

ABOUT SUMATRA.

Queer Stories of the Dutch and the Natives in the Third Largest Island of the World.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.

SINGAPORE, Straits of Malacca. I sailed for two days along the coast of Sumatra in coming to Singapore. The island belongs almost entirely to the Dutch, but it has vast tracts still inhabited by savages, and a large section which the Dutch have been trying for years to subdue. During my conversation with the governor general of the Dutch East Indies he referred to this war and pointed out the province of Achin on the map. It lies at the extreme northern part of Sumatra and is inhabited by Malays who are better fighters and more numerous than our own Tagalos.

THE FIGHTING ACHINESE.

In Achin every man is a soldier and every village has its army ready for service in time of war. The people have been fighting foreigners for hundreds of years. Their country was one of the first in this region to be discovered by white men. Marco Polo visited it in 1291, and about the time of the discovery of America another European landed there and wrote of its pepper, aloes and silk. Queen Elizabeth made a treaty with its sultan, and considerable trading was done before the country came into the hands of the Dutch.

From time to time the different foreign nations tried to subdue the Achinese, but they fought them one after another and at the end of five centuries are still unconquered. Already the Dutch have lost about 10,000 men in trying to control them and have spent it is said more than \$5,000,000. They now have an army in the field against them, and although they possess a part of the coast they are no nearer conquering them than they were a generation ago. The country of the Achinese is about as large as West Virginia. It contains rich pepper districts, and has also, it is said, much gold and silver. Its people are Mohammedans and they use the Arabic characters in writing. They are said to be treacherous, but of late years on account of the wars no one has been able to travel among them.

AN UNKNOWN ISLAND.

The greater part of Sumatra is practically unknown, and still it is one of the richest islands of the far east. It has enormous tracts of fertile soil, and it produces pepper, coffee and rice in vast quantities. It is the largest island of the world, with the exception of Borneo, New Guinea and perhaps

Greenland. It is longer than from New York to Chicago, and in one place as wide as from Washington to Albany. Its area is four times that of Ohio plus that of Massachusetts. It is a land of mountains and plains. Along the west coast there are peaks

from two to three miles in height, while on the east opposite this town of Singapore there is a vast plain, much of which is under water during a part of the year. This is especially so of the Lampong, the province nearest Java. The word Lampong means bobbing in

the water. Here you can travel 150 miles over lands almost perfectly level, and then by going thirty miles farther and the tops of peaks which are two miles above the sea.

SUMATRA COFFEE AND TOBACCO.

The very best of our Java coffee comes from Sumatra. This statement I made in my coffee letter on Java, and the information came to me from the coffee exporters at Batavia. There is a town called Padang about the center of the west coast of Sumatra, which is surrounded by coffee plantations, and there are other regions in which the berry grows well. It is cultivated in the mountainous districts, the Arabians plant being used. The exports are large, and the most of them go to the United States. The methods of cultivation are about the same as in Java.

A TOBACCO TRUST WHICH PAYS 75 PER CENT.

The best tobacco lands are on the north side of the island. Much is raised about Dili, on the Straits of Malacca. The leaf is especially valuable for wrappers, the best of the product going to Europe, and thence to Cuba, where it is used for the finest of the Havana cigars. The exports of tobacco amount to about \$15,000,000 a year. One company—the Dili Maatschappij—has paid a dividend of 75 per cent per annum for twenty-five years. This is the leading tobacco company of Sumatra.

THE LAND OF PEPPER.

It is along this coast that pepper is found. Sumatra raises more pepper than any other island of the world, and it has been raising it for centuries. It was the trade in spices which brought the Dutch to the far east, and a large part of their first pepper shipments were from Sumatra, although they got some from India. They lost pepper trust. About the time of Queen Elizabeth they had settlements both in India and in these islands, and were doing most of the carrying trade of this part of the world. They then sold their pepper at 75 cents a pound, but, trustlike, as they had the monopoly, thought they could double the price, water their stock and still declare big dividends. The English merchants, however, objected to paying \$1.50 a pound, and organized the famous East India company, which drove the Dutch out of Hindoostan and gave India to England.

Here in Sumatra the Dutch still own pepper plantations. The sultan of Achin has his pepper districts, and in the Lampong there are other pepper estates which yield well. In a good year Sumatra exports in the neighborhood of 40,000 pounds, or about two-thirds of all the pepper that tickles the palates of human kind.

PEPPER FOR THE PHILIPPINES.

