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SERVICE IN THE PHILIPPINES ✓

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Ed. Note: This is the second article by Lieut. Mills on the above subject. His first article "From Frisco to Manila" appeared in Vol. X No. 5 of the NEWS LETTER, and he promises to send in other sketches of life in the Philippines in the near future.

It has been said that the grandest experiences in the world are, to a greater or less extent, a state of mind - and so it is with service in the Philippines. It may prove "two years lost any way you look at it" - in a germ laden country of burning heat and torrential downpours - or it can easily be two years of golden days and silver nights which fly on their way all too quickly. You and you alone can make the choice. Happy, indeed, is the family with a single choice in this respect. This little sketch will be written from the latter angle, and another may tell you of the other side.

It is about 4:30 A.M. of your second day in the Philippines, when you are awakened by a most extraordinary sound. At first in your semi-conscious moments it seems a long way off and of almost musical quality coming as if in waves - now louder, now more softly. In a few minutes though the musical quality has disappeared and the air is so vibrant with high pitched crows and squawks overlapping each other that a continuous din results. It is really beyond description in the utter completeness of its discord; for the two million roosters which make Manila vicinity their home are awake and greeting the dawn with cries of joy. In addition, a few million hens contribute heavily to the confusion. In this country the hen cackles just as loud as in the States but lays eggs only half as large, but the male bird can fight. Half of these noble birds will be victors or vanquished ere the Christmas chimes are heard and their razor edged spurs handed over to a new generation of fighters.

After your family has agreed upon one point at least - that it is, indeed, difficult to imagine yourselves ten thousand miles from home, you will likely discuss your first day in the Islands. It was such a busy one and such a pleasant one that to save your life you cannot remember when or how you came home awfully late in the evening, but here you are, safe and happy, so why worry over mere details. A cool shower now follows and a stroll about the lawn just to orient yourself. A few moments may elapse while you gaze outward over an expanse of the light blue lazily moving waters of Manila Bay. There may be a new boat in sight waiting at the entrance of the breakwater and you wonder if it carries that check you had hoped to receive in Frisco or any other mail from home.

A young Filipino (the term "Filipino" is usually applied to those Christian people of the Archipelago, while "Philippino" may refer to any native in the Islands) of about fifteen years of age now approaches softly with word from the hostess (for you are being entertained until you find a place for yourself) that breakfast is ready. This lad is of slight build, about five feet tall and brown as a chestnut, his gold-capped teeth appearing as he gives you a suggestion of a smile. Full length white trousers, a semi-transparent shirt hanging loosely outside them, and straight combed black hair, held securely in place by one of the much advertised "Lie Flat" agencies, add an air of oriental charm to the occasion. He precedes you to the door, opens it and politely waits for you to enter. Then he removes his inch thick wooden sandals and, bare footed, enters behind you. The hostess now greets you, and after inquiring as to how you all slept and if the mosquitoes troubled you explains that "This is Casciano, my house boy". Turning to the boy she continues, "Now, Casciano, Captain Jones and Mrs. Jones are going to be with us a few days and you do anything that they want". "Yes, Ma'am", he answers mechanically and tiptoes to the kitchen while you sit down to a daintily arranged breakfast, beginning with mango, papaya, or strawberries from Baguio.

The hostess will in all probability apologize for serving canned milk, "But you see the babies in Manila take the small amount of fresh milk and "Bearbrand" is really so expensive here", she adds by way of explanation. "It's very fine", you cheerfully lie in replying, "but where is the Lieutenant this morning?" "Oh, he took the bus for Camp Nichols at six thirty, but he left the Flivver for you", she replies.

In the course of the conversation you learn that Casciano serves at the table, cleans the house, polishes the brass and leather goods, cleans the white shoes, washes the Fords - and the dog - and caters to the desires and whims of his mistress in a thousand different ways. For these multitude of services he is paid fifteen to twenty pesos (or seven dollars and fifty cents to ten dollars) a month and his food of rice, bread and fish (about six pesos more). In three or four years he will become a "combination boy", having all his old duties and cooking besides for a small family or one of limited means. He will then earn twenty-five to forty pesos per month. His next promotion will be to that of cook, when he may after long years of experience earn as much as fifty pesos per month.

After breakfast your hostess drives you to the Quartermaster Warehouse in Port Area, opposite Pier One, where the THOMAS docked. Here you visit the Finance Officer on the second floor and with surprisingly little difficulty draw your last month's pay, rental and all, for the THOMAS is but "temporary shelter". Returning to the ground floor the hostess will take you to the "Memorandum Receipt" branch where a kindly Warrant Officer knows just how your family is fixed and that you need a "good" ice box. You select many articles of furniture, as perchance your goods did not arrive on the THOMAS. After noting that each article is actually tagged with your name, your hostess will then stroll to the south end of the building to the cold stores for celery, lettuce, cabbage, etc., and it's "first come, first served".

The drive home is over spaciouly wide asphalt roads. On your right are the piers, Pier (7) being probably the finest in the Orient. When completed it will accommodate two President boats docked end to end on each side. Manila's pride in this structure is, indeed, justified. A turn to the left and you pass the point where Legaspi, the Spanish explorer-Conqueror, and first Governor of the Philippines, landed. Here today is a 20th Century ice cream parlor where your hostess likely will treat you to ice cream or cocoa cola and pay for it while you study the centavos in your hand. The next point of interest is the Manila Hotel on the left. Like Pier 7, this is reputed to be the Orient's best, but the New Majestic Hotel in Shanghai is probably a more magnificent structure. Above this attractive gray building floats "Old Glory", then the Philippine colors, while on a second tower is a red flag with a large white dollar sign (\$) in its center, the last indicating that Mr. Robert Dollar has a Trans-Pacific liner in town.

