

were, discouraged. The discomforts of travel in the Nanyo, as the Japanese called their mandated South Seas, were enlarged upon. Moreover, when you had won the privilege of getting on the boat, it was another thing to find a way to get off; for the Japanese captain at every port would suggest that you would be much more comfortable if you remained on board the ship. To stop over from one ship to another was still harder; so it is with some slight sense of achievement that my wife and I look back upon our four months' stay in the islands in 1935.

At Saipan and Yap we sneaked off the boat. At Palau we got away with the help of a German missionary. At Truk we were befriended by a Native. At Ponape it is doubtful what success we should have had if we had not acquired a princely patron.

A young man in amber glasses and golf pants asked us to join him in a game of deck golf. He spoke English surprisingly well. When I remarked on it he said that he had spent some time in England. It was only later that we learned he had been educated at Oxford. He had a frank, friendly manner, quite different from the clamlike inscrutability of many Japanese. He did not play deck golf with consummate skill, and Mary soon put him in the "pool." She was called "nasty" for her pains.

When he had gone to his cabin, the steward came to tell us rather breathlessly that he was Prince Saionji, grandson of the last of the Genro, the elder statesmen who guided the policy of the nation until the militarists seized power. His grandfather was the most influential man in Japan, hardly excepting the Emperor.

The young prince, not yet thirty, occupied himself in the treaties department of the Japanese Gaimusho, or Foreign Office. He was distinctly pro-American and pro-British, and loved to talk with any one acquainted with Europe or America. He had various fine plans, one of them to establish a university like Oxford in Japan.

We soon found that we had gained a powerful ally. We were, of course, the only American passengers on this ship,

as we had been on all the others, and the closely enveloping Japanese atmosphere had sometimes been very oppressive. Now the lowering brows lifted, and suddenly nothing was too good for us.

Land on Ponape? Why, of course. A radiogram was sent to the Governor, and he radioed back that a house had been placed at our disposal.

Ponape is impressive as one approaches it by way of the twisting channel through the reef to spacious Ponape Harbour. The island is mountainous and wildly picturesque. It plays its role as an island of mystery. Its appearance is more ominous because of the inky clouds that habitually roll across its ranges. Lightning crackles and thunder roars around the mighty Rock of Chokach overlooking the harbour.

This huge natural fortress, two-thirds the height of Gibraltar, drops away in basaltic cliffs so steep that they can be scaled only in one place where the Japanese have constructed a dangerous trail. Without doubt heavy batteries are mounted on the flat crown.

More than once in the past this rock has been used as a stronghold. In German times a Governor noted for his harsh methods came to Ponape to put down a local rebellion. When he had the King arrested and flogged, the islanders retaliated by assassinating him, his secretary, and all of his higher officials. Then they fled to Chokach and pulled themselves up by lianas to its summit. But German soldiers trained in wall-scaling tactics climbed the precipice and captured the islanders. Some were executed, others deported to Palau.

Lofty Ponape attracts the storms. Rain descends in torrents as we draw near looming Chokach. A severe rain-storm is almost a daily event in Ponape. It has the dubious distinction of being one of the best-watered islands in the Pacific. Anything will grow here, including mould and madness.

Under thumping rain, a launch takes us on a half-hour trip through shallow passages between islands to the docks of the town. Busy streets, teeming with Japanese, climb the hillside to a high point crowned by a shicho, government building. It is a frame structure