The Birth of the Hong Kong Rotary Club in 1930

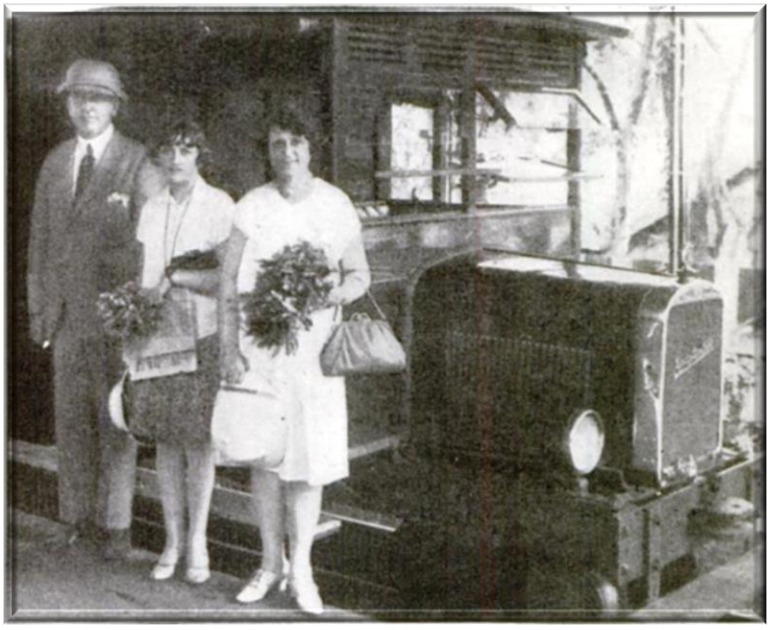
By Herbert K. Lau (劉敬恒) (Rotary China Historian)

1 February 2016

It was 85 years ago when The Rotary Club of Hong Kong (香港扶輪社) was admitted to Rotary International on 20 February 1931. Then it was a non-districted Club. The Charter was delivered from the hands of the Hong Kong Governor Sir William Peel (香港總督貝璐爵士) since there was no Rotary International district governor available in the nearest territories. Later in October 1935, the Club joined the 11 Rotary clubs in China and the other 3 in The Philippine Islands to form the 81st District of Rotary International.

When Rotary International decided to extend to the Far East in the early 1910's, the British Crown Colony Hong Kong located at the south China coast was the first goal, but neither Manila nor Shanghai. The story has to be dated back to June 1918. In his annual report to the Board of Directors of International Association of Rotary Clubs, Secretary Chesley R. Perry wrote: *"We have recently received words that the Rotary Club of Hong Kong, China, has been organized through the efforts of Mr. Coombes of Calcutta, who when in Chicago recently accepted the assignment to organize a Rotary Club in Calcutta."* So, Hong Kong was the first prospect in Asia. However, failure reports were received after several attempts not until the visit by Jim to Hong Kong in 1930 – the last goal of his Far East Rotary Extension Mission in two and a half years.

The birth of the Rotary Club of Hong Kong was given by the voluntary mission of Rotarian "Jim" James Wheeler Davidson (禮密臣/達飛聲) of Calgary, Alberta, Canada, and was the 3rd Vice-President of Rotary International in 1926-1927, with the assistance of his wife Lillian and daughter Marjory. Jim was an explorer, writer, United States diplomat, merchant and philanthropist. He is remembered for *《The Island of Formosa, Past and Present》(1903)* on the history of Taiwan and also noted for greatly aiding the oriental network of Rotary in the capacity as "Honorary General Commissioner of Rotary International for Near and Far East". Here is his photo of travelling around the Southeast Asia in 1930:



James W. Davidson with daughter Marjory and wife Lillian

Invalided out of the service as the American Consul General in Shanghai, China, in 1905, Jim returned to the United States to convalescence, subsequently migrated to Canada once he had recovered. Jim was an enthusiastic member of the Rotary Club in Calgary, and when Rotary wanted to extend its reach throughout the Mediterranean, Middle East, Southeast Asia and Australasia, he was the logical choice as envoy to the region because of his prior international experience. He bridged the Rotary gap between the Caspian and the China Sea, travelled 25 countries establishing 20 plus Rotary clubs in Melbourne, Sydney, Wellington, Auckland, Athens, Cairo, Jerusalem, Bombay, Delhi, Madras, Colombo, Thayetmyo, Rangoon, Penang, Seremban, Kuala Lumpur, Ipoh, Singapore, Batavia (*Jakarta*), Bandoeng, Malang, Semarang, Medan, Klang, Malacca, Bangkok, and the last stop in Hong Kong. Rotary International had given Jim US$8,000 to fund his extension mission; in the end, Jim also spent a quarter-million dollars of his own money. Jim was well known as the "Marco Polo of Rotary".

