MALAYA

M. E. Goldsworthy. Singapore, 28th June 1956

MALAYA

Text by

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Collecting the catch from the purse of a shore seine at Penarik, on the Trengganu coast

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MALAYA

YESTERDAY

Pulau Pinang bandar-nya baharu,
Kapitan Light menjadi shahbandar.
Jangan di kenang zaman dahulu,
dudok mengalir ayer mata.

On Penang's isle the town is new
When Captain Light was harbour-master
Pass not the old times in review
Lest welling tears but flow the faster.

* * * * *

TODAY

Pulau Sembilan tinggal delapan
Satu merajok ka Kuala Kedah.
Sudah-lah nasib perminta badan,
Kita di-bawah perentah Allah.

Of the nine Isles eight remain
One has sulked away to Kedah.
Fate, alas, does life ordain,
We are neath the will of Allah.

* * * * *

TOMORROW

Pileh, pileh tempat mandi,
Esa telok kedua pantai.
Pileh, pileh tempat menjadi,
Esa elok kedua pandai.

Choose well the spot where you would lave,
First a bay and then a strand.
Choose well the country that you crave
Here's a green and pleasant land.

Translations after A. W. Hamilton.

A Malay child, Kuala Trengganu

The mountains of the main range from the Cameron Highlands Road

Introduction

MALAYA is a land of such exquisite charm that the dull details of its geography should be recorded with no more fullness than is absolutely necessary. It is equal in size to England without Wales. Its temperature varies little, the average maximum being 86° F. and the average minimum, 75°. It is the ridge of hills continuing the isthmus shared by Burma and Siam, that thrusts out from ten degrees north of the equator to run for nine degrees, 550 miles, between the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea. An annual rainfall of 100 inches well distributed throughout the year induces the rank luxuriance of tropical rainforests. In the course of the centuries this tropical rain has washed down enough of the hills to foot them with broad level plains in which Malaya grows its coconuts and pineapples, its vegetables, its spices, its rice and rubber. The climate is hot and humid with little seasonal variation.

Rice-fields near Bukit Mertajam, Province Wellesley

Along this ridge, the ancestors of the Australian aborigines and the Papuans, came down about 6000 B.C. on their way to their present homes. About 4,000 years later the forefathers of the Malays made their way from Yunnan to Malaya, Sumatra, Java and beyond. When India and Funan had learned the art of constructing ocean-going ships, the Buddhist empire of Sri Vijaya controlled the Straits of Malacca by a post in the north of the Peninsula and a second at Palembang in Sumatra, a mediæval 'John Company' that invented the Malay language. This empire levied toll on ships passing between India and China. It was overthrown in the fourteenth century by the Javanese empire of Majapahit. Fugitives of the old Sri Vijaya empire fled to Malacca, where, in A.D. 1403, they established a fort that prospered amazingly. *Sējaru Mēlayu*, the Malay Annals, the most notable book in the rather short catena of Malay literature, describes the rise of the town, its relative peace, its palace intrigues, its wealth and its organization which zoned Chinese and Indian merchants, and its huddle of houses, so great that 'a cat took a whole year to complete the circuit of the roofs'.

The restless expansion of sixteenth century Portugal had meanwhile founded colonies in India, whence in 1509 an expedition under Sequira was

despatched to Malacca. Its failure was followed by a successful attack by Alfonso D'Albuquerque two years later, from which Portugal was able to monopolize the spice trade. Fifty years later the Dutch in similar pursuit of trade and empire secured a footing in Batavia, and a long-drawn struggle began between the two powers. After repeated assaults, and a gallant resistance crippled by lack of reinforcements, the Portuguese finally capitulated in 1641. Under Dutch rule Malacca was eclipsed by Batavia, and little interest was taken in the Malayan hinterland. In 1785 Francis Light, in the service of the East India Company, leased Penang from the Sultan of Kedah, and shortly afterwards added the strip of mainland opposite the island, re-naming it Province Wellesley. At the end of the century, Malacca, through a series of intricate diplomatic adjustments during the Napoleonic wars, was transferred to Britain.

In 1819 Sir Stamford Raffles founded Singapore. It was a barren land occupied by pirates of so ruthless a character that 'not only ships, but the very devils of hell, feared to pass by it.' An island recognised as a key position even by pirates appealed to Raffles's ambition to establish a free port where all could trade in peace and order. The British came, not as conquerors conscious of a great mission with high-sounding titles like Viceroy and Commander-in-Chief, but as traders. Their officials were servants of the East India Company and were given the business-like names of chief-secretary and under-secretary. They desired above all things a small secure area where a factory could be built and where the ordinary exchange and mart of commerce would supersede the classical Roman economy. The port

grew rapidly and has shown an energy and adaptability that survive the changes of more than a century. Starting with spices, switching to coffee, tapioca, gums, gambier, rotans and pineapples, and then adding tin and rubber, it has finally settled down as one of the ten great ports of the world.

Where the Portuguese had come as viceroys, regents, missionaries and conquerors, the British came as merchants. Their object was trade, their economic principal *laissez-faire*, with no more interference with local culture and custom than was consistent with the maintenance of law and order. The ports were made 'free', in brave defiance of the tradition that had hitherto made Eastern trade a jealous monopoly. Raffles drew from Burke the idea that colonies were held in trust, and that the welfare of the inhabitants was a major concern of the governing power. While therefore pursuing and encouraging trade to his utmost capacity, he cultivated the closest relations with the people of the country, became an authority on the language, customs, flora and fauna of Malaya and encouraged education by the establishment of schools. Though his stay was limited to a few years, his influence remained and remains an inspiration.

Penang, Malacca and Singapore thrived. In the Peninsula there was constant strife among the states, and, within each state there were often ruinous dynastic struggles. The discovery of rich deposits of tin in Perak and Selangor brought out wealth which incited the lawless to robbery and violence. The tin was near the surface and could be worked by open-cast methods. Rival gangs of miners and their labourers disputed with each other for possession of the mines while the local administration did little more than levy as many tolls as they could. With communications hopelessly inadequate, supervision necessarily devolved on local headmen whose abilities rarely reached further than the installation of a series of customs stations along the exit routes. Mining camps are not notoriously law-abiding and in Perak and Selangor mining camps were many and policemen few. Finally the Sultans of Perak and Selangor requested the then Governor of Singapore to send them a Resident to teach them the art of government.

Peace and prosperity marked the next fifty years. The prosperity was strengthened by agricultural advance, though liable to frequent set-backs. The spice trade declined, sugar and coffee failed and even rubber was subject to disastrous slumps in the second and third decades of the twentieth century. Malaya, in capturing a large portion of world trade was exposed to the trade cycle, and embarked on the perilous seas of restriction schemes for rubber and tin. Nevertheless it achieved and maintained the highest standard of living in Asia.

The Residential system was successfully introduced and by the end of the nineteenth century Perak, Selangor, the Negri Sembilan and Pahang had formed themselves into a federation. Johore remained aloof but accepted a British Adviser in 1914. Kedah, Kelantan, Trengganu, and Perlis came under British protection in 1909. The Peninsula was occupied by the Japanese from 1942 to 1945. Cut off from the rest of the world Malaya saw the hard austerities of autarchy, and lessened considerably though they were by the large stock-pile that had been heaped up in anticipation of war-shortages, suffering and hardship were wantonly acute. The Malayan Union which had been planned *in vacuo*, lasted only from 1946 to 1948 when it was succeeded by the present Federation of Malaya. Singapore became a Crown Colony with its own administration.

A full history of Malaya has yet to be written and until the erudition of a Stubbs is united with the imagination of a Toynbee, the history will remain a bewildering chronicle of petty states and pettier chieftains. Prehistory is still obscure and even the approximate dates of the stone-age are conjectural. The country should be seen rather than read. All of it is green, green grading from the pellucid shade of young rice or the dull olive of rubber, or the yellowish hue of coconut palms, to the infinite variety of tints in the forest. The land is always green, and three-quarters of it is forest so thick and dense that visibility inside is never more than thirty yards. This impenetrable jungle defied human occupation until tin and rubber attracted an abundance of labour and capital.

Before the tyres of the motor car called hundreds of thousands of acres of rubber

plantation into being, all transport in Malaya was by river. In 1870 there was not a single mile of road in the Malay States. Here and there a little colony of Malays had made holes in the jungle and planted their rice-fields and formed their kampongs in a valley, waging an unending war against its return. The more enterprising fished or went off into the jungle and came back with a harvest of rotans or ivory or gums. It was not till the latter part of the nineteenth century that tin was mined on a large scale and that estates of coffee and coconuts were superseded by rubber. Labour for the development of these industries was imported from India and China. Foreign capital was attracted. Roads were opened up, a railway laid, and land communications established between the states.

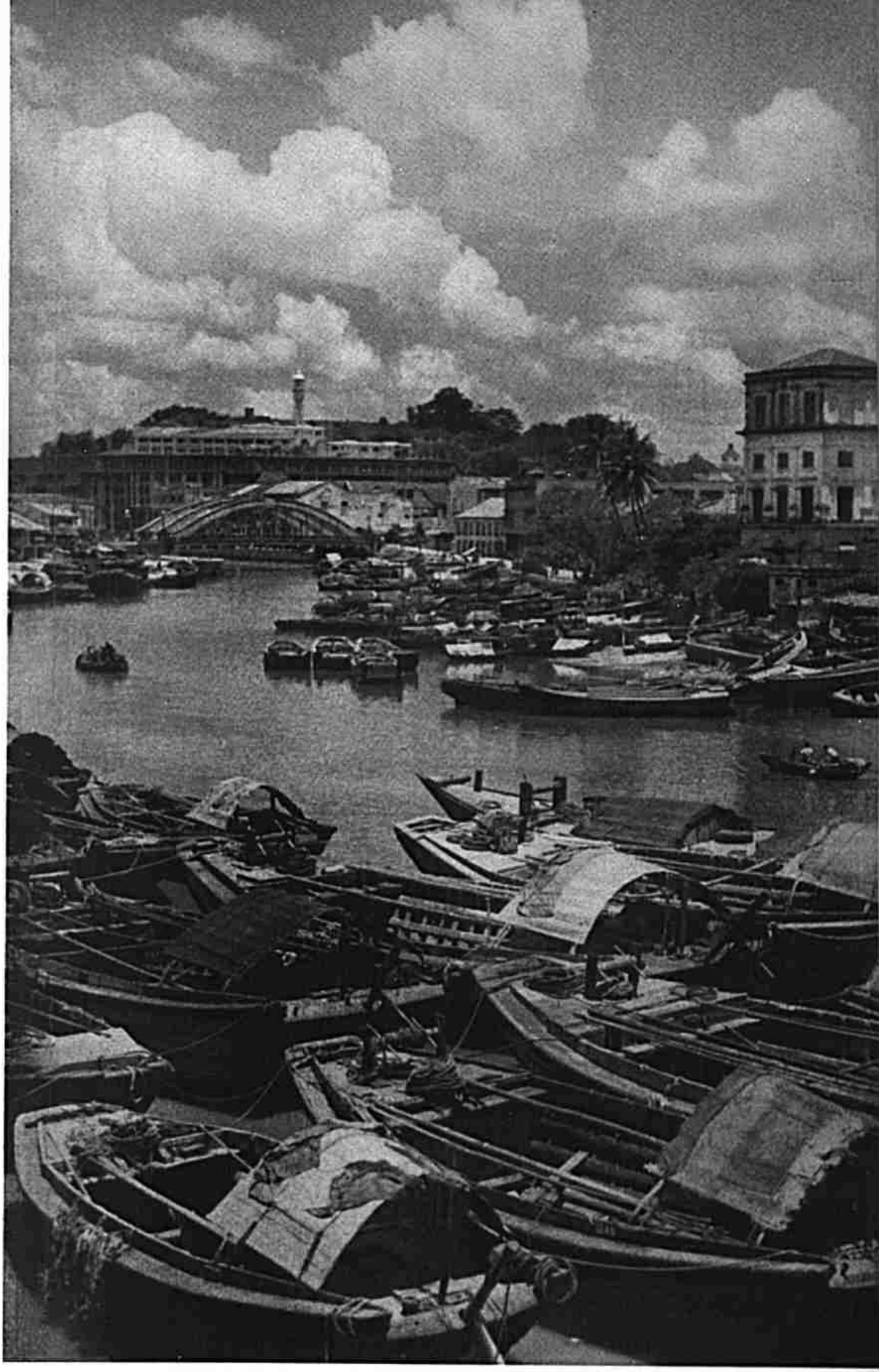
Such introductions of labour have, as always, produced profound social and moral changes. Taking the two Malayan territories together, the Malays are now outnumbered by the Chinese and amount to only three-sevenths of the population. Accustomed for centuries to the easy-going life of the kampong, they have been thrown into the complexities of international trade with its unintelligible cycle of boom and slump. Jostled and elbowed by the hard-working immigrant toughened in the struggle of the survival of the fittest, they see themselves in danger of being overwhelmed, and are acquiring political consciousness.

But Malaya has a sickness which must be cured. It has not yet found itself. All but a fractional part of its population are Asians who have for centuries based their unit of society on something small, the family, the clan, the village. There never was any great loyalty to the state as an abstract idea, and now the state has become very large and complex. The territory has been unified, the hearts and minds of the people have not. They have been bidden to cherish an undivided loyalty to an entity that their experience makes almost incomprehensible. Malaya has acquired wealth, but has not found a soul, or a common patriotism, or common standards of value. The most pressing of all Malaya's problems is how to make men feel themselves fellow-citizens and brothers in God.

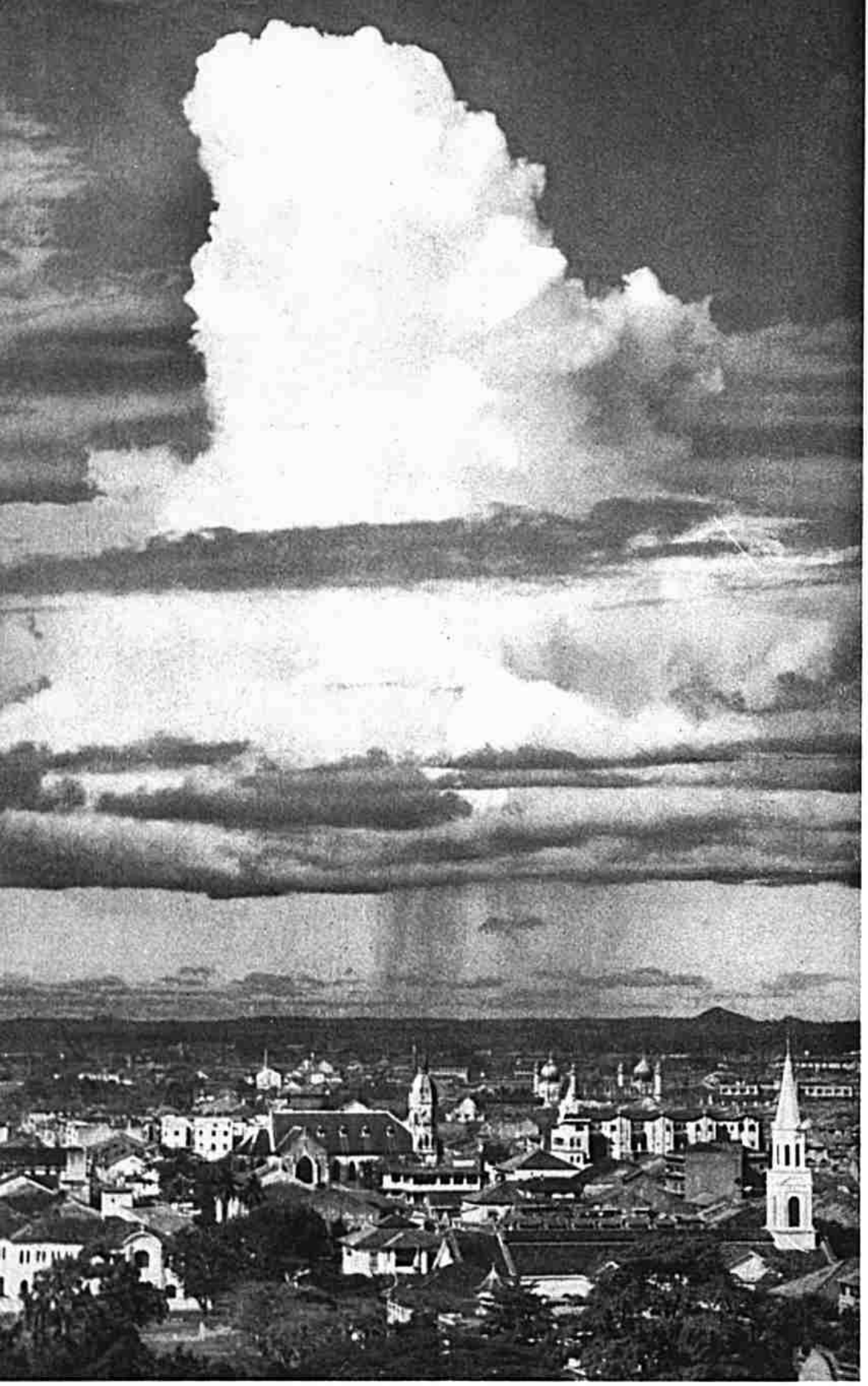
The Singapore water front at dawn

Singapore

THOUGH it lies at one of the world's focal points for trade, the strategic value of Singapore was not fully realized till Sir Stamford Raffles, a servant of the East India Company, concluded a treaty with its nominal suzerain, the Tengku Hussein, and obtained possession of it in 1819. On the 28th of January of that year Raffles, accompanied by a Major Farquhar and a sepoy, rowed up river towards twenty Malay huts. He landed, met the Temenggong and opened negotiations for the building of Singapore. He regarded it as of more value for Britain than a continent. 'What Malta is in the West, Singapore may become in the East.' The *mens provida* of Raffles may have noted the George Cross of Malta and the fall of Malaya with interest. This small island of Singapore, 27 miles long and 14 miles wide, separated from the southernmost tip of the land mass of Asia by a narrow quarter mile strait, was the political child of Raffles. On it he wrote: 'Free trade, peace, and the law and order of England'.



