

THE SULTAN OF DJOKJA.

How the Dutch Officials Use Him in Governing Java.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.

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DJOKJAKARTA, Java.—I am taking a trip through a land of the Arabian Nights. I am in the native states of Java, and the scenes about me are stranger than those of the days of Haroun al Raschid in Cairo and Bagdad. Princes and nobles in gorgeous costumes strut through the streets with their women servants and slaves following them. Some go about under huge umbrellas of gold, silver and cloth of bright colors. The common people squat down on the ground as they pass and look up in reverence. This city is the capital of one of the native states, and it has a sultan, who has a great palace city within it.

The palace city has white walls twenty feet high all around it. It contains magnificent buildings, the homes of the nobles of the court. It contains an enormous harem. It has a menagerie of tigers, lions and other wild animals, as well as state elephants which go about in his majesty's processions. There are more than ten thousand people connected with the court of this Javanese monarch, and he has soldiers, slaves and treasures galore. He maintains the same state now that his ancestors had hundreds of years ago, for though the Dutch rule his province, they do so solely through him, making the people believe that they are obeying the sultan. It is the same with the great state adjoining, that of Boekit, where the sultan of Solo lives, of whom I shall write later on.

In the past these sultans ruled the whole island, and they are still looked up to by the natives. The Dutch appreciate their power, and keep the hand of iron concealed in the velvet glove with which they handle them. Right in front of the palace inclosure there is a barracks filled with Dutch soldiers, and about the whole is a moat with drawbridges which can be lowered or raised. The palace is fortified, and there are cannon on the walls, nominally to protect the sultan, but so arranged that they could be easily turned on his palace and shatter his imperial city to pieces.

A VISIT TO THE SULTAN.

The Dutch resident governor has the same standing as the sultan. He sits beside him on public occasions and is on a level with him. The sultan sends word to the resident every morning asking how he has rested and the resident replies in turn. When the sultan goes out in state he has gorgeous gold umbrellas above him, held by his servants, and when the resident calls on the sultan it is in a coach with four horses with similar umbrellas held over him.

Through my letters from the governor general of the Dutch East Indies I was invited by the resident to attend a great function at the palace of the sultan. It was the circumcision of one of the sultan's sons according to the rites of the Mohammedan religion, and all the court and the highest of the Dutch officials were invited to attend. Before my invitation was tendered I was asked if I had a dress suit and white necktie and was told that I must be in full evening dress, although the ceremony was to take place at 7 o'clock in the morning.

We started from the palace of the resident at 6:30 a. m. Our party was all in full dress. There were a dozen rich Dutch planters, several officials of the army, each of whom was resplendent in gold lace and trimmings, and also the civil officials who were evening clothes. The party all told was more like a group of the best-dressed men taken from a diplomatic reception at the White House than what you would expect to find on this island, generally supposed to be a jungle of savages, rhinoceroses, and snakes. We rode to the palace in state escorted by the European guards of the sultan. These number thirty-two. They were mounted on fine, black Australian horses and always accompany the sultan when he goes out of the palace. They are stationed inside his city nominally for his protection and nominally under his control, but in reality as a guard to prevent revolution or conspiracy against the Dutch rule with-out.

GOING IN STATE.

Our procession was, I judge, at least a half mile long. The resident, surrounded by his guard, rode at the head in a splendid carriage drawn by four high-stepping, fawn-colored, Javanese ponies. His coachman was in livery, and his footmen stood beside him carrying the great golden umbrellas which formed a part of his state. Behind came the assistant resident, a fine-looking Hollander, in a coat of gold braid, but with more modest umbrellas. He had also four horses. Further back were other four-horse equipages, and then came the more modest two-horse carriages, each with its swill coachmen and footmen, containing the planters and visitors, and among them myself. I wish you could have seen the natives dropping down to the earth and looking up at us almost with reverence as we dashed down the long avenue of wide-spreading trees which leads from the home of the resident to the Kraton, or palace city of his majesty. We went through a great gate by a crowd of native soldiers and officials, who straightway retreated until our procession was by. We drove across a great court inside the walls and finally stopped before another gorgeous gateway, the entrance to the palace grounds proper.