In overcoming the previous experiences of failure by others, Jim's first approach to each new country would be contact of the government officials for whom he had letters of introduction. In many cases, these same gentlemen, convinced of the excellence of Rotary, would become members of the first small committee. They would suggest names from the ruling, professional and business groups for Jim to interview. Jim's remarkable good-natured diplomacy brought together many persons from very diverse political, religious, business and cultural sectors. For example, in Bangkok, two of the organizing committee were princes, one of whom became the first president of the Bangkok Rotary Club. The more often Jim was told that it was impossible to bring all these different cultures and races together, the more determined he became. One of his clubs had members from eight different races, and several new classifications had to be devised, such as one for "Malay chief".

Hong Kong

Regarding the organization of the Rotary Club of Hong Kong, the story is better to be told by James W. Davidson in his own words written in 1932:

"I am glad to reach Hong Kong because I would be approaching that part of the world in which I had lived thirteen years, nine of them in Formosa, across the way, although I had little hope of finding out here many whom I had known, for changes in this part of the world are very numerous.

"Furthermore, I was looking forward with pleasure to the task of organizing a Rotary Club here. There had been many previous efforts made to organize, all of which had failed. I was convinced and still am that a Rotary Club can be started in any city with sufficient population providing one knows his Rotary and is in a position to spend the time necessary to do the work. There is the occasional group who have become interested in Rotary through some favorable contact with Rotary elsewhere made by one of their number which will welcome anyone who will come along and help them, but it was not my good fortune to find such a situation in any of the larger cities.

"Though working in an honorary capacity, I considered that it was my particular business at the time to organize the club regardless of opposition and I was not attempting it as some had done before me who were unable to give sufficient time to the task or whose primary object in the city was either business or sightseeing. I approached the difficult problem in Hong Kong without any fears of failure. I was fortunate in the fact that the new Governor, Sir William Peel, had come to Hong Kong from Kuala Lumpur and that he had attended the official inauguration meeting there. As he was seated next to me at this dinner meeting, I was able to tell him much about Rotary.

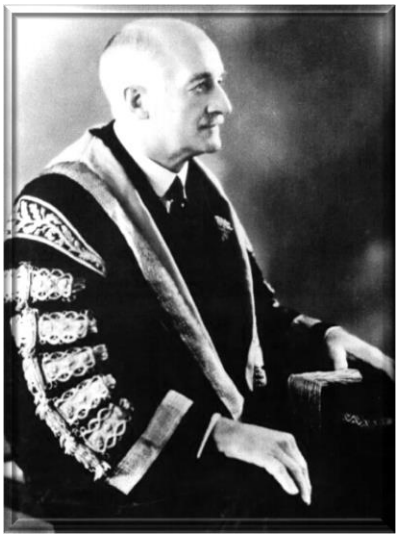
"I had explained to Sir William that the gentlemen I wish to meet were such as would be representative of the official business and professional community and include representative Chinese. For I believe the greatest service that Rotary can render in these Asiatic communities is that of developing friendship

among the different races and nationalities resident there, so often antagonistic toward each other, and I feel that if Rotary rendered no other service it would be well worth while.

"Among the eight letters of introduction received from the Governor, three were to representative Chinese who stood high in the confidence of both the Chinese and European communities. They very kindly volunteered to divide the Chinese list among them and to have a preliminary interview with prospective members. Such of these as displayed interest were then brought together at one of the Chinese social clubs in groups of four to six. I enjoyed those meetings very much. They were a fine type of Chinese, cultured, advanced, and capable. Nearly all spoke perfect English. Many were university graduates, all very hospitable and interested in the ideals of Rotary, the primary object of which is a development of a better understanding and friendship among different nationalities. The Chinese ladies were no less delighted and Mrs. Davidson, Marjory, and I were the recipients of hospitality from them which we appreciated very much.

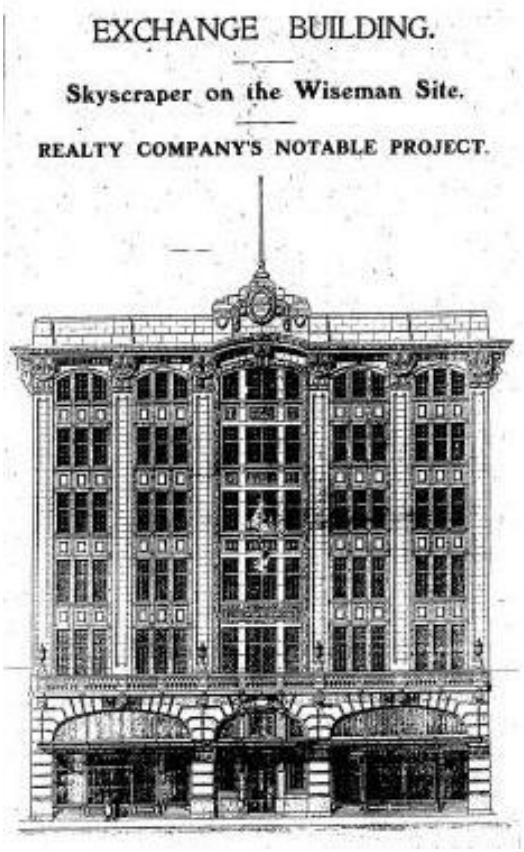
"Regardless of pleasant features, the organization of the Hong Kong Club was a difficult task, requiring a month's stay which included two meetings of the board of directors following the organization. The inaugural dinner was held on 8 December 1930, with over eighty present including guests. All of the press were very kind in their efforts to help the movement, one of which in commenting upon the meeting stated that perhaps never before had there been brought together in Hong Kong a group representative of so many different vocations, officials, businessmen, educationalists, engineers, scientists, important men in their respective lines and representing both European and Chinese communities."