A large open square now opens to the left while an unobstructed view of the bay is on the right. "The Luneta", that open square, recalls many historical events dealing with the life blood of the Philippine people. Here the Spaniards executed Filipino leaders of the opposition, and here Rizal, the Filipino National Hero, sank beneath a fusilade of their bullets. Just north of the old Luneta may be seen the wall of the old walled city with its frowning parapets and watch towers gazing silently thru' the years at the ever-changing scene below. Its guns are long since silent, its magazines are filled with gardeners' tools and athletic equipment, and its cherished moat now forms an up-to-date golf course and a series of sunken gardens. In place of the old cannon and musket balls the little white rubber spheres of none too skilled golfers now drop within and constantly bombard the outer walls. Fort Santiago at the Pasig River end of the wall now houses the administrative offices of a peaceful American Army, while several officers' quarters are actually located along the top of the wall.

Looking across and beyond one sees the new "Capitol" or legislative building with its spotless cream colored walls rising above the trees. Another turn and the Army and Navy Club is passed, and Dewey Boulevard is followed along the shore, a beautiful though quiet street at this time of the day. A few moments more and you are home again. The Monsoon breeze is blowing refreshingly from the Southeast, (for it is between December and May) across the porch and into the open house. The doors and windows seem immense, the windows sliding apart to the right and left. Each window and door uses white shells cut into two and one-half inch squares. A medium sized house will contain from four thousand to eight thousand such squares in its windows and doors. This type of construction obviates the use of curtains and permits the use of native products. Shells are also used extensively for lamp shades, trays and souvenirs of various kinds. It is not uncommon to see houses in which nearly the entire side of a room opens. The majority of houses are of the elevated

bungalow type, built upon timbers or cement posts about six feet above the ground. This type of construction catches a little more breeze and discourages various "crawling things" from entering.

It is, indeed, an ever present source of interest to sit upon the porch and watch the rest of the world go by. The large number of Ford automobiles seen drives away any tendency toward homesickness. Other cars, ranging from little old Hupmobiles "20's" of a decade and a half ago to the last word in Packard Straight 8's also slip by, and yet the old transportation is very much in evidence too. As one watches, two Chinese coolies trot by carrying, suspended from a pole between their shoulders, a complete aparador (wardrobe), a large trunk and other heavy articles. The perfect harmony and rhythm between their noiseless springy steps and the bending of the pole impresses one with the calm "take it as you find it - but take it" creed of these Orientals. At a much slower speed a carabao and cart enter the picture. This animal is the real beast of burden of the Islands. For centuries he has hauled their loads, pulled their crude plows thru the muddy rice paddies, and even supported native generals upon his broad back in periods of national emergency. Even within the memory of many of ourselves has he dragged our own American artillery up the steep mountain sides, rescued our 20th Century trucks from seemingly bottomless mudholes and very recently has been the prime mover in "gassing" our majestic Martin Bombers. But here we are digressing - as this scene unfolds before us we certainly do feel a "kick". Manila is, indeed, the meeting point between the East and West, the Old World and the New. We are sometimes too prone to consider anything not done our way not done efficiently or correctly, but let us consider - man power is cheaper here than in the States, i.e., hour for hour; gasoline is nearly double in price here (except when purchased at eighteen to twenty-two cents per gallon from the Quartermaster). It is, therefore, safe to assume that the foot "Chino" carriers and carabao drivers will survive for some time to come.

The Flivver is now warmed up and headed South for Camp Nichols. A short run along M.H. del Pilar Street follows (named for the twenty-two year old Philippine General who fell before American arms at Tridad Pass during the Insurrection), and then across to A. Mabini Street (named for a Philippine Patriot or Irreconcilable whom the Americans imprisoned several years ago on Guam Island). Along the latter street a few five-room livable houses at \$35 a month rent are pointed out. After passing the old Spanish Fort, shelled by Admiral Dewey in 1898, and the wrecks of two old Spanish boats driven ashore at that time, one enters the suburb of Pasay, a growing town which Manila hopes to absorb. After dodging goats, pigs, trolley cars, bicycles, automobiles, carabaos and squatting brown forms one finally reaches the end of the car line, about seven-eighths of a mile from the flying field. Here the scene changes, as more residences are encountered. The Polo Club with its smooth green polo field in the foreground, its large outdoor swimming pool, its pagodaized water tower and its tennis courts, with now and then a bit of the Bay showing beyond, makes a most alluring picture. A few paces north, but hidden amid the foliage is the home of the Philippine Senate President, Manuel Quezon, supporter of Philippine Independence.

Immediately opposite the club is to be seen a unique arrangement of cottages, the group being known as the Valhalla. Here a family may live a week, a month or longer in a clean-screened, ant-proof cottage. The cost will be from \$125 to \$160 a month with meals for two, altogether a quite satisfactory proposition for a newcomer. The same street is now known as F.B. Harrison (named for Governor-General Harrison, 1913-1921). The next point of interest is "Camp Nichols No. 2", a private owned group of cement houses ranging in price from \$60 to \$75 per month. The next quarter mile leads through a typical Barrio (village), where natives are building dugout type boats, repairing immense fishing nets, operating markets, playing ping-pong and football and training roosters for the local pit. A sudden turn to the left just prior to the "miniature hotels", Yokohama, Kobe, etc., and we are face to face with the guard at Camp Nichols. From the gate (20 minutes from the center of Manila by automobile); we can see a stone church directly ahead and the Field, whose big development was started by Major B.Q. Jones just beyond it.