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DJOKJAKARTA

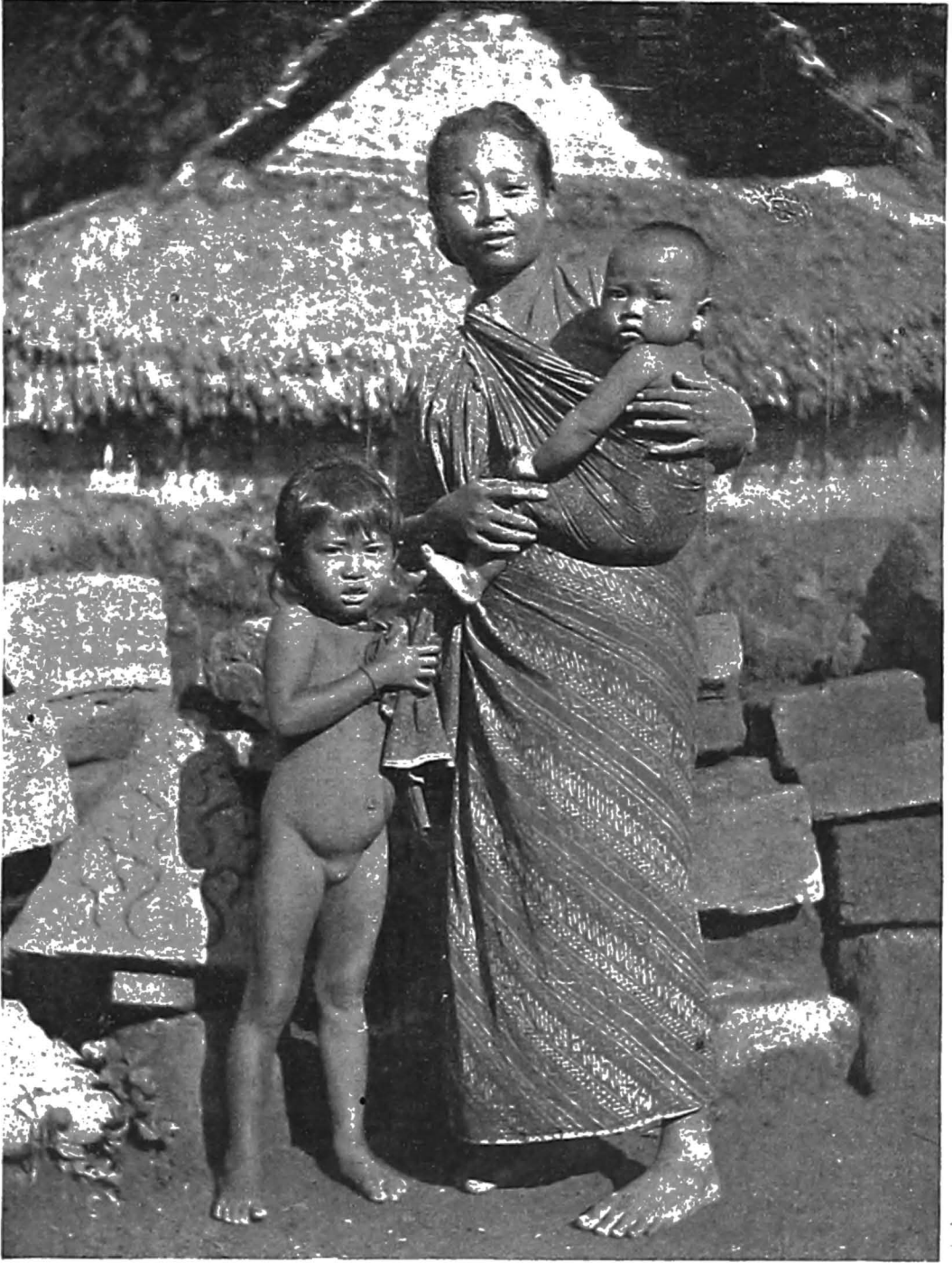


AS the heat of Solo was but little less than that of Batavia, and we had only worse accounts and solemn warnings given of the sickening, unendurable heat of Soerabaya, where fever and cholera most often abide, it seemed wisest to give up the visit to that east end of the island, to forego that torrid shore where first the Arabs landed and conquered the Hindu rulers of Majapahit, to be succeeded in their turn by the Portuguese, and then the Dutch. The ruins of Majapahit, and the tombs of its princes, and the graves of the Arab priests who were the first rulers of the conquered empire are attractions in Soerabaya's neighborhood; but the great object was the Mount Bromo of the Tengger plateau, where the exhausted residents may take refuge from the steaming plain and breathe again. Tosari, the great sanatorium, on one of the sharp spurs of the Tengger, is over five thousand feet in air, and commands one of the most famous views in Java, with the plains, the sea, and groups of islands in one direction, and the great Bromo, smoking splen-

