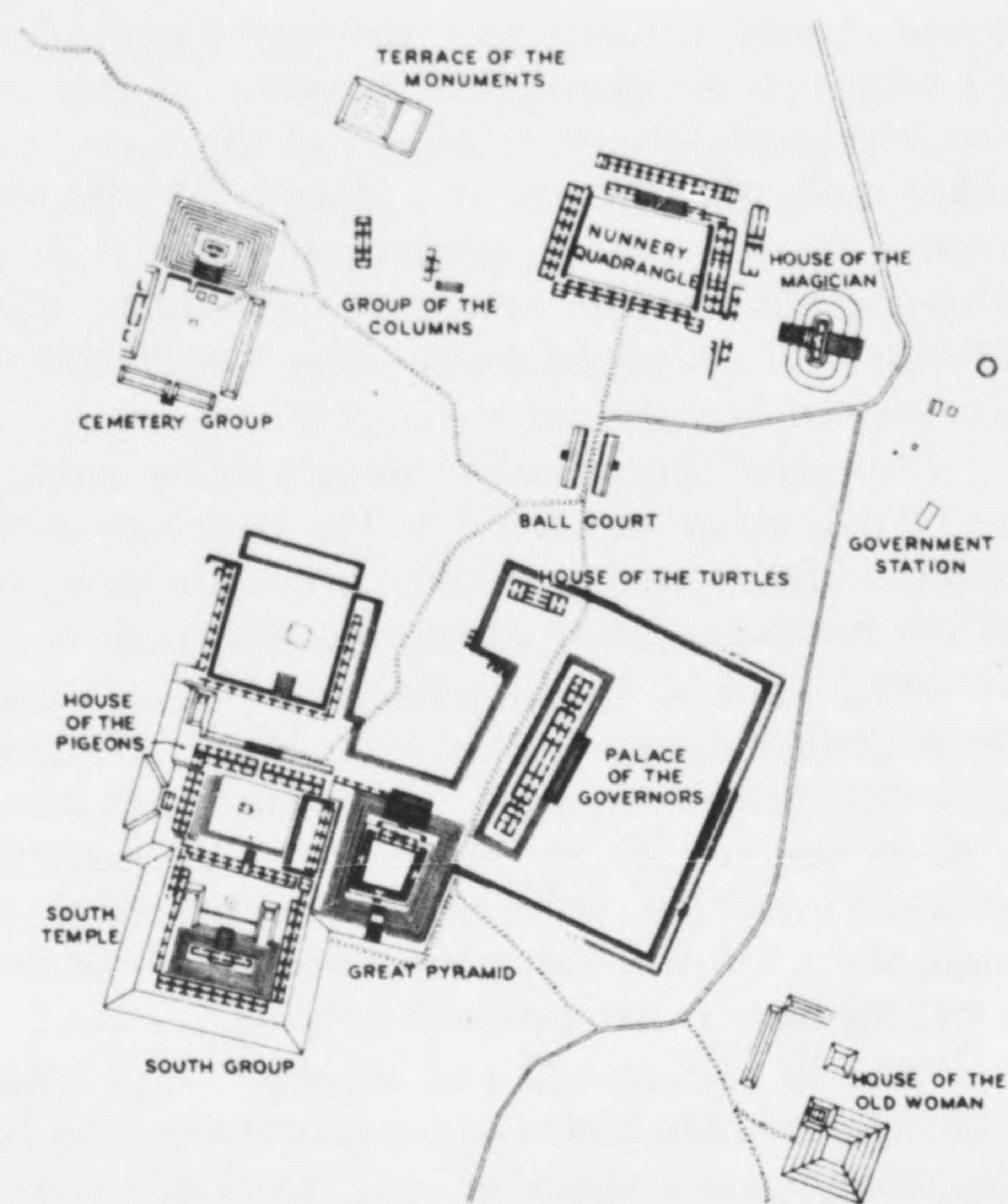


CHART OF UXMAL

Chac smiled broadly as he drew Teo forward.

"This youth, revered cousin, is my bride. Her name is Teosinte, and not many hours ago she lay beneath the waters of the Well of Sacrifice in Chichen Itza."

Amazement shone in the dark eyes of the priestess as she looked at Teo.

"And you saved her, Chac?" she asked. "Or did she survive to prophesy?"

Chac told the story in a few words and when he had finished the priestess took Teo warmly in her arms.

"You have courage, my child, and steadfastness, and my cousin here is blessed in having won your love," she said. "Now quickly you must have a refreshing bath, and proper clothes, and food and rest."

She struck a thin disk of polished jade that hung by a cord near her, and a slave girl appeared in answer to the musical note.

"Go, child, and bathe and dress and when you have rested a little, come back to sup with me. And you, Chac," she turned to the boy, "you know your old room on the east side of the court. A slave will attend you there with garments and a bath. Do you come back here, too, for supper with me."

A little later Teo sat on a low mahogany stool, warm and comfortable in a robe of cotton thickly

inwoven with rabbit's hair and richly embroidered. Under it she wore undergarments of fine cotton, rich with lace embroidered at the edges with white and gold thread. She sipped her chocolate from a cup of crimson lacquer and listened to the animated talk of the priestess, splendid in robes of blue and yellow brocade. Chac was handsome in scarlet.

Chac and the priestess were talking politics, and Teo's mind wandered to the frescoes on the walls, which were done in lime green and rose, until she heard the great nun speak decisively.

"You cannot, in all conscience, expose your bride to such dangers, Chac," she said. "It was all very well when you were unattached, and I was glad to see you go to Chichen Itza to learn for yourself conditions there. But I am a practical woman, and I tell you that your situation is changed now you have found yourself a bride."

"She is courageous and strong," said Chac, putting out his hand to clasp one of Teo's. She put down her cup and smiled at him. "Look at her face, my cousin. You see she does not fear whatever may come to us."

"I see her face," said the High Priestess, "and it is lovely indeed, and wise for one so young. All the more reason, I tell you, that you keep her safe. You are the only son of your father. You have the future of your family to think of, not yourself alone. The holy men of Itza have preserved the Maya culture faithfully for many generations. You must not let your family die out in these sad times and the worse times that are to come."

"We will not die," said Chac confidently. "No, my cousin, I must lead the Itzas in the rebellion that is to take place next year, the time appointed."

The High Priestess considered for a long moment in silence. Finally she said, "I see I cannot persuade you, and I must go in a few moments to preside at a Sharing of Sin ceremony. A man has died, and his relatives are waiting to take his sins upon themselves so that his time of penance may be shortened in the lower world. Go both of you and ask counsel of my wise colleague, the High Priest of the temple. Listen well to his words, for he is old and very wise."

"We go, revered cousin, and thank you," said Chac, rising, but the priestess gestured for him to seat himself again as she rose. "Finish your supper, children," she said, practically, gesturing toward the lacquered plates of food. "I must remain fasting until after the ceremony. But before I go,

I must give a bride gift to the lovely child you have brought with you."

The priestess moved across the room and took from a finely woven basket there a little image of the Corn God carved in purest jade.

"Now this is very old, and very holy," she said, placing it in Teo's hand.

"And very precious, too," added Chac, his artist soul delighted at its beauty.

The little figure hung on a chain of delicately carved rings of jade, and while Teo stammered her thanks shyly, Chac took it from her hand and hung it soberly about her neck. "This shall be an everlasting symbol of our love," he said, "and we will keep it always for our children's children's children."

"Be wise then, as you are courageous," the priestess told them bluntly, "and remember, in your plans for rebellion against tyranny, that the Itzas of the future depend on your wisdom, as well as on your courage."

She kissed the two lightly on their foreheads, raised a hand to bless them and went from the room.

"She's marvellous," breathed Teo, looking after her.

"Yes, she is," admitted Chac ruefully, "but she doesn't want me to fight."

"Neither do I," murmured Teo, "but I'll stand with you if you must."

"I know you will," said Chac, "and as I see it now, I must. But do you realize, Teo, that we are alone and safe for the first time together? This is our wedding supper. Let's enjoy it before we go to meet the High Priest and ask his counsel. Being a man, I'm sure he'll tell me I should fight."

But the High Priest did not. He sat, old and beautiful in his azure robes of office, waiting for them when they had climbed the steep steps of his temple to the little stone room in which he lived.

"All things move in their appointed way, my son," he said when Chac had finished his vehement defense of his plan. "All my long life I have studied Time, bearing in mind the knowledge handed down to me from Maya priests who for two thousand years and more have studied chiefly Time and its mysteries.

"Because of our deep studies we can tell the probable course of future events, and there are among us *chilanes*, specially gifted in prophesy. Time has its own laws and its path circles back to

the place of its starting, over and over as the centuries move. You know that the fifth return of the fateful Uudz Katun is upon us. Because of our sins it circles lower each time it returns upon itself. Perhaps, in the far future, when expiation has been made, it will begin once more the upward climb as it must have done before the time of our first recorded cycle, the brilliant period of our culture in the Old Empire.

"I need not recite these cycles to you; you know them. But I must tell you that the cycle that is about to commence is the worst of all. The rebellion from which you hope so much will bring not liberty, but destruction and civil war. I am soon to die, but even I will see our cities abandoned and the land laid waste."

"But who will do this? Surely we can destroy the Cocom and his mercenaries," protested Chac.

"Even so. Itza will join Xiu to fight the Cocoms, and will indeed destroy the most of them. Then Itza will fight Xiu, until, in famine and loss the Maya return to a near savagery."

"But this is madness," cried Chac.

"And worse will follow," went on the old priest inexorably. "Your grandchildren will see the coming of bearded men on the sea, in boats like white-winged birds of prey. They will be armed with thunder and lightning, and wear skins of metal and ride tall four-footed monsters fleet as the wind.

"Many will say it is Kukulcan. Those of Tenochtitlan will say it is Quetzalcoatl returned from exile, and fear of him will turn their bones to water, and Tenochtitlan, that mighty city, will be delivered over to the strangers and they will destroy it and build a greater city in its place.

"But we who have seen them in visions know these bearded men are not men of Quetzalcoatl, that kind god, for these men will sacrifice our people in their thousands, not on altars, but on battlefields. Their god is gold, and though they will give lip service to a Kind God, and His Mother, their cruelties and greed will rule them."