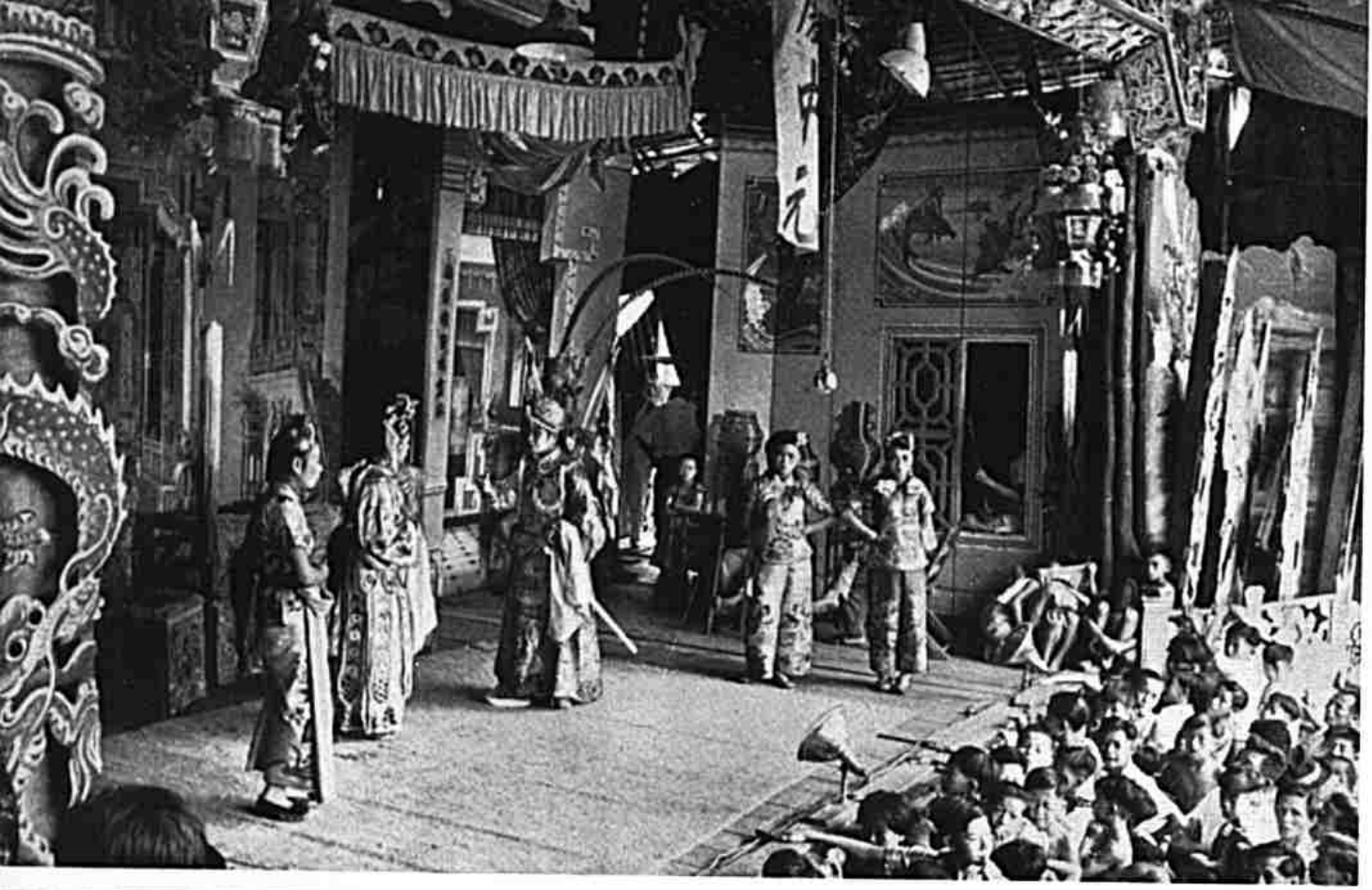
The Singapore River



Rain clouds breaking over Singapore

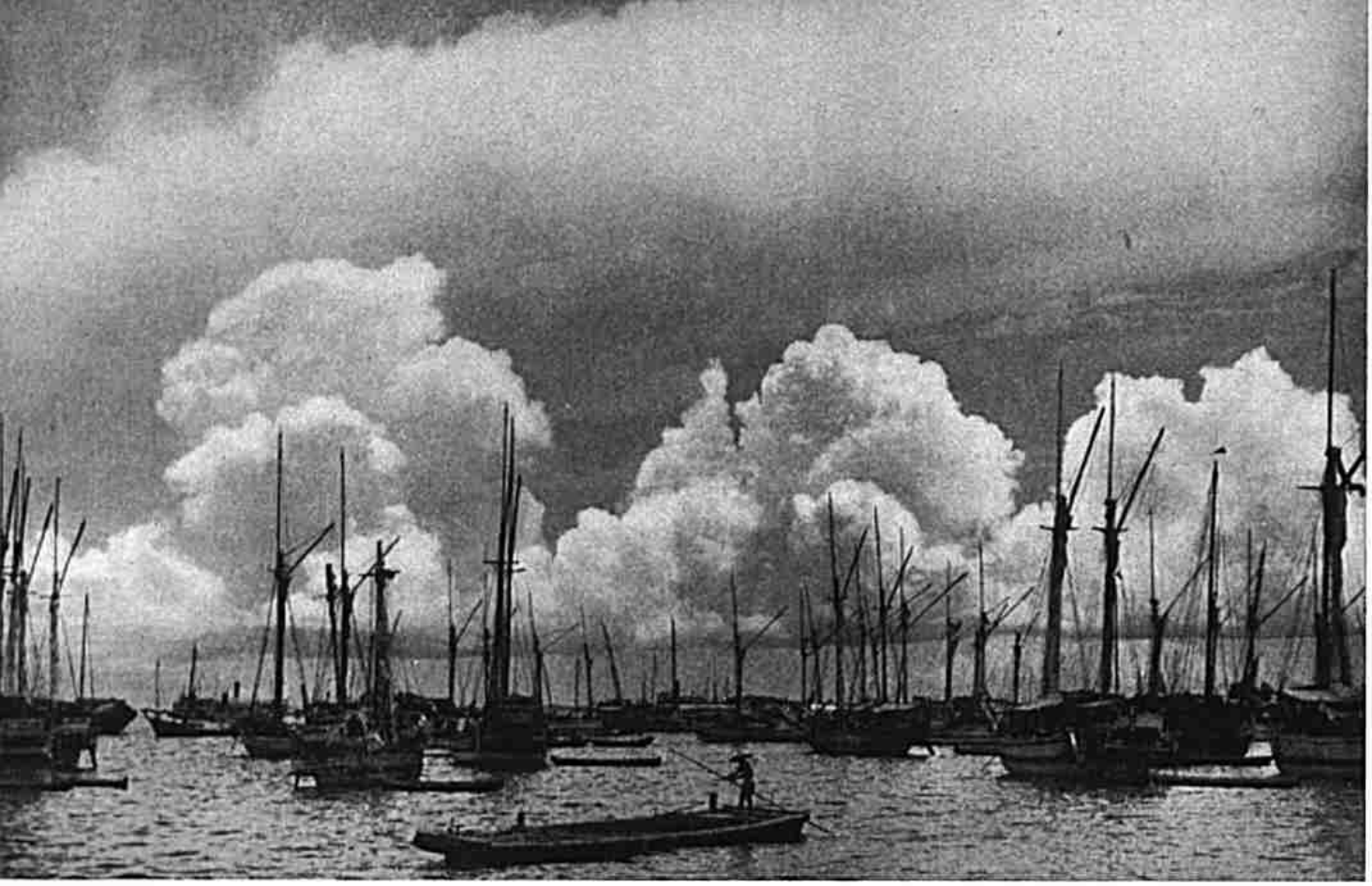
The beach at Bedok village, on the east coast of Singapore Island

In little more than a century Singapore has joined the select circle of towns with more than a million inhabitants. A prosperous present frequently prompts a hunt for a respectably ancestral past, and though the town's motto is *Maju-lah Singapura*, the careful researches of the 'Friends of Singapore' zealously seek and preserve any ancient relic that may be unearthed; the treasure trove is scant, and it must be admitted that the early history of Singapore is, until the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, almost wholly obscure. A junior engineer, annoyed by a large block of stone that was an obstacle to one of his schemes, blew it up and used it as road metal. It was covered with inscriptions and might have been as illuminating as the Rosetta stone. Similar vandalism had been perpetrated not long before when the British took over Malacca and blew up the Fort. There are early graves of doubtful antiquity but any precision is woefully lacking. Peopled from Sumatra, Singapore was sacked by the Javanese empire of Majapahit; its refugees fled to Malacca leaving it desolate for centuries and uninhabited except for pirates.



Above, a performance at a Chinese open-air Theatre in the Beach Road market. Left, a Taoist priest in a funeral ritual dance

The Chinese section of Singapore. Telok Ayer Street (above), and Boon Tat Street (below)



Local trading craft of the Java and South China Seas. Bugis schooners, built in southern Celebes, and Hylam junks from China (below), lying in the Singapore roads

Phenomenal growth came in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Nature had stacked the cards against Singapore. It is built on a mud bank, and has had to triumph over natural handicaps of swamp and malaria. Free-trade provided the opportunity, *laissez-faire* demanded efficiency and sanctioned the haphazard, unplanned growth. Narrow streets ran hither and yon, houses were built back to back, open spaces for recreation were conspicuously absent. The brooding spirit of Raffles must be disquieted at the jostling of wealth and poverty, squalor and magnificence. But Singapore has always cherished a good conceit of itself, and the able men who had made their fortune in its trade, devoted much service to its health.

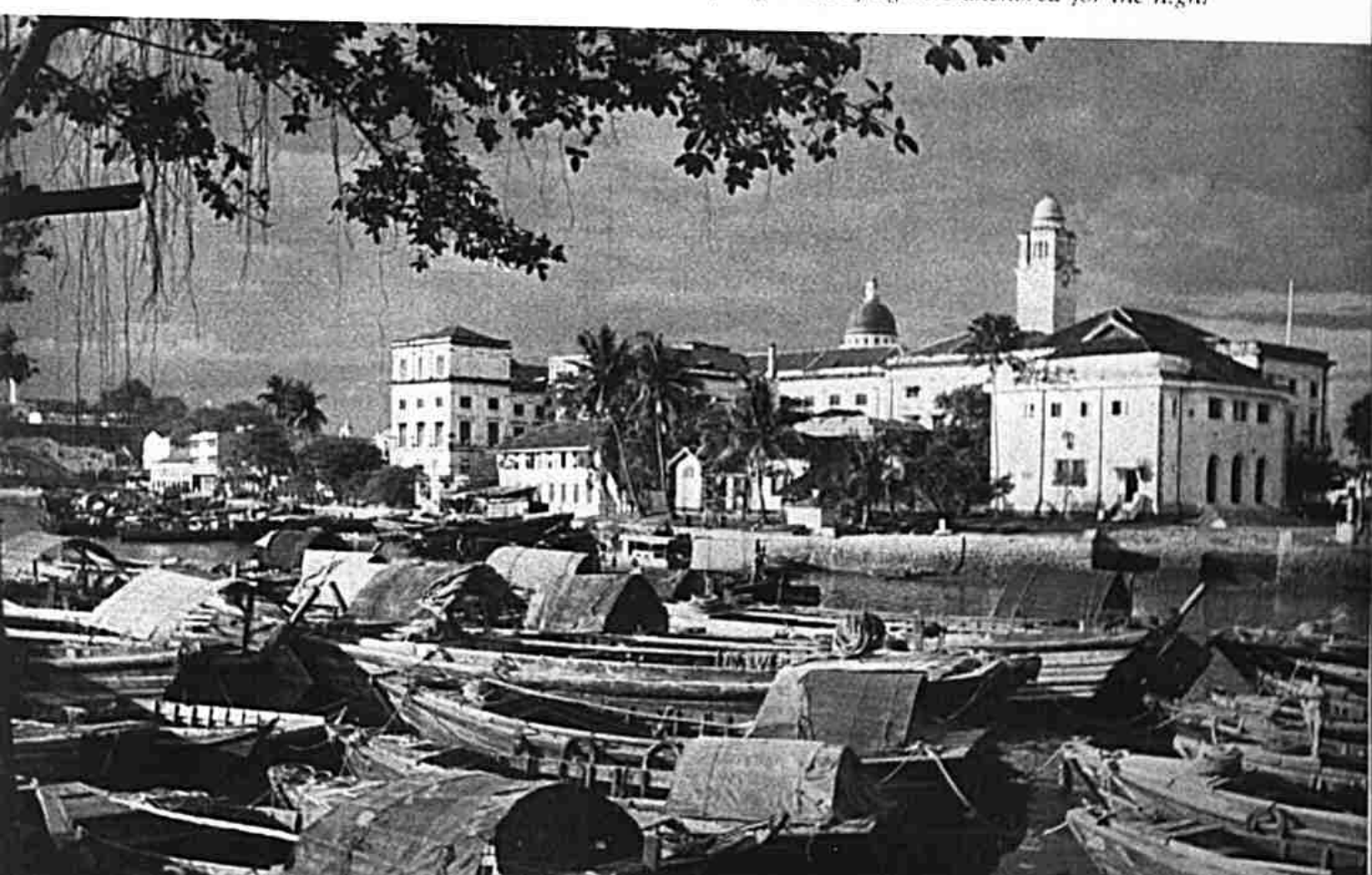
The history of the harbour curiously reflects the tensions and alliances between private interest and public good. The provision of wharves for landing or shipping cargo, and of facilities for ship repairs were in the hands of private companies during the nineteenth century. In the early years of the twentieth the Singapore Harbour Board was established. This is a corporation in which the public wharves and dry docks are vested. The board consists of a chairman, and five to ten other members among whom are representatives of Government, and

Madurese trading boats lying off the Singapore water front

Albizzia trees along the Bukit Timah Road

business men with large interests in the use of the facilities it offers. The board makes its by-laws and levies its charges subject to the approval of the Governor in Council. The port is efficient and presents an example of successful nationalisation. On its liberation from the Japanese on 5th September, 1945, the port was an empty shell. Enemy and allied air-raids had destroyed 70 per cent of the godowns, and had done much damage to the ship-repair yards. The Japanese had made no attempt at any form of reconstruction, and had not even undertaken maintenance dredging work. Roads, tracks, quay-surfaces and plant were in a deplorable state. Cargo berths and dry-docks were cluttered with silt and sunken craft. Cranes, railway stock, tugs, lighters and machinery had been moved irrecoverably by the light-fingered Japanese. The labour was emaciated and in rags. Law and order in the area were unknown. By the end of 1947 the port had overcome its difficulties. Morale in the labour force had been renewed, plant replaced, and a volume of traffic poured out in quantities rarely exceeded in the port's history. In that year imports were £122,033,000, and exports £94,967,000, and the figures have increased yearly. The port was the first target of openly militant Communism which adopted naked violence in the middle of 1948. Singapore fell to the Japanese because its supplies were cut, and it was unprotected from sea and air attack. The Communist attack

Singapore. The Supreme Court and Municipal Building (above), and the Secretariat Building from across the Singapore River (below), with a foreground of lighters anchored for the night



The fishing village on Pulau Sudong, off Singapore

with no such advantages was met. The story of the Harbour Board is emphasised because it is true to type in Singapore history.

Singapore's growth was luxuriant and even rank, but agencies arose which pruned the fouler weeds. Its vital statistics show that it is the healthiest port in the East. The Improvement Trust builds model dwellings and is doing what it can to remove slums. In the early days land was given out in perpetuity, but the growing importance of the town made it possible to stop this rash generosity and to grant land on a 99-year lease. Many such leases are now falling in and the Town Planner in his desperate need of slum clearance and of open spaces will profit largely. The Government, for its part, provides a library, a museum, schools, hospitals, a Social Welfare Department, and the other necessities of a modern town. For long Singapore was artistically backward and suffered the reputation of being the 'showman's grave'. This stigma of æsthetic illiteracy is being gradually removed and a number of cultural societies are educating public taste, in part with considerable success, particularly in the sphere of the fine arts. The appreciation, and now the making, of music are also flourishing.

The population of Singapore amounts to 1,000,000, the great majority (78 per cent) of whom are Chinese. Other races are Malaysian 12 per cent, and Indian 8 per cent, while Eurasians, Europeans, Arabs, Jews, Philippinos, Sinhalese, and many others complete this most plural community. Allowing for the normal post-war crime waves, the population is law-abiding.

The temper of Singapore is robust and confident. Geography has endowed it handsomely with the possibilities of a vast entrepôt trade. Industry has realised the possibilities, and capital has added the benefits that accrue from a financial and commercial centre. Elaborate plans emerging from the chrysalis of blue-prints are already providing more schools, more health services, a modern air-port, and greater industrialization.

Critics asseverate that Singapore lacks character. The charge touches a tender spot and the city now takes solicitous care of its few monuments, and its few open spaces, tries to beautify its gardens and preserves its little remaining jungle at Bukit Timah. It was granted a city charter on 22nd September, 1951, and duly celebrated the occasion, for a day. Scores of thousands attended the various ceremonies and gave proof of that local patriotism and civic pride which will be the most influential factor in making Malaya one in mind and heart.

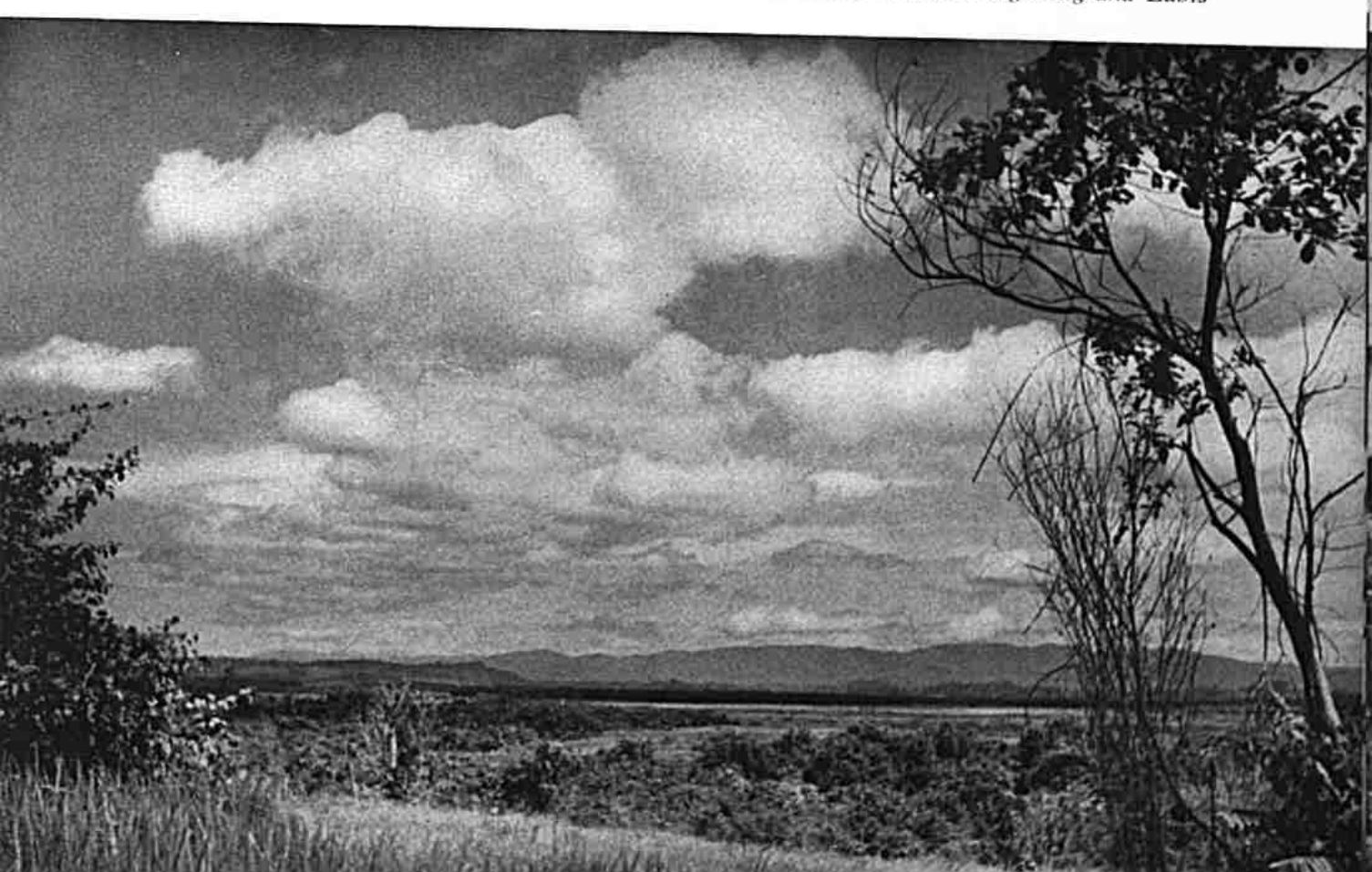
The Singapore River front from Fort Canning

Johore Bahru from the causeway over the Johore Strait

Johore

JOHORE alone among the Malay States has a coastline on the China Sea and the Straits of Malacca. The high mountain range of the peninsula flattens at the north boundary of Johore and the country is relatively level. Internal communication therefore presents fewer difficulties and development has proceeded faster than in the other states. The soil, apart from a very rich patch of volcanic origin round Buloh Kasap, was never very fertile, and a series of croppings of gambir, tapioca and coffee, have further impoverished it. The country has overcome its handicap by its favourable internal communications, by its proximity to the port and market of Singapore, and by two outstanding sultans. Always practical and thrifty, the administration created its own government service which improvised new methods as the need arose, and which has brought

Landscapes in central Johore. Above, a section of the main trunk road between Kulai and Ayer Hitam. Below, a view over open country from the same road between Yong Peng and Labis



Rivers in western Johore. Above, the Muar River at Bandar Maharani (Muar). Below, the Simpang Kiri at Parit Sulong; the Simpang Kiri is one of the two tributaries which form the river emptying into the Malacca Strait at Bandar Penggaram (Batu Pahat)

out many able men. The native-born Malay is in a minority in Johore, but he has never been squeezed out of the trade and agriculture of the country. The ferry services on the Batu Pahat and Muar rivers are both owned and operated by a Malay company.