didly, in another. The great crater of the Bromo, with several smoking cones rising from a level of rippling, wind-swept "sandy sea," is three miles in diameter, and is claimed, despite Kilauea, as the largest crater in the world, as it is certainly the largest in Java. A colony of Siva worshipers, who fled to the Tengger that they might pursue their religion unmolested by Arab rulers, live there in long communal houses, tend the sacred fire once brought from India, and sacrifice regularly to Brama, the "God of Fire," at his smoking temple. In this modern day living sacrifices are not offered, save of fowl; and priests and people content themselves with offerings of fruit and foods, and make other great ceremonies of burning lumps of fragrant benzoin, the "Java frankincense," at the crater's edge.

The most serious sacrifices in the Bromo's neighborhood are of those unfortunate natives who are seized by tigers as they work in clearings or walk mountain paths alone. The briefest stay at Tosari equips a visitor with tiger stories fit for tropical regions; and my envy was roused when some Tosari tourists told of having seen a child who had been seized and slightly mangled by a tiger, but a day before, on a road near the village, over which they themselves had passed.

The short railway ride back from Solo to Djokja, past the familiar ground of Brambanam, was a morning's delight. We could see from the train that the railway did run close past the temple courts; and with the brief glimpse of the ruined pyramids, we viewed our exploit of walking to Loro Jonggran's fane at midday, and clambering over the temples through the



THE BRAMBANAM BABY.

long afternoon, with great complacency—a feat that nothing could induce us to repeat, however.

It is all historic and sacred soil in the region around Djokja, and we returned with the greater interest for our real visit to the city, where one touches the age of fable in even the geographic names of the place and its environs, since the modern Dutch rendering of Djokjakarta, and the older Yugya-Karta of Sir Stamford Raffles, are only variants of the native Ayogya-Karta, the Ayudya mentioned in the Javanese Parvas, or Ramayan, as the capital established by Rama. The exploits of Na-yud-ya, the earliest ruler of Djokja, are described in the same sacred Parvas, and this was the center of the early Hindu empire, whose princes were great builders and for ten centuries were busy erecting temples, palaces, and towers in the region around this their city of Mataram.

Na-yud-ya's descendants resisted the Arab invaders to the last, and the Hindu princes of Middle Java retained their independence long after Islam's susunhan had declared himself supreme over the eastern empire of Majapahit¹ and the western empire of Pajajaran.² These Hindu or native princes, as they were considered, resisted susunhan and Dutch alike, and the Java war of the last century against the two usurpers was a long and bitter struggle, lasting from 1745 to 1758. The susunhan's brother, the second prince, who had joined the native or Hindu princes, was won back to

¹ Majapahit, capital of the eastern empire, was near the modern Soerabaya.

² Pajajaran, capital of the western empire, was near the modern Batavia.

family allegiance by Dutch intrigue and influence; and the susunhan, dividing his eastern or Majapahit empire with his troublesome brother, made the latter a ruler, under the title of Sultan of Djokjakarta. The Dutch had been given the site of Samarang for their aid in such wars, and soon after the division of the eastern empire, the susunhan made that remarkable will of 1749, deeding his empire to the Dutch East India Company after his decease. The region between Djokja and Solo remained a seat of war for the rest of the century, the old princes, different heirs, claimants, and factions, always resorting to arms, and the Dutch always having an interest in the struggles. Marshal Daendels had his campaigns against and his sieges of Djokja, and the British had to besiege and bombard it before it admitted Sepoy occupation. After the restoration of Java to the Dutch there was a thirteen years' war with this eastern empire,—the Mataram or Majapahit war,—and then, by treaty, the Dutch gained final control of the whole island and became absolute masters of Java; susunhan and sultan accepted annuities; each paid a revenue in products of the soil, and admitted Dutch residents to "make recommendations." The Sultan of Djokja is only another of the puppet rulers. He maintains the outward show and trappings of his ancestors' estate, and, with fine irony, is termed one of the "independent princes."

