Via Ports

From Hong Kong to Hong Kong

Alexander Grantham

With a new introduction by Lord Wilson of Tillyorn

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CHAPTER ONE

HONG KONG, 1922–1935

ON a bright December morning in 1922, a few days before Christmas, the good ship *City of York* was steaming through the China Sea as she approached Hong Kong. On deck stood two new Cadets of the government administration, Thomas Megarry and myself, eagerly watching the approach to our destination and admiring the panorama of sea and sky and land spread out before us. Now the vessel passed Lyemun, the narrow entrance to the harbour. On one side, lay the island of Hong Kong with its chain of hills culminating in Victoria Peak 1,800 feet above the city of Victoria. On the other, stretched the mainland with the 'Nine Dragons', another range of mountains, forming a splendid backdrop to the twin city of Kowloon. We knew that the harbour, enclosed between the island and the mainland, was one of the finest in the world, but were not prepared for the beauty or the bustling activity. Ocean liners lay alongside the Kowloon wharves, ships flying the flags of many nations and coastal and river steamers from Canton and inland ports of China —their names painted in English letters and Chinese characters— strained at buoys in the stream, loading and unloading cargoes, junks with bat's-wing sails skimmed the water, ferries shuttled to and fro, while launches, whistling and tooting, darted hither and thither on their busy errands: a veritable arena of maritime commerce. It was exhilarating and, strangely enough, seemed to harmonize with the quiet majesty of the hills: nature and man not in conflict but complementing each other. The harbour is the very heart of the city and, as we learnt later, even when not visible to the eye, makes its presence felt.

But as the ship tied up at the dock side, we had to concentrate on the business of getting ourselves and our baggage ashore, for no one had come to meet us. Rival gangs of coolies disputed for the privilege of carrying our impedimenta and mulcting two innocents abroad. They spoke no English, we spoke no Chinese; however, we managed to make them understand that we wanted to cross the harbour to Hong Kong. It was indicated we should get into rickshaws, which we obediently did and started off, whilst they jog-trotted behind with our trunks and bags slung from poles. The rickshaw-pullers deposited us at the ferry terminal whence we crossed to the

Hong Kong side by a double-ended 'Star' ferryboat, a five-minute journey. From the ferry one gets a comprehensive view of Hong Kong, and as we drew nearer we saw that the city begins at the very water's edge with commercial buildings, banks and shops—many with arcaded verandahs—occupying the narrow strip of level land on the water-front, beyond which the ground rose steeply. Houses now took over, becoming fewer and more scattered on the higher slopes until on the topmost ridge we espied many elegant residences. This was the Peak district, at that time reserved for Europeans. I felt that whatever lay in store for me in my new job, I should at least be surrounded by beauty.

With some difficulty, we found our way to the Hong Kong Hotel and paid off the baggage-coolies, having been bullied into giving them double the proper amount. This was the best hotel in the Colony but we felt we could afford it with our princely salaries of £250 a year. The next step was to report ourselves at the Colonial Secretary's Office. Accordingly, the hotel porter put us in sedan-chairs and, proceeding along Queen's Road, we observed with fascination the jumble of cars, rickshaws, bicycles, coolies carrying loads and pedestrians, and caught glimpses of narrow streets that seemed to go straight up the mountain side—one being appropriately named Ladder Street. And so up Battery Path with its banyan trees and fern-covered banks above the hurly-burly of the street. Soon, all too soon, for I was feeling as nervous as on my first day at school, the chair-bearers put us down at the C.S.O. Two new boys were about to enter the headmaster's study for their first interview. But the friendliness of our reception, accompanied by apologies for the failure to have us met—the despatch from London giving the date of the ship's arrival had been overlooked—quickly put us at ease. We learnt that we should be going to Canton to study Cantonese for two years and our departure was arranged for a few days hence. This gave us time to explore Hong Kong and to do a little shopping.

Outstanding in my memory is the ride on the Peak Tram, a cable car that goes 1,200 feet above sea level and in those days the only means of reaching the Peak, unless one had the energy to walk up the very steep Peak Road on which cars were prohibited. At the upper terminus one either walked or took a rickshaw or sedan-chair. With the absence of noise it was peaceful and soothing whilst the views were superb. From one side we gazed over the city and harbour, the muffled sounds of which reached us faintly from below. On the other, we saw distant islands rising from a glass-like sea in a crimson

sunset, and after dark the myriad lights of fishing junks like fairy lamps.

Canton and Macau

Canton, about a hundred miles up the Pearl River, could be reached by train in four hours, but most people chose the comfortable river steamers which took eight hours, either going by the night-boat and sleeping on board, or by the day-boat. I preferred the day-boat, as the scenery was delightful, especially in the early evening when toilers in the fields and the fishermen in their boats wended their way homeward. It reminded me of eighteenth and nineteenth century engravings of oriental scenes. Those engravings may not be as accurate as a photograph but they are far more expressive of the spirit of the places they depict.

To Canton I would hardly apply the adjective 'beautiful': 'exciting' would be more appropriate. It bustles with activity, even more than Hong Kong. The river and the river-front are a perfect bedlam of noise. At all hours of the day and night, junks, tow-boats, stern-wheelers, river steamers and launches come and go with cargoes of goods and animals being loaded or unloaded and passengers getting on and off, to the accompaniment of yelling and shouting, blowing of steamers' whistles and the squealing of pigs and squawking of chickens. Away from the water-front the activity is almost as great but the noises are different.

Originally, Canton had been encircled by massive walls and had no motor roads, the principal streets being not much more than twelve feet wide and paved with large uneven granite blocks. By 1922, most of the walls had been demolished and broad thoroughfares driven through the city. Along these, cars would dash at reckless speed, their horns blowing ceaselessly, and woe betide any pedestrian or rickshaw unlucky enough to get in the way. These however were only the main avenues and most of the picturesque streets remained. Many of them consisted of shops selling the same kind of merchandise; a street for silk, one for ivory, another for silverware or jewellery and jade, as well as streets where more practical commodities such as rice or firewood could be bought. The gold-lettered signs of the shops and the bolts of richly coloured brocades and satins in Silk Street made a particularly gay sight.

About half a dozen of the Cadets lived in the 'Yamen', the residence in Manchu days of the military governor, consisting of two old rambling buildings and a gate-keeper's lodge in about two acres of ground surrounded by a wall, and reached by the narrow

'Flowery Pagoda Street' that led to a pagoda. Although right in the middle of the noisy city, it had an air of quiet, rather like the Temple in London. The rest of the Cadets lived on Shameen, a strip of land about three-quarters of a mile long and a third of a mile wide, separated from the city on three sides by a narrow creek, the third side being the Pearl River. In those days, Shameen was an international settlement with its own governing body which kept the place beautifully clean in contrast to the rest of Canton. Most of the consulates and foreign business firms were located here; a little bit of Europe tacked on to a Chinese city. I was glad I lived at the Yamen and not on Shameen.