"For gold they must go to the Aztecs of Tenochtitlan," said Chac. "There is no gold in Yucatan."

"But they will come to Yucatan for conquest. And twice they will be driven out. The Maya will resist far longer than the Aztecs, though not the Xius. The Xius will accept the God of the bearded men and live in peace with them."

"What of the Itzas?"

"The future of the Itzas depends on you, my son. Go with your bride and prepare for them a place of refuge. Go south as our forebears, holy men, went south 800 years ago from Chichen Itza to Chakanputan. But go you southward yet to the valley below the highest mountains. There you will find Lake Peten and the ruined cities where our forebears first began to build a golden age two thousand years ago, for this I know from our old chronicles.

"Then was no war, but peace among the Maya. The great mountains rise, the snow white on their summits, great trees a hundred times higher than a man give shade. There are streams of water and in a grassy plain a lake, blue as the sky, with islands green as jade. There on those islands you must build once more a golden life for the Itzas, beloved of the good god Itzamma."

Chac felt Teo's two hands close around his arm, urging him.

"But will the Itzas be forever safe there?"

"No. The strange men riding beasts will come there too, at last. Good priests will come with them, but the men of gold and murder will have their way despite them, and your city will be destroyed. But you, my children, will not see this. Your children's children's children will live on in peace until at last the strangers come with metal tubes and death."

Chac sat with his head in his hands, deep in disappointment and despair. Teo sat quietly against him, waiting. She had not Chac's fierce desire for vengeance; life to her now was warm and promising; she did not want to lose it. Yet she understood how Chac must feel since all his young life he had brooded on the wrongs done his people by the traitor Hunac Ceel and by the strangers Hunac Ceel had hired to subdue them. Now, since he could not doubt the dire foreknowledge of the High Priest of Itzamma, he must accept defeat even before it came, and turn in a new direction for a more creative effort.

"Next year the fourth return of the Uudz Katun begins, Reverend Father," he began, "and surely that is the time fated for the destruction of the tyrant?"

"It is the time," agreed the High Priest, "and his destruction and that of the prison city, Mayapan, will come to put an end to his misdeeds, during the fateful Katun 8 Ahau that is about to begin. But you, my son, must not lead the rebellion.

The rebellion will be led by Ah Xupan Xiu, the chief of the Xius at Mayapan. The Cocom will be destroyed and all his family save only one son, now absent at Ulua. This son will return to build again, and that will be the cause of the final subjugation of the Maya to the bearded stranger.

"Listen, and I will tell you, for my eyes, so soon to die in this body, can see far down the future. The bearded strangers will be driven from our land, not once, but twice, and there will come a time when not one remains, though the land will have been laid waste by the pestilence and slaughter they have brought.

#### THE FATEFUL UUDZ KATUN

*The Uudz Katun, "the doubling or folding over of the katuns", comes every 260 tuns, or 256¼ years of our chronology, on the Katun 8 Ahau. A katun lasts twenty years.*

*A very interesting chronology of the Maya cycles is given by Dr. Morley in his book, "The Ancient Maya", Stanford University Press, 1946. Reviewing thirteen centuries of Maya history, he shows "a clearly recurring pattern", and its key is in the successive returns of the fateful Katun 8 Ahau—the special twenty-year period when destiny wrought her greatest changes.*

*The first period of Maya cultural brilliance was in the Old Empire cities of what is now Northern Guatemala. The dates were 317 to 987 A. D.*

*The first return of the Katun 8 Ahau was in 672-692 when Chichen Itza is said to have been abandoned for the first time.*

*The second return of the Katun 8 Ahau fell on 928-948 when the Itza abandoned Chakanputun (the city they had built after leaving Chichen Itza), and returned to Chichen Itza.*

*The third return of Katun 8 Ahau (1185-1204) brought the plot of Hunac Ceel, the Cocom ruler of Mayapan, which caused the fall of Chichen Itza and made the Cocom ruler of all Yucatan, with the Itzas and the Xius as his prisoners. They remained his vassals for another cycle of 256¼ years.*

*The fourth return of Katun 8 Ahau (1441-1461 . . . the period of our story) brought the successful rebellion of the Xius and the Itzas against the Cocom. Mayapan was destroyed and the country was plunged into civil war that made the Maya unable to withstand the Spanish invaders who came about fifty years later.*

"The great grandson of Ah Xupan Xiu, whose name will be Napot Xiu, will make a pilgrimage through the country of the Nachi Cocom, great grandson of the present Cocom. He will go to offer sacrifice of living maidens at the Well of Sacrifice at Chichen Itza, but he will first ask safe conduct from Nachi Cocom. This will be given him, and his safety sworn to by the Cocom. But once they have him in their power, they will fall upon him and slay him and all his company in revenge for the revenge his great-grandfather took nearly a hundred years before, at Mayapan. And a worse civil war will follow. Revenge breeds revenge, my son, and civil war breeds weakness.

*Just 136 days before the fifth return of Katun 8 Ahau (1697-1461) the Spanish conquest of the Maya people was completed, with the destruction of the Itza city of Tayasal. The Itzas had held out longer than any other group of Maya, but with the fateful uudz katun upon them, they gave in.*

*The sixth return of Katun 8 Ahau, according to Maya chronology, will begin in 1953.*

#### THE XIU FAMILY

*The Maya kept family records over long periods of time. One such record, contained in an ancient leather portfolio, is preserved in the Peabody Museum at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts, U.S.A. It is the family record of the Xius, beginning with the founder and governor of the city of Uxmal.*

*This record carries the story of the Xius down to the time of Mexican independence in 1821, and from living members of the family it has been possible to continue their history to the present day.*

*The present head of the family, Don Nemesio Xiu, lives at Ticul in Northern Yucatan, and belongs to the thirty-eighth generation beginning with Hun Uitzil Chac, founder of Uxmal. Don Nemesio has a son, Dionisio, and grandchildren Genoveva and Gerardo, the latter born in 1943. These grandchildren are descendants in the fortieth generation of the former royal house of Uxmal.*

*No such written record is known in the case of the Itzas, the family to which the fictional hero of our story, Chac Xib Chac, is imagined as belonging. The Xius accepted almost at once the Spanish conquerors and became Christians. Their records were preserved. The Itzas, on the other hand, resisted conquest for more than two hundred years. Their records were destroyed.*

"The bearded strangers will then return, led by one named Montejo, and take the country easily in the midst of the civil strife. The Xius will go over to the invaders, accepting their religion, and they will live long in the land. The Cocoms will resist and be destroyed. But do you, my children, Itzas, go with your love southward, while there is yet time, and build the city of Tayasal on Lake Peten to be a refuge for the Itzas."

"We must go," breathed Teo, and Chac at last bowed his stubborn head in acceptance of the old priest's command.

A few days later they were on their way. They went by the good road that led past Chichen Itza, skirting that city to the north.

In passing Teo could not resist an impulse to look once more at the terrible Well of Sacrifice through the new eyes of her happiness.

And so, as night fell, the two slipped through the wood and approached the deserted platform that hung over the dark water.

"I wonder if I should attempt to get the tasselled leather thongs I tied the vine with," remarked Chac, as he stood beside his silent bride.

"If anyone should find them they could be traced to me, and so to you, because I've always been a bit of a dandy where my sandals were concerned. The tassels of those thongs, which I pulled out of my sandals, are strung with jade beads, and each bead has the glyph of my name, Chac Zib Chac, carved on it."

"Oh Chac, isn't that dangerous?"

"I don't know," replied the boy. "There was no time to get them off the projecting rock that day, so I only cut the vine as close to the rock as I could.



SO-CALLED "HOUSE OF THE MAGICIAN", UXMAL, IS ALSO KNOWN AS THE "HOUSE OF THE HIGH PRIEST"

I doubt if anyone will ever find them, especially since no one except the old stilt dancer and maybe Mother Tzib at the tavern, knows that you escaped."

"Chac," said Teo suddenly in a far-away voice. "I feel so strange. I think I'm going to fall. Save me . . . ."

Darkness had come over Teo's eyes, a deep pulsating darkness that enveloped her. She felt herself falling . . . .

(TO BE CONTINUED)

# My Friends \* \* \*

## Hansel and Gretel

BY ERA ZISTEL



**H**ANSEL and Gretel, the two young raccoons, were found in the woods one day. Their mother had evidently been killed by a porcupine, for she was nowhere to be seen, and the babies themselves were full of quills.

Our first job when we got them home was to remove all the quills—a difficult and, for them, very painful procedure. Most of the quills we were able to pull out with a pair of pliers, but to get one out we had to operate, since it had already worked its way deep into the flesh. First we cut away the fur, then we made an incision with a razor blade, then, once the tip showed, we pulled out the inch and a half long barb. Poor little Gretel! She screamed and squirmed, but not once did she try to bite the hands that were helping her.

They were very young, with only tiny buds of teeth showing, too young for solid food. So our next problem was to find something they would eat. After trials and errors, we discovered it to be Pablum and milk, the ideal kitten food, which they found so acceptable that they shrieked with joy whenever they saw a milk bottle. However, after having been with us a month, they learned to eat other things also: crackers, potatoes, raisins, raw meat, cooked vegetables, berries, corn, nuts and, if there were nothing better to be had, bread. But, like all other raccoons, they have a particular fondness for cookies (especially if they're marshmallow) and candy (especially if it's chocolate).

When raccoons accept something from you, it is always with their hands, not their mouths. A piece of bread or cracker or cookies they will hold in their two hands just as a human might, and bite into it very daintily. They are scrupulously clean as far as their eating habits are concerned. A dozen times or more during a meal they must rush over to the water dish to wash their hands,

and sometimes their faces, too, for good measure.

Common belief is that raccoons wash their food before they eat it. But this has not been the case with Hansel and Gretel, nor, I must add, with any of the older wild raccoons I have watched feeding. Only once did Gretel lend credence to the belief. That was when someone gave her a gift of several empty ice cream cones.