The city of Djokja, fifth in size of the cities of the island, and reputed as more Javanese than Solo, less influenced by Chinese and European example, is in the center of the residency, and but twelve miles from the shores of the Indian Ocean. It is approached by

railway from either side over a plain planted chiefly with indigo and tapioca, whose low, uninteresting plants in myriad rows, and the frequent roofs and tall chimneys of fabriks, speak of abundant prosperity for all classes. The broad streets of the provincial capital are beautifully shaded, and the residency, a great, low, white building with a classical portico, is set in a luxuriant garden, where Madagascar palms and splendid trees make halos and shadow for the grim stone images, the pensive Buddhas and fine bas-reliefs, brought from neighboring ruins. The government offices adjoin, and on any court day one may see the crowds of litigants and witnesses sitting around on their heels beneath a shadowing waringen-tree that would be fit bench for Druids' justice. The majority of the cases tried before the assistant resident, who there balances the scales, are of petty thieving; for notwithstanding the severity of the penalties for such offenses, the inherent bias of the Malay mind is toward acquiring something for nothing—transmuting *tuum* into *meum*. The death sentence is pronounced upon the burglar caught with a weapon on his person, and twenty years in chains is prescribed for the unarmed burglar; for in this eternal summer, where people must live and sleep with open doors and windows, or at most with flimsy lattices, some protection must be assured to those who own portable properties and valuables. But with the great advances made in the security of property, the innate propensities of the race are not to be eradicated by even three centuries of stern Dutch justice; and there is the same mass-meeting of witnesses and lookers-on squatting under the big

waringen-tree at Djokja, when the scales are to be balanced by the blind lady, as before every petty court-room on the island. An ingenious little firefly lamp, taken from a Djokja burglar, was given me as a souvenir of one such a court day. It was a veritable fairy's dark lantern—a half of a nutshell, with a flat cover sliding on a pivot and concealing at will the light of two fireflies struggling in a dab of pitch. The burglar carried a reserve supply of fireflies in a bit of hollow bamboo stoppered at the ends, and added a fresh illuminator whenever the dark lantern's living glow diminished.

The Djokja passer is a large and important daily gathering, but corrugated-iron and tiled sheds in formal rows have pretty nearly robbed it of all a passer's picturesqueness. Model municipal government, Dutch system and order, are too pronounced to please one whose eye has seen what a few palm-thatched booths and umbrellas, and a few tons of scattered fruits and peppers, can produce in that picnic encampment by Boro Boedor's groves or in the open common at Tissak Malaya.

We had been promised great finds in the way of old silver and crises in a street of Chinese pawnshops opening from one corner of the passer; but the promises were not realized. The betel-boxes, buckles, and clasps in charge of these wily "uncles" of Djokja were plain and commonplace, and not a jeweled nor a fancy kris of any kind was to be seen, after all the repute of Djokja's riches in these lines of native metal-work. Hundreds of sarongs, each with a dangling ribbon of a ticket, were stowed away on the shelves of these

pawnshops, proofs of the improvidence and small necessities of these easy-going, chance-inviting people; and while we were haggling over a veined kris-blade with the most obdurate Chinese that ever kept a pawnshop, a timid little woman stole in and offered her sarong to the arrogant, blustering old rascal. He scowled and scolded and stormed at the frightened little creature, shook out and snapped the finely patterned battek as if it were a dust-cloth, and still muttering as if making threats of blood and vengeance, made out a ticket, and threw it at her with a few silver cents. We wanted nothing more from that shop, save the head of the "uncle" on a trencher or impaled on a kris's point.

With a shameless eye to revenue only, the government has long continued to sell pawnbrokers' licenses at auction to the highest bidder, after a brief relapse from the year 1869 to 1880, when the experiment was tried of selling licenses to any one at a moderate rate. The great income from such licenses fell away so amazingly that the auctions were resumed, and the improvident natives handed over again to the merciless Chinese pawnbrokers, who charge interest even up to ninety per cent., and usually retain everything that crosses their counters. M. Emile Metzger, in a communication to the "Scottish Geographic Magazine" (vol. iv., 1888), gives fifty thousand florins a year as the annual revenue during the eleven years when the other system prevailed, which soon increased to as much as one million, sixty-five thousand florins a year when licenses were again auctioned to the highest bidder.