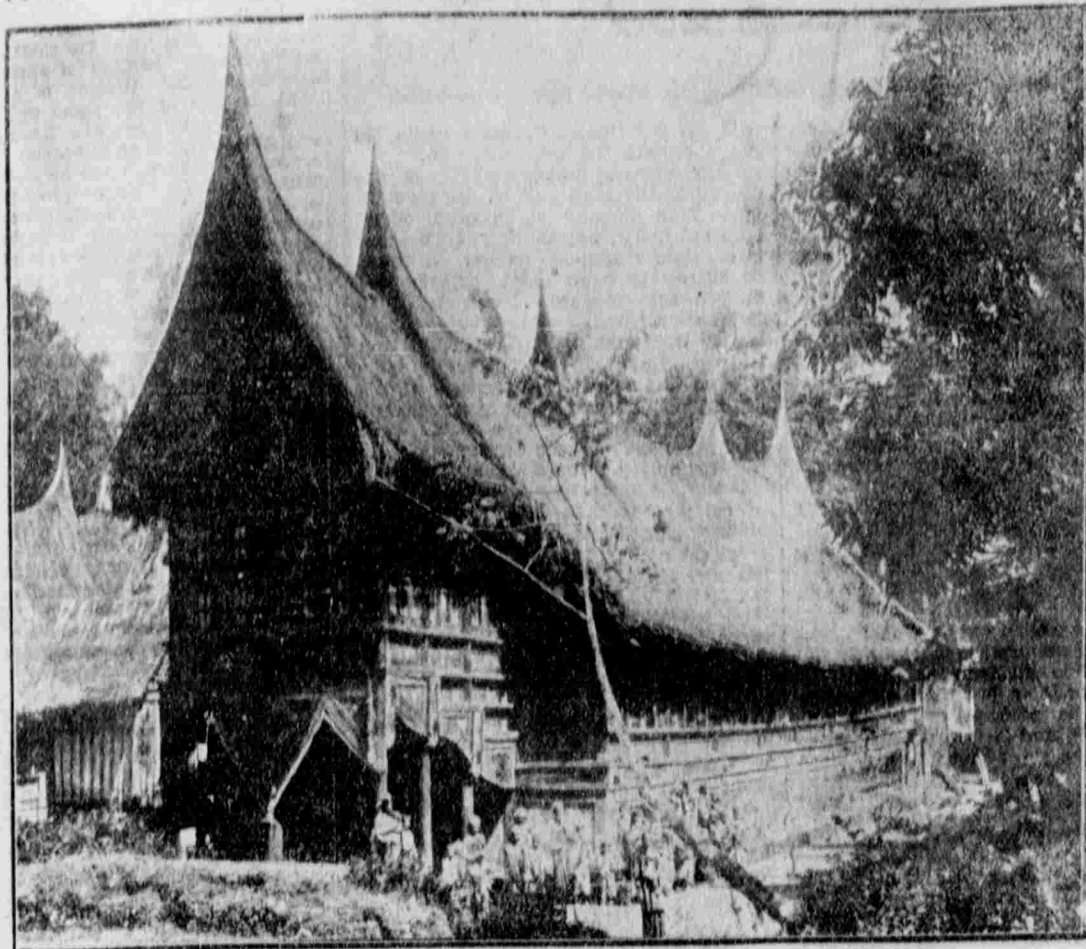
I have made some inquiries as to the pepper business, and as far as I can learn it will pay the agricultural department to investigate it for the Philippines. Mindanao and the Sulu archipelago have plenty of land suited to the crop, and the moist, warm climate there is just right for it.

The pepper grows upon bushes which rise to a height of from twenty to thirty feet. The plants are set out from



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Photographed for the "News" by Frank G. Carpenter.

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MENS' JERSEY UNDERWEAR, SILK FLEECE, WORTH \$1.00 FOR 59c.

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ALL PURE WHITE BRISTLE HAIR BRUSHES, THE 50c KIND, ONLY 25c.
Ebony Hair Brushes with pure White Bristle and Sterling Silver Ornament on back, only 48c.
Clothes Brushes from 10c up.
Shoe Brush 10c up.
Whisk Brooms from 5c up.

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An immense line of Fancy Tea Cups and Saucers at 10c, 15c, 25c, 35c and up.
BEST HEAVY HANDLED WHITE TEA CUPS AND SAUCERS FOR 8c.

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WE HAVE A FEW CAPES AND JACKETS LEFT TO GO AT HALF PRICE.

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All \$5.00 Waists goes for \$2.98.
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ALL WOOL TRICOT WAISTS WORTH \$2.00 ANYWHERE, GO FOR 98c.
Beautiful Flannelette Waists worth \$1.25 and \$1.00, go for 65c.
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Nicely trimmed Flannelette Wrappers, a Bargain, 98c and \$1.25.

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ALL OTHERS IN PROPORTION.

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Nice Celluloid Manicure and Toilet Cases, 45c, 65c, 98c, and \$1.25. Elegant cases in Manicure, Toilet, Collar and Cuff Boxes, etc., \$1.50, \$1.75, \$2.50 and up.
48c, 75c, 98c, \$1.25, and up. IT WILL PAY YOU TO LOOK THROUGH OUR LINE.

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WE HAVE SOME GREAT BARGAINS IN DRY GOODS.
Best Indigo Blue Calico, 5c.
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