The inaugural dinner meeting of the Hong Kong Rotary Club was held on Tuesday, 8 December 1930, at the Lane Crawford restaurant (The Café Wiseman) in the basement of the newly built Exchange House (*aka* Telephone House 電話大樓), the center of industry and finance in Hong Kong. The charter members included 79 of the leading citizens: 31 Chinese, 46 Americans and Europeans, 1 Indian and 1 Japanese. The Club was admitted to Rotary International on 20 February 1931. Within the great Chinese region, Hong Kong Rotary Club remains today the oldest with more than 80 years of regular weekly meetings. The Club is the home of most number of Rotary International officers, including vice-president, director, administrative advisors, and district governors, and also the home of many knights bachelor bestowed by the British monarch.



Sir William Peel

James Wheeler Davidson



Exchange Building, No.14, Des Voeux Road, Central District.
Venue of the Inaugural Meeting of the Rotary Club of Hong Kong on 8 December 1930.

Des Voeux Road Central in 1930

The first office bearers of the Rotary Club of Hong Kong 1930-1931

President – Sir William Woodward Hornell, Kt., CIE, MA (康寧爵士)

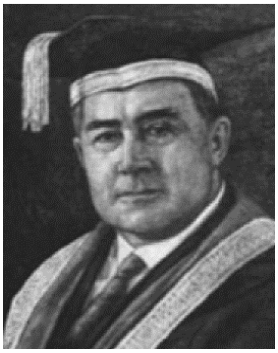
Vice President – Dr. The Honorable Ts'o Seen-Wan (議員曹善允博士), OBE, LLD, JP

Joint Secretaries – (1) L. F. C. Bellamy

(2) Benjamin Wong-Tape (黃炳耀太平紳士), JP

Treasurer – N. J. Perrin

Directors – The Honorable Sir William Edward Leonard Shenton; Allan Cameron; Chau Yue-Teng (周雨亭); J. M. Wong; Wong Kwong-Tin (黃廣田); Benjamin Wylie



Sir William Woodward Hornell, Kt., CIE, MA (*Oxford*) (康寧爵士) was the third Vice-Chancellor of the University of Hong Kong (香港大學校長) from 1924 to 1937. He was elected club president was, probably, because of the recommendation by his superior, Chancellor of the University – the Hong Kong Governor Sir William Peel.

Dr. The Honorable Ts'o Seen-Wan (議員曹善允博士), OBE, *Hon*LLD (*HKU*), JP, Hong Kong Legislative Councillor (香港立法局議員), was a distinguished lawyer and educationalist. He was the co-founder of St. Stephen's Boys' College (聖士提反書院) and St. Stephen's Girls' College (聖士提反女子中學). He was a founder of Munsang College (民生書院) and served as the College Council Chairman starting from 1926 until his death. S.W. was one of the committees in establishing the Hong Kong University in 1908, and served the University Council in his later life. S.W. took great interest in medical work and has served in various ways with: Alice Memorial and Affiliated Hospitals, Maternity Hospital and Institute for Training of Nurses (雅麗氏紀念產科醫院、何妙齡醫院), Tsan Yuk Hospital (贊育醫院), the Chinese Public Dispensaries (華人公立醫局委員會), and Sanitary Board (潔淨局), etc.

The District Affiliation and Governors to The Rotary Club of Hong Kong

(1) 1931-1932-1933 (non-Districted)

When the Rotary Club of Hong Kong was admitted to Rotary International in February 1931, it was a non-districted Club. The Club was directly supervised by the Secretariat of Rotary International in Chicago, U.S.A.

(2) 1933-1934-1935 (non-Districted)

In 1933-1934, until 30 September 1935, Ernest F. Harris (*Shanghai*) was appointed Honorary Commissioner (*i.e. Special Representative today*) to supervise clubs in the Republic of China, the British Crown Colony Hong Kong, and The Philippine Islands.