After the first sniff at them she went quite wild, and hurriedly carried them over, one after another, to throw them into the water dish. There she gave them a furious scrubbing, for all the world like an impatient old woman washing out a lot of dirty clothes. Of course they melted. Then she spent the next half hour contentedly trying to fish the little pieces out of the water again. Neither she nor Hansel made any attempt to eat the sticky mass she finally managed to pile up beside the dish.

Like kittens, they enjoyed playing with various toys: rubber balls, paper balls, anything that rolled or skipped across the floor and rustled or tinkled. Gretel would spend half an hour or more patting between her paws the bells tied by a string to one of our chairs that has provided amusement for many generations of kittens. She also had a favorite rubber mouse that she liked to take to bed with her. If we made our fingers run across the floor, they would both scurry after them and try to catch them, and, having done so, would roll over on their backs and kick against the hand with their hind legs—again exactly as kittens do.

From the very beginning they were ardently and persistently affectionate. The first night they spent with us they both crawled into my lap, kneaded it with their paws, purred, and finally curled up to fall sound asleep there. They loved to be picked up and held, and would show how much they loved it by patting our faces with their

hands, or washing and nibbling at the tips of our ears. They also took a mischievous delight in thrusting their little fingers inside our ears, and inside our nostrils, too—but there we drew the line.

In the door of our screened porch we have constructed a small swinging door for the cats to use in making their entrances and their exits, and this, to our surprise, the raccoons learned to operate in no time at all. And then, of course, there was no getting away from them out of doors either. Wherever we went, they had to follow: to the pool where, while we drew our water, they went paddling at first and later swam with great enjoyment; to the barn, to the dump, to the woodpile, and even into the woods.

One day we were halfway down the road when we heard a breathless "Prرت! Prرت!" behind us, and turned to see Gretel hurrying along to catch up with us as fast as her stubby little legs would carry her. Farther back Hansel, the more timid of the two, stood shrieking in terror. So we had to retrace our steps and carry them back home again. After that we had to sneak out of the house and away as furtively as a couple of thieves, and look around every once in a while to make sure we were not being followed.

On fine days, once they were old enough to climb, they liked to spend the afternoon hours in a tall maple close to the house. For a while they would be visible playing in the branches high above us, batting at the leaves or chasing each other from limb to limb, or precariously hanging from them upside down, like a couple of daring circus acrobats. But after a while they would disappear, and although I prowled around and looked from every angle, I was never able to find out where they went. However, when supper time came I had only to stand at the foot of the tree and call, and two little masked heads would peer down at me, then, with a scramble, they descended the huge tree trunk to join me, coming down head first, and without a slip.

They were very conversational. Their eager "Prرت! Prرت! Prرت!" might mean "Please pick us up," "Please play with us," or "Please, could we have something to eat?" The long drawn out chirring sound they made was more demanding. They were then very hungry, or very lonely, or very worried about something, and in need of immediate reassurance and attention or protection. To add emphasis to the chirring, when the need

was very urgent indeed, a frequent "Hm?" of inquiry was added.

When they were threatened, or when they quarreled with each other, they growled like dogs, spread their hands wide, and walked backwards and forwards on their hind feet—a posture that reminded me somewhat of a belligerent crawfish. They they looked and sounded very menacing, *but I never once saw them make an attack with or without provocation.*

From the first they were wary of the cats, but tolerant, even when they had their faces slapped by sharp-clawed paws. With the kittens they played an occasional merry game of tag. But for the dog they actually seemed to develop some affection. They liked to pat her face with their hands, pull her ears, play with her fluffy tail, and climb up into the wool on her back. To her credit it must be said that she allowed herself to be mauled thus without protest.

During the evening they slept on a shelf built especially for them high up near the ceiling of the porch. Then, when we went to bed, they were put to bed also, in a box on the floor. There was a special ceremony for this. They had each to be given a piece of hard candy to suck on until they fell asleep. And they had also to be given an old skirt of mine to lie on. One night I forgot the skirt. But not for long. The great to-do they made over the omission was enough to get me out of bed in a hurry, to find the skirt and take it to them.

After a month of their good-natured and ardent companionship we grew very fond of Hansel and Gretel, and were greatly tempted to make sure, by some method of confinement, that they would always be with us. But there is a law, designed primarily not for the protection of the animals themselves, but rather for the men who trap and kill them, that says they must not be denied the freedom of the woods. We obeyed that law, and because we obeyed it, tragedy struck.

One evening Hansel came home, without being called, alone. Even if he had not tried to tell us, with urgent chirring, that something had happened to Gretel, we should have known, for so great was their affection for each other, that they were never more than a few feet apart.

All night long, at intervals, we searched and called for Gretel. Hansel was inconsolable. He would not eat, cried until he was sick, and could



not be comforted until at last I picked him up and held him on my lap, where he hiccuped like an exhausted, miserable child, then finally purred a bit and fell into a restless sleep. Next morning he got up early and went to look for her. So did we, but without hope, and without success.

Then, at noon, a timid little girl came to tell us a halting and terrible story of something she had witnessed and could not forget.

It had happened while we were away. Hansel and Gretel were up in their tree, waiting for us to come home and give them their supper. A gang of boys, passing by, saw them there. Did they stop for a moment to admire their beauty, to talk to them? Yes, they stopped, but it was only to pelt them with rocks. Hansel immediately climbed up higher in the tree, where the thick branches hid him from sight, and thus escaped. But the trusting Gretel made a perfect target. Hit once, and again, and again, down she tumbled at last from her high perch and, bleeding and terrified, sought protection where she thought it should be—under the legs of the very humans who were her tormenters.

The boys took her home with them and shut her up in a small, dark box. There we found her the next afternoon, after the little girl had told us her story. She had been given no food or water. One of her paws had been badly mangled by a rock, and was no more than a mass of raw, swollen flesh. One of her eyes had been hurt. She was bleeding from the nose, apparently from internal injury, and seemed so close to death that we had no hope for her.

Yet, ill and miserable and in such great pain as she was, still she managed to purr when we put her into the box that was home to her, on the old skirt of mine that had been her bed. There she slept, hovering between life and death, for three days, rousing only when we offered her a bit of milk, and refusing all other food. The fourth day she purred when we talked to her, and gently patted our fingers with her good hand when we held them out to her.

Now, after two weeks of pain and inactivity, she is up and about again, hobbling around on three legs, with the fourth, still raw and swollen and useless, held carefully in front of her, and again she plays with the tinkling bells and the rustling balls of paper and the rubber mouse that she likes to take to bed with her. Now she sleeps, like a spoiled kitten, in the crook of my arm with

her head pillowed on my shoulder. Now she can eat only from my hand, which must make up for the one of hers that is useless.

Yes, she lives. But for how long? What will it be that she will encounter next, when she is well enough to go out in the woods again? A hunter? A trap? Another gang of boys? Will it be a swift, merciful death, or such terrible torture as she has already suffered?

And Hansel, what became of him? The dreadful encounter with the boys brought about a change in Hansel. For three days, while Gretel hovered between life and death, he did not come near us at all. We gave him up as lost. But on the fourth night, quite late, we heard the familiar "Prرت? Prرت? Hm?" somewhere near the house. When we called he came to us quite readily, allowed us to pick him up and fondle him and carry him into the house. He was as tame and gentle and loving as if he had never been away.

He was also much thinner and very hungry. Evidently the woods had not offered him much in the way of food. Three plates of Pablum, two bowls of milk, a handful of raisins, several crackers and three pieces of candy were devoured in short order. Then he played with the overjoyed Gretel for a while, and then he wanted to go out again, back to his woods.

We locked the little swinging door so that he could not get out, with a hook on each side of it. But with a casual flip of his hand he opened each of the hooks, and then he was gone, into the night, to his natural home.

Again, for days, we had no glimpse of him. until, on the fifth night, we heard his imperative "Prرت? Prرت?" directly outside our window. There he was, halfway up the trunk of a nearby tree, peering in to see what we were doing. Again he had come back for food, for a play with Gretel, for an hour or two of our companionship.

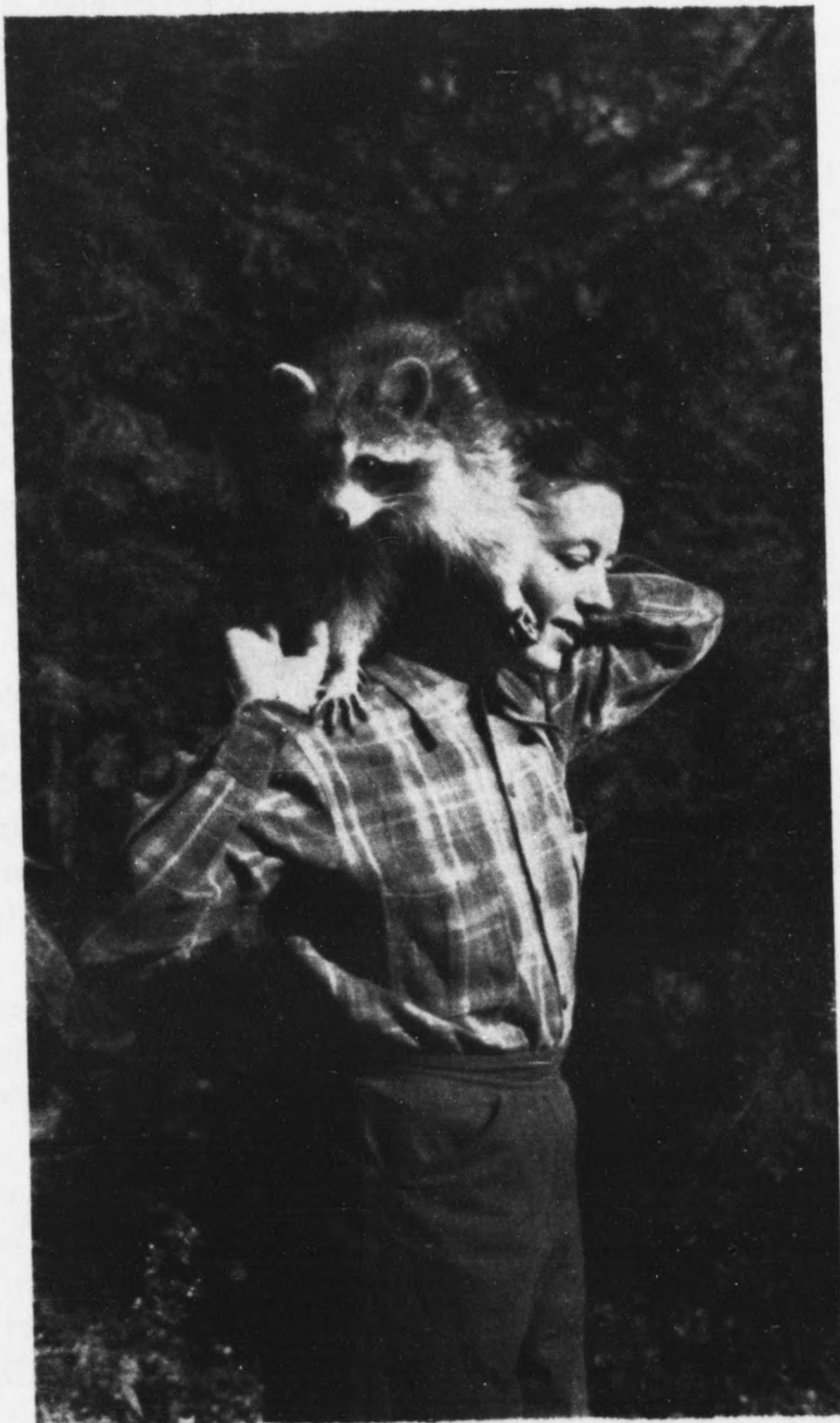
We did not try to keep him back this time when he wanted to go. For perhaps it is better thus. No doubt he will continue to return whenever he has need of food, or help, or affection. But gradually he will learn to fend for himself, and will come to fear and avoid the humans who are his most dangerous enemies. For Gretel it is now too late to hope for such salvation.