To concentrate on one language to the exclusion of everything else should result at the end of two years in a high degree of fluency in speaking, reading and writing, even if the accent be not perfect. But Chinese is a very difficult language for foreigners, and of all the dialects Cantonese is the hardest. To make matters worse, few of the teachers—we had to find our own—had any idea of teaching. I suppose I am average in the matter of languages, and I worked hard and passed all my examinations; nevertheless when I had finished I could do no more than make myself understood when shopping, read the easiest parts of a Chinese newspaper and write a simple letter very ungrammatically. I was incapable of carrying on a social conversation without losing the thread after a few minutes. About twenty years later when Governor of Fiji, I thought I would try my Cantonese on a Chinese storekeeper in one of the outlying villages. He listened to me in polite bewilderment for a few minutes and then said, 'More better you speak English'. A few Europeans have a flair for Cantonese even though they have not learnt it as children, which is the easiest and best way, but they are rare. In my days, too much stress was laid on writing and reading, instead of on speaking. This fault has since been corrected.

Despite the fact that we took our studies seriously—or most of us did—we had plenty of time for play. Some of us bought ponies, which cost little. I paid 15 shillings for mine. We would ride out into the country; our favourite rendezvous being the White Cloud Mountain, on the way to which was an ancient monastery where we would hob-nob with the monks. During the hot summer months we started off as soon as it was light. We were, however, not the only early birds, for this was the time of day when the city night-soil was carried to the fields outside the city. Following a train of coolies with their buckets was a very odoriferous proceeding, but one gets used to most things, even smells. Once or twice we got into the crossfire

of contending sides in a local civil war and, with bullets whistling about us, hastily withdrew.

Provided we passed our examinations at the specified six-monthly intervals, the authorities in Hong Kong did not bother us, and we never dreamed of asking for permission to absent ourselves. On one occasion a Police Cadet had gone on a British cruiser as the guest of the captain, his cousin, to Weihaiwei, whence he went to Peking. Unfortunately, the Hong Kong Commissioner of Police happened to be staying at the same hotel and asked Scott what he was doing there; was he not supposed to be studying Cantonese in Canton and not mandarin in Peking? Luckily for Scott the Commissioner was a kindly man with a sense of humour.

After I had been in Canton for about nine months the Hong Kong government decided to rebuild part of the Yamen which meant that two of us had to move elsewhere. So Scott and I chose to go to the Portuguese colony of Macau rather than to Shameen.

Macau is four hours by river steamer from Hong Kong and double that distance from Canton. Canton is the apex of the triangle of which Hong Kong and Macau are the eastern and western base points respectively. We took with us our boys, cook and coolies, our furniture, our ponies, our dog Wendy, and our cats, Gin and Bitters. We must have been quite a sight going through the streets of Canton and as it started to rain, my boy hopefully held an umbrella over the mattresses on which were crouching in utter misery Gin and Bitters.

Macau is quite different from either Hong Kong or Canton. Most of the people are Chinese as they are in Hong Kong and entirely so in Canton, but there are more Eurasians—Macanese. The climate also is much the same, hot and muggy in summer, cool or cold and sunny in winter, but there the similarity ends. The Portuguese have been in Macau for four hundred years and their imprint is distinct. Many of the narrow streets with vine-covered buildings and houses—some pink, others blue, white or green—suggest the Mediterranean rather than the Orient. Time, also, has left Macau behind, for the founding of Hong Kong with its natural deep-water harbour spelt the death knell of Macau as a commercial port. The liveliness of Hong Kong and the raucousness of Canton are absent. Instead one sees the gilded youth leaning against the Senate building or elderly Macanese languidly taking the air under the banyan trees along the graceful crescent of the Praya Grande. The impression Macau made on me then—and still did when I revisited it a quarter of a century later—was that of a once beautiful *grande dame* whose youth and

vivacity had been left behind but whose grace and charm still remained. I have a very soft spot in my heart for Macau.

In my young days Macau was notorious for its gambling and its opium. The great gambling game was fantan. The croupier would have in front of him a pile of cash—a small Chinese coin about the size of a farthing—from which he would take out a handful or two and proceed to count them out in fours with a chopstick. Bets would be laid as to whether one, two or three or no cash would be left over after he had finished counting. I thought it rather a dull game. Moreover, fantan houses were not in the least romantic or glamorous. We only went when we had visitors from Hong Kong, and the sole attraction from our point of view was that drinks were on the house. Both the Macau and the Hong Kong governments operated opium monopolies, but whereas the Macau monopoly was farmed out, in Hong Kong the government itself sold the opium, the declared object being to discourage the pernicious habit of opium smoking and indirectly to raise revenue. Accordingly the price of opium was fixed at a high figure, well above that of the black market, whilst possession of non-government opium was a criminal offence. Unfortunately, this resulted in a flourishing black market, which sold below the price of government opium and which consequently was much patronized by the poorer folk, who thereby became criminals. One year the government decided to be more realistic and drastically reduced the price of its opium. Immediately the black market was killed; the sales of government opium went up and the courts were emptied of persons charged with opium offences. The quantity of opium smoked and the number of smokers remained the same. But as soon as the government's action came to the notice of well-meaning but not very practical people in England, pressure was brought to bear on the Colonial Office which peremptorily ordered the Hong Kong government to revert to the previous price. The order had, of course, to be obeyed; once again the police courts were filled with opium offenders and the black market came back to life. I always thought too little common sense was talked and written about opium. Taken in excess it is harmful, but so is alcohol. Just as the British working man likes his pint of beer at the end of a day's work, so the Chinese coolie likes his puff or two of opium. The sale of government opium has long since been abolished and to possess opium is an offence; but the evil of the drug traffic persists, with the difference that instead of opium, heroin, a derivative of opium and much more harmful, has become the habit. It would perhaps have been wiser not to have prohibited opium smoking entirely, but to

have controlled the sale realistically and to have dealt severely with trafficking in heroin and similar drugs.

Scott and I enjoyed our time in Macau at our little two-storeyed semi-detached house at No. 11 Aerea Preta, or as the Chinese called it 'Hak Sha Wan' (Black Sand Beach), a rickshaw ride of about twenty minutes out of town. We worked diligently at our studies but got in a good deal of riding, going across into China for the purpose, since Macau is small—about 2½ square miles—with nowhere to hack. Passports or anything of that kind were unnecessary. We simply rode along the beach from our house; one moment we were in Portuguese territory, the next in China. Unfortunately our riding came to an untimely end when bandits started shooting at us from behind rocks. I gave my pony to a friend who soon tired of him. Failing to find anyone who, I considered, would be a kind master, I came to the reluctant conclusion that the only thing to do was to destroy him; so very early one morning I took him to a vacant square and shot him with a revolver, hurrying away as soon as the deed was done. I have often wondered what the street cleaners said when they came upon a dead pony in the middle of the town. I expect that what actually happened was that an enterprising Chinese butcher cut him up for meat. Scott was lucky enough to find a good owner for his pony in Hong Kong.