(3) 1935-1936 (81st District)

On 1 October 1935, The Rotary Club of Hong Kong became one of the 15 constituent clubs in forming the new 81st District of Rotary International. The District Governor was Dr. Chengting Thomas Wang (王正廷博士) (*Shanghai*) (*diplomat*).

The other 14 clubs were: 11 clubs from the Republic of China; and 3 clubs from the Philippine Islands (United States Protectorate):

The Republic of China (中華民國)

(1) Shanghai (上海); (2) Tientsin (天津); (3) Peiping (北平); (4) Canton (廣州); (5)Hangchow (杭州); (6) Tsingtao (青島); (7) Tsinan (濟南); (8) Foochow (福州); (9) Amoy (廈門); (10) Hankow (漢口); (11) Nanking (南京).

The Philippine Islands

(1) Manila; (2) Cebu; (3) Iloilo

(4) 1936-1937 (81st District)

At the Rotary year beginning, the District Governor was Dr. Chengting T. Wang (王正廷博士). But he resigned on 1 August from Rotary International because of mission to U.S.A. as Ambassador of the Republic of China. Dr. Fong Foo-Sec (鄺富灼博士) (*Shanghai*) (*Educationist, R.I. Director 1933-1934*) was appointed to fill up the vacancy.

(5) 1937-1938 (96th District)

The Rotary Club of Hong Kong became a member of the 96th District.

Commencing 1 July 1937, the entire 81st District was allocated to The Commonwealth of The Philippines. To cater for the future Rotary China development, 3 new districts were created for China, Hong Kong and Macao.

96th District -- China [that portion including the provinces of Fukien (*Fujian*) 福建, Kwangtung (*Guangdong*) 廣東, Kwangsi (*Guangxi*) 廣西, Kweichow (*Guizhou*) 貴州, Yunnan 雲南]; and Hong Kong 香港; Macao 澳門.

97th District -- China [that portion including the provinces of Kiangsu (*Jiangsu*) 江蘇, Chekiang (*Zhejiang*) 浙江, Anhwei (*Anhui*) 安徽, Hupei (*Hubei*) 湖北, Szechwan (*Sichuan*) 四川, Kiangsi (*Jiangxi*) 江西, and Hunan 湖南]

98th District -- China [that portion including the provinces of Hopei (*Hebei*) 河北, Shantung (*Shandong*) 山東, Shansi (*Shanxi*) 山西, Kansu (*Gansu*) 甘肅, Shensi (*Shaanxi*) 陝西, and Honan (*Henan*) 河南]

District 96-97-98 Governor (3 in 1) was Dr. Fong Foo-Sec (鄺富灼博士) (*Shanghai*)

(6) 1938-1939 (96th District)

At the beginning, Dr. Fong Foo-Sec carried on the duty of District 96-97-98 Governor (3 in 1). But he passed away in October. To fill up the vacancy of 96th District (South China), Dr. James McClure Henry (香雅各博士) (*Canton*) (*Educationist – Lingnan University*) was appointed District Governor.

(7) 1939-1940-1941 (96th District)

District 96 Governor: Dr. James McClure Henry (香雅各博士) (*Canton*)

(8) 1941-1942 (96th District)

The governors in districts 96, 97, 98 (China and Hong Kong) were not functioning in territories occupied by the Japanese forces because of the Pacific War. Past District 97 Governor Tan Wei-Hseuh (譚偉學) (*Shanghai*), served as the governors' representative for the 5 clubs (Chungking 重慶; Chengtu 成都; Changsha 長沙; Sian 西安; Hong Kong 香港) in the unoccupied part of China.

(9) 1942-1943-1944-1945-1946 (96th District)

No governors were elected from the 3 districts due to the Pacific War. Dr. Chengting Thomas Wang (王正廷博士) (*Chungking*) was appointed Administrative Adviser for China to keep in touch with those functioning clubs in various provinces.

(10) 1946-1947 (96th District)

Dr. Chengting Thomas Wang (王正廷博士) (*Chungking*) (*Rotary International Director 1944-1946 / 2nd Vice President 1945-1946*) served as Governor for Districts 96-97-98.

(11) 1947-1948 (96th District)

District 96 Governor: Dr. Li Shu-Fan (李樹芬醫生) (*Hong Kong*) (*Medical Service*), the first Hong Kong Rotarian served as Rotary International officer.

Hong Kong Rotary Club was the first time host of District Conference.

(12) 1948-1949 (96th District)

District 96 Governor: HUANG Kuang (黃光) (*Canton*)

Taiwan was included in this 96th District when Taipei Rotary Club was formed in 1948.

(13) 1949-1950 (57th District)

Many districts had been dissolved during the World War II. Commencing 1 July 1949, Rotary International decided to re-organize and to re-number all districts. The 3 districts in China were re-numbered from Districts 96, 97, 98 to Districts 57, 58, 59.