*January, 1948:* Hansel is gone. He paid his last visit to us the night before hunting season opened. The next day was one of madness, with

almost continuous gunfire echoing through the woods. And we never saw him again.

Gretel, now nearly full grown, is still with us, faithful and devoted. The injured eye is now almost entirely sightless. The paw, although nicely healed, is still so sensitive that she winces if it is touched. Probably because so many of the small bones were broken, it has lost some of its usefulness.

By special permission of the state authorities, we are allowed to keep her until May first. Then the game warden is to come and take her away, "to a suitable habitat". To the woods—not our woods that she has come to know and love—but some strange woods, where no doubt certain and perhaps terrible death awaits her. Should I, before he comes, give her that death with my own hands, in a way that I know would not be terrible?



ERA ZISTEL AND GRETTEL

World Youth, April 1948

## THE REAL SPEED KING

Insects can afford to smile (if insects *do* smile) at man's frantic attempt to travel faster than speed of sound. One of them has come close to doing that for a long time, without any fuss or publicity.

This insect rejoices in the name of *Cephenomyia*. According to Dr. Roy Chapman Andrews, director of the American Museum of Natural History, no less than 818 miles an hour has been chalked up against him—him, because the female of his species does not fly quite so fast.

"This is estimated by the best scientific observations," says Dr. Andrews. "Still," he adds, "I'd feel more comfortable about *Cephenomyia*'s reputation if it were possible to subject it to tests in a wind tunnel. That being out of the question, we must accept the work of Dr. Charles H. T. Townsend, a scientist who has devoted many years to the study of insects and to this one in particular.

"*Cephenomyia* flies at high altitudes where air pressure is reduced, and if it were to fly at its top speed in a direct line for seventeen hours it would completely encircle the world in one daylight day."

It is not surprising that insects can claim the speed championship of the world in the air because they have been flying longest. Birds have been in existence only for a paltry 135 million years, whereas insects have been flying for several hundred million years. Man has only recently begun to spread his wings, and even the insects would have to admit that he has not done so badly in the short time he has had to learn.

## INSECT DINOSAURS

Rule of the earth by insects is not a nightmare age still to come. It has already happened and is finished.

"Insect dinosaurs", creatures resembling dragonflies but having a wing span of nearly a yard, dominated the air for 50,000,000 years, according to Prof. Frank M. Carpenter of Harvard University.

The reign of these and other insects came with the coal age and ended with Permian, which followed it in geologic time. By then, fish-like creatures had evolved into reptiles and amphibians able to stay out of water permanently, and the long reign of land vertebrates had begun.

S. S.

Page Thirty-five

# The STRANGE and WONDERFUL Country of INDIA



## Story Eight

### THE BABY ON THE GHAT



**W**e are going to Benares," announced Mr. Slovinski one evening at dinner.

"Oh dad!" protested Max, looking up from his plate of curried chicken and speaking with his mouth full. "We've hardly seen the Punjab, yet."

"Haven't you realized, son, that a whole lifetime would hardly suffice to see all the mysteries and wonders of India? What I myself regret is that we haven't had time, this trip, to go south into Rajputana, one of the most fascinating and gorgeous parts of India, where the Rajput Princes, who claim descent from the Sun-god, rule in the midst of all the colorful pageantry of ancient India."

"Who are the Rajputs, really?" asked Max. "I mean, aside from myths about them."

"They are the real Aryans of the world, using that word in a strict racial sense. They conquered India thousands of years ago from the Indian aborigines, a very dark-skinned people who still survive as members of the lower castes and among the so-called Untouchables. The Rajputs have built some of the most beautiful palaces in the world. We must come back some day and see them."

"All right. But besides the things we haven't seen, there is the little matter of Azra, the Mohammedan heroine of the Robbers in Purdah, that is still outstanding," said Max.

His sister, Sunny, exchanged a quick glance with their young Brahman friend, Tara Dass. "Why Max," she cried mischievously, "I didn't know you were interested."

"What *has* happened about her, then?" asked Max. "Nobody tells me anything."

"You tell him, Tara," suggested Sunny.

"Something rather marvellous," returned the Hindu boy, in his precise English speech.

"Azra and Sunny between them persuaded Azra's grandmother to receive me. They had given her a rather highly colored version of my part in the affair of the robbers, and I'm afraid I didn't try very hard to set the matter straight, since it was my only way of keeping in touch with Azra."

"Let me tell it," interrupted Sunny. "Mrs. ul-Din liked Tara immensely. She's a very broad-minded old lady, even if she does keep strict purdah. We talked a lot about changing times in India and she agreed that Hindus and Moslems must learn to get along together, even if it leads to romances which in her young days would have been considered disgraceful. I could see that she was observing Tara closely and liking what she saw."

"Finally she suggested something quite wonderful," broke in Tara. "You know some of the wild Mohammedan tribesmen from over the western border are beginning to try to invade Kashmir, because the Hindu ruler of Kashmir, Sir Hari Singh, has indicated that he wishes Kashmir to join the Dominion of Hindu India."

"Yes, I know. The British and Americans are being flown out of Kashmir in anticipation of trouble there. Mother has already been flown to Darjeeling."

"Yes. Well, Azra's grandmother said that as a Mohammedan she feels morally responsible, to some extent, for the aggressions of the Mohammedan tribesmen, and, to make a long story short, she has invited my family to come and stay with them until the troubles are over."

"So that's the reason you've been looking so

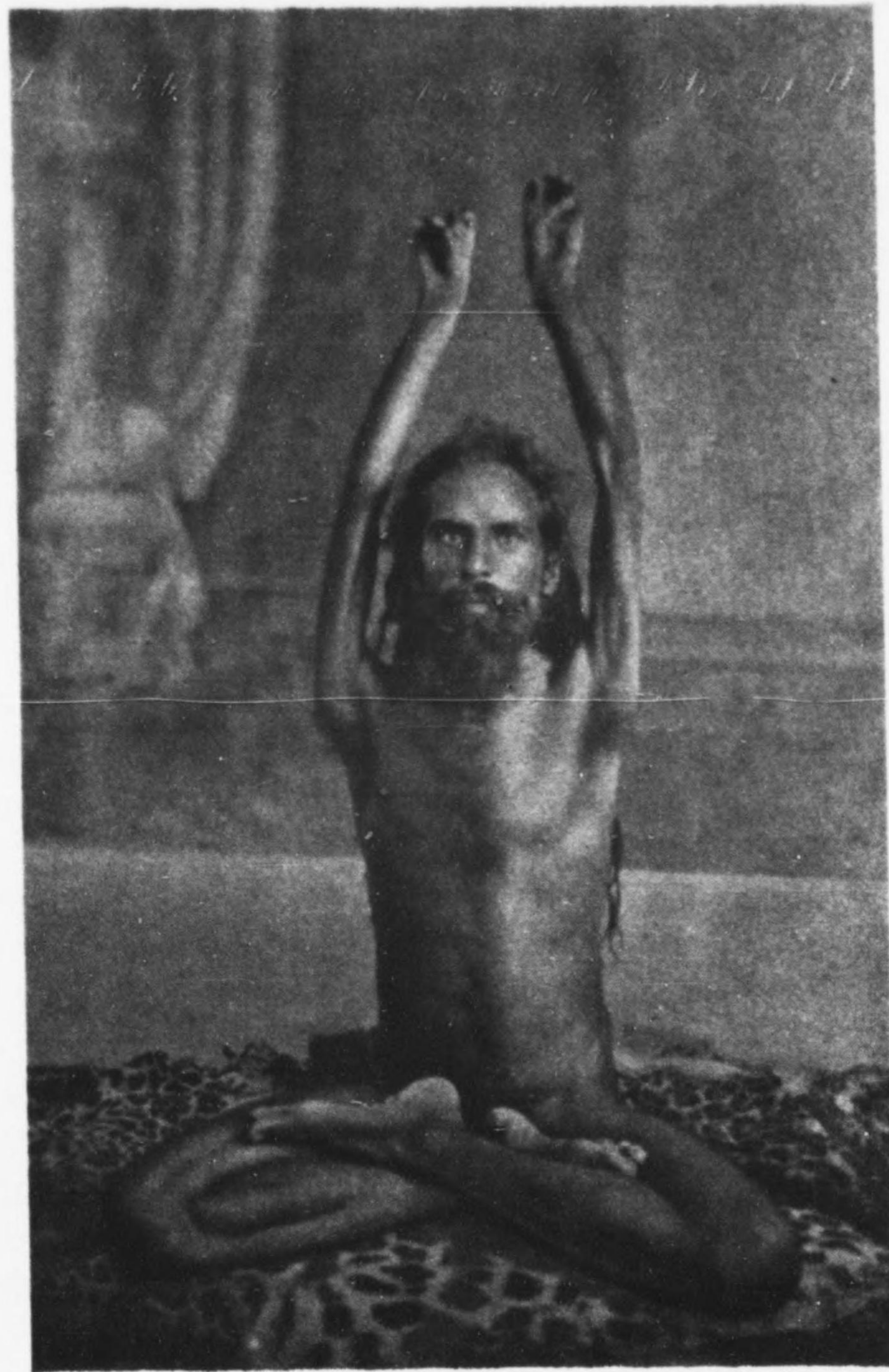
pleased with life the past few days, is it?" remarked Max. "Well, good luck to you, though I must say it seems to me that both you and Azra are pretty young."