Here there were officials wearing high white and black sugarloaf caps not unlike those worn by the Persians or Corsican gentlemen at home. Each cap was about eight inches high without visor. It was the exact shape of a sugarloaf with the top chopped off, and was made of some transparent material which looked to me like raffine wax. From the ears to the waist the officials were perfectly bare, for according to court etiquette no man must wear a jacket or anything around the upper part of his body while in the palace of the sultan. Each official had a gorgeous waistcloth belted about him falling from his waist to his thighs and under this a pair of tight naraikons. Each man had a great knife or kris with gorgeous handle of silver or kris in his belt, and the richly carved metal showed out against the highly colored calico waistcloth. We saw thousands of these men as we went on inside the palace. They squatted in salutation as we passed, and later on squatted about in front of the great pavilion where we were entertained by the sultan.

THE SULTAN AT HOME.

This pavilion had a vast roof, upheld by many wooden pillars, beautifully carved and decorated with red lacquer and gold. The sultan was sitting upon a throne within it as we came up, and the crown prince stepped down from a lower seat and came out to the Dutch resident and shook hands with him. As

A Visit to His Walled City and to a Queer Entertainment in His Palace—His Subjects Crawl About on Their Knees When They See Him, And His Servants and Officials Must Be Bare to the Waist—A Look at the Harem—Something About the Crown Prince and His Brothers—A Stroll Through His Walled City—His Menagerie—Queer Customs of Etiquette as to Umbrellas, Hats and Other Things.



Photographed for the "News" by Frank G. Carpenter.
FROM THE SULTAN'S HAREM.

the sultan saw the resident he arose and stepped forward, the Dutch resident moved toward him, and the two of them shook hands and sat down side by side. We merely bowed to his majesty, and were then conducted to seats in the rear of him, which gave us an excellent view of the court.

The scene was a curious one. In front of us and to the left, extending on and on to the walls, was a sea of these half-naked nobles, each squatting on his haunches, with his white cap on his head. To the right, more in front of the sultan, was an equally large collection of women all bare-headed, bare-necked and bare-shouldered, and all squatting down on their heels. Each had a gay sarong wrapped tightly about her body, and under the sarong, so that as I looked I could see only the bare shoulders, necks and heads of the women, the effect being that of a sea of naked, yellow beauties submerged to the armpits.

A LOOK AT THE SULTAN.

The sultan sat within ten feet of me. He is a tall, fine-looking old man, now slightly stooped. He wore a black jacket, which blazed with diamonds and medals, and a gorgeous sarong, below which shone out slippers of gold. He has fine features and looks like a thoroughbred. He is said to be well educated and to be a man of ability. Just behind him stood a number of female slaves, each holding a certain thing in case he might need it. One had a betel box, another a cigar box, and others articles of the toilet. Near him sat the crown prince, who also had five slaves about him. The crown prince wore a blue silk jacket and a gorgeous sarong. He had on a black cap, and his long hair hung down his back. He had a great kris in his belt, and as he came up to the pavilion his bare-headed servants carried an umbrella over him. I got a closer view of him going out. He is of a light yellow color, having very bright black eyes. His teeth are black and filed to a point, as are those of most of the women and men in the palace.

As we took our seats the sultan's band played. It was stationed at the back of the court, and musical instruments were sounding boards, drums and bells peculiar to Java.

A SON OF THE SULTAN.

Next the chief actor of the day appeared. This was the son of the sultan, who was to be made a full-fledged Mohammedan through certain unmentionable ceremonies, which were performed by the Mohammedan priests in little pavilions of white silk in front of the pavilion where we sat. The boy was just fifteen years old. He came into the court bowing low and sat down cross-legged in front of the pavilion facing his majesty. He was gorgeously dressed, all in green and gold. He wore a jacket of green silk, a scoop shawl hat of green satin and a sarong of green and silver. He sparkled with diamonds. His arms were bare and also his legs from the knees to the feet, but his skin was dusted with a yellow powder which glistened like gold as the rays of the rising sun fell upon it. After he sat there a moment the sultan raised his hand and the boy started to go to his father. He first took off his kris or sword and laid it down upon the ground, for no one dare approach his majesty with arms upon his person. Next he folded his hands in an attitude of prayer and bowed low before the sultan. He then crawled forward a few steps and again bowed as in worship. He kept on crawling and bowing until he at last reached his father's feet. Here he knelt again in reverence and then kissed the instep of the foot his father held out and then the knee. After this he crawled back to his old position, never rising to his feet. This

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this feast. We drank tea grown in Java out of cups of beautiful china, and at the same time the sultan and the resident drank out of cups of gold.