District 57 Governor: George Ernest Marden (馬頓) (*Hong Kong*) (*Tug & Tow Service*)

(*Shanghai Rotary Club President 1928-1929*). He moved to Hong Kong after the World War II.

(14) 1950-1951 (57th District)

District 57 Governor: Pedro Guimaraes Lobato (*Macau*)

(15) 1951-1960 (non-Districted)

Due to conditions unfavorable in China, Rotary International dissolved the 3 Rotary districts 57, 58, 59 effective 1 July 1951. Later, all remaining Rotary clubs in China mainland were terminated in January 1952. Any remaining Rotary clubs in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao were considered as non-districted clubs. Rotary International President appointed an Administrative Advisor for China to supervise these clubs and to extend new clubs within these 3 territories. During this decade, 4 members of the Hong Kong Rotary Club had served such appointment in some of the years, respectively:

(1) Dr. Chengting Thomas Wang (王正廷博士); (2) George Ernest Marden; (3) Dr. Arthur W. Woo (胡惠德醫生); (4) Dr. Tseung Fat-Im (蔣法賢醫生).

(16) 1960-1961 (District 345)

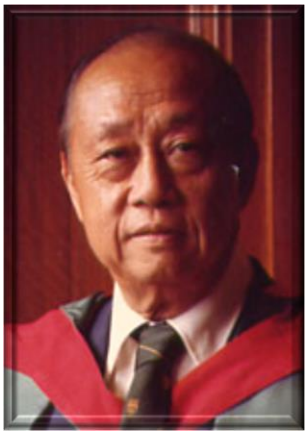
Petitions for district initiated by Taipei Rotary Club (臺北扶輪社) continuously over the last 3 years, Rotary International accepted and decided to create a new District 345 for the 16 clubs located in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macao, effective 1 July 1960.

District 345 Governor: Kwo Keh-Ti (郭克悌) (*Taipei*) (*Educationist*)

(17) 1961-1962 (District 345)

District 345 Governor: Kenneth Fung Ping-Fan (馮秉芬) (*Hong Kong*) (*Banking*)

(*Hong Kong Rotary Club President 1949-1950*) The first Hong Kong Rotarian served as Governor of this District composed of Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macao.



(18) Since 1991 onward (District 3450)

Commencing 1 July 1991, all Rotary districts are to be identified with a 4-digit number system. This was initially accomplished by adding a zero at the end of each current District number. Since then, District 345 was changed to District 3450 until today.

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Amazing Hong Kong

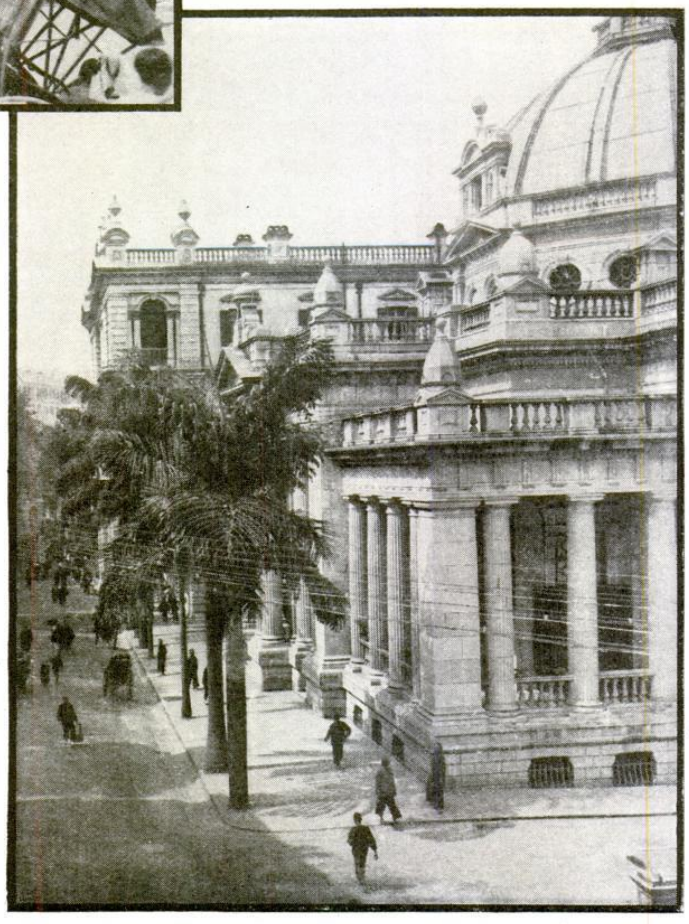
By Lillian Dow Davidson

"THE large number of pretty, smartly dressed Chinese women you see on the streets!" That was my husband's reply to my question, "What strikes you most forcibly about the Hong Kong of today?"