The conquest of Malacca in 1511 drove the famous Bendahara Tepoh to sanctuary in Johore. He was buried in Segamat and his followers established a flourishing community there extending to Labis and Tenang where they carried on the tradition of planting rice, a crop that elsewhere in the state has not been vigourously worked. Johore has always avoided monoculture and endeavoured to build its economy on a wide foundation. In addition to rubber, it exports patchouli oil and has extensive areas under African oil palm. Its coastal belt carries many coconuts grown chiefly by immigrant Indonesians; and the pine-apple industry is being successfully revived. Before the war, Japanese worked iron in Batu Pahat, and there are tin mines in Jemaluang and Kota Tinggi. Prospects of an export trade in bauxite are favourable.

Johore has always steered a middle course between the rigidities of a planned economy and the recklessness of *laissez-faire*. It has grown as the natural expansion of a group of small holdings, increased, and acquired schools and roads. Communications in Johore are excellent. The two main roads from Johore Bahru northwards are magnificently designed and surfaced. The shorter road runs to Pontian Kechil and thence along the coast through Batu Pahat and Muar to Malacca, but it has to cross two rivers which are unbridged and where the delay at

Two guests at a Malay wedding, South Johore

Tapping a rubber tree

the ferries can be prolonged. The slightly longer route runs through Ayer Hitam, Yong Peng, Labis, and Segamat to Gemas where it joins the Feninsula Trunk Road. Another road runs easterly and northerly to Kota Tinggi and Mersing. The two chief lateral roads join Segamat, Jementah and Muar (Bandar Maharani) and further south Mersing, Kluang, Ayer Hitam and Batu Pahat (Bandar Penggaram). The railway runs north-westerly almost bisecting the state. Along these roads and the railway plantation rubber is grown but the small-holder has never been elbowed out and driven to the remoter and less accessible districts. Its long coastline encouraged the fishing industry and its ports at Muar and Batu Pahat do considerable trade with Indonesia.

The fauna of the country has been carefully preserved. Seladang, elephant, tiger, rhinoceros, tapir, the sambhur and barking deer, are less in danger of extinction here than in any area apart from the King George V National Park. In the undisturbed jungle where this wild-life can flourish, the aboriginal Jakuns can progress at the slow rate to which their capacity limits them, and

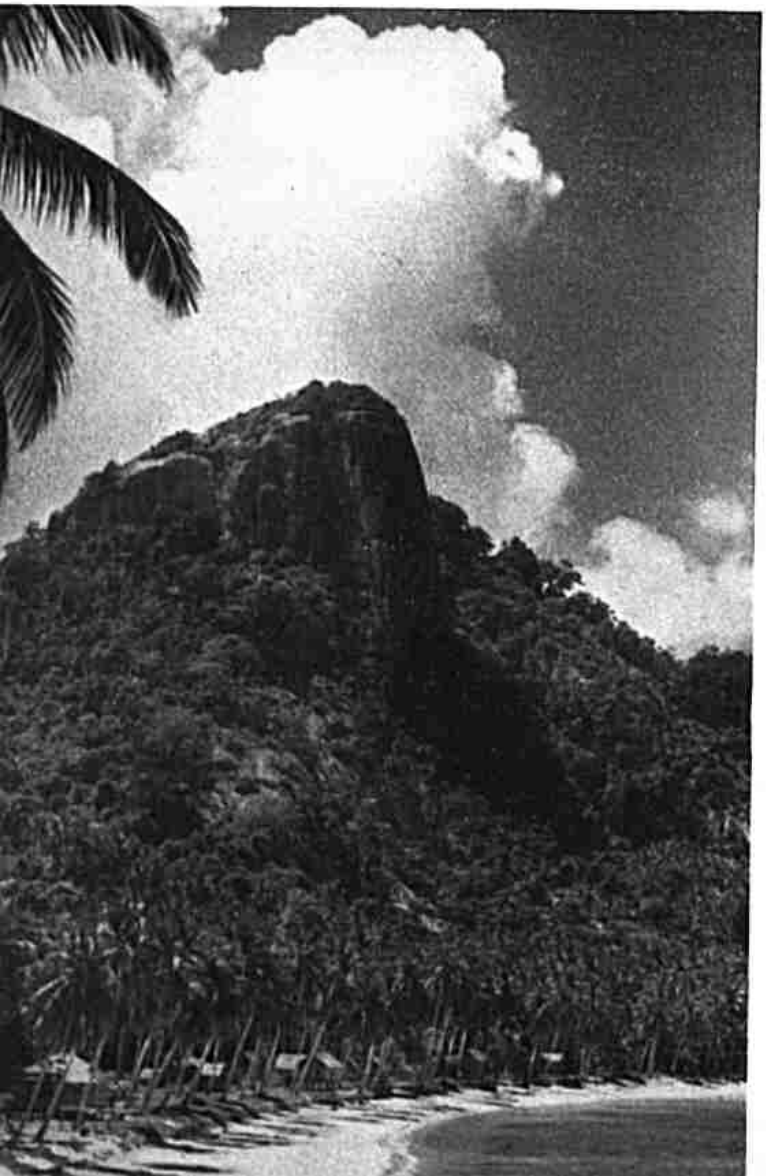
can be saved from the dangers to which the sudden impact of a higher civilisation exposes such primitive people.

Much of the country is low-lying and swampy. The Buloh Kasap swamp through which the Malayan Railway runs proved one of most heart-breaking obstacles for the railway engineers to overcome. If rain is more than ordinarily heavy the roads and track are liable to flood.

These are the minor discomforts in a state of great promise. A vast reserve of land exists for padi-planting at Endau and can be worked when pressure of population compels. Vital as food production is in every national economy there is a particular difficulty in Malaya. Padi-planting, while it supplies food to the grower and his family, has the handicap of being far less profitable than rubber. Rice grows in swamps that cannot support rubber and other trees, and the land is always available for rice and rice alone. But there must be an inhibiting reluctance in the decision of a benevolent government to exercise pressure to compel the planting of a crop which, however valuable in the national economy, yields to the private grower less reward for more effort than rubber. Government therefore attempts to redress the balance by imposing nominal rents on padi land, giving grants for rice mills, and building irrigation schemes, while it taxes rubber 'as much as the industry can bear'. Nevertheless padi-planting is poorly paid and laborious work, though it is possible that mechanisation may reduce some of the labour and that animal husbandry may swell the planter's meagre income. Johore used to carry many herds of buffalo but the fabulous profits of rubber allowed them to dwindle. The advanced veterinary services of Johore could revive this industry. The whole of Malaya is woefully short of live stock, and the protein requirements

A Malay Special Constable

The islands of the Johore-Pahang archipelago from the mouth of the Mersing estuary at dawn. Below, to the left, the village on Pulau Pemanggil, the second largest island in the group



of the rice-eating population have to be met by imports of meat from Bali and Siam. Johore's closeness to the almost insatiable market of Singapore makes it a potential centre for stock raising. Grazing grounds could be set aside and planted with the fodder grasses that must take the place of useless lallang that covers many otherwise suitable areas. On rubber and coconuts practical experience has proved that the introduction of fodder grasses enables a more mixed farming to return a handsome profit.

When the emergency is over Mersing will have a future as a holiday resort for visitors

Tioman, part of Pahang and the largest island in the Johore-Pahang archipelago. Above, Tioman seen from the beach on Pulau Tulai, the most northerly island of any size in the group. Below, the Sungei Pasir Berus, a small river on the west side of Tioman

View on the Kota Tinggi to Mersing Road, south-east Johore

from Singapore. Muar will be a very useful port for small craft between Johore and Indonesia and in coastal trade. A satisfactory part of Johore's revenue is devoted to education and specially to trade schools. The site of the University of Malaya will, under present arrangements, ultimately be removed to Johore Bahru.

Johore Bahru, the seat of the Sultan and the administrative centre, is handsomely laid out with many fine buildings and open spaces. Situated at the apex of the pyramid the government was able readily to control the administration of the outlying districts and, in consequence of its strength, was able to delegate to them much local autonomy. This devolved responsibility evoked a local pride which included a loyalty to the state as a whole and which has made Johore wholesomely homogeneous as a state. It is proud of its written constitution; and its State Council is able to handle the problems of the modern state efficiently. This healthy confidence may have been influenced by the past. Driven out of Malacca in 1511 its Sultan, Mahmud, fled to Johore where he established a kingdom in which Johore, Pahang, Trengganu, the Karimon Islands and the

Riouw Archipelago participated and which was known as Riouw-Johore. The capital was at Kota Tinggi. But the kingdom was beset by many enemies. The ruling line degenerated and died out with the murder of the last king in 1699, and with the Anglo-Dutch Treaty of 1824 which divided the area into Dutch and English spheres of influence, Riouw-Johore disintegrated. But the last Sultan had left the Bendahara in Pahang, the Temenggong in Johore, and a third minister in Trengganu. It is from these ministers that the present Royal Houses of Pahang, Johore, and Trengganu have descended. But Johore history goes even further back, and to Gunong Ledang (Mount Ophir) still cling many legends of Hang Tuah and fairy princesses, were-tigers, magic gardens invisible to the unbelieving eye but still apparent at times to men of special gifts.

The accessibility of Johore always exposed it to the troubles of the other states whether these were due to internal strife or to foreign aggression. Johore, in, but not of, the disturbances, was a moderating influence. In the Portuguese and Dutch periods Johore trimmed successfully. The ancestors of the present Sultan helped to negotiate the sale of Singapore to Raffles, and the Dato Menteri of Johore negotiated the Pahang treaty of Clifford.

A Chinese smallholder's hut, South Johore

Early morning view from Walsh's Corner on the road from Raub to the Semangko Pass—dawn breaking over the mist-filled valleys of northern Pahang

Pahang

PAHANG, in area the largest of the Malay States, is relatively one of the least developed. Lord Lugard's remark "the material development of Africa may be summed up in the one word, transport" applies cogently to Malaya. For centuries the population of Pahang was tied to the coast or to the banks of the Jelai, the Tembeling and the Semantan which unite to form the Pahang River, and to the Rompin and the Endau. The roads are widely separated and few. The most important runs from Kuantan to Jerantut, Benta, Raub, and the Gap where it connects with the Selangor Road to Kuala Lumpur. From this main artery a branch road starting at Benta, runs to Kuala Lipis. Another goes from Kuala Lumpur by way of the Ginting Sempak over the mountain range to Bentong, thence to Karak, Mentakab, and Temerloh, with a fork to the Negri Sembilan and another fork to Raub. Pekan is linked to Kuantan by a road which follows the coast northwards to Kuala Trengganu, and continues northwards to Kota Bharu. A road long planned and much needed will link Temerloh to Maran on the Jerantut-Kuantan Road

Inland in Pahang. Above, the ferry on the Pahang River at Jerantut. Below, a smallholding in the Sungei Benus valley at the eastern approach to the Ginting Sempak

A rain storm breaking over Pulau Rawa, one of the smaller islands in the Johore-Pahang archipelago

At Gemas the trunk line of the Malayan Railway sends a branch northwards. This opens up much country in western Pahang, but development is slow and the train has been aptly called the Sakai Express. It was not finished until the 1930's. For miles the railway, a single track of metre guage, runs close to rivers and is liable to occasional damage. Lengths of it were washed away, and large bridges broken down, in the great floods of December 1926. During the Japanese occupation the rails were removed and the track was used as a road. Travelling would be more expeditious if the line could be converted permanently into a road, but the cost of widening not only the track but the bridges is beyond the reach of Malayan finances. Meanwhile the lines are being renewed and foot-travellers use the road extensively in a country where even bridle-paths are scarce.

A journey in Pahang is always rather an undertaking. Even communications by boat on the coast are much reduced during the north-east monsoon, while the rivers have rapids not easily navigable. The rivers carry some traffic but they are in the main so shallow that only small craft can use them. The Pahang River is the largest in the country. It carries an immense burden of

silt which is washed down from the steep hills by which it flows and from the mines and rubber estates. Its banks fall in and it becomes broader and shallower and so liable to overflow that the rainy periods of December and January are always a source of anxiety to the riverine mukims and to Pekan, the seat of the Sultan. Within living memory the river at Pekan was 15 to 20 feet deep, clear, and well stocked with fish. It is now only 5 or 6 feet deep, muddy and turbid, with a fish population pitifully inadequate as food for a rice-eating people who require supplies of additional protein for their diet.

The Pahang River has not only cut a new mouth during some ancient and forgotten flood, but even in the upper reaches it has sought a new course. During the 1926 floods the junction where the Jelai and the Tembeling unite to form the Pahang River was so broad that a Malay from the Ulu Tembeling could not recognise the confluence in the expanse of swirling water. A short distance further up river the Tembeling had made a new bed for itself in one reach, and in doing so exposed an interesting collection of pottery and flints that perhaps marked an early Siamese working.

The roads are long and switchback over much broken country. Occasionally, magnificent views are afforded, a particularly fine one being seen from

The State Mosque at Pekan, on the Pahang River

he village of Kampong Tanjong Lumpur, at the mouth of the Kuantan River, early in the morning

'Walsh's Corner' on the road between Raub and the Gap. Development is ribbon on roads that were originally built to be the means of outlet for valuable freight such as gold from the Raub Australian Gold Mine, tin from Bentong, and rubber from Central Pahang. Even so the demand for land is weaker than in the western states. It has therefore been possible to plan the future development of the state with less complication from vested interests and haphazard settlement. Pahang has in consequence set aside considerable areas for forest and wild-life conservation.

There is a wild-life reserve at Krau, and to the north of the state lies the greater portion of the King George V National Park; there are hill-stations at Bukit Fraser and Cameron Highlands. The King George V National Park includes Gunong Tahan, probably the highest mountain in Malaya. The wild-life sanctuaries were planned by the late Theodore Hubback for whom wild-life preservation had become a dominant passion and who as Honorary Game-Warden devoted the last twenty-two years of his very active life to the cause of conservation. He is buried in the King George V National Park, and his epitaph should read *Si monumentum requiris, circumspice*. The two wild-life reserves are intended to act as sanctuaries for the larger fauna where elephant, seladang, tapir, the two-horned rhinoceros, and tiger will be conserved.

These large reserves will have many other uses; they will be a home for aboriginals some of whom, the Pangan, are as primitive as any tribes in the world; they will attract tourist trade; they will present opportunities for research

A Jalorar running, with the sail half-reefed into the Nenasik River before an advancing storm. These boats, which are found only on the Pahang coast, are the fastest of the Malay fishing craft; under favourable conditions they may reach a speed of 8–9 knots

to scientists; and they will protect the land against erosion and the headwaters of rivers from excessive silting. Fishing and photography, but no shooting will be allowed in the National Parks. Big-game hunting in Malaya has never been a popular sport. The jungle is too dense, the effort too strenuous, and the bag too small to attract more than a very few of the hardiest hunters. Pig, deer, and bird shooting can be enjoyed but the search for big game, elephant, rhinoceros or seladang, demands such an expenditure of time in the jungle as to place it beyond the powers of nearly everyone.

Pahang has a long history of war and filibustering expeditions of conquest, and Pahang men have always had a reputation as fighters and soldiers. The first British official visit to Pahang was made by Swettenham in 1885. He impressed on the Bendahara the financial improvidence of granting concessions of land. The advice was little heeded and when young Hugh Clifford, later Sir Hugh Clifford, Governor and High Commissioner, arrived soon after at the Sultan's capital in Pekan, he found chaos. He was merely an agent with little authority, a position quite ineffective for the bad old times. A British Resident was installed at Kuala Lipis who endeavoured to recast administration and to establish peace and order. A few of the chiefs resented the change, and some, under the

The fishing village of Nenasik on the Pahang coast

Orang Kaya Pahlawan, revolted. They were joined by To' Gajah and carried out sporadic raids in guerilla warfare. Then as now, an active, bold and mobile enemy operating in the jungle is extremely difficult to defeat. Clifford harried the rebels vigourously from place to place and drove them over the border to Trengganu. In 1895, after it had dragged on for four years, the rising subsided.

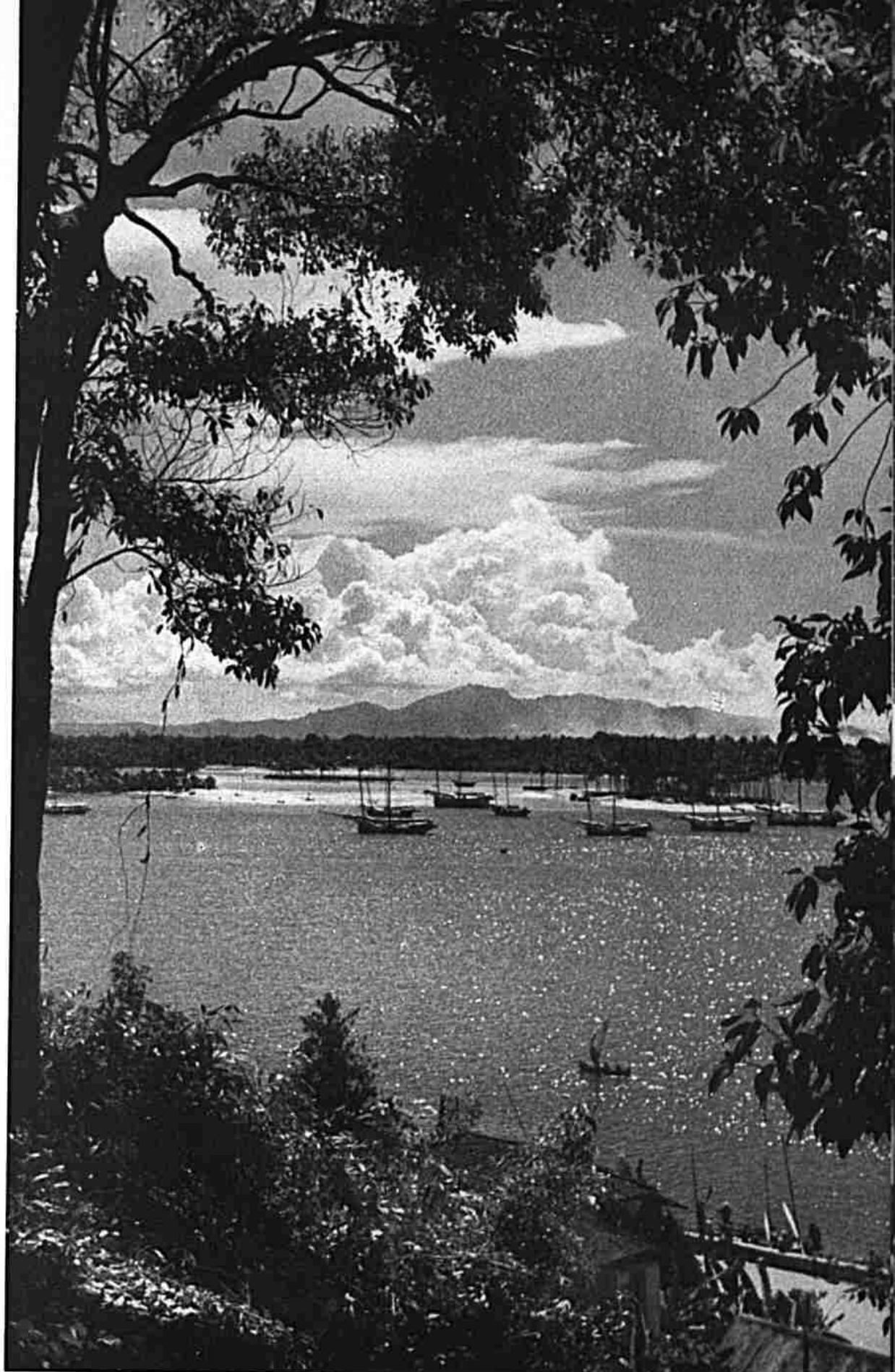
One of the world's two guttapercha plantations is situated in Pahang near Kuala Lipis, and the large island of Tioman exports some of the favourite Chinese delicacy, the edible nest of the little black swiftlet. Geologically, Pahang is full of interest. The Raub area has volcanic soil that is particularly fertile. Gold has been worked regularly in the same area by an Australian company. The metal occurs in patches in many parts of the state but the occurrence has never sustained more than a few fossickers. Bentong has mined much tin. Pahang used to be called the Cinderella of the Federation, but improved communications throughout the state will enable produce other than tin and rubber to be exported at a profit sufficient to pay for Cinderella's later transformation.