The Sultan of Djokja has a kraton, or palace inclosure, a mile square in the very heart of the city, the great entrance-gates fronting on a vast *plein* or *platz*, where waringen-trees have been clipped and trained to the shape of colossal state umbrellas, great green pajongs planted in permanence in the outer court or approach to the throne, as a badge of royalty. The huge Burmese elephants, that play an important part in state processions, trumpet in one corner; and strangely costumed retainers are coming and going, some of them as gaily uniformed as parrakeets, and others reminding one of the picadors and matadors in the chorus of "Carmen." Surrounded by this indoor army of gorgeous musicians, singers, dancers, bearers of fan and pajong, pipe and betel-boxes, the sultan's court is as splendidly staged as in the last century; and when this "regent of the world" and "vicegerent of the Almighty," as his titles translate, goes abroad in state procession, the spectacle is worth going far to see, the Djokjans assure one. Twenty different kinds of pajongs belong to this court—those flat umbrellas that are the oldest insignia of royalty in all the East, and are sculptured on Boro Boedor's walls through all the centuries pictured there. From the sultan's own golden pajong with orange border, the gold-bordered pajong of the crown prince, the white pajongs of sultanas and their children and of concubines' children, down to the green, red, pink, blue, and black pajongs of the lesser officials and nobles, all pajongs are exactly ordered by court heraldry—the pajong the definite symbol of rank, a visiting-card that announces its owner's consequence from afar. Strange accompani-

ments these, however, for a sultan who plays billiards at the club and a sultana who takes a hand at whist.

The old Taman Sarie, or Water Kastel, in the suburbs, built by a Portuguese architect in the middle of the last century for the great sultan Manko Boeni, is an Oriental Trianon, a paradise garden of the tropics, where former greatness spent its hours of ease in cool, half-underground chambers and galleries such as Hindu princes have made for themselves in every part of India. The Taman Sarie is sadly deserted now. The most important buildings were shaken to formless mounds by earthquakes—the last great Djokja earthquake of 1867, when so many lives were lost, making the complete ruins that are covered with vines and weeds. The ornamental waters are choked with weeds and rubbish; the carved stonework is black with mold and lichens; the caves, grottoes, tunnels, staircases, and galleries around the wells are dripping and slippery with green mosses; and the rose-gardens and shrubberies are fast going to jungle. A few pavilions remain, whose roof gables are as deeply recurved as those of Burmese temples, but for the most part all the once splendid carved and gilded constructions are but wrecks and refuges for bats and lizards. The Water Kastel in its better days stood in the midst of a lake, reached only by boat or a secret tunnel; and here the old sultan Hamanku Bewono IV and his harem whiled away their leisure hours, even when an army thundered at the gates.

On one unfortunate day he kept Marshal Daendels waiting in the outer court for an hour beyond the time appointed for an interview, while the sul-

tan and his women made merry, and the gamelan sounded gaily from the Water Kastel's galleries. Daendels, growing weary, suddenly pushed through the retainers to the mouth of the tunnel, and appeared to the dallying sultan in the Water Kastel without announcement or further ceremony, and with still less ceremony seized the sultan by the arm and led him back to Dutch headquarters, where the interview took place. Another version of this Water Kastel tradition describes the mad marshal as making a dash down terraces and staircases to a water-pavilion sunk deep in foliage at the edge of a tank, where, in a shady cellar of a sleeping-room, shielded and cooled by a water curtain falling in front of it, he dragged the sultan from his bed, and carried him off to headquarters. The *opas* and the chattering old guardian, who led us about the Kastel's labyrinths, plunged into the green gloom of a long, mossy staircase that led to the platform on which the sultan's sleeping-room opened, to show us the "unlucky bed" and prove by it their particular or favored version of the irruption of Marshal Daendels. The bedstead or couch is an elaborately carved affair, and must once have been the chief ornament of this cool cave-like retreat; but in the reek and gloom of the late afternoon this water boudoir seemed too suggestive of rheumatism, malaria, and snakes by wholesale to invite one to linger, or to suggest repose on the "unlucky bed," which insures an early death to the one who touches it.

Another water-chamber was provided in the Sumoor Gamelan ("Musical Spring"), a deep circular well or tank near the ruined banquet-hall, with vaulted cham-