Then we said good-bye to the sultan, and the crown prince and the Dutch resident, with their retinues, marched out together, we following behind.

THE CITY OF THE KING.

On the day after this reception I spent some time in exploring the palace city. Djokjakarta has over 100,000 people. I judge, but it is about outside the city of the king proper. I took a carriage and drove through the walls of his majesty's municipality and then went up one avenue and down another, going through hundreds of acres covered with the houses and huts of the nobles and servants of the court. I passed by great trees trimmed in the shape of umbrellas. They had a foliage like boxwood, but their branches, and leaves formed an umbrella-shaped mass as big as a haystack. Imagine the biggest haystack you have ever seen trimmed to the shape of a wheel of green 100 feet or more in diameter, twenty feet thick, resting upon a great round trunk, perhaps twenty feet high, and you have one of the warring trees of the sultan's palace grounds. The places proper are enormous structures of one story with many rooms. The sultan has a big harem. He has the right to take any woman in his kingdom to wife and when the daughters of the nobles reach a marriageable age they are brought to him and he picks out such as he chooses and directs that they remain in the palace. The nobles are anxious to have their daughters in the palace, for a pretty girl is sure to get her father and brothers good, fat jobs, as well as to elevate the standing of the family.

THE SULTAN'S BAND.

Passing his majesty's zoological garden, where a couple of the young princes were studying the lions, I stopped for a time at the band stand, or rather music building of the palace city. It was an open shed with a pyramidal brick roof rising in steps toward the center. Within it a score of musicians were sitting crosslegged on mats going through their exercises. Some had barrel-like drums on their knees, others had gongs and series of bells upon which they were playing chimes. One of the gongs was as big as a bushel basket and gave forth a sound like a brass drum. The golden-faced musicians wore high sugarloaf caps, navy blue jackets and sarongs of peculiar patterns. They played solemnly, but sweetly. As I waited the smell of opium came to my nostrils and I found that one of the band was taking

a smoke, during the breaks in the playing.

In another palace I saw three old men sitting crosslegged chatting idly together. They must have been high officials, for they had high, black stove pipe caps on their heads. There were servants about them and as often as one of the officials required anything, a servant crawled in stooping low that he might not be as high as his master and bowed his head to the floor as he received the command. He then crawled out on his knees or heels to get what was wanted.

Everywhere throughout Djokjakarta these ceremonies of master and servant held good. Every native official has an umbrella carried over him as he moves about, and the streets are full of these processions of nobles and slaves. A noble is not supposed to do anything! He will not carry anything in his hand, and so a servant must go outside in the hands of his servant. The servant often goes out on white waiting, but to show that he wears it only as a slave he turns the visor of the cap to the back of his head instead of the front.

In the United States when a great man comes into a house or hall the audience out of respect rise up; in Djokjakarta as a mark of respect they squat down. This squatting position is called the dodok. As I have said before, it is not considered humiliating by the people, and they do it as a matter of course. The kiss of reverence is always on the instep or sole of the foot or on the knee as I have described in the case of the young prince.

As to the people crawling along on their hands and knees, this is done by the lower classes in the presence of the chief and always by the chiefs when in the presence of the sultan. When the sultan first got his European carriage the Europeans were horrified to find that the seat of the coachman was higher up than that of his majesty. This would never do with a native coachman, so at first a foreigner was employed to drive the sultan's outfit, in order that this matter of etiquette might be somewhat provided for.


The rank of a man can be told by his umbrella. Only the sultan and the resident governors have golden umbrellas carried over them. The queen and princes can have yellow umbrellas, and the more distant relatives of the royal family and the concubines have the right to carry white umbrellas. The nobles have green umbrellas and red umbrellas, and some of the lowest officials carry umbrellas of black. These umbrellas are not like ours. They are much larger and are borne on poles from ten to fifteen feet high, seldom facing the sun.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.

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