"Oh, one naturally does not think too far ahead," said Tara reddening. "But at least if our families can get together it is a beginning."

"And do you know something else she said?" cried Sunny. "She said that although she wishes Azra to observe purdah until the disturbances have quieted down, for the protection it gives her, she hopes that Azra will go unveiled for the rest of her life. And she quoted the Mohammedan leader, Mohammed Ali Jinnah, Governor General of Pakistan, who said recently, "Purdah is an evil anachronism. We are doing our best to wipe it out. Its disappearance is only a question of time."

"Will she and the aunts come out of purdah, too?" asked Max, interested.

"Maybe, slowly. You see they are used to it, and they would feel shy if they had to go through the streets with their faces bare. But Azra, who is



SELF-PURIFICATION. A FAKIR

not shy at all, except maybe with Tara, is longing for the moment when she can put aside her veil for good."

"That shouldn't be long now, thanks to the effective work of the Emergency Committee headed by Earl Mountbatten, and the genuine cooperation of both Mohammedan and Hindu leaders to bring about peace," observed Mr. Slovinski.

"There are still plenty of refugees around, though."

"Yes, there is still the problem of the homeless, Sunny," agreed her father. "But this problem, gigantic as it is, is being efficiently handled by the Inter-governmental Commission for Relief and Rehabilitation. As a measure for relief they have ordered a million quilts and a million padded coats and are feeding the people. And as for rehabilitation, experts are resettling the refugees from both sides of the border in the farms abandoned by refugees going to the other side, and have distributed a hundred thousand tons of wheat seed so they can begin to produce food for next year. This creative



THE WELL OF KNOWLEDGE, BENARES

cooperation does not make many headlines, but it is far more important and significant for India's future than the occasional riots that break out."

An Indian colleague of Mr. Slovinski's, a Mr. Bhag Singh, had stopped by their table to greet his friend and nodded approval as he heard the last few words.

"You are right," he said, shaking hands with Mr. Slovinski and nodding with a smile to the others. "You may have noticed a certain resentment toward the foreign press recently here in the Punjab. It is unrealistic of us to feel resentment at the scareheads about massacres in India that appear in your American newspapers.

"After all, the more irresponsible of our Indian newspapers feature the murders, the gang wars and the occasional race riots and lynchings in America in such a way as to give Indians a very false impression of American life, just as you Americans are given a false impression of Indian life by some of your newspapers.

"Many thousands of Indians die every day in the year of diseases, just as thousands die in America from the same causes. These deaths, though by far the more numerous, are not headline material. It is the violent deaths, gang wars or religious riots, that get the headlines. And so ugly and largely untrue pictures are built up."

"You are right, my friend, and I think my children are getting a somewhat fairer picture of India in their minds by their travel here. After all, considering that India is overcrowded, being half the size of the U. S. A. with three times as many people in it, India is a peaceful and happy country, even compared with our own. Very few Americans die of cholera, but then, very few Indians die from motor accidents. Won't you take coffee with us?"

Bhag Singh laughed as he sat in the chair the waiter brought for him. "Thank you, I will. I'm glad your young people are developing a friendly interest in my country, for after all, you must remember that you Americans owe the very discovery of your country to ours."

"What!" exploded Max, incredulously.

"I'm only half serious," explained the tall turbaned Sikh with a smile. "But really you know, it was because of rumors spreading through Europe during the fifteenth century of the fabulous wealth of the Indies, its spices—its gold and jewels that set Christopher Columbus to dreaming of a voyage across the world to find these treasures. He found America instead, and to save his face, he called the aborigines he found there . . . Indians. Which has been a source of confusion to all ever since!"

In the laughter that followed Tara spoke seriously.

"I don't think it was just to save his face, sir," he suggested. "It was a genuine mistake."

"No doubt, but you'll admit that it is very confusing. Now, to differentiate, we have to speak of Red Indians and East Indians . . . Moslem Indians, and so on."

"I've got an idea," Sunny spoke up suddenly. "I suppose if you were to add up all the Indians there are in North and South America and add them to the four hundred million Indians in India, you'd maybe find that nearly a third of the people of the world were called Indians. Why don't we just all call ourselves Indians and stop bothering with the differences?"

There was a general shout of laughter at Sunny's bright idea.

"I imagine that another third, or maybe a quarter, of the people of the world are Mongolians," said Max. "How'd they like to be called Indians?"



BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF BENARES

"Lots of Mongolian people here in India are—the Gurkhas, for example," remarked Bhag Singh, coming to Sunny's rescue.

"Well, what about the black races in Africa and America, and the white ones of Europe and America?"

"We've got lots of black people and white people here in India, too," persisted the tall Sikh, with twinkling eyes. "And what's more, we've got statesmen of the highest caliber here in India—belonging to several races themselves—who are doing a splendid job, in the face of age-old feuds and dire poverty and ignorance, of welding the whole miscellaneous lot into one nation—India."

"Let's all adjourn to the United Nations Assembly and tell them we don't care what they label us, since we're all so mixed up anyway, as long as they bring about peaceful cooperation in the world," cried Sunny enthusiastically.

"Hear! Hear!" remarked Max drily.

"All right, I'll come down off the rostrum," Sunny assured him, and turned to the tall man in the turban. "Mr. Singh, won't you tell us something about yourself? We're sort of collecting personalities for our mental scrapbook about India. There are so many different kinds."

"Very well, you shall stick a pin through me and add me to your collection. To begin with, I am a Sikh, as you must know from my name. And I am an orthodox Sikh, to the extent of never cutting my hair or beard. If I were to unwind my turban I could prove to you that I can sit on



THE GOLDEN TEMPLE AT BENARES

my hair . . . it is that long." His eyes twinkled as he surveyed his group of young listeners. "And I always carry the kirpan, though in my case it is only a symbolic toy." He showed them a small dagger on his watch chain. "Yet my orthodox father sent me to Dr. Ambedkar's college in Bombay where I had the good fortune to study with Brahmans, Jains, Moslems and others."

"Isn't Dr. Ambedkar the famous leader of the Untouchables?"

"Yes, and the fact that this college, founded by an Untouchable for Untouchables is attended by caste Hindus should surprise you Americans, for it is just as if, in America, a Negro college founded by a Negro were attended by whites: 1,245 Whites to 55 Negroes in the student body. That is the proportion, as it happens, of Untouchables to Caste Hindus in Dr. Ambedkar's college. Yet those same Caste Hindus, fifty years ago,



A BURNING GHAT

would have felt themselves defiled if the very shadow of an Untouchable had fallen across them in the street. So you see, in some ways, we in India are solving our racial problems very rapidly. Remember that when you read about our religious riots."

"I think that is thrilling," said Sunny earnestly as she rose with the rest from the table. "I wish you were going with us to Benares. Isn't that a great center for religious fanaticism?"

"Fanaticism, yes," said the tall Sikh. "But also it is a center for much pure religious feeling. Mother Ganges, you see, is so pure that she purifies all she touches. You will see many strange things there, but remember that religion is of the heart, and only God knows the heart of man."

"But these people who sit on spikes, and stick long knives into themselves, and do such odd things—surely they are fanatics?"

"Labels again. Beware of labels," said the tall man, smiling as he left her, in order to continue his conversation with her father.

Sunny was thinking of his words as she walked with the others along the ghats at Benares. All about her rose the domes of temples and shrines, some of black marble, some of white marble carved into lace-like patterns, some made of gleaming beaten gold. Flocks of green parakeets swooped in and out among the colorful buildings. Haughty peacocks with spread tails stalked by, milk-white bullocks wreathed with fresh flowers wandered at will.

Everywhere were people, masses of people from beggars to maharajahs. Holy men of every description moved in and out among the crowds, some chanting and rattling begging-bowls, some wrapped in contemplation.

"Those are the burning ghats over there," said Mr. Slovinski, brushing off some ashes from the open-air cremations, that had settled on his sleeve. "The most desirable thing in life, for many millions of Hindus, is to die and be burned beside the great Mother Ganges, and to have their ashes scattered on her purifying waters."

"Dad, what exactly is a ghat?" asked Max.

"The word 'ghat' means steps, and refers specifically to the steps on a river bank down which the pilgrims pass to bathe in a holy river. There are bathing ghats and burning ghats. And the word is also used in India in much the same way as we use the word 'foot-hills' in English. You'll see in your map of Southern India ranges of hills

called the Eastern Ghats and the Western Ghats."

Sunny had ceased to listen. A gay party of women in the loveliest saris she had ever seen was passing. It turned up a narrow side-street. Sunny impulsively darted after them to have a better look at the silken saris of rose, blue, apple-green, crimson and yellow, embroidered and interwoven with gold, which they wore. The women were singing the high pitched, strangely cadenced songs of India and carried silk-wrapped bundles in their hands.