We had one very severe and unpleasant typhoon in Macau. I was patiently waiting for my teacher, wondering why he did not come. I soon knew the reason, for the sky became overcast and the wind whipped itself up to a gale—a velocity of 120 miles an hour was recorded. Our house faced on to a road on the far side of which was a low sea-wall, then the beach and the sea. Normally the sea was calm and, even half a mile or more from the shore, had a depth of less than six feet. When the typhoon was at its height, however, waves were breaking against the front of the house and we had to pile up beds and furniture against the French windows to prevent their being blown in. The ponies stabled in the backyard were almost submerged. Most uncanny was the lull as the centre of the typhoon passed over the Colony. After all was over, we discovered that our road had been washed away and for three weeks we had no electricity or water. The only other really bad storm I have experienced was in Hong Kong a few years later. In the space of eight hours, twenty inches of rain fell, accompanied by continuous thunder and lightning in terrific crashes and flashes which made the night like day. We almost thought the end of the world had come and I did not meet anyone the next day who could say he had not been frightened. Much

damage was caused by the rush of water down the steep hill-sides, dislodging rocks and boulders which went hurtling down, smashing everything in their path.

Peking

Early in 1925 I passed my final examination in Cantonese and obtained leave to visit my mother and stepfather, General Munthe, in Peking. He and my mother had married after the First World War in which my father had been killed. General Munthe, a man of character, was a striking looking person with the piercing blue eyes of a Norseman and the largest moustache I have ever seen. He came out to China in the eighties of the last century to join the Chinese Customs Service, and during the Boxer uprising in 1900 had organized the first international train that got through from Tientsin to relieve the hard-pressed foreign legations in Peking. Later he became adviser to Yüan Shih-k'ai, the first president of China, and was now head of the Legation Quarter police—all Chinese, but with their white leggings and smart appearance conspicuously different from the regular police. He spoke mandarin faultlessly and over the years had acquired a considerable knowledge of things Chinese, and had built up a large collection of pictures, porcelains and sculptures. Even now, each day after luncheon, two or three art dealers were ushered into the drawing-room to display some special treasures and often, when they left, another object would be added to the collection. Of particular fascination was a bronze bowl—I do not recollect of what dynasty—standing in the drawing-room that occasionally gave out a clear ring, even though nothing and no one had touched it. Was some spirit trying to convey a message? Part of the collection is now in the museum at Bergen, my stepfather's birth-place, and part—the General Munthe Collection—in a museum in Los Angeles.

When my ship arrived at Shanghai I learnt that the train service to Peking was disrupted owing to a civil war. In disgust I booked a passage back to Hong Kong, but at the last moment managed to secure a berth on an overcrowded Japanese steamer going by a roundabout route to Tientsin, whence I got a train that in eight hours instead of the usual three eventually reached Peking.

Peking impressed me enormously. Enclosed within the massive Tartar Wall, pierced at intervals by great gates, broad avenues run north and south and east and west, between them a labyrinth of densely crowded streets and lanes called *hutungs*. This is the Tartar City, inside which lies the Imperial City surrounded by high pinkish-

red walls. Within this city again, and the centre of it all, is the Forbidden City, where in former days the Emperor and his court lived in seclusion. The magnificence of the layout, the vast golden-roofed audience halls, the palaces and the great courtyards make a truly imperial domain and vividly remind one that this was once the centre of a great empire.

My mother arranged expeditions to a number of interesting places. One day we went in rickshaws to the Summer Palace. Situated in the Western Hills a few miles out of the city, it was built by the Empress Dowager, Tz'ŭ-hsi, with funds intended for the navy after the original palace had been burnt by the Anglo-French expedition of 1860. Entering the walled precincts through elaborate gates, one sees how the buildings in clusters, or scattered over a series of low-lying hills, fit into the landscape and harmonize with their surroundings. We followed a covered way with railings and pillars of red lacquer and ceilings painted with landscapes and birds and flowers which led past buildings and courtyards alongside the lake. Roofs of bright coloured tiles crowned pavilions, their upturned corners mounted by curious little gods or grotesque beasts of porcelain, whose purpose was to ward off evil spirits. Temples climb the hills with a wealth of stairways and balustrading. The silver sheen of the lake is broken by a graceful camel-back bridge and in the Ocean Terrace Palace, on an island, the young Emperor Kwang Hsü was for a time kept a virtual prisoner by the Empress Dowager. Beyond the Summer Palace lies the Imperial Hunting Park, once a fine forest but today few trees remain.

Another day we visited the Temple of Heaven, perhaps the finest of all Peking's temples, where every year the Emperor performed ritual sacrifices and prayed for bountiful harvests. Within the wooded park, at the head of a long marble causeway, stands the round temple with triple roofs of glazed lazuli tiles matching the blue of heaven. At the opposite end of the causeway the Altar of Heaven spreads its white marble platforms open to the sky. Standing before it on a moonlight night, as we later did, the Altar's pale loveliness seemed truly celestial.

A further expedition was to the Pei Hai or Winter Palace, a favourite resort of the Emperor Kublai Khan, in the northern part of Peking. We picnicked beneath ancient cedars and explored the vast uncared-for grounds, wandering through palaces and buildings fast falling into decay, and courtyards strewn with fallen tiles, carvings, and broken gods. Crossing the lake we admired the one thing still in its pristine glory, the great Dragon Screen of nine glazed-tile dragons,

four pairs of which are in corresponding colours with the central one in imperial yellow. The temple, whose entrance the screen guarded, has disappeared.

In those days that now seem so far away, Peking's social life was stimulating and cosmopolitan, made up as it was of Chinese and Europeans; all were interesting and many, persons of distinction. Resident foreigners entertained in their Chinese-style houses, the one-storey buildings grouped around courtyards. One might meet an archæologist or a botanist, enthusiastic about a recent discovery in the Gobi desert or some other remote place, or a minister from one of the foreign legations. There were collectors of old paintings, porcelains or earthenware, men of letters and artists. Occasionally a famous war-lord would put in a brief appearance, or a painted Manchu princess in jewelled head-dress and embroidered robes would lend an exotic touch. Luncheon, dinner, and cocktail parties, a week-end in a temple in the Western hills, visits to the Great Wall and the Ming Tombs, riding in the grounds of the Temple of Heaven, kept me pleasantly occupied. It was exhilarating too, to be part of Peking's street life. Rickshaws, motor-cars, carriages and donkeys, all made as much noise as possible, while wedding processions added brilliant colour. Peking carts, innocent of springs, were drawn by gaily caparisoned mules, and caravans of shaggy camels lifted disdainful heads as they came with measured tread from the Gobi Desert and wended their way through the streets. But everyone dashed for safety when a shining Rolls Royce with screaming siren and lolling war-lord hurtled by.

We visited fairs held in temple courtyards where delightful objects could be had for a trifle—a carved jade horse, a silver box studded with agate or cornelian, a delicate painted snuff-bottle or a plum tree covered with fragile blossom. Part of the fun was haggling over the price, a pastime enjoyed both by the seller and the purchaser. At a night fair on a pavement pitched above the street, articles were spread out on the flag-stones in the flickering light of little oil lamps, their squatting owners presiding over them.