"What an astonishing change!" I exclaimed as my mind leaped back to the streets of Hong Kong of twenty-five years ago.

At that time, it was rare to see any but coolie women, poor drab drudges, prematurely aged by hard labor and rendered still more unattractive by their dingy, black, flapping trousers and wide, loose, clumsy jackets, making them all look fat and shapeless. The woman always followed many paces behind her man, as custom so rigidly decreed, the wind carrying back to her the few sing-song words he cared to address to her. These women of a passing age still shamble along the city roadways, their minds probably stunned at the daring of the very

Here one may buy—well, anything —a rug, carved ivory, and if one is lucky—perhaps a piece of choice jade.



The great Bank of Hong Kong through which flows silver (not gold) from the tradesmen's counters and back again.

modern young Chinese who so boldly and defiantly oppose that enslaving dragon, Tradition.

Two things above all must horrify them; first, that these sheltered members of the gentry should appear in public at all and, secondly, that they dare to place themselves on a par with Chinese men by walking side by side with them on the streets, and even appearing with them at such places of amusement as cinema shows and at dances at hotels and restaurants. In truth, I am as dumbfounded as they at such an unbelievable change, seeming as if a miracle had taken place in this thought-to-be "Unchanging East."

One of the Hong Kong British newspapers, in an editorial, boasted of the beauty of the Chinese girls of that city and justly so for nowhere else in China did we see a greater display of comeliness. Clothes always help to frame beauty and in this case the frame is both dainty and pleasing. One thing, however, calls for admiration. Although the minds of these young Chinese women must have leaped centuries of Chinese inhibitions in acquiring their modern ideas, yet, withal, they were sensible and loyal enough to want to retain their own more becoming oriental garb,—but with modifications. The Chinese men, in the Treaty Ports especially, have donned the complete outfit of Western clothes and wear them remarkably well.

In fancy I can almost see the birth of the modern "long gown" of the Chinese women. About a table upon which is spread the age-old Chinese tunic and trousers, a group of Chinese women, lead-

Photo: R. Moulin, from Ewing Galloway, N. Y.

Here along the West Praya, occupied mostly by banks and mercantile firms, one buys and sells to the constant hum of international trade.

ers in the new movement, are gathered. By mutual consent the trousers are discarded because of their ugliness, and they turn their attention to the tunic, seeing possibilities of modernizing it. The characteristic side fastening with its cute decorative frogs, so thoroughly Chinese, is good, so they decide to keep it, likewise the high collar; the sleeves are too long and too full, so they must be taken in and shortened to elbow length; scissors must be applied freely on the sides of the too-wide garment to make it fit snugly but easily and by lengthening it, it would look much like the sheath-like one-piece gown of the West. The resulting simple but modest costume of rich material revealed for the first time in thousands of years the slender, graceful bodies of these little ladies. Smartly coiffed bare heads and up-to-date European shoes set this dress off to perfection.

EVEN the Chinese food in Hong Kong seemed a subtle blend of East and West. Doubtless our host and hostess, a Chinese doctor, a Rotarian, and his wife selected only dishes that were pleasing to the Western palate. Always in China one sits at a round table for the food is placed in the center and each guest helps himself constantly throughout the meal to any of the dishes he desires. As chopsticks were used, I proved so inexpert that the Chinese ladies sitting near me saw to it that my private bowl was always well filled from the source of supplies. Among the dishes were these: chicken with walnut meats, exceptionally good and my favorite; roast chicken done to a turn; crab meat, bambooshoot and egg omelet; small squares of garupa fish fried in deep fat to a rich golden brown; asparagus with crab meat; stewed shark's fin with crab gravy; stewed chicken with bambooshoots; mashed chicken in bird's-nest soup; rice with shrimp, pork, ham and egg; fried chicken noodles (chau min), etc. Steaming, perfumed towels were brought around at the beginning and end of the meal to cleanse the hands.

Beautiful, sky-soaring Hong Kong with its peak almost two thousand feet in height and lovely wooded slopes casts its own unique spell. European homes, invariably white in color like the villas on Lake Como, encircle the peak, drop down the slopes, palatial, with their massive [*Continued on page 44*]

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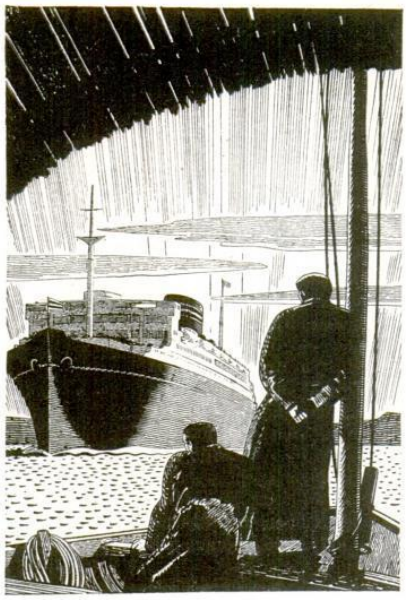