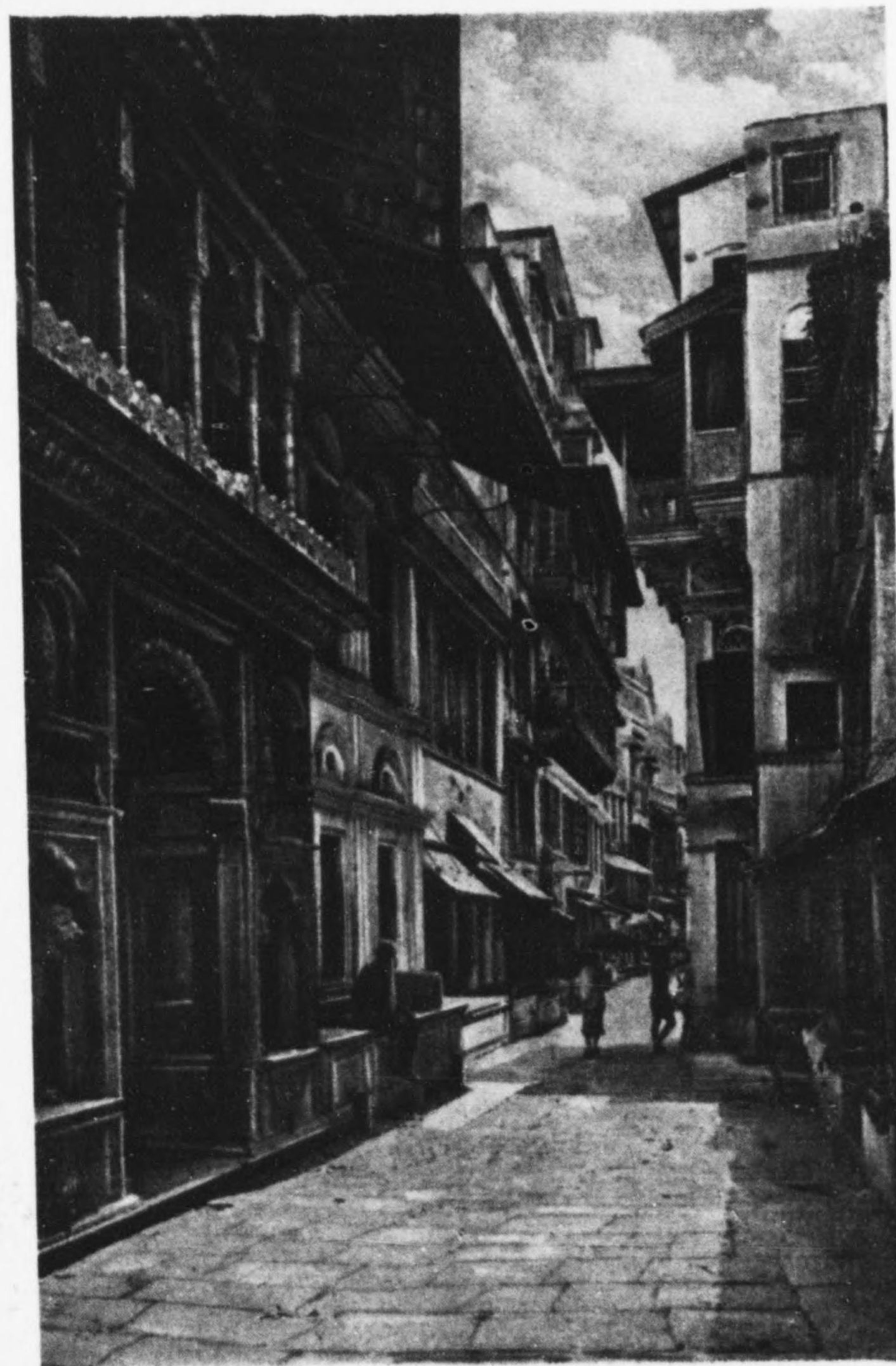
One of them, seeing Sunny's friendly interest, held out her hand and spoke in English.

"We are going to a christening," she said. "Would you like to go, too?"

"Oh yes, please," said Sunny. She looked behind her and saw she had come farther down the dark and rather dirty alley than she had realized. The boys and her father were nowhere in sight.

"Oh well, they'll wait for me," she thought. "I mustn't miss this."

"I suppose I couldn't go back and call my fa-



A STREET IN BENARES

ther and brother?" she suggested tentatively.

"No. No men, please," said the woman, smiling. "But you will be very welcome if you like to come."

The group of women turned into a larger street where they entered a narrow gate, and Sunny, following them, found herself in a small courtyard shut in by high walls. With a slight feeling of uneasiness she followed up a narrow dark stairway to an upper room of the house. Once inside the doorway of that room she stopped and gasped with astonishment.

Seated on a pile of rugs against the farther wall was a very pale but smiling woman who seemed to be clad in solid gold. Over at the other side of the room stood an elderly woman, evidently the grandmother, holding a week-old baby in her arms. But it was the costume of the seated woman that struck Sunny dumb with amazement. She glanced inquiringly at her new-found friend, who was wearing a pretty marvelous sari herself. It was hand woven pure silk, a deep rich rose color, spotted all over with flowers of pure gold woven into the silk, and with a ten-inch border of gold.

"Am I mistaken," asked Sunny, "or is our hostess dressed from head to foot in pure gold? Is she a goddess or something?"

"No, she is a new mother," returned the other, smiling. "So, naturally, she is wearing her best sari for the christening. Yes, it is gold, and so heavy that she could not stand up in it. We Jains are the goldsmiths of India. We spin pure soft gold into threads as fine as silk and weave it into cloth that is supple and delicate and, of course, never tarnishes. Come and sit beside the young mother. She does not speak English, but she will be interested to see you."

Sunny, feeling rather dazed, sat down on the floor beside their pale hostess.

The smiles and bows of the introduction having been exchanged, she sat and watched the women in their graceful saris, like richly exotic flowers, greet their hostess with charming gestures and friendly words. They laid their silk-wrapped bundles, evidently presents for the baby, beside her, and went to exclaim over the sleeping child in its proud grandmother's arms. Sunny wondered if she could go and look at the baby, then remembered that some Indians believe that foreigners have the evil eye, and decided she had better not.



HINDU GIRL WITH TEMPLE OFFERING

Trays of sweet cakes and candies were passed. Sunny took a delicate arabesque made of honey and butter that melted in her mouth. The next tray that was passed to her seemed to contain candies wrapped in gold paper. She took one (it was almond paste), and as she watched the others, absently crumbled the "gold paper" wrapping in her fingers. It hardened down into a heavy pellet as if it were a bit of tinfoil. She looked down at it in surprise, then glanced inquiringly at her friend in the rose sari.

"Good heavens, it's gold leaf, isn't it?" she exclaimed.

The woman nodded and smiled. "Don't throw it away," she advised her.

Sunny glanced at her hostess. The girl, not much older than Sunny herself, was leaning back against the wall, her eyes closed. She looked very tired and frail.

"Poor dear," she exclaimed. "The sari is too heavy for her."

She picked up an edge of the skirt that lay



beside her on the floor and for the first time really realized that the glittering costume was what it looked to be, spun out of pure heavy gold. Besides that, the young mother wore heavy necklaces, bracelets and nose and ear rings of great rubies, pearls, emeralds and diamonds. Sunny got up from the floor decisively.

"Thank you very much for letting me come," she said in English. "It has been a wonderful experience. But now I hope you will go back to bed. You mustn't over-tire yourself."

The pale mother, who had opened her eyes, watched Sunny's face as she spoke. She could not understand the words, but she saw the expression of kindness and concern on the American girl's face and responded to it.

"We are all going soon," said the woman in the rose sari. "I am glad you came with us, little American girl. Shall I send some one with you to find your father and brother?"

"No thank you. They won't be far. And thank you for bringing me."

Sunny ran down the steps and out through the courtyard into the alley. This was now filled with beggars of all kinds, lepers, blind men, cripples, holy men with their begging bowls. Sunny dropped her pellet of gold into the outstretched hand of a sad-looking widow, and tried to push her way through the clamoring crowd.

Meanwhile Max was arguing anxiously with his father as they stood on the bank of the Ganges.

"Dad, I've really got to go looking for her. Some drunken tramp may have carried her off."

"Now Max, have you seen a single drunken person in the whole of India since you've been here?"

"Well no, I haven't, now you speak of it. But there are plenty of fanatics!"

"Have you heard even a rumor of Europeans or Americans being molested during all these troubles?"

"No, but . . ."

A noisy mob of chattering grimacing grey monkeys on

a foray from a nearby temple that was sacred to them dashed up and pulled at Max's clothes mischievously, then scampered off. Having disentangled himself from them, Max continued.

"She might have got into trouble with some of their sacred animals. Maybe she bumped into a cow and a Hindu mob attacked her, thinking she was being disrespectful to it."

"Sunny is far too discreet to do anything like that. Trust Sunny. She'll be back."

"Don't you agree with me, Tara? Isn't there danger for a girl alone?"

"Not for Sunny," returned the Hindu boy calmly. "I think she has gone off to look at something. The only danger is that she might get lost among all these temples and alleys. If we stay here she will find her way back, I think."

At that moment Sunny appeared, a little disheveled from pushing her way through the beggars who had gathered in hopes of alms from the proud father of the little Jain baby, but eager to tell of her adventure.

Another adventure was about to come to them. As they stood at the top of the steps leading down to the Ganges, listening to Sunny and talking about the pilgrims who stood praying and bathing in the holy water, they saw a little girl, about four years old, toddle down the steps after her father who had gone down to bathe, leaving her



PURIFICATION BY BATHING IN THE HOLY GANGES

behind without a backward glance at her.

A flower-wreathed white bullock, making its way down the steps to drink, pushed by the child and she fell into the water.

"That child will drown," cried Max. "And no one is doing anything about it. She must belong to that man out there bathing. Mister! Hey, mister!"

The man, absorbed in his devotions, did not turn his head.

"I know she belongs to him. She was clinging to his hand as he came to the steps. I saw him tell her to go back."

The child's floating hair was now all that could be seen on the dirty water at the edge of the steps. Her thin little arms had ceased to struggle.

Max slipped off his shoes and started down.

"Look out, Max, it may be sacrilege for you to go into the Ganges."

"I don't care. We can't let this happen." He waded out waist high in the water and caught up the dripping child.