On my arrival in Peking I decided to start learning mandarin, the dialect of the North and destined to become the national language of China. A teacher was duly engaged and, in contrast to my Cantonese teacher, knew how to teach. Moreover, mandarin, apart from the script, is easier than Cantonese, having only four 'tones' as compared to the nine of Cantonese. I made good progress but as time went on my enthusiasm for mandarin gave place to enthusiasm for Maurine Samson, a young American girl who was spending a few months in

Peking. I had met her soon after my arrival at one of my mother's tea-parties. Maurine accompanied us on our sightseeing trips and we often dined and danced to a White Russian orchestra at the Hotel de Pékin where she was staying. One sunny afternoon a few days before my departure for Hong Kong, I invited her to go for a walk on the wall—the top of the Tartar Wall being a favourite place for walking—and before we reached the Hatamen Gate, I had asked her if she could bear the life of an exile and live in outposts of the British Empire—could she marry me? To my joy it appeared she could. Arrived at the Gate where our rickshaws awaited us, we reluctantly descended the ramp. Our coolies seemed to sense our elation for they dashed off at a breakneck speed, giving little yells and shouting everyone out of the way, never slackening until they pulled up abruptly at the vermilion gates of General Munthe's compound. My mother and stepfather did not appear to be greatly surprised at our news, declaring themselves delighted and giving us their blessing. Maurine returned to San Francisco to persuade her family that it was all right for her to marry an Englishman and live abroad, while I went back to Hong Kong to be posted to the Colonial Secretary's Office.

Marriage

The staff of the Colonial Secretary's Office was small, consisting of only three Cadets and a couple of dozen clerks in addition to the Colonial Secretary. The advantage of a small office is that one gets to know everyone. They are not just a lot of vaguely familiar faces as is inevitable in a large office. Claude Severn, the Colonial Secretary, was a kindly man if somewhat pompous; but in that era pomposity seemed inseparable from important persons such as the Colonial Secretary and heads of firms. The machinery of the Hong Kong government was ponderous in the extreme with great attention to detail. After a few years when I had got to know its working, I was amazed and shocked at the amount of time the governor, the colonial secretary and other senior officials spent on matters of minor importance that should have been left to junior officers. In the same way the Secretariat exercised a meticulous control over the activities of the government departments that must have been, and indeed was, galling to their heads. This craving for dotting the 'i's' and crossing the 't's' would probably not have occurred if the government had been faced with serious problems. The officials would then not have had the time to devote themselves to trivia. But the Colony rarely

had serious problems either in the international or local political fields. It was plain straightforward administration.

The hard core of the administration was the Cadet Service whose members not only filled the senior posts in the Secretariat and the Treasury but also the headships of the Police, Education and Post Office departments. This might have been all right in the early days of the Colony and before empire-wide colonial police, education and postal services had been established. But now the system was out of date, and one by one the headships of the specialist departments were taken over by qualified officials. The last to go was the Post-master-General, when I had the satisfaction of turning this over to a member of the Colonial Postal Service shortly after my return as Governor in 1947.

The clerks in the Secretariat, and I believe throughout the government, were excellent and very hard-working; so much so that a rule had to be made that no clerk was allowed to stay on after office hours without special permission, as overwork was affecting their health. Conscientiousness was the sole reason for their working such long hours. They received no extra pay. Dictation and stenographers were unheard of; everything was written out in longhand and typed out by a Chinese typist. But the march of progress could not be halted and, notwithstanding the protests of the Chief Clerk, one lady stenographer, Miss Thornhill, was appointed—quite an event in the life of the office.

Most of my service in Hong Kong until my transfer to Bermuda in 1935 was in the Secretariat, and in spite of occasional bouts of frustration when my seniors did what should have been left to me, I found the work interesting, for the C.S.O. was the centre of the government machine which enabled me to obtain a good knowledge of all that was going on in the Colony. Unfortunately it gave me no opportunity for keeping up my Cantonese. Had I been more enterprising and not about to get married I might have done this after office hours; but I did not.

I have said that Hong Kong was rarely faced with difficult or serious problems, but a very troublesome situation did arise shortly after I joined the Secretariat. This was the general strike and boycott of the Colony by China in 1925. The origin of the trouble was the shooting of some Chinese in Shanghai by British members of the internationally controlled Shanghai Municipal Police. This led to a violent anti-British campaign throughout China, and culminated in the general strike in Hong Kong and the prohibition by the Chinese government of the importation into China of goods from Hong Kong

and the export of goods from China to Hong Kong. As a junior I was not concerned with the politics of the matter, and was only inconvenienced to the extent of having to do duty as a special constable and trying to cope with my own cooking and other household chores, since all our servants had left. The strike gradually petered out but the boycott, which did considerable damage to the Colony, dragged on for several months longer.

I had feared that the strike would necessitate a postponement of my marriage but happily this did not occur, and Maurine duly set sail from San Francisco accompanied by one of her sisters. My mother also came down from Peking for the great event which had been fixed for 28th October when the weather is perfect. My best man was Walter Scott who had shared quarters with me in Canton, Macau and Hong Kong. Tall, handsome, always well-turned out and aristocratic in appearance, he was approachable and friendly. He had a high degree of integrity with a streak of stubbornness. His brain was keen, and altogether he was superior to his colleagues in the Police, but to have told him so would have embarassed him acutely. He fell in love with Maurine's sister and a few years later they married. After I had gone to Bermuda in 1935, we only met when our leaves happened to coincide. He was in Hong Kong when the Colony fell to the Japanese in 1941 and was executed by them two years later. His death was a grievous loss not only to us but also to the Colonial Police Force, for by then he had shown himself to be a man of outstanding ability.

As not infrequently happens at weddings, the bride arrived late, but the fault was not hers. She was to be given away by Sir Claude Severn. On the day of the wedding he had been attending a luncheon in his honour and when he arrived at the hotel to collect the bride, forgot to have himself announced, sank into a chair and fell asleep. Upstairs the bride and her sister, anxiously watching the clock, became alarmed and descending into the lobby, discovered Sir Claude. He was quickly awakened and a waiting car whisked them to the cathedral. After the ceremony we walked down the aisle to Lohengrin's wedding march and chiming bells. The Governor, Sir Edward Stubbs, had kindly placed at our disposal his launch to take us to Cheung Chau, an island about ten miles distant where a friend had lent us his bungalow for our honeymoon. At the conclusion of the reception at the hotel, we left amid showers of rice and confetti for Queen's Pier to board the launch, gay with fluttering flags and pennants. Waving to friends as the launch moved off, we were suddenly deafened by the noise of hundreds upon hundreds of exploding fire-crackers, the Chinese mode of wishing us happiness and long

life. An hour later we landed at a little wharf at Cheung Chau, thence we walked through a fishing village up a winding path to a house perched on a rocky cliff overhanging the sea. Happy days followed as we explored the island, bathed from the white beaches and made plans. The moon was full that week, and from our terrace in the soft night air we watched its silver shimmer on the sea and the lights of Hong Kong in the distance.

