

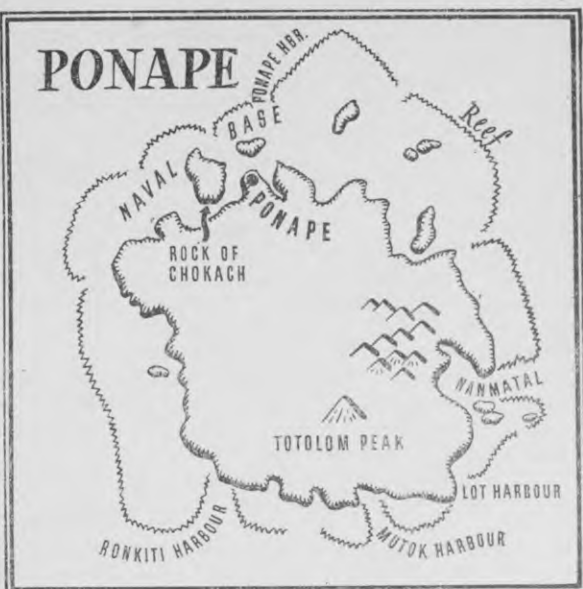
draught can be accommodated. The depth of the basin averages 20 fathoms; and in some places exceeds 40 fathoms.

Bitter land fighting may be expected in Ponape, for no other Micronesian island is so replete with "natural fortifications" in the way of deep ravines, high peaks, precipices, and jungle. The Ponapeans have a superstitious dread of the interior, but the Japanese have penetrated it to start plantations and, doubtless, install armaments. Because of the difficult terrain, there are only 40 miles of roads as contrasted with, 171 miles on much smaller Saipan. Streams of any kind are almost unknown in Micronesia, but there are rivers on Ponape, tumbling down to the sea from upland lakes. American whalers used to come to Ponape for fresh water.

The basaltic cliffs are honeycombed with caves, which were used by the islanders to withstand the German siege in 1901, and will doubtless now be found faced with concrete and converted into forts and machine-gun nests.

Forts of the traditional sort are not built by the Japanese, but there is one on Ponape left over from the Spanish regime. It is still in good repair and will probably be used. It stands on a hill overlooking Ponape Harbour. Several acres are enclosed within a high stone wall 6 ft. thick, on top of which defenders may crouch protected by a 3 ft. escarpment. There are two heavy iron gates. Inside the compound is an old Spanish roundhouse, solidly built with gun-ports framed on the inside by the brass ports of some Spanish ship.

Also within the fort is a school facing a large playground. From the veranda of the school we viewed a tribal war dance. Stout Ponape youths removed their straw hats, Osaka-made shirts and pants, smeared themselves with oil and daubs of paint, and adorned themselves with wreaths of the lovely fragrant white flowers with yellow centre called on Ponape the Pomaria, or "Smell of Mary." Their well-oiled, naked, brown bodies



flashed in the sun as they fought with staves to the rhythm of a shouting chorus. The chants of songs were stirring. The performance without a change would be a sensation on the New York stage.

The dance was in honour of Prince Saionji. His face wore a strained, almost horrified expression as he watched the blood-chilling ferocity of the savage dance and the very evident relish these head-hunters would have for real battle.

"Good men, if they are with us," he remarked. "I'd hate to have them against us!"

The fort of Ponape was built for the express purpose of protecting the Spaniards from the islanders. It was the only island of the Carolines on which the Spaniards found a fort necessary.

In the old cemetery near the fort a gigantic mango tree broods over the graves of Spaniards and Germans killed in island uprisings. Granite stones commemorate the German governor Gustav Boder and three of his aides killed by Ponapeans on October 18, 1910. The Japanese dead are buried elsewhere.

It is interesting that the first white men to take up residence on Ponape were missionaries of the American Methodist Mission and they came in 1850.