bers opening around it—just such echoing places of green twilight, where it must be cool on the hottest noonday, as one may see in the old palaces at Lucknow, Futtehpore Sikri, and Ahmedabad, in the fatherland whence the ruling princes of Java came. There is, too, a great oval tank with beautiful walls, parapets, and pavilions, well worthy of a Hindu palace; and in this secluded place there lived for many decades a sacred white or dingy yellow turtle with red eyes, an albino to whom the people made offerings and paid homage. The Taman Sarie has great fascination for one, and at sunset something of romance seems to linger in the old gardens and grottoes, the picturesque courtyards and galleries; and one could imagine scores of legends and harem's mysteries belonging there—that anything and everything had happened there by that lake that burns a rose-red when the palms are silhouetted against the high sunset sky. A group of children played hide-and-seek about the once august court, supple, nimble little bronze fauns, with the carefully folded kerchiefs on their heads their only garments—kerchiefs that they arrange with the greatest care and deliberation many times a day, holding the ends of the cloth with agile toes while they pat and crease and coax the fine folds into the prescribed order of good form. These children dashed through the shrubberies, leaped balusters and walls as lightly and easily as wild creatures, and ran up tall trees like squirrels, to gather tasseled orchids and some strange blue flowers that we pointed to with suggestive coppers, and they hailed us as old friends when we came again.

There were delightful drives to be taken in and around Djokja in the cool of the afternoon, the tamarind- and waringen-shaded streets leading to bowery suburbs, that gave wider views out over the fertile plain with the winding Oepak River, or toward the beautiful blue mountain cones that slumbered to northward. There were always the most decorative palm-trees in the right place to outline themselves against the rosy sunset sky, and the drives back to the hotel through the quick twilight and sudden darkness gave many views into lamp-lighted huts and houses—genre pictures of native life, Dutch-Indies interiors, where candle-light or firelight illuminated family groups and women at their homely occupations, that should inspire a new, a tropical school of Dutch painters. The graves of the old Hindu princes of Mataram crown a beautiful wooded hill south of the city near the sea-shore, and are still worshiped and garlanded by their people.

Through our now near friend, august patron, and protector, the kindly assistant resident, we received word at sunrise that the independent Prince Pakoe Alam V (“Axis of the Universe”) and his family would graciously receive us the next morning at nine o’clock; and that meanwhile our patronage was invited for a topeng, or lyric dance, to be given by Prince Pakoe Alam’s palace troupe on that evening for the benefit of the widows and orphans of the soldiers killed in the Lombok war. This Lombok war had been brought to a close that week by the capture of the treacherous Balinese sultan who had so tyrannized over the Sassaks, and was then on his way to be paraded



TYING THE TURBAN.

with the victorious soldiers before the governor-general in a grand triumph or review at Batavia.

I had a long, quiet afternoon at the Hotel Toegoe to give again to the enormous folios of Wilsen's drawings of Boro Boedor, while my companions napped, the palm-branches hung motionless in the garden, and only a few barefooted servants moved without sound—that deathly silence of tropic afternoon life that is sometimes a boon, and sometimes an exasperation and irritation to one accustomed to doing his sleeping by dark and not turning day into night. Finally the pale skeleton of an invalid, who was my next neighbor on the long porch, lifted his pitiful voice, and was helped out to his chair, and then our imperturbable Amat stirred from his leisured sleep on the flags beyond, meditated for a while, twisted his kerchief turban anew, disappeared, and returned with the tea-tray, silent, impassive, and automatic, as if under some spell. A graceful little woman peddler came to the porch's edge—a pretty, gentle creature with dark, starry Hindu eyes, clear-cut features, even little white teeth, and crinkly hair. It was delight enough to watch this pretty creature's flash of eyes and teeth, and her manners were most beguiling as she proffered her sarongs—intricately figured batteks from Cheribon and Solo, silk plaided ones from Singapore, and those of Borneo shot through with glittering threads. Nothing could have been more graceful and charming than the naïve appeals of the little peddler woman, and nothing could have presented more extreme and unfortunate contrast than to have the sockless and waistless young Dutch matron of the opposite portico step down and

run to the garden gate at sound of a military band. Few women since Atalanta's time have been able to run gracefully; and this thick-ankled young matron, with her flapping mule slippers, scant sarong, and shapeless jacket, outdid all descriptions and caricatures of "the woman who runs." A friendly cavalier in gaudy battek pajamas, who had been talking to the lady, and blowing clouds of pipe-smoke into her face the while, gaily danced an elephantine fandango as the band went sounding down the street to give its sunset concert in the park.

When tea was taken to the lady's porch after this divertisement, she took a banana to the edge, and called, "Peter! Peter!" There was a rustle and crash of boughs overhead, and a great ape, nearly the size of a man, swung from one tree-branch to another, snatched the banana, and bounded back into the tree, where it peered cunningly at us while he ate. After that every rustle in the shrubbery made us jump; we kept umbrellas at hand for defense, and made solemn compact that no one of us should be left asleep unguarded while doors and windows were open to this dreadful reminder of "The Murders in the Rue Morgue."