Our return to Hong Kong marked the first matter-of-fact business of being married. We had the good fortune to be allotted a small bungalow on the Peak where today stands a tall block of flats. With the servants of my bachelor days I continued to do the housekeeping, as Maurine had had no experience of this kind of life, least of all in a British Colony. But after a few weeks she proposed to take over, saying the house was not kept clean and the servants were stealing most of the food. A certain amount of 'squeeze' is acceptable, but not outright robbery. I was appalled, but she was adamant and take over she did. Almost at once I noticed an improvement, but the servants became sadder and sadder until eventually they left us and went to batten on some other unsuspecting bachelor. We then secured servants who did my wife's bidding.

Social Life and Protocol

Social life was pleasant and easy for a young married couple and Maurine soon got into the way of things. Hong Kong society was cosmopolitan; besides the government and service people, there was the consular crowd and the banking and commercial community. We mixed with British, Chinese, French, Americans, Germans and others, enjoying it all with the exception of ladies' bridge-luncheons. These fearsome affairs started at one o'clock with cocktails and 'small chow' (canapés) followed by an elaborate lunch, after which the ladies settled down to bridge interspersed with gossip. Tea was served in the middle of the afternoon, then more bridge and finally cocktails before the guests went home about eight o'clock. Maurine found these parties a burden and considered them a waste of time, so she gave as few as she decently could. My salary was small, but so was the cost of living, and to entertain on a modest scale was fun. From the first we made a point of inviting people of different nationalities to our parties; we found it stimulating and have followed the practice ever since.

In those days Hong Kong was very protocol-minded and the heads of firms and senior government officials were extremely

conscious of their positions and demanded proper respect from their juniors which we dutifully gave. Somerset Maugham has depicted with biting sarcasm the social snobbery of the East in his book *On a Chinese Screen.* It did not bother us, for we had no aspiration to venture into the exalted world of the 'taipans'. Getting to dinner parties was sometimes quite a business. We did not possess a car and even if we had, frequently could not have used it, for some of the houses were accessible only by chair or rickshaw; whilst if the party were in Kowloon and it happened to be raining we would start off in chairs, transfer to the Peak Tram, then chairs again to the ferry, across the harbour by the ferry and finally arrive at our destination by rickshaw—five modes of conveyance. But being young we did not mind.

What we enjoyed most was the bathing and swimming during the summer. Best of all were the launch picnics. We would set out in the afternoon, having tea as the launch steamed to some beautiful bay or to an island. Bathing suits were donned and we would take it in turns aqua-planing. After an hour of this, we dropped anchor to dive and swim from the launch, or go ashore in a dinghy when energetic members of the party walked. At dusk supper was served, and if there happened to be a moon, we swam again before returning home. From the harbour at night Hong Kong presents one of the fairest spectacles in the world, the hundreds of lights, dotted or strung like necklaces over the Peak, make it impossible to tell where the lights leave off and the stars begin. Our favourite beach was Big Wave Bay—a misnomer except in the monsoon season or when a typhoon is about. The curving beach of little more than a quarter of a mile is enfolded by two arms of hills with a backdrop of other hills. We would put on our bathing suits behind some rocks, for bathing tents had not yet invaded the privacy of the beach.

During the winter, walking was our main week-end recreation, and happily Maurine liked it every bit as much as I did. The best walks were in the New Territories. The New Territories on the mainland have an area of 355 square miles and were leased to Britain by China in 1898 for a period of ninety-nine years. At the time of which I write they were entirely rural with the exception of the built-up part which is a continuation of urban Kowloon. One or two villages only were of any size and much of the country was wild and untamed. The Territories also include more than two hundred islands and islets, the largest of which, Lantau, being almost twice the size of Hong Kong island. Cheung Chau was the only island with a large village or small town. The others were either sparsely inhabited or completely uninhabited because of lack of water. The island of Hong

Kong, thirty square miles in extent, was ceded—as distinct from leased—in 1842. To it was added in 1860 the four square miles of Kowloon peninsula.

On a Sunday morning or a holiday, starting before dawn, we would cross to Kowloon and take a train or country bus to some distant point and there strike off into the hills. All day, up hill and down dale, we would go, climbing mountains from whose tops we had sweeping views of the countryside, or going down steep hill-sides into valleys patterned with terraced paddy fields, but devoid of crops at this time of year. We passed through tiny villages where I would chat with the farmers. We followed ancient paths paved with heavy granite slabs, old as the hills themselves. We came on miniature temples far away from any habitation where travellers might rest or offer incense to one of the gods. At these we would leave some sticks of incense burning on the altar. Occasionally we espied a very small shrine in an old gnarled tree, indicating the abode of a tree-spirit.

Home Leaves

Ten years elapsed between our marriage and our departure for Bermuda. During this time we had two home leaves, one of eighteen months and one of twelve months. Such long periods were not normal, but on the first occasion I read for the Bar and on the second attended the year-long course at the Imperial Defence College. Prior to the establishment of the Colonial Legal Service in the early thirties, the posts of magistrates were filled by members of the administrative service. If they had a liking for judicial work, they would be called to the Bar and in due course promoted to a colonial judgeship. But when the Colonial Legal Service came into being, judgeships were confined to members of that Service, and no one was eligible for appointment to it unless he had practised at the Bar for a specified number of years. Magistrates, too, were supposed to be members of the Legal Service. So far as judgeships were concerned, this was a wise rule for some of the administrative-judges were weak on knowledge of the law, and few had had experience as counsel. On the other hand, I thought that administrative officers made better magistrates than young barristers. What they lacked in theory they made up in common sense and understanding of human nature—the prime requisite for a magistrate. On my return to Hong Kong after passing my Bar examination, I was appointed junior magistrate at the Hong Kong court. Apart from the fact that the work was interesting and human—for my district covered the most densely populated part of Hong

Kong—I had the satisfaction of being my own master, since once on the bench the magistrate is monarch of all he surveys. This was a pleasant change from being a junior in an office. However, the legal side was not to be my destiny. Lacking the qualifications for membership of the Legal Service and in any case preferring the administrative side, I reverted to the Secretariat after eighteen months. On my second leave the Colonial Office offered me two years on secondment to the Colonial Office or one year at the Imperial Defence College. I chose the latter. The College is a combined services staff college for selected officers who have already been through the staff college of their own particular service. In addition, a limited number of civil servants and officers of the Dominions are admitted. The course, which lasts for a year, is wide and interesting and something out of the ordinary for a colonial civil servant—I was the first to attend—and I have never regretted the twelve months I spent on it.