A fishing village at Kuala Trengganu, near the mouth of the Trengganu River

Trengganu

TRENGGANU is the least known and least developed of all the Malay States. Its coastline is very long relative to its area, and the hinterland is so harsh and broken that subsistence planting is a doubtful experiment, and large scale agriculture too burdened with the heavy overheads of transport and machinery to be profitable. The chief river, the Trengganu, has rapids which make navigation above Kuala Brang hazardous; the minor rivers Kemaman and Dungun substitute for roads and carry traffic. A determined attempt to improve road communication is being made, but the resources of the state do not stretch to first class roads. The lesser roads are jeepable, but in wet weather they are deeply rutted and slippery. They do however, link up with Pahang to the south and Kelantan to the north.

Before the industrial revolution furnished adequate machines to overcome space and the jungle, a Malay State had to be governed in small units. It placed



The estuary at Kuala Trengganu from the old fort; the boats lying at anchor in the river are locally-built trading schooners

A boat of the Kuala Trengganu fishing fleet running for port before the afternoon wind from the sea

its capital town in a river basin, using the river as its life-line. Between the units were the steep forested mountains acting as almost impassable barriers to communication. In Trengganu the areas that could be easily settled were few and far between. The ineluctable consequences are much parochialism and the absence of schools and hospitals.

Agriculture is unrewarding and many of the men are compelled to take to the sea, either as fishermen or as coastal traders, plying from estuary to estuary in small, locally built boats. Trengganu craft, the finest in Malaya, are sturdy and of excellent workmanship. As a group the cargo-carriers are marked by their shallow-draught, double-ended hulls, long bowsprits and a sail plan of one or two European headsails and two large, Chinese-styled battened lugsails. The fishing boats, all of which are undecked and steered with a paddle, though they may range up to 45 feet in length, use the characteristic Malay rectangular sail, but along this coast it is cut taller than it is broad.

Since the long coastline is unsheltered from the rigours of the north-east monsoon, save for the Redang and Perhentian groups of islands, the men have to be resolute as well as skillful. Braced and strengthened by the storminess

Setting up the loom for weaving a Kain Tegarun: Kuala Trengganu

of the sea, the Trengganu fishermen sail further from the shore than do the men of their trade elsewhere in Malaya—and following a bad blow out of season they may unexpectedly finish up two hundred miles south of their starting point.

The fishing fleet with its russet-sailed boats returning at sunset to the lovely ports of Kuala Trengganu, Paka and Besut is a thing of beauty, but as an economic proposition, not very sound. It is possible that a fish canning industry could be introduced. Malayan waters are richly stocked, but old-fashioned and wasteful methods of catching and marketing raise the price of fish to the consumer immoderately. In most Malayan towns fresh fish, caught locally, is more expensive than fish tinned and carried from America.

Iron is mined at Kemaman and Dungun in the south of the state, and the capital town, Kuala Trengganu, has a surprising small cottage industry, the manufacture of household articles in brass and white metal. The process is similar to that employed in Brunei and in parts of Sumatra. The object is first made in wax. The shape thus formed is then covered completely with a mixture of clay and dried rice straw to form a mould, penetrated at one point by a narrow cylinder of wax. When the metal is to be cast the mould is heated with it in the furnace, placed so that the liquid wax runs out through the spigot hole, leaving a hollow shape into which the molten metal can be poured. Brass is used mostly for cooking pots and coconut oil presses, heavy utility objects which are finished roughly with a file.

Ferrying boats collected at a market village on a tributary of the Trengganu River

Fishing villages on the Trengganu coast. Above, Kampong Kerteh, at the mouth of the Kerteh River. Below, a village at Chukai, on the Kemaman River

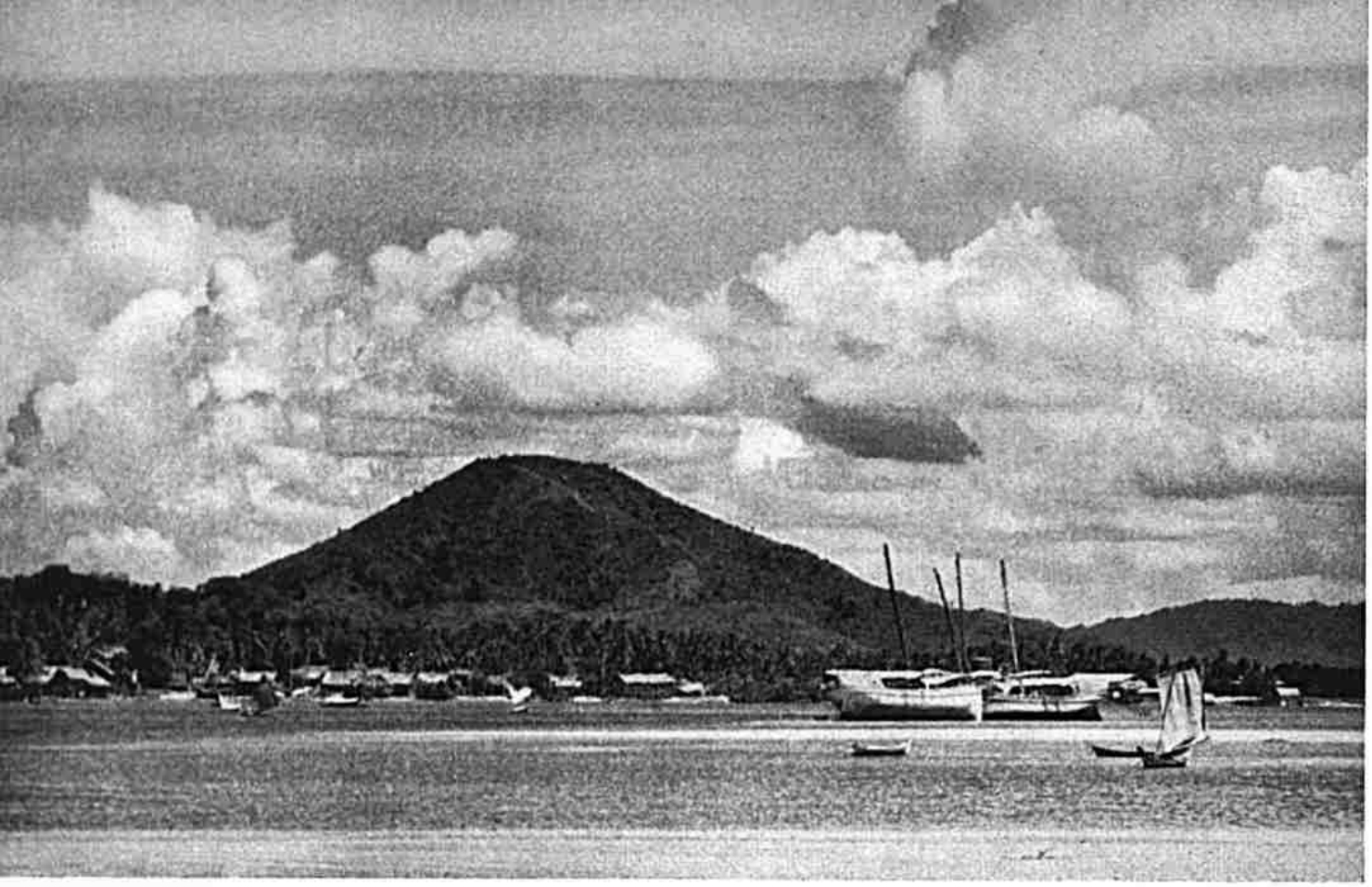
Sellers and buyers in the market at Kuala Trengganu

The white metal is kept for semi-luxury items such as sireh sets, candlesticks, finger bowls, spittoons and ash-trays. These are often finished as carefully as the Kelantan silver-ware, and here too one sees designs with a touch of fine artistry, local in feeling and peculiar to the state.

The great cottage industry in the Kuala Trengganu district is the weaving and dyeing of sarongs, work for which the town has long been famous, and in which at the present time Malayan craftsmanship finds its finest and fullest expression. Two kinds are commonly produced, plain and tartan cloths, and sarongs in which a design in gold or silver thread is inserted over the base at the time of weaving, cloths known to the Malays as *kain songket*. The latter, which at one time rivalled the products of Brunei and Sumatra, are sometimes varied by working on a marbled ground, achieved by irregular dyeing of the warp threads by a tie-and-dye process. The latter too is sometimes used by itself on the woof, to give a plain marbled cloth known as a *kain limau*, or on the whole cloth, giving a *kain pĕlangi*, or rainbow cloth.

An old market-woman, Kuala Trengganu

Trengganu is also the home of the best Malay plaited work, used in the production of gaily coloured and patterned mats, bags, baskets, purses and dish-covers. These are prepared from long strips of dried fibre cut from the leaves of plants of the Pandanus or Screw-pine group, a series of coastal palms with long, spiked leaves, widely spread in tropical countries. Two different kinds are used in Malaya; one, known as *Mĕngkuang*, is employed for the coarser work, which



Bukit Besar from across the Trengganu River, Kuala Trengganu

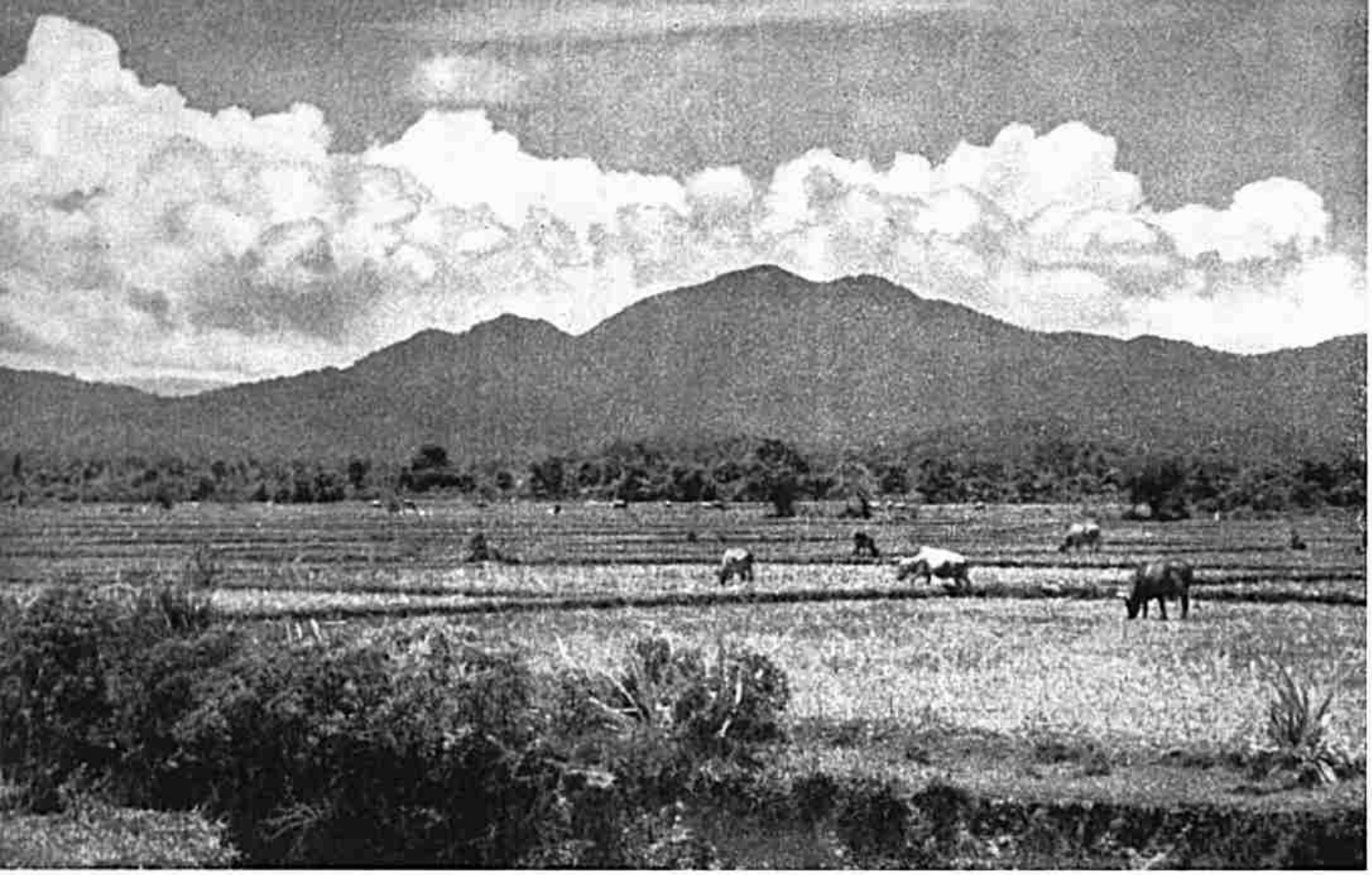
is normally uncoloured, while the other, called *Pandan*, is used for the finer work in which some or all of the strips are generally dyed before plaiting. Work of the latter kind is produced at suitable points all along the eastern seaboard of the Peninsula, from the Pahang River north to the Thai frontier, and round Malacca on the west side, but except perhaps for a few of the Kelantan mats, the finest work comes from the Trengganu villages, particularly Kampong Setiu, Dungun and Kampong Nyior, near Paka.

The full history of Trengganu has yet to be written. Its people are proud and reticent, but it will be possible one day to fill out the skeletal outlines of the dynastic changes with the significant flesh of social history. A damp climate and multitudinous insects soon destroy records, and dates to escape oblivion must be linked to notable events. The chief dates are 1883, 'The Big Wind'; 1897, 'The Great Flood'; 1927, 'The Second Great Flood'. Professor Rupert Emerson dispelled the idea that 'in Kelantan and Trengganu the British and even the Siamese intervention disrupted a somewhat primitive but idyllic government'. In Trengganu, 'all manner of crime was rampant, the peasantry was mercilessly down-

trodden, but the land was full of holy men and the cries of the poor were drowned in the noise of ostentatious prayer.' During the Pahang rising in 1891 young Hugh Clifford chased the leaders to Trengganu which owed nominal allegiance to Siam. He was accompanied by a Siamese official and the harried leaders eventually surrendered to the Siamese authorities. In 1909 Siam transferred 'all rights of suzerainty, protection, administration and control' to Great Britain.

It is unlikely that Trengganu will be developed on the lines of the western states. Capital is lacking and labour is scarce. There is always the handicap of the monsoon which puts a wet blanket on normal activity for two months a year. Grants from R.I.D.A., or from a Colombo plan have a tendency to flow near to an industry which is already producing rather than to an area where industry must be created *de novo*. The crying need is for education, especially technical education. Trengganu has artisans and with the pressure of expanding population the state will fill up and some industrialization should be feasible. The poverty of the country has slowed the rate of progress but the last twenty years have seen a notable acceleration.

Perahu Bedar at Paka on the Trengganu coast



A landscape in the Kelantan coastal plain—Bukit Yong from near Pulai Chondong, some twenty miles from Kota Bharu on the Kuala Krai Road

Kelantan

THE word Kelantan is somewhat fancifully derived from Kilat and Tanah—land of lightning. But there is little of the fanciful among the people of Kelantan. Their history may go back 2,000 years, it certainly goes back to 1225 when it was listed in the Malay Kingdoms as owing fealty to the Sri Vijaya Empire. Its isolation and its exposure to the storms of the China Sea and its scarcity of tillable land have bred a hardy, earthy race. There are few areas in the Peninsula where the population has approached saturation point and pressed hard on the means of subsistence, but Kelantan has long been one of them. It has a relatively short coast-line, and a fertile plain encircled by high forest-covered hills so broken and steep that effective cultivation is beyond the capital resources of the people. Crowded on to the cramped space of the

The beach at Bachok, on the Kelantan coast

Above, fallow rice-fields at Tumpat, close to the Thai frontier, at sundown. Below, the Kelantan River at Pasir Mas, in the dry season

Sunset over the estuary at Kuala Kemassin, on the Kelantan coast

plain, the Kelantan men had to work or starve. They chose to work and mobilised their womenfolk, who have thereby won an unusual freedom. Kelantan women weave and plait, tend a shop or a market stall, and sell their products, fruit, eggs, poultry, vegetables and jaggery. Habits of industry were grafted on to the Kelantan people for these alone ensured survival.

Bared to the full blast of the north-east monsoon which severely restricts sea-faring from October till early January, Kelantan suffers the further visitation of untamed nature in severe floods and storms. These obstacles have deterred immigrant races from settling in so hard a country. Competition from men on the spot was too keen and immigrants passed on to where the prize of a fortune was less arduously acquired. For centuries the Kelantan man had been satisfied with the old routine of peasant subsistence-farming enlivened by the local sports of cock-fighting, bull-fighting and kite-flying. But the increasing morcellement of his holding as it passed through generations of inheritance from father to several sons, compelled him to specialise and the artisan class emerged.

Above, plaiting a pandan sleeping mat in a house at Perupok, Kelantan. Below, selling rice in the market at Kota Bharu

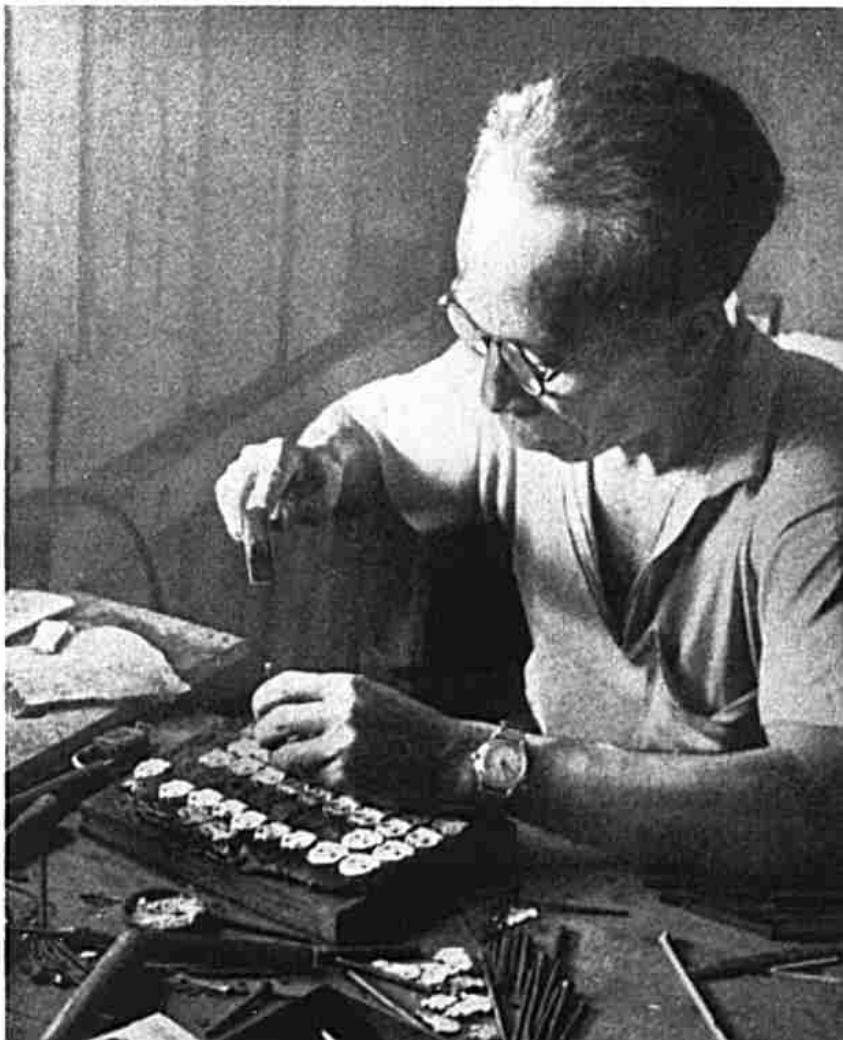
The artisans particularly excelled in silver-work, fashioning, as Sir Frank Swettenham wrote, 'vessels, and ornaments and jewellery as beautiful in form, as original in design, and almost as perfect in workmanship as anything of a similar kind to be found in the East.' Formerly the craftsmen worked under royal patronage, but for twenty years now this has been replaced by an official marketing organization. The labour force of the Public Works Department and

other Government departments was and is home-grown and various skills have been learned; masons, fitters, and mechanics have emerged and these with the various craft workers are coming to form a quasi-middle class in Kota Bharu.