"Give her to me," said Sunny. The child opened soft brown eyes and shuddered with fear of the strange white faces bending over her. Sunny held the thin cold little body close to her, and after a moment's struggle she settled down like a kitten, realizing that she was among friends.

Max kept an indignant eye on the bathing man. He had not so much as turned his head, but kept dipping and rising, throwing the glittering drops of water over himself as he prayed for purification. By the burning ghats of Benares, where sorrowing relatives watch the half consumed bodies of their dear ones float down the stream all day and every day, there is always commotion, and the shrill screams of the people who had witnessed Max's rescue of the child had not roused him from his devotions.

"Ask her if that's her father out there. Tara," said Max.

Tara spoke to the child in Hindustani, but she did not understand. She turned her face in against Sunny's warm shoulder.

"Poor little mite," murmured Sunny.

"I'd like to have a word or two with that fellow," said Max angrily. "Look, he's coming back."

The man's face was transfigured as he made his way back up the stairs. All his sins had been

washed away forever, and he was now assured of a favorable rebirth. His face turned sullen, however, as Max accosted him abruptly.

"This your little girl?" asked the American boy angrily. "Don't you know how to take care of her? She almost drowned while you were out there? Hasn't she got a mother?"

Tara interposed anxiously, for the man seemed to meet anger with anger. "You shouldn't attack people like that, Maxie," he said. "Maybe you don't understand."

"What is there to understand?" returned Max impatiently. "The fellow went off trying to save his own soul, I suppose, and left his little girl to drown. I've heard these people don't care much about girl babies, but this is really more than I can stand by and watch."

Tara asked the man a question in Hindustani, and the man replied.

"He says his wife's body has just been burned over on the burning ghat."

"That's all right, and we sympathize with his grief, but make him understand that his child was about to drown because of his neglect of her."

The man looked at the child in Sunny's arms, but made no move to take it. He shrugged his shoulders and turned to go, speaking back to Tara over his shoulder in Hindustani. He had other rituals to attend to in the temples of Benares.

"He says it is only a girl child, and a widow at that. He says it would have been better if you had left her alone. Now she is your responsibility."

The child's long lashes were drooping over her pale brown cheek. She was about to fall asleep from exhaustion. Sunny held her close and looked bewildered at Tara.

"Did I understand you to say that the man said we should have let her drown?" she stammered incredulously.

Tara nodded. "He is a very poor and a very ignorant man," he said.

Max, his fists clenched, full of unreasoning rage that urged him to give the unnatural father a good beating, watched the retreating back of the pilgrim.

"Hold hard, Maxie," said Mr. Slovinski, warningly. "You can't change a thousand years of superstition in a day. And you can't change people's minds by beating them up. Yes, Sunny," he turned to his daughter, "That's what he said."

And you must try to understand his point of view, outrageous and cruel as it seems to you. As he sees it, the child has nothing to live for. She is a girl child, a widow, and so she will be a life-long burden to him, since she can never marry. Death in the waters of the Holy Ganges, however, would have released him from the burden of one more mouth to feed, and it would have been far better for the child herself. Death in the Holy Ganges would have passed her on to a more fortunate incarnation. She might even have been born a boy child."

Sunny stared at him open-mouthed for a moment.

"Widow? Did you say that this mite is a widow?" she gasped.

"Yes, that's what he said, and it was unwise of him to admit it, for it is against the Sarda Act of India to betroth or marry little girls. But it is still done secretly in the villages, among the ignorant and poverty-stricken people who wish to get their girl children settled as soon as possible. This baby must have been the promised bride of someone, perhaps a neighbor's boy of six, or a man of sixty. In eight or ten years he would claim her as his bride. But meanwhile the man or the boy must have died, and since among the ignorant, orthodox Hindus it is always considered the woman's fault if the husband dies, for whatever reason, she must pay the penalty for that sin by lifelong widowhood and penance.

"In the old days, she was burned alive on her husband's funeral pyre, but the British Government put a stop to that practice, which was called suttee. Perhaps the quick death of suttee, cruel as it was, was preferable to the living death of the Hindu widow who has no personal rights of any kind."

"But this baby isn't married! Maybe she's never even seen the man or boy who's supposed to be her husband."

"Probably she never has. But she's married, just the same, having been formally betrothed to him, and now that he's dead, she's a widow, and, according to the orthodoxy of the ignorant mass of

Hindus, she is her husband's murderer, perhaps by some sin committed in a former existence."

"But I never heard of anything so dreadful," cried Sunny, holding the sleeping child more closely to her. "It's so—so unjust. And so cruel."

"Yes, and many thousands of enlightened Hindus, both men and women, are devoting their lives to putting an end to this abuse, which has grown through hundreds of years of ignorance . . . and poverty, too, Sunny. Since their religion forbids her to marry again, they would not be human if they did not blame her for becoming an economic burden on her family."

"It isn't her fault."

"No. But how just is the ordinary human mind when weakened by chronic anxiety and hunger and ignorance? Try to understand the situation as this man sees it."

"I may understand, but I'll never forgive it," said Sunny rebelliously.

"You needn't. But listen," continued her father imperturbably. "The man is a villager, and very, very poor. Poorer than you can even imagine poverty to be. His wife is dead—and note, please, that he must have loved her, for he did her the greatest service in his power after her death: he brought her body to be burned beside the sacred Ganges, so as to assure her a happy rebirth.

"Now she is gone, he must look for another wife, preferably a young girl. Can he expect his new bride to take on the care of a girl baby, a



BATHING GHAT, BENARES

widow who will be perpetually on their hands since she cannot be married off, and who is too young even to be useful as a drudge around the house?"

Sunny looked down at the sleeping child in her arms.

"Oh Daddy, couldn't we keep her? She'd be no more trouble than a kitten."

Mr. Slovinski sighed.

"I don't see how we can, Sunny. The moment you begin to think of India in terms of human suffering, your heart is broken. That is perhaps both cause and effect of their philosophies which try to place the reason for such things on sins committed in a previous incarnation. They know that the baby in your arms has not sinned during her few years of life. Then why is she doomed to suffer? It must be because she sinned in some previous life."

"I never heard anything so ridiculous," cried Sunny.

"No Sunny," returned her father quickly. "You are not wise enough to judge the universe yet. I understand your feeling for this child, though. We will see what we can do."

"There comes Max. Where has he been?"

"I followed that blighter to the door of a temple," explained Max. "It seemed to be an especially holy one, and only for Hindus. They wouldn't let me in. What can we do about the fellow? Set the police on him?"

"Even if we forced him to take the child back she'd lead a miserable life. Sunny wants to keep her. What do you boys think of that idea?" Mr. Slovinski turned to Tara, who, an enlightened Hindu himself, had been leaning against a parapet looking sadly down at the devout bathers in the Holy Ganges. "I think, sir," he replied, "that the child would be happiest in one of the many homes maintained by educated Hindus for little widows like her. Only the poor ignorant villagers of India now follow the custom of child widowhood . . . they and some of the ultra-orthodox high caste Hindus who cling to the old ways. The trouble is that there are so many millions of ignorant here in India. But if the child is put in one of these excellent homes, she will be free to marry later if she wishes, and meanwhile she will be educated to become a useful woman of India."

"We could pay for her keep and education," cried Sunny. "Let's have her trained to be a doc-

tor. I'm sure she's bright, and India needs doctors. Let's get away from this place. There's death and cruel callousness everywhere. Look at that! It's just so wrong!"

She pointed to where an arrogant, flower-wreathed bullock was crowding some thin, hungry-eyed children off the narrow street. "They ought to kill that animal and make soup for those hungry children."

"Stop talking like that, Sunny," said her father sternly. "Many of these pilgrims understand English. That's a shocking and blasphemous thing to say from their point of view. Those bulls are sacred. They must be fed and cared for though children starve. You may think they are wrong, but you are not competent, my dear, to judge the heights and depth of Hindu religious philosophy. You are doing one thing today which, according to your lights, is the right thing to do. So bring the child and we will leave these God-seeking pilgrims to their devotions."

"Calm down, Sunny," said Max sympathetically. "I know how you feel. Want me to carry the small one for a while? She's a cute little trick, isn't she? Look at the length of those eyelashes. Too thin, though. We'll have to feed her up."

Sunny drew a long breath, holding the sleeping child more closely to her. "Lots of creamy milk and cereal," she said, "and some good beef broth."

"Don't overdo it, Sunny," remarked her father over his shoulder as he pushed a way for them through the crowds. "She's never tasted meat, and the little stomach couldn't stand rich food too soon."

"Okay," said Sunny, smiling suddenly at him. "And thanks, Dad." She turned back to Tara, who was wandering sadly along behind them. "And, Tara, excuse me for sounding so vehement. I know it isn't Hinduism at its best that makes these cruel things happen. It's the same ignorance and superstition that show themselves in other ways in other countries."

"And greed and indifference," added Tara gravely. "India is a very wealthy country, with plenty for all if all were wise and industrious and patriotic in the true sense. I have learned my lesson on this trip away from my beloved home in Kashmir. I expected to go on in the comfortable way my family lives there. But now I mean to work for the rest of my life with the hundreds

of thousands of truly patriotic Indians who have ended all caste barriers among themselves, and who have abolished religious quarrels and are devoting themselves to bringing a happier and more secure life to the masses in India, regardless of race or creed."

"Stout fella," cried Max. "I could envy you. Life is going to be a grand adventure for you, as an Indian, from now on."

"I suppose there are adventures of the same kind waiting for you back in America?" suggested Tara. "Or is everything perfect there?"

Max looked at him indignantly for a moment, then walked thoughtfully along the teeming riverfront of the fabulous city of Benares. For three miles this riverfront is lined with glittering palaces and temples dedicated to all the gods of the Hindu pantheon, and to many sacred animals. From the ghats pilgrims of all castes and outcasts bathe, for Mother Ganges takes all to her bosom without distinction and is forever spiritually pure and uncontaminated. Physically, however, the Ganges is far from hygienically pure. Half-burned corpses from the burning ghats and refuse of all kinds float on the muddy waters in which people afflicted by all kinds of diseases from leprosy to tuberculosis bathe side by side. Miracles of healing, both spiritual and physical, certainly happen there, for the Hindus bathing in the holy stream are possessed of a burning faith.