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Amazing Hong Kong

[*Continued from page 35*]

many-arched verandahs, so typical of Hong Kong, and nestle among the soft green trees. Nowhere else could one find a city with a more entrancing residential district. Here sites-with-a-view are not for the favored few but for all. Below is spread out a delightful panorama of the long harbor, the water of which is dotted thickly with the most curious and interesting water craft imaginable from the odd looking "Hermes," air-craft carrier attached to the British China Squadron which is located in these waters during the winter season, down to the frailest sampans of the Chinese water folk. Busy little ferries ply constantly back and forth between Hong Kong and Kowloon on the mainland opposite.

The most amazing thing about Hong Kong is that the British and they alone have made this island city what it is today, the most beautiful city in the East with one of the busiest harbors in the world. In the beginning of time, Nature covered the island with trees but the Chinese peasants, poor souls, needed firewood so badly that they, in the course of centuries, denuded the land, so much so that the island of Hong Kong was ceded to Great Britain 89 years ago by the Chinese Government, who deemed it worthless for it was as barren and bald as a potato. But far worse than this, it was notoriously unhealthy and had but one Chinese village upon it whose inhabitants when not fishing were plying their more lucrative trade of piracy.

The British people when confronted by a combination of evils such as these are at their best and with dogged determination set about conquering them. They planted millions of trees, cleaned out the pirates and set to work to make it a healthful city but not without the sacrifice of many European lives before they met with success. Besides the magic touch of beauty, they raised it to a commercial city of the first magnitude. Statistics speak louder than words. They show at a glance the present importance of Hong Kong as a distributing centre. In 1928, 52,278 vessels with a total tonnage of 37,640,694 entered and cleared this port. In 1931, imports and exports totaled £165,000,000 or $820,000,000.

There is a terrible manifestation of nature in the shape of Tai Foons (Big Winds) against the fury of which the British of Hong Kong must needs match their brains. The typhoon of 1906, coming as a complete surprise, took a life toll of 10,000 Chinese and fifteen Europeans; fifty-nine European ocean-going vessels, representing 72,185 aggregate tons were driven ashore or otherwise very badly damaged and 2400 Chinese craft were lost. The British officials then grimly put their heads together to devise a comprehensive system of signals. When a red T is hoisted in several points of the city, a typhoon is within 300 miles of Hong Kong, a black signal shows it is within 180 miles and then all shipping activity ceases, large ocean-going ships proceed to safety anchorages while the smaller craft run for one of three large typhoon shelters. An hour-glass signal indicates that the gale is expected to increase while a black cross shows that it is expected soon. Because of these warnings when the typhoon of 1923 swept over Hong Kong, the wind reaching a record velocity of 130 miles, it did far less damage than the former one. Rarely does a year pass by without a typhoon. While we were there one day the red flag was hoisted and the ferries stopped running but fortunately it veered off to the north.

IN COMING to Hong Kong we reached the last of the big cities established by Great Britain through Asia. We were struck with the far-sightedness of the British statesmen responsible for establishing these cities as free ports, on a basis of freedom and equality to all. There is no red tape whatsoever upon arrival. The briefest examination is made mostly in connection with the Health Department and this may even be overlooked if there is no special reason to suspect contagious diseases in other ports. Once ashore, there is the same complete absence of formality and the stranger, if a prospective resident, regardless of his race, color, or religion enters the contest to make a living on equal basis with the British who are certainly not coddled nor given any advantage over the men of another country.

MANY special trains will handle the movement of Rotarians and visitors to Seattle for the Rotary Convention, June 20–24. Districts and a number of the larger clubs already are making arrangements for solid Pullman trains to carry their delegates.

No one railroad has been authorized by Rotary International as the official railroad. Various districts and clubs are selecting those railroads which offer the most from the standpoint of convenience, service and saving of time.

And now in regard to the organization of the Rotary Club of Hong Kong my husband wrote: "I am glad to reach Hong Kong because I would be approaching that part of the world in which I had lived thirteen years, nine of them in Formosa, across the way, although I had little hope of finding out here many whom I had known, for changes in this part of the world are very numerous.

"Furthermore, I was looking forward with pleasure to the task of organizing a Rotary club here. There had been many previous efforts made to organize, all of which had failed. I was convinced and still am that a Rotary club can be started in any city with sufficient population providing one knows his Rotary and is in a position to spend the time necessary to do the work. There is the occasional group who have become interested in Rotary through some favorable contact with Rotary elsewhere made by one of their number which will welcome anyone who will come along and help them, but it was not my good fortune to find such a situation in any of the larger cities.