The Arts and Crafts Depôt markets the silver-ware in the larger towns of Malaya, and occasionally, through the Singapore Art Society, to buyers outside the country. Its production is a true cottage industry with the men working in their own homes or in small atap sheds nearby. New lines like long-handled honey spoons and pickle forks, match-box holders, tea and coffee sets, salad servers, have been introduced but the craftsmen still use their traditional designs and ornamentation. There is still very little division of labour, but doubtless the expanding market and the tourist trade will call for a greater specialisation.

Another cottage-type industry which still persists is sarong weaving, with nearly a thousand looms working in the state, producing a wide range of plain and check cloths, now of silk and often in pastel shades in place of the coarse, dark tartans for which Kelantan was once famous. *Kain songket* are also woven in Kelantan, together with herring-bone cloths using four sets of heddles instead of two. Trengganu's other cloths are not made here, but Kelantan is the home of the Malayan Batik sarongs, a minor industry which started some fifteen years ago and at present provides work for over 3,000 people. The largest single unit, a modern factory in Kota Bharu, has nearly 300 employees, but a number of the other workers operate at home in small family groups. Kelantan Batik is done with metal blocks, or with stencils, and differs markedly from the Javanese original in both pattern and colour. The patterns include

A Kelantan silversmith at work: Kota Bharu



The village of Bukit on the Kelantan coastal plain, at sundown

elaborate flowered designs, with birds and butterflies disporting themselves in intricately drawn panels. Kelantan colours, too, are mostly bright blues, greens, oranges and reds, instead of the usual sombre browns, ochres and indigos, and the colours suit the people. The women of Kelantan are not only among the most independent in Malaya, they are also among the most attractive, and the brightest and gayest in their costume. A Kelantan village market is a place of surprising life and colour, a joy to see and a sight not to be forgotten.

Much retail trade is in the hands of the Malays, and several other minor industries operate in Kota Bharu apart from the Malayan Batik work and silverware. There are printing works and a thriving match factory. An ambitious 'North-Eastern Transport Service', also Malay, manages an efficient bus service covering the whole state, and another company ferry services along and across the Kelantan River. The N.E.T.S. sent its mechanics and drivers to Singapore for training. The Kelantan man is thrifty and though the cost of living is high in relation to the other Malay states, savings in the Post Office Savings Bank have been considerable.

Rice is grown in the 1,000 square miles of alluvial plain, but there is little room for expansion. All the flat land is taken up and the granite hills round it do not lend themselves to terracing. The yield is but 240 gantangs per acre, but experiments have shown that a higher output can be achieved by the use of better selected seed, more manure and better irrigation to defy adverse weather conditions. The planting calendar must accord with the solar times of the season. Growers have many traditional devices by which they can accommodate their lunar months to the Gregorian system. Their superstitions and taboos in the sowing, planting, reaping and pounding of the rice are numerous and their daily talk is full of similes from the *sawah* such as: *jika mĕnampi, jangan tumpah padi* (when you winnow, don't spill the grain) that is: don't let zeal run away with discretion; '*Bagai sĕrunai batang padi*' (a flute made from rice-stalk or a flimsy device which will not last long); and *bagai padi bunting* (shapely, e.g. of a woman's leg).

Kelantan, though it has its roots in the past, is modernising. The practice of sending a few able men abroad for intensive study has thrown up sound leaders who realise that constitutional change is conditioned by economic factors and that economic effort must accompany political progress. The country has been relatively free from problems set by the irruption of foreign capital. Its troubles were its own. It was partially unified by Nong Pandak in the eighteenth century and Long Yunus founded the present Royal Family. But absolute power, as usual, corrupted absolutely. One raja reigned for 53 years and was given the nick-name of *Mulut Merah*. In 1903 a later raja and his uncles operated the mint as their monopoly and used 'a tin coinage that was the most trumpery in the world.' Revenue, if any, was paid to clerks in the palace who bore it off on elephants to a cache in the hills. A man named Duff was granted a concession over 3,000 square miles for the payment of £2,000 and 2,000 shares in the company. The claims of the Duff Development Company had to be settled but the concession saddled the country with debt for many years. Now conditions are better. Kelantan proposes to abolish its old harbour at Tumpat, and to build a bigger and better one at Kuala Besar. During the last twenty years progress with the favourable adjuncts of a thrifty administration and an industrious people has been remarkable. Ethnically the Kelantan man is the purest strain of Malay. He owes little to others and his success in working out his own salvation may be gauged from Professor Raymond Firth's 'Malay Fishermen, Their Peasant Economy.' The fishermen can be padi-planter, coconut-grower, iron-miner and gold-digger too.

The Pẓrahu Buatan Barat, the typical and most numerous fishing boat in use on the Kelantan coast. Above, a boat under full canvas, and below, launching a Pẓrahu in calm weather.

A fishing village at Kuala Perlis, near the mouth of the Perlis River

Perlis

PERLIS is the northernmost and smallest state in the Federation. For a hundred years Buddhist Siam claimed suzerainty over it without any great interference or influence. In 1909 the suzerainty was transferred to Great Britain. During the Japanese occupation it was handed back to Siam but on liberation the *status quo* was restored and it is now again in the Islamic family of the Federation. The Sultan's seat is at Arau, the administrative centre is at Kangar. The other towns, little larger than villages are Padang Besar on the Siamese border, Kuala Perlis, and Kaki Bukit.

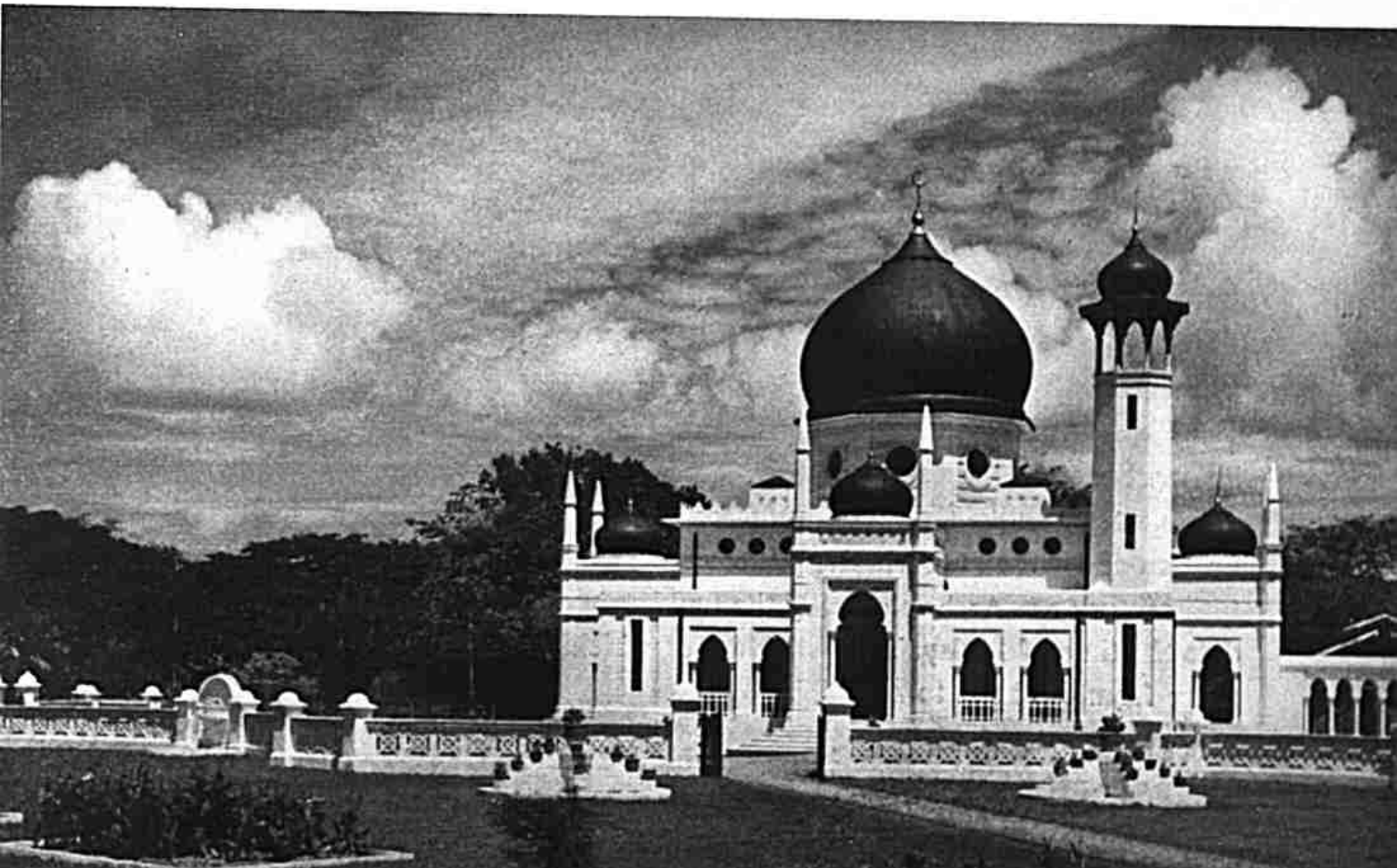
The 1949 census report gives the total population as 70,490, of which only 6,324 are shown as urban. Such figures indicate clearly that the people are mainly small-holders who grow rice. The administration is small, one official in his life plays many parts, and the services of Kedah officials are bespoken

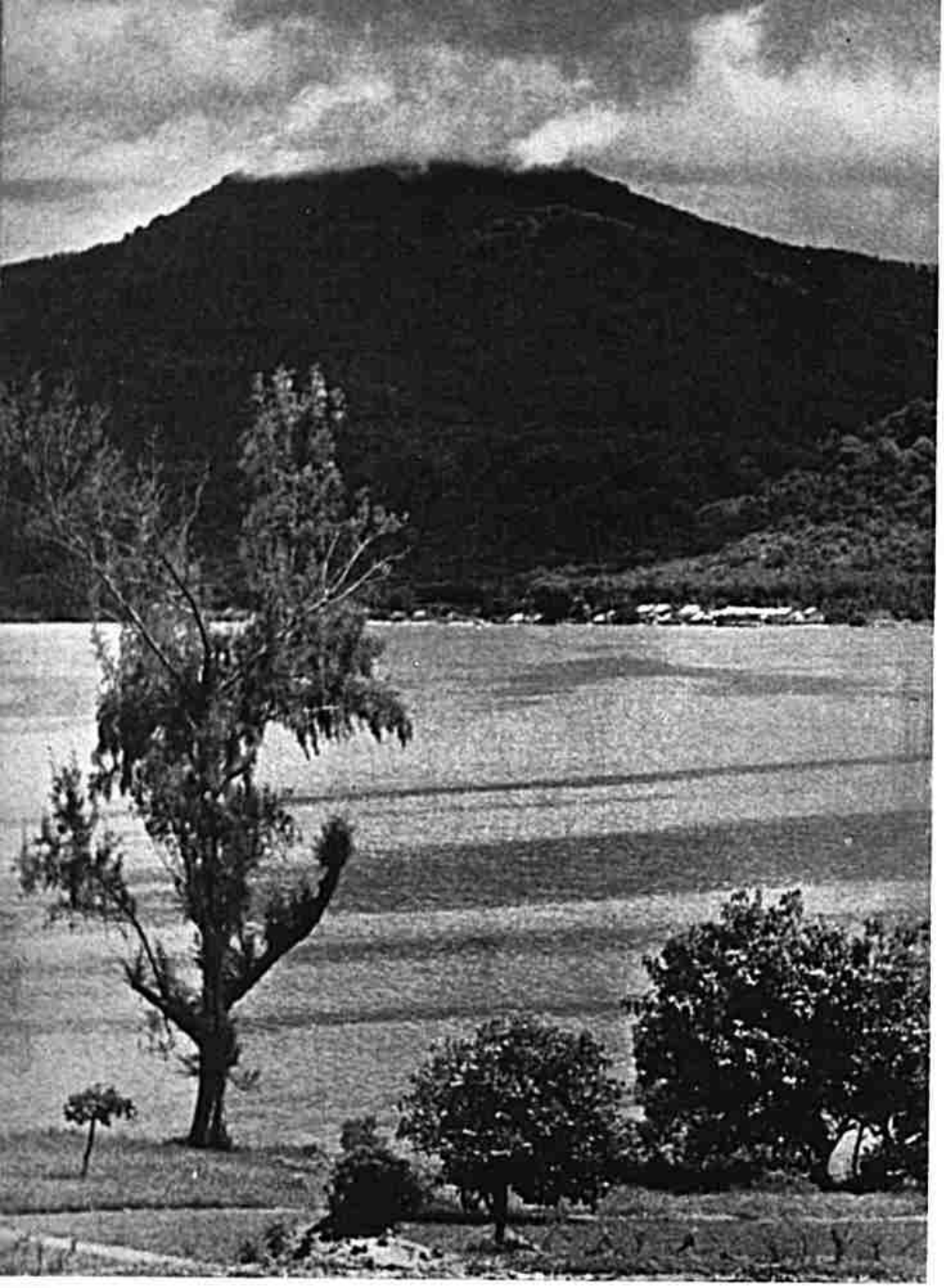
The village of Kampong Kepala Kerbau, near the Perlis-Kedah boundary

when occasion requires. Malays are by far the largest part of the population, but in many there is a strain of Siamese blood. The retail trade is in the hands of the Chinese who also work the tin-mines of the state.

A feature of the landscape is the limestone *goa*. In the geologically remote past these were part of a chain of hills which have been weathered and eroded along channels of weakness and have left standing only the *goa*, the haunt of bats and birds and the odd combination of goat and antelope known as the serow. The *goas* have caves formed by the solution of the limestone by rain and water from underground streams. These caves are often large and in some cases contain tin. To discover the tin was a hazardous undertaking and there have been many instances where the adventurous miner has been crushed by falling rock, drowned, or walled in by some unhappy subsidence blocking the passage out. The caves have been used for centuries by bats whose guano makes excellent manure. The extraction of this guano provides a livelihood for many Malays.

Kangar, the capital of Perlis. Above, a small- holders' village on the outskirts of the town. Below, the State Mosque





Gunong Raya from across Bass Harbour, in the Langkawi Islands

The caves had ancient inhabitants. Guano diggers working in a cave near Tengku Lembu recently unearthed some early remains. These consisted of human bones and pieces of pottery. Among these pieces were two small fragments utterly unlike the rest. They were sent to the British Museum for identification and were authoritatively classified as Greek pottery of the fourth or fifth century B.C. Archæologically the find is of great importance for it helps to date the time of Malaya's neolithic age at which guesses have been made that range from 6000 B.C. to A.D. 600.

Calm and storm. Above, sunset over the Langkawi Islands. Below, monsoon rain clouds breaking over a cluster of small-holdings near Kuala Perlis, Perlis

While prehistorians patiently fit together their jig-saw pieces into a coherent whole, modern Perlis goes on with its work. It is an active little state with a will and a mind of its own. It grows good padi and the Government uses all its power to maintain the quantity and quality of the crop and to secure a good price for the grower. It experiments with new fruits, even the grape-fruit has been introduced. The experiment was a success but ranks as a *tour de force* rather than a commercial enterprise. A Department of Co-operation helps to keep the small-holder free from debt, to provide him with a bank for his savings, and to teach him better marketing.

Tin mining is from the nature of the ground a perilous venture, but fishing along the sea coast is profitable. High prices of padi in recent years have put unusual wealth into the pockets of the small-holders; but the Government revenues remain very small and do not provide the capital to finance the many improvements still needed, among the most important of which is the necessity of improving the quality of the local cattle.

Raffles described the Siamese connection as 'so remote from protection on the one side or attachment on the other that it is but a simple exercise of capricious tyranny'. Since 1909 Perlis has had a new birth of freedom.

Fishing Nets drying at Kampong Kuala Kedah, Kedah

Kedah Peak from Penang Hill

Kedah

KEDAH has best preserved the old pattern of Malay life, fishermen and rice-growers living alongside the coasts and rivers. Originally the Malay States were merely the river valleys with capital towns occurring in or near an estuary and forming a convenient meeting place for the settlements in the river basins. The frontiers of the Sultanates were jungle interfluves where rice could not be grown. Recent immigrants from Europe, India, and China, cut down the jungle in many areas to establish a totally different method of agriculture, plantations for the large scale production of tapioco, coffee, sugar-cane, pineapples, and rubber. Further inroads were made by tin-mining and quarrying. Thus the jungle was penetrated. Plantations and mines require efficient transport, and the construction of roads and railways followed quickly.