Whilst on this second leave I applied for a transfer, explaining to a sympathetic Colonial Office official that while I was happy in Hong Kong the two men immediately senior to me were able, and I envisaged myself being blocked for promotion if I remained there. My request was noted and I returned to Hong Kong. A few months later the colonial secretaryship of Bermuda was offered me. This was exciting but there were drawbacks. I should drop about a third in salary and would have to pay my passage and that of my wife from Hong Kong to Bermuda. But looking up the careers of previous colonial secretaries in Bermuda, I observed that none had remained there for more than three years before being promoted to a higher post elsewhere. Maurine and I talked it over and decided on the more interesting though somewhat precarious course. Accordingly, in October 1935 we set sail for New York on the twelve-passenger ship, the M.S. *Tricolor* with ports of call at Shanghai, Kobe, Nagoya, Yokohama, across the Pacific to San Francisco and thence through the Panama Canal to New York—a journey lasting six and a half weeks. Never have I enjoyed a sea trip so much. My preference for ocean travel is either first class on one of the 'Queens' or a twelve-passenger freighter.

In New York we had a happy ten days seeing friends and going to theatres before embarking on the *Queen of Bermuda*, on which we received the treatment of minor V.I.P's—our first experience of this delectable dish.

CHAPTER TWO

BERMUDA, 1935–1938

BERMUDA has the distinction of being mentioned by Shakespeare, when in *The Tempest* Ariel says to Prospero: '. . . thou call'dst me up at midnight to fetch dew from the still vexed Bermoothes. . . '. The islands were discovered by the Spaniard, Juan de Bermudez—hence the name—but Spain never claimed or occupied them, probably because the submerged coral reefs surrounding them made the islands exceedingly hazardous to sailing ships, and possibly because they had an evil reputation as the home of devils and spirits—one of the islands is named Devil's Island. It was on the reefs that the *Sea Venture* was wrecked when taking a shipload of colonists from England to Virginia in 1612. These 'sea venturers' were the first human beings on Bermuda and are the original ancestors of the present-day white Bermudians. The coloured Bermudians, comprising two-thirds of the population, are descendants of slaves brought from Africa.

Since its founding three hundred and sixty years ago Bermuda has had a chequered career. Seafaring was the main occupation for the first two centuries of the Colony's existence; seafaring not being confined to fishing and the carrying of cargoes between the West Indies, the Americas and England, but extending to privateering, a legalized form of piracy. When that came to an end, the resourceful Bermudians turned their attention to 'wrecking'. Ships would be lured to their doom by lights so placed as to lead them on to the reefs. They would then be 'saved'—at a price—by the islanders. Can it be wondered that the twentieth century Bermudians, whose forebears were these red-blooded, enterprising men, jealously guard their independence and individualism? I found them a most admirable people and, once they got to know you, very friendly. I liked and respected them enormously. In more modern times many Bermudians have married Americans and Canadians, but the Bermuda character remains much the same, I am glad to say.

After wrecking had to be given up, the colonists had a hard time. They did not much care for farming and, when in later years Bermuda onions, potatoes and lilies found a ready market in New York, much of the work was done by Portuguese who had come from the Azores. The outbreak of the American Civil War provided lucrative oppor-

tunities for blockade-running, as did prohibition in the United States after the First World War. But what has really proved the salvation of Bermuda is tourism, now the Colony's biggest industry. The pleasant and salubrious climate—it certainly is not 'vexed'—began to attract visitors from America in the latter part of the last century. Presidents of the United States found it a refuge from affairs of state and many writers have come here to work. Mark Twain, for instance, never ceased to return to this 'tranquil and contenting place'. Up to the nineteen-thirties most of the visitors were well-to-do Americans who rented houses for the winter months. These still come, but a round-the-year tourist season has been developed as well.

Bermuda has much to delight the eye: cedars—or junipers to be exact—which flourished in our time (now, alas no more, a disease having wiped them out) fiddlewood, bamboos and other trees, white beeches and some pink ones, oleanders, deep pink against the sapphire sea, hibiscus, lilies and many other flowers. The houses of coral, washed in pastel shades, have white roofs which look truly enchanting by moonlight. The islands are coral with only a shallow covering of soil, and for building material all that has to be done is to saw up blocks of coral on the site of the projected house, using the space from which the coral has been cut for a water tank. Every house is obliged to have its own water supply from rain caught on the roof, and a government regulation provides that roofs be lime-white-washed annually. It is remarkable that the water in the tanks should remain clear and fresh from one year's end to another. If the rains do not come, water has to be brought by ship from New York, an expensive business, but this seldom happens.

Bermudians are proud of the fact that their parliament is one of the oldest, if not the oldest, in the British Commonwealth outside the United Kingdom. There is a lower and an upper house. The former, the House of Assembly, is entirely elective, one of the members being the Speaker. The upper house, the Legislative Council, consists of *ex officio* members, of whom the Colonial Secretary is one, together with appointed members, and is presided over by—of all people—the Chief Justice. The respective powers of the two houses are much the same as in the case of the House of Commons and the House of Lords in Britain. The Executive Council corresponds roughly to the Cabinet in England, with the Governor as President and the members either *ex officio*—the Colonial Secretary again being one—or appointed. Some of the members are also members of the House of Assembly which provides a useful link between the executive and legislative branches of government. Bermuda has

no political parties and I doubt if such a development would be a good thing for the Colony. She is also fortunate in not having an income tax. This is a deliberate act of policy, as the absence of such a tax encourages foreign business concerns to register themselves in the Colony. They have to pay a registration fee, but this is a trifle compared with the tax they would have to pay in their own countries. The income from the fees is a not inconsiderable item in the government's budget.

As the *Queen* made her way slowly along the North Shore, we stood on deck watching the approach to our new abode, now through a narrow passage between two small islands and into Hamilton Harbour, past the Princess Hotel and the Royal Bermuda Yacht Club, to the wharf at Hamilton, the capital, alongside the principal street, Front Street. Those on shore waved and shouted to their friends on the ship. This December scene of sunshine, blue sea and sky, people in white or light-coloured clothes, streets crowded with bicycles, horses and carriages presented a decided contrast to the one we had left in New York three days previously.

General Sir Thomas Astley-Cubitt

The acting Colonial Secretary and the Governor's A.D.C. came on board to welcome us, then going ashore we drove in the Governor's victoria through the town and along a cedar-lined avenue, up a steep hill to Government House. The exterior of the house of grey concrete has little to commend it, but the site is fine, overlooking spacious gardens, the town on one side and the sea on the other. At the door to greet us in the friendliest possible manner were the Governor, General Sir Thomas Astley-Cubitt, and his wife, Olive. After chatting a few minutes, the Governor said the first thing I must do was to take five official oaths and led the way into his study. 'My boy', he said, 'I think we should have a gin'. We had a gin and another before each oath. This was nine o'clock in the morning! In those days a good deal of heavy drinking took place in Bermuda which was the downfall of more than one good man. Habits have since changed.

