



P & O. S. N. Co.

Oct 24, 37

S.S. Carriage
Sunday on the China Sea

Dear Annie -

Quite unintentionally my stay in Tokyo developed or rather lingered into a month. My Polish journalist friend Aleksander Janča had been urgently telegraphed to me in Kyoto to come on and meet the brilliant young Indian dancer Ram Gopal. As this seemed to be very much in my line, I succumbed and have spent the month in a little semi foreign Tokyo house built, as most of them like a packing case rattling and creaking like one every time there was an earthquake of which there were at least a half dozen. Ram Gopal, age 20, favorite dancer of the Maharaja of Mysore, trained as a temple dancer since the age of eight, in Malabar, and unexpectedly speaking most beautiful English turned out to be as delightful a person as he is a genius at dancing. He is going shortly to Hollywood and I am sure will be a sensational success in America - even outshining Shankar. For my work he would have been an inexhaustible source of inspiration, but, although he was staying in the same house most of the while I was there, our sittings were continuously interrupted due to (what seemed to me) trivial matters

such as business illness etc. that I was able to achieve only a few worthwhile studies. There in my life have I felt such unbearable frustration, to be so close to the possibility of doing something outstanding and having it slip thru my fingers. However I do feel that I was already being enveloped by the atmosphere of India, tho actually in the very heart of most modern Japan. Ram Gopal of course knows James Cousins (their paths had crossed again only a few months ago in Java where J.C. was travelling with the Maharaja of Travancore) and numerous other people whom I expect to meet in Madras Bangalore Mysore & elsewhere. Two portrait commissions I did accomplish in Tokyo, one of Mrs Tyon daughter of the American Ambassador Grew another of a Mme Kwaitkowska wife of the Polish Consul in Harbin.

Also the seasons changed rapidly from broiling heat of Summer to bitter dark cold mists of Winter, which for me was welcome as it helped rid me of the amoeba which I had picked up in Peking. However Tokyo has none of the charm of Kyoto where I was glad to return if for only a few hours on Oct 22, on my way to Utsunomiya. The Shosoin the great Imperial Treasure was opened for 5 days Oct 22 to 27 to a limited number of visitors & I was lucky enough to get a card, see this unique



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collection of 8th century objects (which have been sealed up ever since that time) most of which were imported from China or perhaps even Persia or Parthia at that early period. The same evening I boarded the "Carthage" in Kobe from where we sailed the morning of the 23rd. I have booked passage only to Singapore still undecided whether to change ships there & hasten directly to Madras or take a longer time via Colombo. In Hongkong I will meet an Indian friend who will decide for me.

From Kyoto I mailed to you a package containing ^{one} embroidery, ^{one} brocade, one Chinese one Japanese which I hope you will tell me, arrive safely. Also from Tokyo I sent in my N.Y. Life Insurance premium, but the stupid servant failed to register the letter, so you may get inquiries from the company. I don't know if excuses are accepted for delayed payments.

This ship is practically deserted, only eight second class passengers with accommodations for

several hundred. We don't stop in Shanghai at all, making the Kobe-Hongkong run in four days, so having three days in port there. But having hesitated ten years to set out on this Indian expedition I am now more than impatient to be in the midst of it.

One day before leaving Kyoto, I went to the Ise Shrine at Yamado on the sea-coast where the Sun Goddess gave birth to the first Japanese Emperor, then on to Mikimoto's pearl farm. There each person in our party was presented with four pearl oysters, mine containing two quite large pearls and two small ones. However they are not of great value, as Mikimoto has cultivated so many of them that they are almost a drug on the market. And all my illusions of the romance of pearl divers was destroyed. They were bowlegged women in ill fitting cotton suits and glass masks who swam about a concrete dock in about six feet of water, whistled turned upside down and picked up the muddy oysters as if they were gathering vegetables!

Let's hope there's more glamour to the jewels of Colombo.

As always

Scho.

c/o Thomas Cook & Son
Colombo, Ceylon