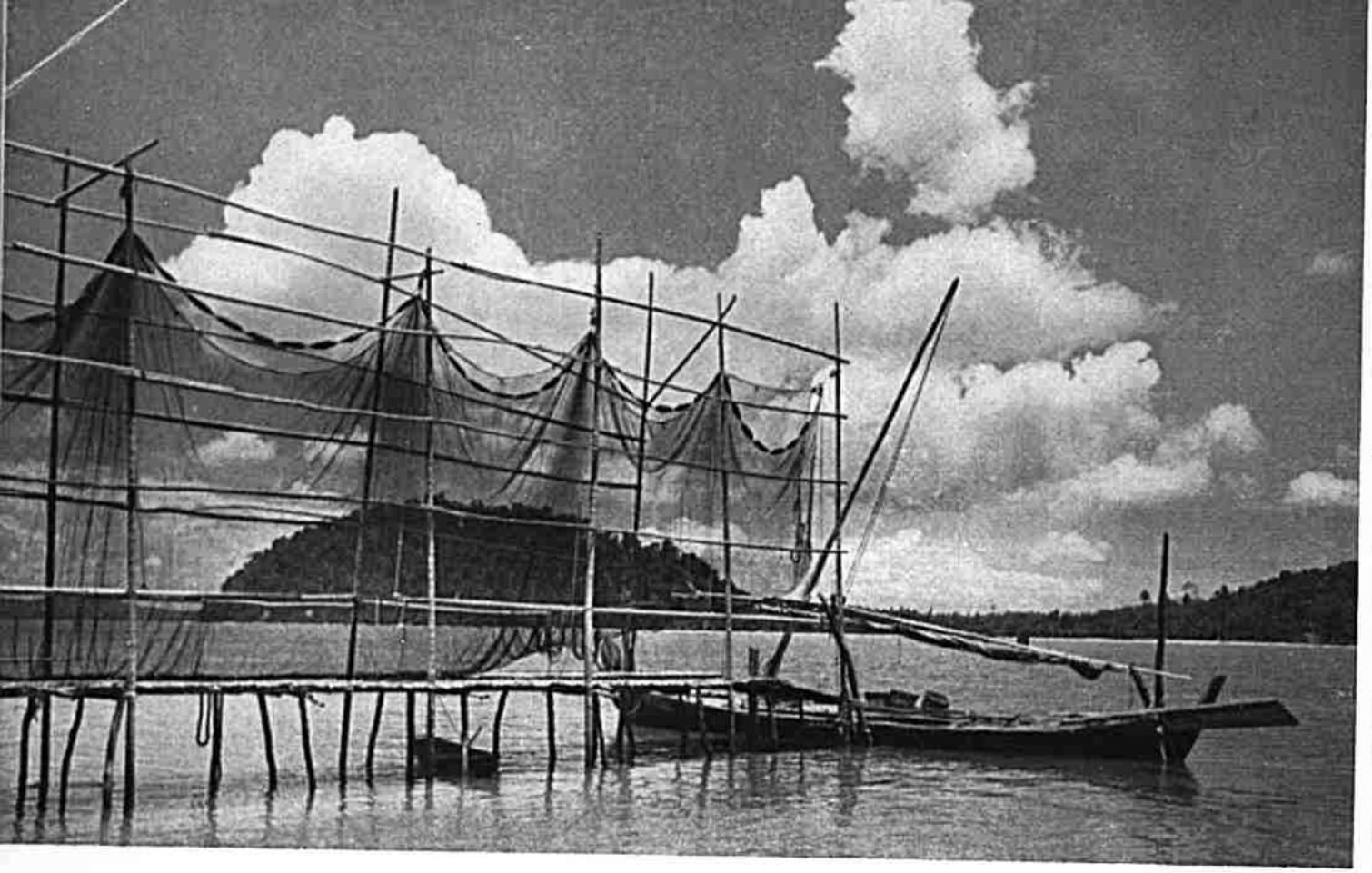
But Kedah is relatively flat, and rice can be grown on very large areas of the country which, accordingly, has always been more effectively under the control of the Sultan. Of its 554,000 inhabitants only 13.8 per cent were

Kedah Peak from the north

classified as 'urban' in the 1947 census report. The Kedah Malays, adept at making canals and irrigation channels, brought much of the state under cultivation. Thus there was less jungle, less vacuum to attract the immigrant pioneer.

The state has, therefore, a very high proportion of Malays in its total population, and it has had to make far smaller adjustments of its social and political framework to the altered environment. In 1516 Kedah was exporting 'much pepper, good and fine' to China and Malacca. In 1641 Kedah resisted the Dutch restriction on trade and dealt with India in tin, elephants and calico. Kedah was too far north for the Dutch to interfere successfully and traded actively across the Bay of Bengal. Captain Francis Light in 1786 leased the uninhabited island of Penang from the Sultan of Kedah on behalf of the East India Company which needed a refitting station and port of call for East Indiamen bound to and from China. A condition of the lease was that the Company should aid Kedah in the event of attack from Siam. In assenting to this clause Light exceeded his instructions, and when Kedah was invaded by Siam in 1821, it was

Above, a landscape in the Kedah coastal plain at the beginning of a rainy season. Below, a lime stone hill or Goa, haunt of the Serow, near the Kedah-Thai border



The fishing village of Tanjong Dawi, on the north side of the mouth of Merbok River. Above, fishing nets drying, and below, the main street in the full heat of the midday sun

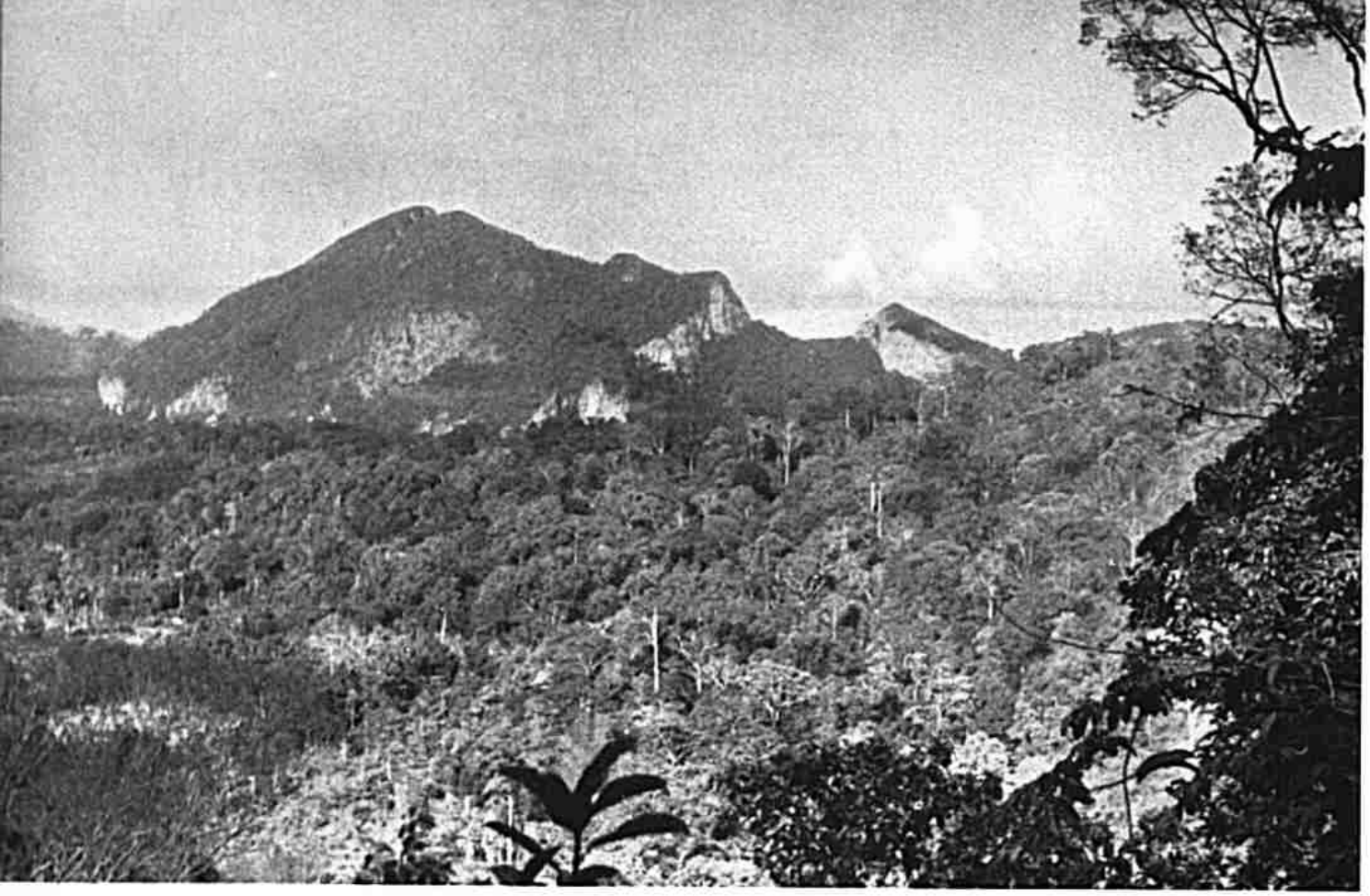
The Kedah coastal plain looking north from near the summit of Kedah Peak

broken and the Sultan had to flee for his life to British territory. The sanctuary granted him there mitigated, but is far from condoning, a breach of faith.

In 1821 the population was estimated at 50,000. In 1839 it was 21,000, in 1884 it was 150,000 and in 1947 it was 554,441. The Sultan was not able to return to his harassed country till 1842 and even then Siam still claimed suzerainty. The wealth of Kedah expanded, but it declined as the century drew to a close, and in 1905 the country was so near to bankruptcy that Siam appointed a British Adviser who induced the Sultan to set up a State Council. In 1909 Siam transferred suzerainty to Great Britain.

Kedah is the largest grower of rice in the Peninsula, but rubber in large estates and in small-holdings, where it forms the cash crop, is widely planted. Several islands off the coast belong to Kedah, the largest being Langkawi, almost as beautiful as Penang but comparatively undeveloped.

Sir Frank Swettenham writes: 'In 1874 Kedah was more advanced in its institutions, in the observance of order, the well-being of its people, and the general development of the country than any other state in the Peninsula. The



Baling Hill, from the Kroh Road, early morning with the dawn mist still lifting from the valley

then Sultan of Kedah, his brothers, and the chiefs who assisted him were highly intelligent and the country was free from debt.' When later he visited Alor Star he found it 'the chief village, a small but regularly laid out and tidily kept place some miles up the main river of the country. . . . .The country was highly cultivated; the Sultan was a just and upright man of intelligence; and his officers were full of good intentions; and his chief minister was a man of real energy; and the people seem happy and contented.'

The tradition of just and upright men of intelligence, real energy and good intentions persists. Executive power is in the hands of Malays who administer the state economically, and who send the ablest men to England for further training, and who would rather fail in a new enterprise than shirk the attempt. Much is done to secure for the *rayat* a free and fair market for his kampong produce by weekly road-side fairs, by numerous state-sponsored co-operative societies, and by technical advice. The state, though still rural in appearance, has a modern mentality and very early opened a large aerodrome

at Alor Star. Its roads are almost too good and run with a Roman straightness that dulls the senses of the car-driver and lulls him to a dangerous somnolence. Its markets are of good design and construction, and its towns well laid out.

The chief towns apart from Alor Star, the capital and the seat of the Sultan, are Sungei Patani, Kulim, and Baling which is picturesquely ringed by a rampart of limestone hills. These towns have schools where the education is intended for the average rather than the bright pupil. There is a large Islamic school at Gurun, for the Malays are firm and faithful but not fanatical Muslims.

The Sultan resides at Alor Star. Ceremonial occasions give the Malays a chance to express themselves in a riot of rich colour that a country people, environed normally in unending green, can create without clash or vulgarity. A royal wedding, or the return of the Sultan from a journey abroad, never fails to attract thousands of good-humoured and very likeable spectators who infectiously enjoy the change from their rural routine. A people subsisting on the growing of rice, and having money only when the price is artificially high, is free from the vicissitudes of boom and slump, and can make merry with no afterthoughts. Kedah has been called a feudal state, but if the charge is true it refers to a feudalism of a pattern less harsh than some industrialism.

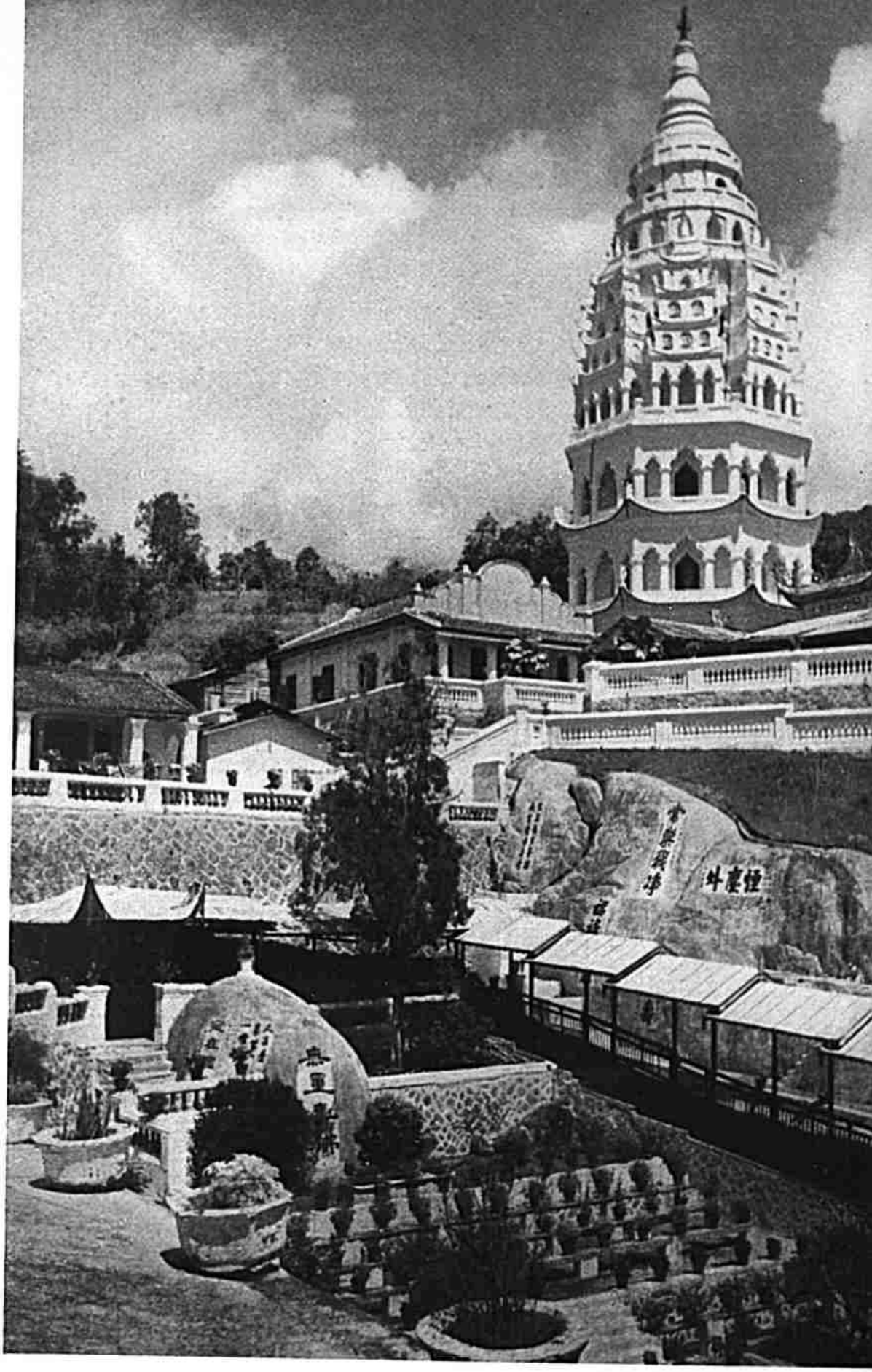
The State Mosque at Alor Star, Kedah, from across the river

George Town and Penang roads from Penang Hill

Penang

PENANG must be one of the loveliest islands in the tropical world. In truth its beauty is exceeded by that of Bali, but Bali is peerless, and after Bali?

It is a short easy journey by the funicular railway to the top of Penang's 2,700-foot hill. To the north-east are a few small islands and the sharp outlines of the isolated Kedah Peak; to the east is the broad plain of Province Wellesley and the rice-growing districts of Krian interspersed with rubber and coconut plantations; and to the south-east in blue distance is the more broken country of Perak. The scenery has not the awe-inspiring grandeur of mountains but it has the kindly look of goodly land lived in by a great multitude of mankind. The sky is never cloudless, and the retinue of shades passing over sea and land in infinite gradations of green and blue tempts others than W. H. Davies to stand and stare.



The Chinese Buddhist temple at Ayer Itam, Penang

The wooded roads of Penang; above, in the Vale of Tempe; and below, the coast road near the Sungei Pinang, on the west side of the island

The coastal plain, Penang Island, from the West Coast Road

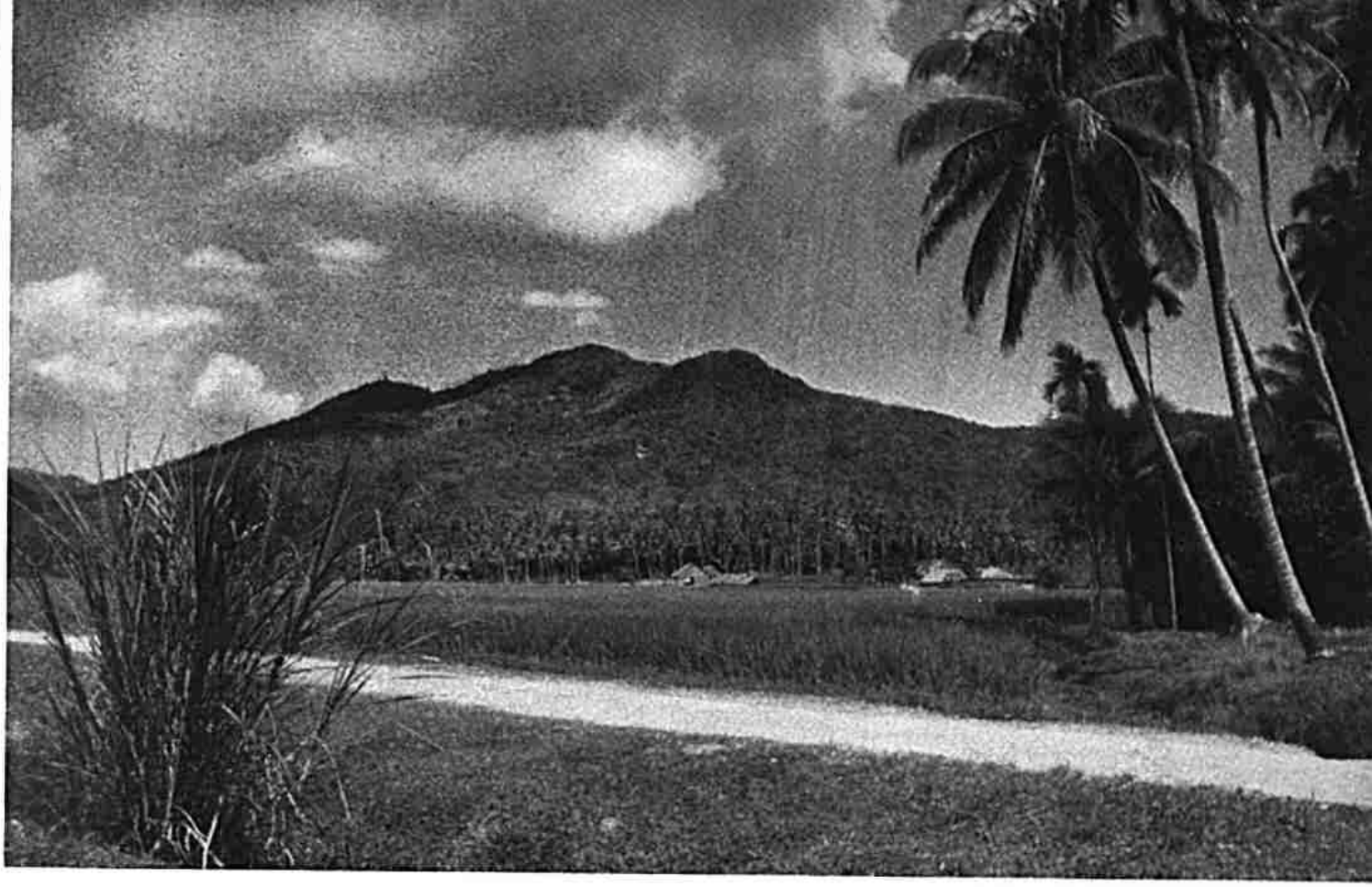
The island is round, and in relief it resembles an old-fashioned hat. The crown is the hill, which falls steeply to the wide brim of land where lie kampongs, rice-fields, rubber holdings, coconut estates, fishing villages, houses and towns. The capital, George Town, commemorates George III, and the strip of land along the mainland opposite (added for much the same reasons as Kowloon opposite Hong Kong) is known as Province Wellesley. Such names date the places. Penang island was leased from Kedah by Captain Francis Light in 1785 on behalf of the East India Company who wanted a place where ships could refit and revictual. Light was no administrator. He gave out land recklessly, and in 1805 Penang had few roads and public buildings, no medical service, no department for the collection of revenue, and the scantiest provision for the maintenance of law and order. In 1832 the seat of government was transferred to Singapore. In 1867 Singapore, Malacca, and Penang were taken over by the Colonial Office as the Straits Settlements, an arrangement which lasted till Malaya, less Singapore, was federated.