During our stay at Government House we got to know our hosts and became devoted to them. Tom Cubitt was a most colourful character. Tall and distinguished looking, he was the beau ideal of the general. His flow of language was often lurid and he delighted in making outrageous remarks and scandalizing people. At the dinner table on one occasion he called across to the Bishop who was sitting

next to Lady Cubitt, 'Bishop, did you know that the Chief Justice gets his corsets at the same shop as my wife gets hers?' He knew everyone in the Colony and all the ins-and-outs of what was going on, and was immensely popular in the best sense. When I visited Bermuda more than twenty years later he was still remembered with affection. Apart from the fact that I had a great liking for him, I found him a very good chief to work for. His wife, too, was most attractive, both in looks and personality.

The Colonial Secretary was not provided with quarters and to find a house was difficult as the most suitable ones had already been taken for the winter by American visitors. The House of Assembly considered the question of an official residence for the Colonial Secretary, but the proposal was rejected for the reason—as I was told privately by a member—that if they gave one to the Colonial Secretary they would also have to give one to the Chief Justice, and whilst I was well enough liked, the Chief Justice was unpopular. However, we managed to get something that would do for the few months until the Cubitts left, when we moved into Government House pending the arrival of the new Governor. Then once again we had to go house hunting. Luckily an American friend came to our rescue and lent us her house whilst she was away for the summer. This gave us time to continue our search. At last we found a really charming house, 'La Garza', in Paget parish. We came to love 'La Garza' almost more than any other house we have occupied. Powder-blue, except for the white roof and balustrades, it had probably been built in the eighteenth century by a privateer—the later ones had elegant taste. The long drawing-room had a tray ceiling, french windows and a white marble fire-place brought from Europe. The dining-room had two fire-places and windows looking out on to the Sound. The furniture that came with the house was a mixture of good and bad. We discarded the former and used the latter. To this we added what we had brought with us and had carpets specially made in Hong Kong, including an off-white one for the drawing-room.

The garden had variety—a small grove of bamboos, that speedily got out of control if not watched, cedars, fiddlewood, palms, pines, oranges and allspice, frangipani, poinciana, clumps of white and pink ginger and oleanders, both white and pink. In the spring a host of cream, white and mauve freesias suddenly appeared as if by magic; later to disappear in the same magical way. An ancient night-blooming cereus had climbed to the top of a tree and nearby was a trellis covered with *copo del oro*, whose great gold buds arranged on the dinner table would open with a 'plop' to enchant the guests. In the

same way we used the night-blooming cereus which slowly opened to display their golden chalices and to breathe out a delicious perfume.

The simple life of Bermuda was very different from the sophistication and lavish entertaining of Hong Kong. With the exception of occasional large dinners and balls at Government House or Admiralty House, informality—which did, however, I am glad to say, mean black tie at dinner parties—was the key-note. The only drawback to this enjoyable gaiety was going out to dinner on bicycles. Hiring a carriage for the evening was expensive and we did not often indulge in this luxury. Maurine was the principal sufferer, for her dresses had the habit of getting caught up in the back wheel of her bicycle. On one occasion when going to a party she fell off, which did not improve the appearance of her dress. This is one of the few times I have heard her swear. However, she usually managed without losing her temper or ruining her clothes. Motor-cars were not allowed in pre-war Bermuda. And how pleasant it was cycling along the white coral roads with no honking cars covering one with dust.

When General Cubitt left on retirement we moved into Government House. In most colonies the practice is for the acting Governor, usually the Colonial Secretary, to occupy Government House when the Governor is absent for any length of time, or between the departure of one Governor and the arrival of the new one. In Bermuda this was not done for understandable reasons. The Governor, in most cases, was a general and had allocated to him soldier-servants from the regiment stationed in the Colony. A civilian acting as Governor had no such privileges. Moreover, if the soldier-servants did agree to serve him, they were inclined to take a superior attitude. In addition the Governor brought out from England at his own—considerable—expense other servants who took their holiday when he went on leave. At the same time, good servants were very difficult to find locally. The horses and all save one of the carriages were the Governor's personal property. But needs must when the devil drives. We had no house and simply had to transfer ourselves to Government House, which we duly did, taking with us our cook and fervently hoping that the soldier-servants, who held key positions, would carry on. Looking back, we have wondered how we had the courage to tackle such a situation, or how we managed to get through. We went into it in blissful ignorance and, though we soon realized how precarious was our position, I do not think that others did, for we presented a serene front to the public. One particular day will ever remain in our minds. Just before the guests were due to arrive for a

large lunch party the butler and footman, both soldier-servants, said they were quitting forthwith and would not even stay to serve. I had to use all my persuasive powers to get them to agree to see us through the meal. Not only was I successful in this but they remained for the rest of our time at Government House. Whilst I was coping with the butler and footman, Maurine was in the kitchen soothing the cook who had gone temperamental. Those weeks at Government House took years off our lives, but we survived. Never again, though, did we venture to occupy Government House when I held the position of acting Governor in Bermuda. Instead, we continued to live in our own house, which meant of course that we could not entertain on the scale expected of 'His Excellency'.

In other respects being acting Governor had its compensations and the office work was even lighter than that of the Colonial Secretary. I spent one acting period drafting a new pensions ordinance, quite a complicated piece of legislation. Each Sunday I would bicycle to a different parish church and read the lessons. At one church the parson bowed to me before he bowed to the altar, which I thought was giving me undue precedence. At another time I had to attend some ceremonial function in uniform. Having no official equipage at my disposal, I drove to the side door of the building in a hired cab from which I slipped out unobtrusively before making my formal entry. No, it was not altogether easy being acting Governor in Bermuda.

Bermuda being considerably smaller than Hong Kong and the constitutional set-up completely different, the approach to my job also had to be different. Moreover I was not a junior in the Colonial Secretary's Office. I was the Colonial Secretary. In a crown colony such as Hong Kong, the Governor is the seat of power. This is not the case in Bermuda. Here the Governor is more like a constitutional monarch. If he, either of his own volition or at the behest of the Colonial Office, wishes to have any particular measure carried out he has to move with circumspection, and if it is something to which the House of Assembly has strong objections, for example the introduction of income tax, he is unlikely to win his point. Cubitt was an adept at lobbying, but his success really arose from the fact that the Bermudians knew that he had the welfare of the Colony at heart. By contrast, his successor was clumsy in his approach and did not disguise the fact that he cared little for Bermuda and the Bermudians and still less for Americans, who were the bread and butter of the Colony. The Colonial Secretary had to back up as well

as he could the efforts of the Governor; his position being analagous to that of a chief of staff. Fortunately, I get on well with most people and I found the members of the House of Assembly reasonable and forthcoming, though as often as not they disagreed with me and went their own sweet way. The paper work was much less than it had been in Hong Kong, so in the office I had an easy time.