"Though working in an honorary capacity, I considered that it was my particular business at the time to organize the club regardless of opposition and I was not attempting it as some had done before me who were unable to give sufficient time to the task or whose primary object in the city was either business or sightseeing. I approached the difficult problem in Hong Kong without any fears of failure. I was fortunate in the fact that the new Governor, Sir William Peel, had come to Hong Kong from Kuala Lumpur and that he had attended the official inauguration meeting there. As he was seated next to me at this dinner meeting, I was able to tell him much about Rotary.

"I had explained to Sir William that the gentlemen I wished to meet were such as would be representative of the official business and professional community and include representative Chinese. For I believe the greatest service that Rotary can render in these Asiatic communities is that of developing friendship among the different races and nationalities resident there, so often antagonistic toward each other, and I feel that if Rotary rendered no other service it would be well worth while.

"Among the eight letters of introduction received from the governor, three were to representative Chinese who stood high in the confidence of both the Chinese and European communities. They very kindly volunteered to divide the Chinese list among them and to have a

5 Minutes from Waikiki

DOWNTOWN HONOLULU, locale for the National Foreign Trade Council—May 4-6, need make no apologies on the score of *beauty*. However, to the great majority, its charm is mostly in the fact that world-famed Waikiki Beach is but 5 minutes distant.

We know no better reason for a trip to Hawaii than Hawaii itself, but the great conventions in Honolulu and on the Pacific Coast provide the very best of business reasons. Think of Hawaii in connection with these conventions! (But don't forget your golf clubs.)

*National Foreign Trade Council, *Hawaii* . . May 4 to 6, 1932
U. S. Chamber of Commerce, *San Francisco*, May 15 to 21, 1932
*4th Pacific Rotary Conference, *Hawaii* . . June 12 to 14, 1932
Rotary International, *Seattle* . . . . . June 20 to 24, 1932
*With direct steamer connections for the Mainland meeting.

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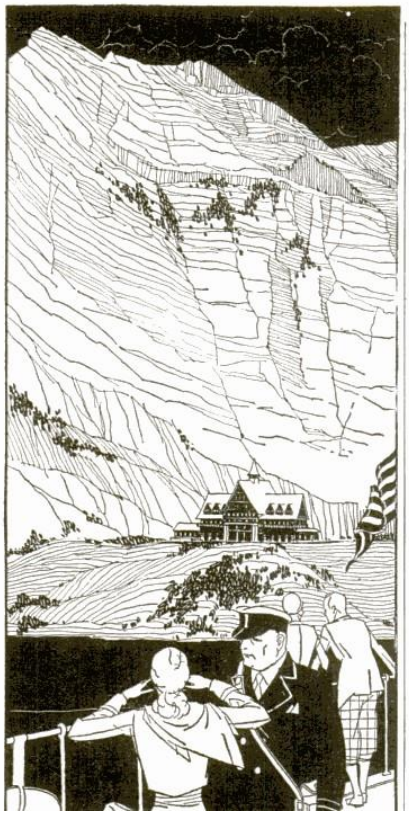

preliminary interview with prospective members. Such of these as displayed interest were then brought together at one of the Chinese social clubs in groups of four to six. I enjoyed those meetings very much. They were a fine type of Chinese, cultured, advanced, and capable. Nearly all spoke perfect English. Many were university graduates, all very hospitable and interested in the ideals of Rotary, the primary object of which is a development of a better understanding and friendship among different nationalities. The Chinese ladies were no less delightful and Mrs. Davidson, Marjory, and I were the recipients of hospitality from them which we appreciated very much.

"Regardless of pleasant features, the organization of the Hong Kong Club was a difficult task, requiring a month's stay which included two meetings of the board of directors following the organization. The inaugural dinner was held December 8th with over eighty present including guests. All of the Press were very kind in their efforts to help the movement, one of which in commenting upon the meeting stated that perhaps never before had there been brought together in Hong Kong a group representative of so many different vocations, officials, business men, educationalists, engineers, scientists, important men in their respective lines and representing both European and Chinese communities. The officers were: president, Sir William Hornell, active head of the Hong Kong University; vice-president, Hon. Dr. S. W. Tso; honorary joint secretaries, Mr. L. F. C. Bellamy and Mr. B. Wong Tape; treasurer, Mr. N. J. Perrin; directors, Hon. Mr. W. E. L. Shenton, Messrs. Allan Cameron, Chau Yue-Teng, J. M. Wong, Wong Kwong-tin, and B. Wylie.

"Hong Kong was the last city on my program of club extension. With it we could truthfully say that Rotary was now a world-wide organization for now practically every city of importance from the Mediterranean to the China Sea and the Pacific had its Rotary club. From Hong Kong on, my duty consisted of official calls on existing clubs in the Philippines, North China, Manchuria, Korea, and Japan and to interest such clubs in extending Rotary to the smaller communities in their vicinity."

1930 --- Aerial view of the Victoria Harbour, Hong Kong.

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