In its early years Penang grew cloves and nutmegs, the best in the world. Both are troublesome crops, for the trees are subject to insect pests which are very difficult to eradicate. The industry gradually dwindled and now only a small number of clove and nutmeg holdings are to be seen. These are owned and operated by Hakka Chinese, who alone seemingly have the combination of perseverance and skill needed to win a living from them. These spices grow best on hills of decomposing granite overlooking the sea. On the flat lands at the foot are the rice-fields which give the heaviest yields in Malaya, and kampongs whose durians, rambutans, and mangosteens are famous.

The island has a considerable entrepôt trade and its tin-smelting works reduce tin-ore from Perak, Perlis and Siam. In addition there are rice mills, coconut oil factories, canneries, and various minor and often mushroom industries.

The schools are excellent. The Penang Free School, established in 1816, claims to be the best as well as the oldest in Malaya. It has had much influence on the cultural life of the Settlement, which itself has always been regarded as the intellectual centre of Malaya.

Tamil sailing lighters (Tongkangs) at anchor in Penang roads



Rice-fields on the east coast plain, near Sungei Nibong

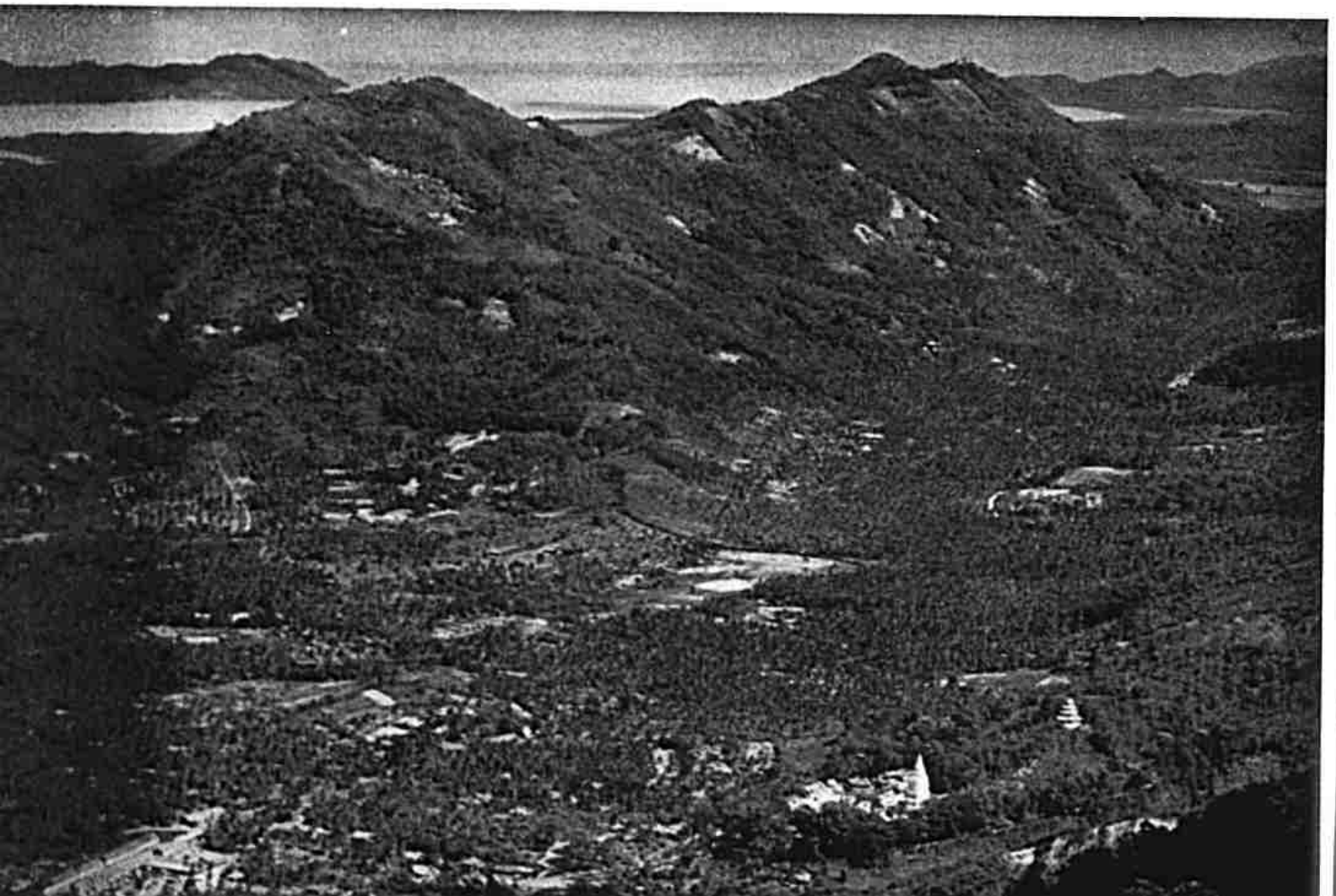
The climate is good and healthy: many wealthy Asians retire to the island and occupy large houses along Northam Road. The tourist industry is still under-developed but it is bound to grow. Natural advantages and human ingenuity have made Penang a fair port, but the channel between the island and the mainland is shallow and subject to much silting from the mainland rivers. There is little prospect of providing good docking facilities on the mainland suitable for large vessels, and Penang has therefore the disadvantage of additional cargo-handling. The island is well served by aerodromes at Bayan Lepas on the island itself and at Mata Kuching on the mainland.

In spite of its thirty-four years' start over Singapore, Penang was speedily outdistanced in population and wealth by the more strategically sited town. But Penang, while acknowledging its relative poverty, never admitted a cultural inferiority. Its motto, 'Penang Leads,' is stated not as a hope or a claim or a vaunt, but as a simple fact. It has been peopled by Kedah Malays into whom a strong Indian strain has been introduced. The Chinese have been settled for generations. If the true wealth of a place is in its people then Penang is rich.

Until comparatively recent times, Malaya drew its population from elsewhere, China, Indonesia, and India. The immigrants were as usual unaccompanied by their wives. This leads to much mobility and a low birth-rate. It was not till the twentieth century was well-advanced that women started to come in and to raise a home-grown labour force. Penang and Province Wellesley suffered no such handicap and are almost saturated with population. There are few towns in the Peninsula that do not house some Penang men whom pressure of population and the fragmentation of their small-holdings have driven out to seek their livelihood.

Penang has never lacked the civic spirit and it is possibly the best kept town in Malaya, with broad tree-lined roads, playing fields, a public park (the Waterfall Gardens), and many open spaces. It has a library and, alone among the local towns, maintains a Municipal Band. There are many mosques and temples. The Chinese Temple at Ayer Itam was built from local materials in a style so fitting to the landscape that no visitor can fail to be impressed with admiration and reverence.

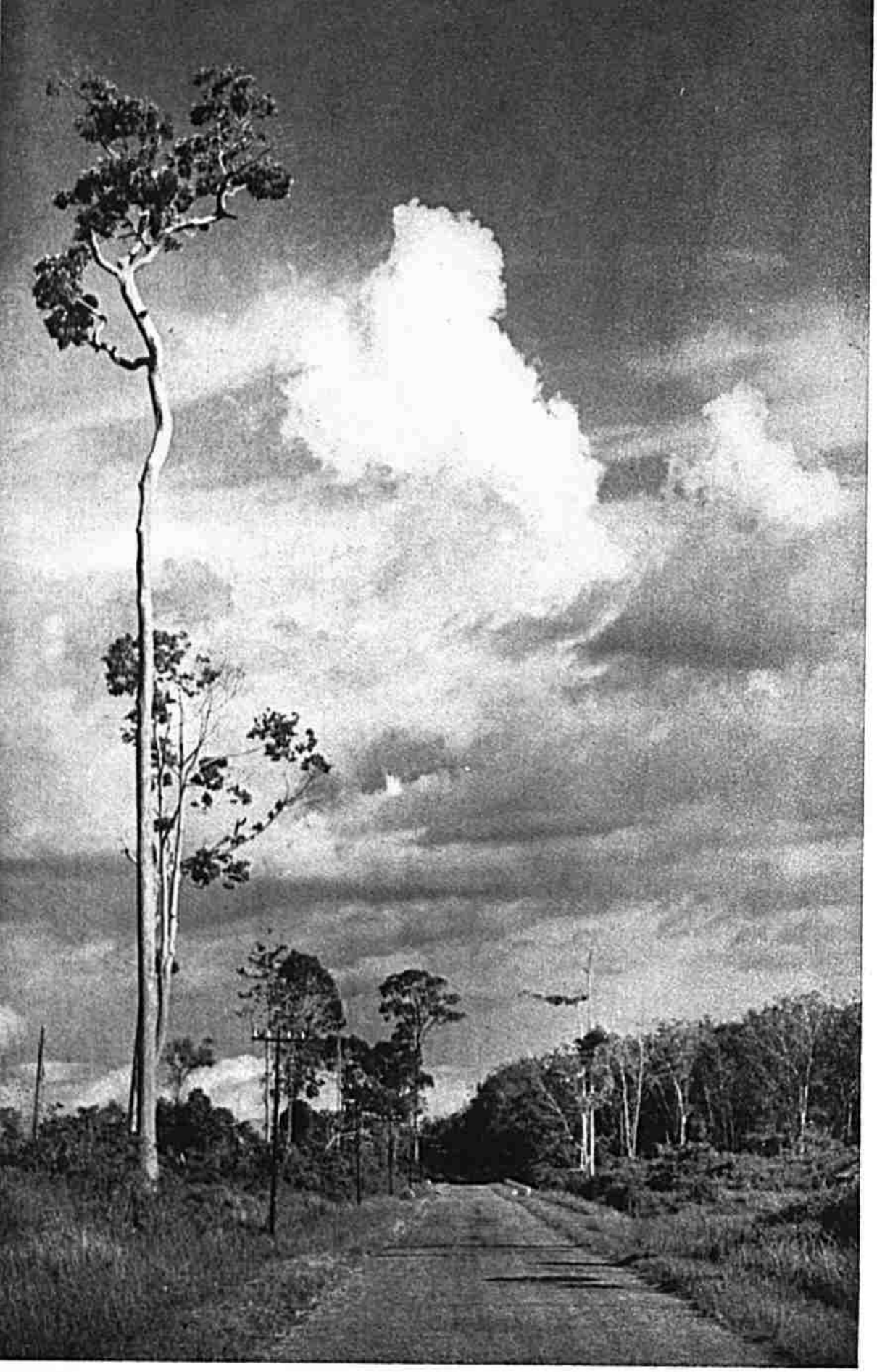
The Ayer Itam Valley, Penang, from Penang Hill



Dawn over the Chenderoh Lake

Perak

THE State of Perak was founded by the eldest son of Malacca's last Sultan. Its Royal House claims descent from Iskander Dzul Karnain, Alexander the Great. Succession to the throne proceeded not from father to son, but rotationally among certain families. Such a system could, and did, give an opening to claimants to prosecute their contentions by civil war, with sequent loss of authority to the central power. The Sultan's writ ran only in the more accessible rivers up which his ministers could travel. Lawlessness and piracy were rampant. In 1824, Pangkor and the Sembilan Islands were ceded to Penang, anxious to stamp out a pirates' lair that ravaged its trade, but these were returned in 1934, long after their original purpose had been achieved. In 1862 Ngah Ibrahim, the Menteri of Larut claimed independence. In 1871 the reigning Sultan, Ali, died. The rightful heir was passed over as unsuitable, Raja Bendahara Ismail assumed government and civil war broke out. The crisis was aggravated by the clashes of Chinese tin-miners in the rich tin fields of Kinta and Larut. In 1874, Sir Andrew Clarke met the Perak chiefs and some of the Chinese headmen at Pangkor and the Residential System was introduced. A British Resident was appointed whose 'advice was to be asked and acted upon in all matters other than those relating to Malay religion and custom.' Sir George



The Dindings Road between Bruas and Sitiawan

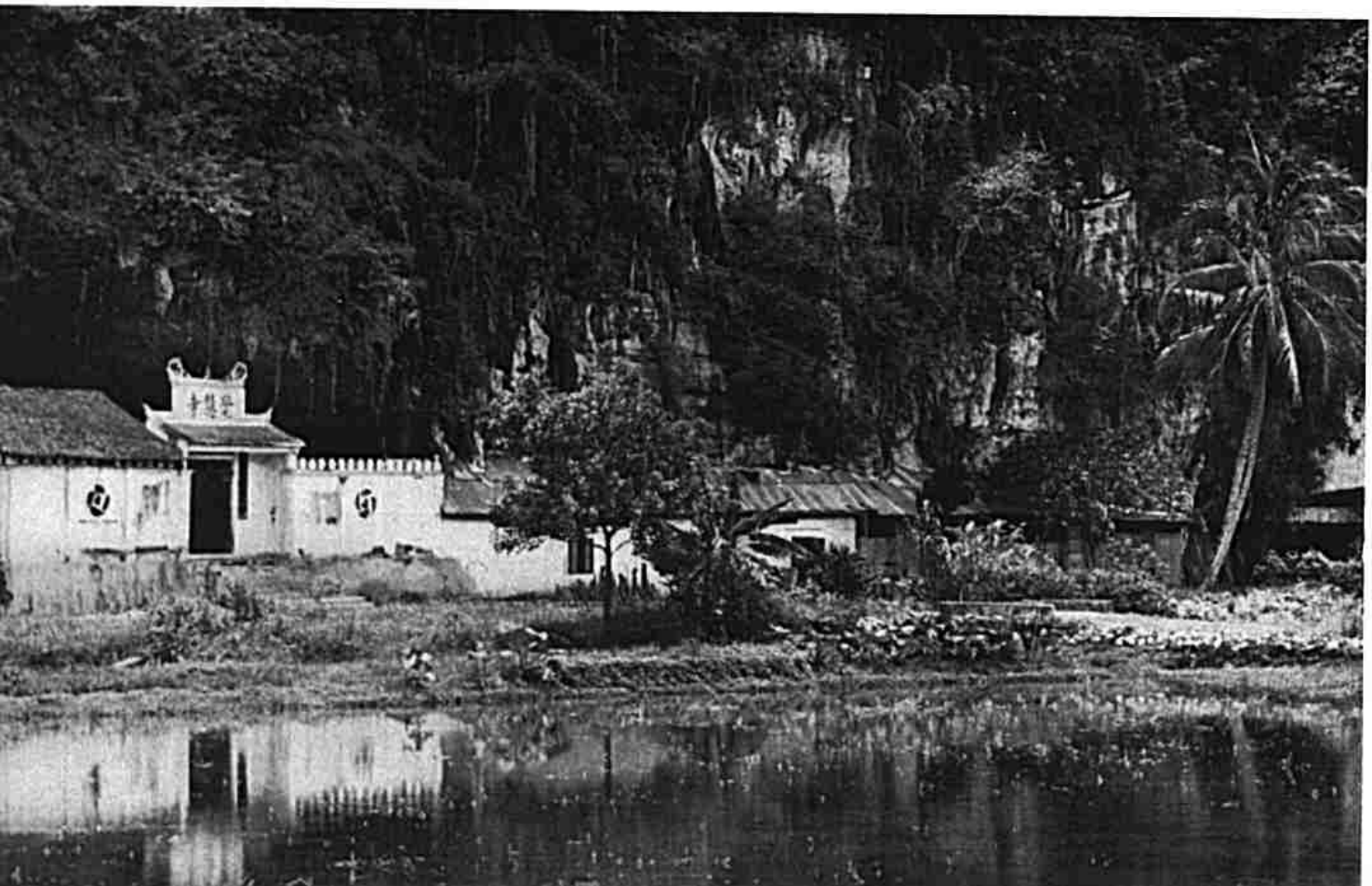
The main trunk road near Gopeng

Maxwell described the Residents as 'business managers'. Perak was fortunate in securing Sir Hugh Low, a man of infinite tact and patience, under whose velvet-gloved hand the land had peace for many years. Two of its Sultans, Idris and Iskander, were rulers of outstanding quality.

Perak is the premier and best-balanced state in the Peninsula. The charge that Malaya has put all her eggs in one basket does not apply here. The heavy-yielding, admirably irrigated and extensive rice-fields of Krian, tin at Taiping and Kinta, rubber throughout all the state, oil palms at Slim, coconuts at Bagan Dato, timber from readily workable forest reserves, fishing along its long coast-line, have made its prosperity broad-based. It has always been able to make the necessary adjustments required by changing environment. It established its first capital on an abandoned tin-mine in Taiping, and then transferred to Ipoh. It built the first railway which carried tin-ore from Taiping to Port Weld. It built the Perak hydro-electric dam.

The Sultan's palace is in Kuala Kangsar on the Perak River, a noble stream which rises in the most unspoilt district of Grik and enters the Malacca Straits

Above, the Malay mosque at Lumut, in the Dindings. Below, a Chinese rock temple near Ipoh



Above, Malay small-holdings in the limestone country near Kuala Kangsar. On the right, Chinese squatters houses in the Chenderoh valley

at Teluk Anson. Political wisdom in the Federation has usually separated the Sultan's capital from the administrative capital, so that a strong central government did not overwhelm the peripheral towns. Local patriotism in Parit Buntar, Teluk Anson, Ipoh, Batu Gajah, Tapah, Kampar, takes a wholesomely independent form.