General Sir Reginald Hildyard

General Sir Reginald Hildyard was to be the new Governor. As was usual I sent him a copy of the arrangements for his arrival which followed well-established precedents. Much to my surprise I received a letter from him objecting to what was proposed and enclosing an alternative programme which, he said, must be followed. Accordingly I took his plan round to the Mayor of Hamilton as being the person principally concerned. The Mayor would have none of it. 'What was good enough for the Prince of Wales is good enough for Sir Reginald', so said that redoubtable old Bermudian, Sir Henry Watlington. In suitably modified language I telegraphed the gist of Sir Henry's message to Hildyard, who had by then set sail from England. He telegraphed back in still stronger terms than before, telling me to do what I was told. I again saw Watlington who would not budge. Again I telegraphed to Hildyard, and so it went on with telegrams flying back and forth. I was between the devil and the deep blue sea. I had to do my best to carry out the Governor's instructions, but I felt he was wrong, which of course I could not tell Watlington. Finally, the Mayor said that if the original programme were not adopted he and the Corporation would boycott the ceremony. At this Hildyard capitulated. He certainly did not know the Bermudians, and in fact he never did get to understand them. When I met him on his arrival he told me in no uncertain language what he thought of me, which was not a good beginning to our relationship. Matters were not improved when Tags, one of my dogs, tried to bite him.

Hildyard wanted to set aside the rules and have a motor-car, but this required the approval of the House of Assembly. After being twice rebuffed, he threatened to resign if his request were not granted. It was not granted and resign he did. Hildyard was really a kindly man, but a bad choice for the governorship of Bermuda. Finding the right man for the post was, however, not easy, since the salary was inadequate to cover the gubernatorial expenses. The Governor had to dip into his own pocket.

Tags and Philip

Tags had a brother, Philip, of the same litter but with no resemblance to him whatsoever, both undistinguished looking mongrels, albeit full of character. Cubitt had found them as puppies abandoned in a ditch and made them his constant companions. On his departure he gave them to us knowing we were fond of them. They accompanied me when I bicycled to the office and spent the day there. They followed us everywhere, even when they were not supposed to. If we happened to be at a friend's house, they would track us down and take up positions outside the front door as if they owned the place. At dinner parties at 'La Garza' we would shut them up but somehow they usually managed to escape. They would then sneak into the dining-room and get under the table, carefully keeping away from Maurine and me, for they knew they should not be there. If I did manage to get hold of one of them he would let out a piteous yelp as though he were being beaten. 'You brute', the guests seemed to say as they looked at me reproachfully. It was, of course, just an act put on by the culprit with the intention of embarrassing me. He would almost wink at me with mischievous pleasure as he was led away. The social functions that met with their highest approval were wedding receptions which they invariably gate-crashed. Avoiding us, they moved about the company enjoying the titbits that came their way. To our sorrow we had to leave them behind when we left Bermuda, as the importation of dogs into Jamaica was prohibited. I am glad to say we found a good home for them and they enjoyed lives of many happy years.

Entertaining

After we had established ourselves at 'La Garza' we did a good deal of entertaining, as we liked it; also we thought the Governor, Hildyard, was not doing as much as he should, and felt it was up to us to step into the breach. Good servants were difficult to obtain so we considered ourselves lucky to have an English butler, Telfer, whose employers had recently returned to England. Telfer could turn his hand to anything, from butling to cooking and making beds. Although very conscious of his position as a 'gentleman's gentleman', he had the gift of getting on with coloured people. When we gave a party we would hire extra help from the nearby Inverurie Hotel. I recollect we paid six shillings for each helper for the evening. The charge now, I believe, is something like three pounds. They and

Telfer got on splendidly and we never had a moment's anxiety. 'You leave it to me, madam', was a favourite expression of his. Only once was there a slip-up and that had nothing to do with Telfer. We had invited to cocktails the officers of some visiting German warships. I had just finished changing when I heard the sound of marching feet. Looking out of the window, I saw the whole contingent of German officers advancing on the front door. Together with our house guests we dashed downstairs just in time to greet them. They had mistakenly come an hour early, and how long that hour seemed before the other guests commenced to arrive. Thereafter the party went with a swing. The officers were an attractive lot of men, responsive, with cultivated bearing and good manners. They stayed longer than the usual time and many departed with other guests who took them to their homes for dinner and later to dance at one of the hotels. We heard next day that they were greatly taken with the Bermuda girls, and it may be added, the girls with them.

On another occasion, when having tea at a friend's house, I sat in a window seat with a spinster and a member of one of Bermuda's oldest and most respected families. We had both been tempted with 'brownies'—small cakes of a chewy consistency— and my companion had taken her first bite of this delectable confection. As she took the remainder away from her mouth, what was my horror to see fastened in it her front false teeth which she waved before my eyes. At the moment she did not realize her loss and I quickly turned to the window, pretending to look at something outside and to stifle my wild desire to laugh. By the time I had controlled myself and turned back to her, the teeth had been restored to their place.

Nothing is more enjoyable than a Bermuda wedding. To drive in a white ribbon-bedecked victoria to a parish church decorated with flaming poinsettias, to sit in an ancient pew and sing traditional hymns, to watch through the open window the white clouds piled up in the blue sky, allowing one's mind to wander during the rather long ceremony in which the bride promises to love, honour and obey, and finally to step out into the sunny afternoon while the bells from the steeple ring out joyously, is truly romantic. Later at the home of the bride, set in terraced gardens, where the reception is held, one chats with friends, and after the bride has cut her cake and the toasts and speeches have been made, the little cedar tree that tops the bridegroom's cake is planted. The bridal bouquet is then tossed to the bridesmaids, and at last amid a shower of rice, the bride—still in her wedding gown—drives away in a flower decorated carriage to some magic spot they have chosen for their honeymoon. It is all very gay and very Bermudian.

At the Belmont Manor Hotel one evening as Maurine and I were dancing together, a summons to the telephone disclosed that I had been offered the colonial secretaryship of Jamaica. This was thrilling news, for Jamaica was a good promotion from Bermuda. Nevertheless, it was bitter-sweet: we felt sad at having to break up a home we loved and to leave Bermuda where we had spent three happy years, despite some difficult moments. But when one is a member of a world-wide service one must expect this sort of thing. Maurine made a quick trip to Jamaica to see what the house there was like, which pieces of our furniture and which carpets would fit in, for the official residence of the Colonial Secretary in Jamaica was fully furnished. Alas, most of it would not do, so we sold what we could not use. After a three-week's leave in England we sailed from Avonmouth on a banana-boat, the *Ariguani,* for Kingston. The passage of fourteen days was delightful, increasingly so as we steamed further south and the world about us assumed a tropical aspect. One forgets the thrill of seeing flying-fish and how different from the north is the deep blue of the southern sky with its incredibly white clouds, piled up like fluffy down, and the sunsets, brilliant in colour at first and imperceptibly changing to delicate shades of turquoise, lilac and salmon. We enjoyed lazy afternoons on deck reading or idly chatting, and usually indulged in a pre-dinner swim in the canvas tank put up on the after-deck, staying in the water until the last rays of sun faded and the first stars of the evening began to show. When one comes from a temperate zone, the tropic skies and nights seem remarkably clear, the moon appears larger and the stars more brilliant, and in the last few nights of our voyage that lovely constellation, the Southern Cross, rose above the horizon.

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