The American Sunny, however, was possessed at that moment with an equally burning indignation and zeal for reform, and she was glad when they arrived at their hotel, away from the sights and sounds and smells she found so bewildering and painful. The little girl slept peacefully, seeming to sense that she was in loving arms. Sunny took off her wet white cotton sari, wrapped her in a dry shawl and laid her on her bed.

"Now," she said practically, "I'm going to give all these things back to the man when he comes tomorrow."

She referred to the gleaming pieces of Benares brass work which a salesman had left for her consideration. She put them all aside with those she had decided not to buy. More reluctantly she lifted the shimmering folds of a lovely Benares scarf, woven of pure gold and silver threads, which she had meant to buy as a gift for her mother.

"Mummy will understand," she murmured, as

she put it back into its soft paper wrappings. "I have to start a fund for the baby's education. I wonder what her name is?"

"Maybe she'll tell you when she wakes up," remarked Max, swinging his legs over the arm of an overstuffed chair. "I hope you'll allow her Uncle Max to chip in."

"All contributions cheerfully accepted," returned Sunny. "You can even go with me to the bazaar to buy her some clothes."

"Do you know what to buy?"

"Oh, just a yard or two of cotton cloth, I suppose, for a little sari like the one I took off her. But in some gay color. And maybe a little pair of earrings."

"Widows aren't supposed to wear jewelry."

"That's exactly why I'm going to buy some," returned Sunny firmly. "I don't approve of jewelry for babies ordinarily, at least not earrings, but I'm going to buy her some, and bracelets, too, that tinkle gaily on her arms . . . just to show what I think about all this widow stuff."

"All zeal, Madame Easy," murmured her brother. "I'm going to give her a nice brass mug of Benares ware to drink her milk from."

"A silver mug. You can afford it."

"Okay, okay," yawned Max, stretching as he rose. "I'll get out of here while I'm still solvent. Seriously though, count me in on fifty per cent of the expenses for our future doctor. Long about college time she's going to cost us something, do you know it?"

"Yes, and isn't it wonderful? She is going to be our little gift to India. Where's Tara?"

"Haven't seen him since we came through the lobby downstairs."

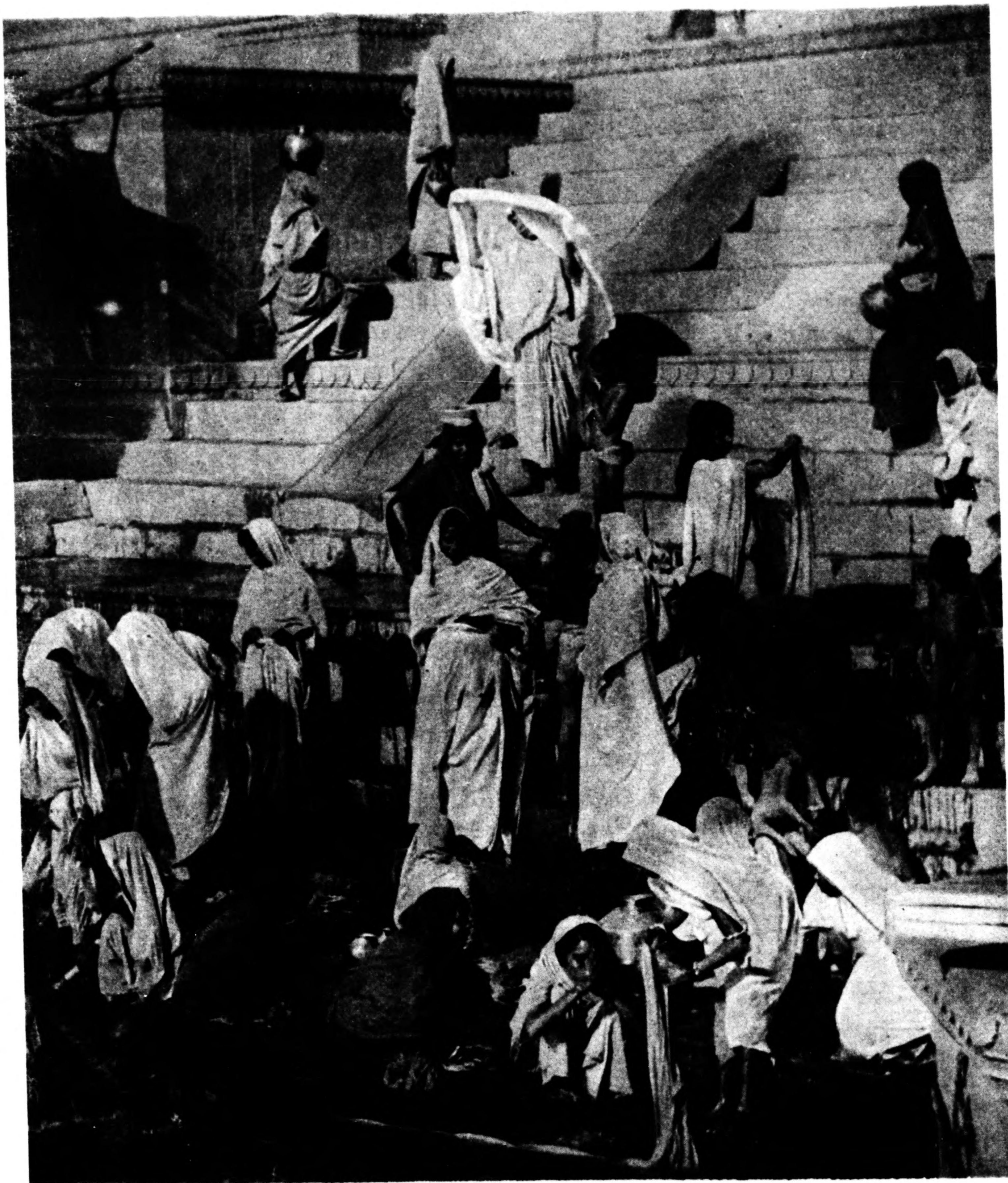
"That sounds like his knock."

Tara came in full of news. "I've found a lovely home for little Alitra. It's in a big garden and is run by a Hindu Maharani, who is a widow herself. The children all look happy and there is an excellent school attached. Of course, everything is free to them through the Maharani's philanthropy, but the manageress said you were welcome to pay for Alitra, if you wish."

"Is that the baby's name?" asked Sunny, surprised.

"Yes, her father mentioned it. Didn't you hear him?" asked Tara.

"No, I was so mad at him I couldn't hear anything but the blood beating in my own ears," con-



HINDU WOMEN ON A BATHING GHAT BESIDE THE GANGES AT BENARES

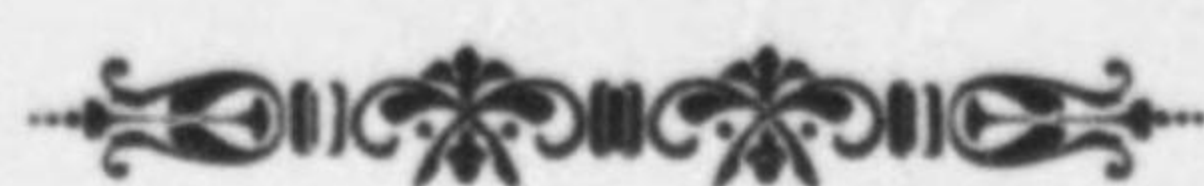
fessed Sunny. "But what a lovely name. Alitra. All right, little darling," she bent to kiss the pale face. "when we have to leave Benares you shall enter the kindergarten of the school in a rose red

sari with a gold border, with your bracelets tinkling and your earrings twinkling and be the merriest little widow in the place."

*Photos—Saeed Bros. Benares*

## INFORMATION QUIZ

YOU CAN ANSWER THE QUESTIONS ON THIS PAGE IF YOU HAVE READ THIS COPY OF  
WORLD YOUTH



1. Name a modern city on the Arctic Circle.
2. Name two rivers in Finland.
3. What is the capital of Finland?
4. What parts of Finland have been ceded to Russia?
5. What is Finland's greatest source of wealth?
6. Name a famous architect of Finland.
7. Where is Uxmal?
8. What is the "Fateful Uudz Katun"?
9. Describe the Nunnery at Uxmal.
10. Where is Lake Peten?
11. How old is the Xiu family of Uxmal?
12. Where is Benares?
13. Why is Benares so beloved by Hindus?
14. Who is Dr. Ambedkar?
15. Why was the Sarda Act passed in India?
16. What food do raccoons enjoy?
17. Describe some of the habits of raccoons.
18. What is air?
19. How does sun affect air?
20. What else affects air?

2000

MAY 7 1948

In reply refer to  
OE

My dear Miss Smiley:

This is in reply to your letter of April 20, 1948 requesting information concerning the circulation of your magazine, World Youth, in Japan.

The circulation of foreign magazines is permitted in Japan, but all publications must first be submitted for approval to the Civil Information and Education Section, General Headquarters, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, Tokyo, Japan. At present, magazines cannot be sold to the Japanese people for dollars, owing to the difficult economic situation which requires the Japanese to conserve their dollars for only the most essential raw materials. Of course, you are free to offer it to the Civil Information and Education Section as a gift.

United States Government funds are available for subscriptions to certain magazines in this country for distribution to the information centers throughout Japan. If you choose this method, you should write to Mr. George Finney, Reorientation Branch, Department of the Army, Washington 25, D.C. Mr. Finney advises, however, that most of the funds are already tied up in outstanding subscriptions to various publications. Nevertheless, there is a possibility that they might be able to add your magazine to their subscription list.

Sincerely yours,

894.917/4-2048

CS/A

*RHW*  
Roswell H. Whitman  
Acting Chief  
Division of Occupied Areas  
Economic Affairs

*CR*  
Miss Carolyn D. Smiley,  
MAY 7 1948 *World Youth, Inc.,*  
El Quito Road,  
Los Gatos, California.

*u.c*  
OE:WSMcCormick:beb  
5/3/48

894.917/4-2048