Perak was the first state to change from the old self-sufficient kampong economy to the

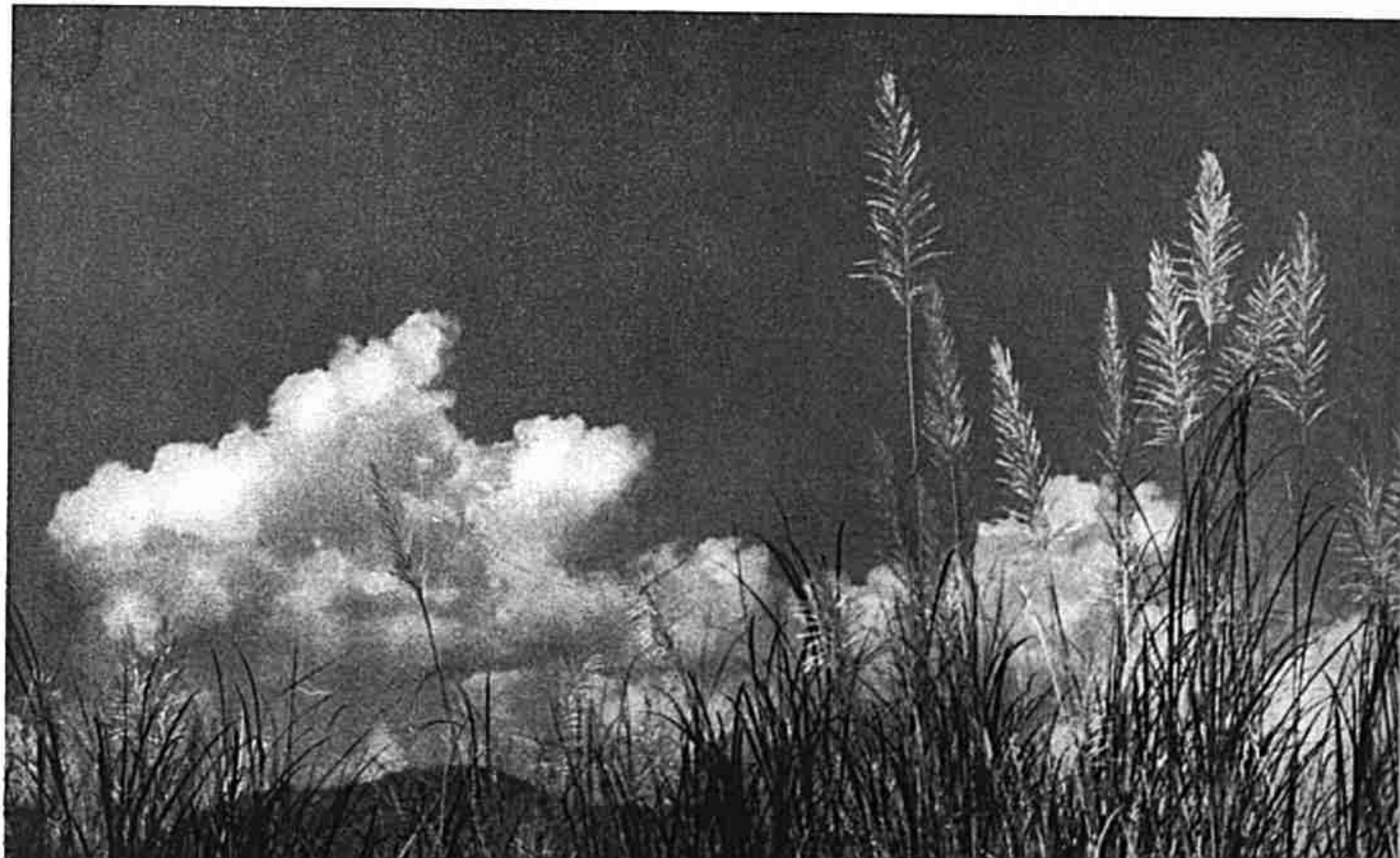
Rain breaking over the Larut Hills, near Taiping

new system of highly capitalised plantation rubber and tin-mines. The banks in Penang and Singapore were ready to supply capital, and Chinese financiers are undeterred from any possibly profitable enterprise, however great the risk. The problem of obtaining labour had to be solved. The Malays are small-holders and it is socially disastrous as well as unjust to take a man from his land and to turn him into a day-labourer. Tin-mining is heavy labour which would be best done by Chinese. To them also fell the laying of roads and cleaning the jungle for the planting of sugar, coffee, and later of rubber, while the subsequent maintenance of estates and the routine duties of the Public Works Department were usually carried out by Southern Indians. Medical and clerical staff were recruited from India, and in the case of the Government services Jaffna Tamils from Ceylon. The Police, the Survey and Forestry Departments contained many Malays who found Government service not uncongenial and whose sons or younger brothers in later years knocked hopefully for admission at the doors of other departments. The task of

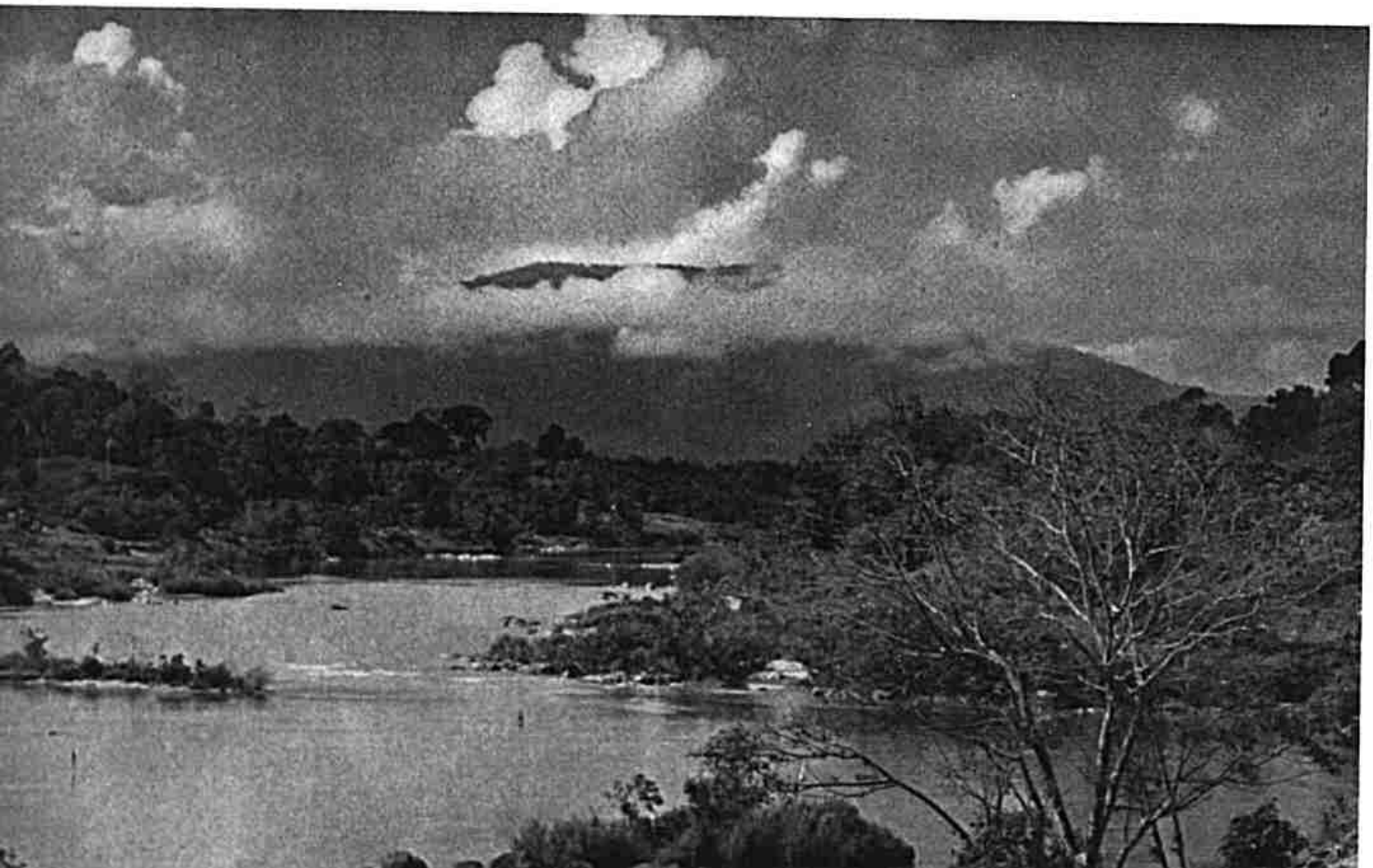
rice-planting was reserved for Malays. Many came in from Kedah and Penang while Malaysians were attracted to the vastly expanded and irrigated district of Krian, and settled there permanently.

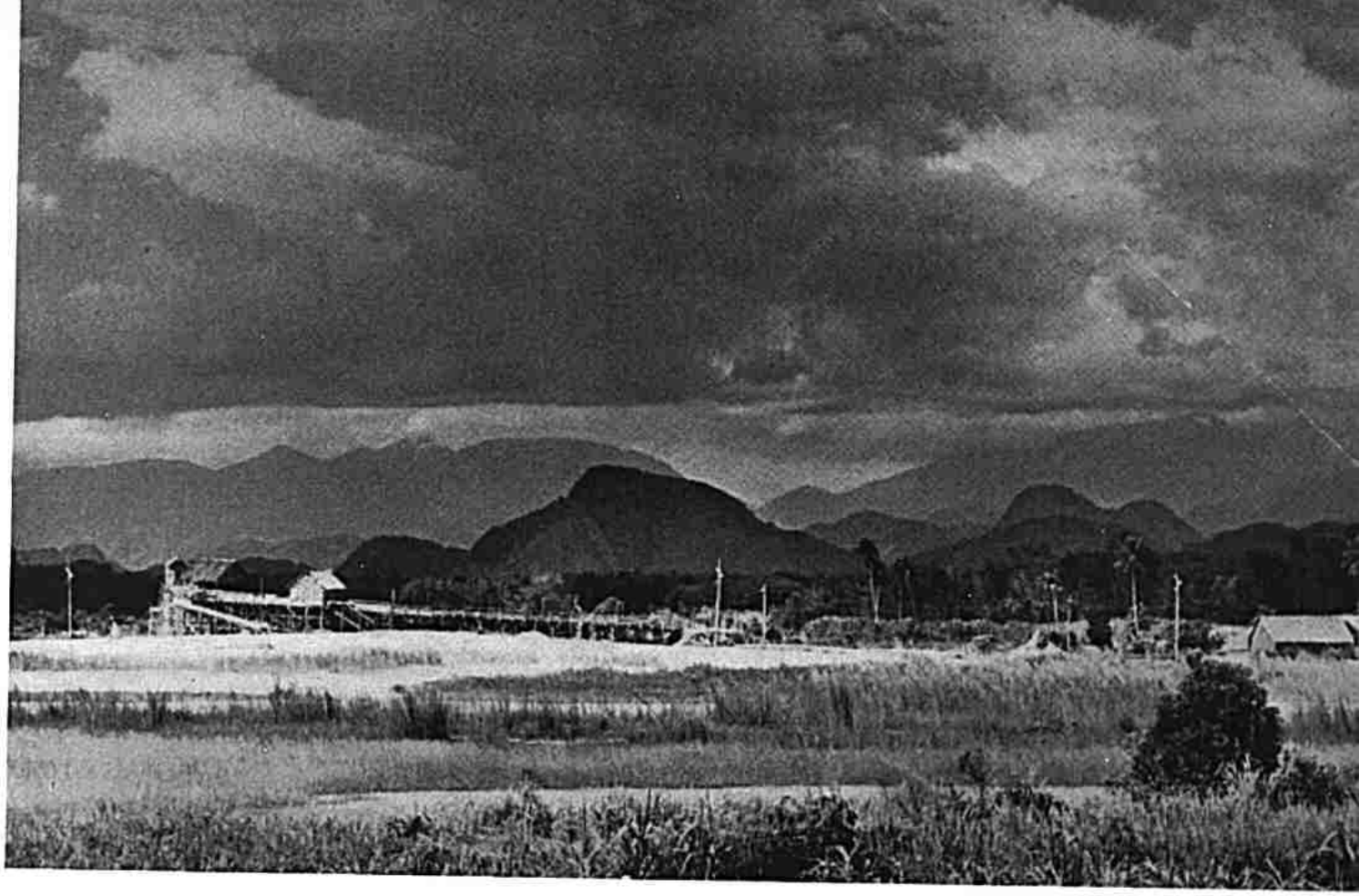
In this way the blow of the impact of a foreign capitalist economy was softened and the Malays had the opportunity of adjusting themselves slowly to the change, and benefitting by the new schools, roads, hospitals, and amenities that were among the bye-products of the agrarian revolution. Not all of Perak was affected by this development, and in one district, Upper Perak, a conscious attempt was made to keep aloof from the movement and to delay the pace of the inevitable change-over as much as possible. Grik, the chief village of Upper Perak, used elephants as transport and cut down its road programme to the improvement of existing bridle paths. Bordered by Siam and under heavy jungle, Grik managed comfortably enough. But even a Grik clock could not stand still for ever and it is being opened up slowly and without some of the vulgarities and crudities of 'modern progress'. The last few elephants that carried annually a Government party on medical inspection to the otherwise inaccessible village of Belum were shot by Communist terrorists.

Elephant grass flowering in the Kinta valley, southern Perak



The Perak River. Above, at Kuala Kangsar, the old capital of the state. Below, looking south from the Chenderoh Dam, with Gunong Selong in the distance



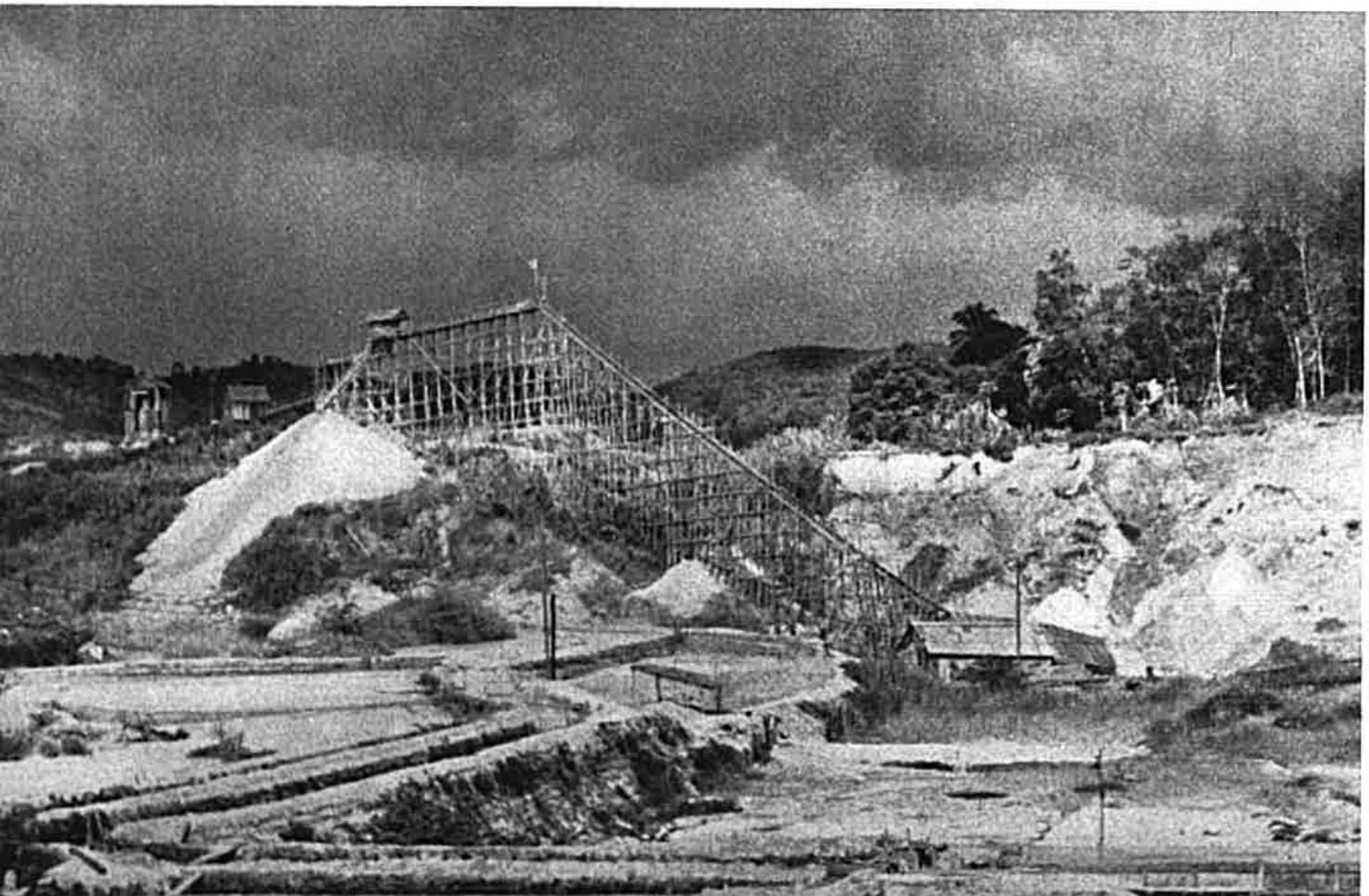


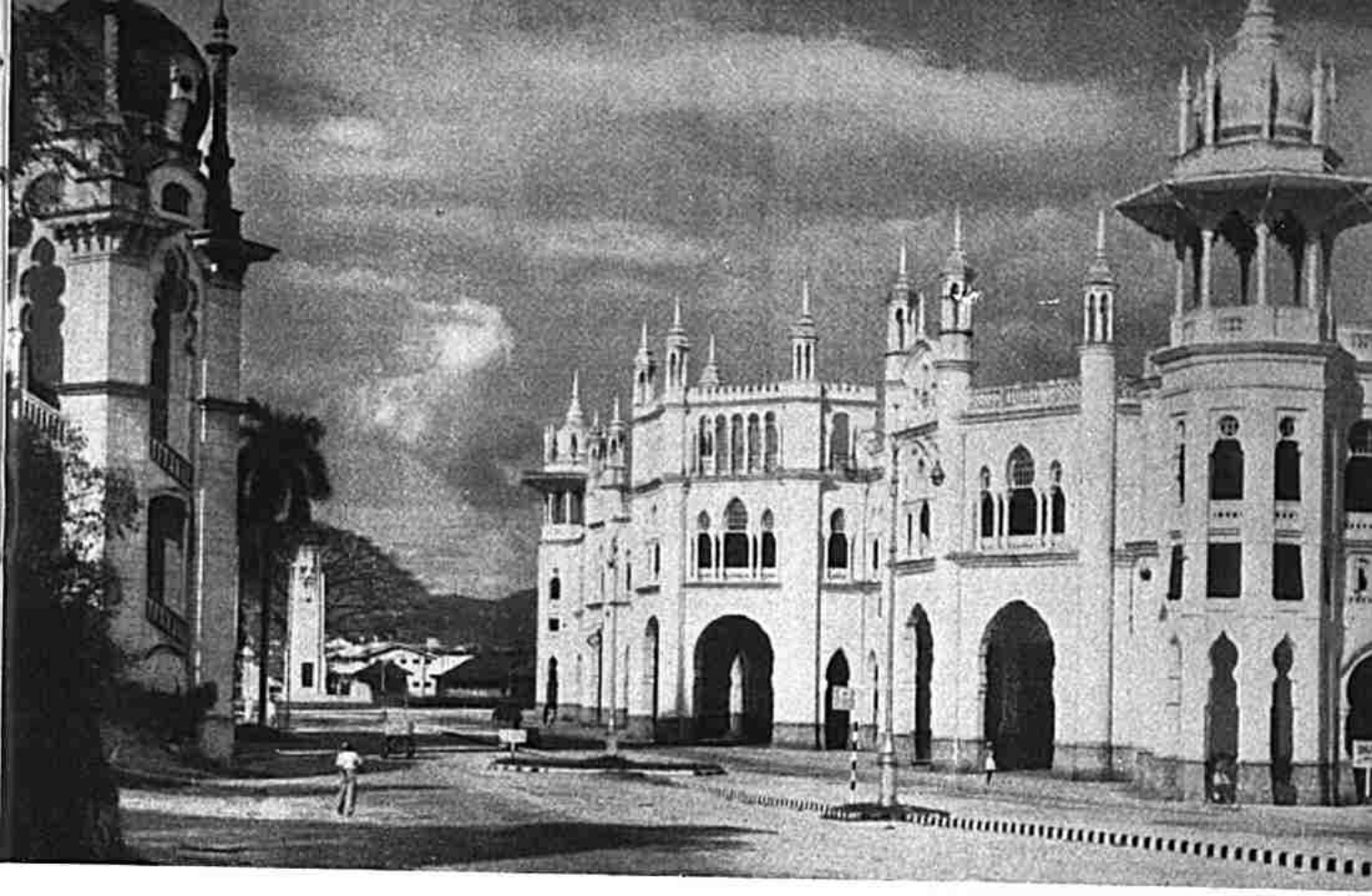
Storm clouds gathering over the Kinta valley, Perak

The tin of Kinta and parts of Tapah is being worked out, and Perak is confronted with the problem of converting its abandoned tin-mines into arable land. The tailings have either escaped into the rivers, thereby doing much damage to the drainage of the country, or have been piled into useless heaps. Modern alienation insists on retention of the tailings, but to a large extent the mischief has been done already. It is difficult to see how such land can ever become useful. If the abandoned area is near a town it may be possible to build on it, or it can be utilised by Chinese who by abundant toil and lavish manuring can make it produce some shallow-rooted vegetables. Re-afforestation is better than nothing and may be the only practicable measure, but nature's pace in restoring humus is measured in inches per century.

Perak is well endowed and has made full use of its advantages. There is an elaborate hill station on Cameron Highlands which, though it lies in Pahang, is approached from the Perak side. A small hill-station exists in Taiping and a seaside resort is open at Pangkor, unfortunately at the end of a long and lonely road. Perak has set aside wild-life reserves and Taiping contains the Federation's only active museum. Every town has at least one school and a recreation ground.

Tin-mining in Selangor. Above, a dredge operating at Petaling, south of Kuala Lumpur. Below, a Chinese open-cast mine



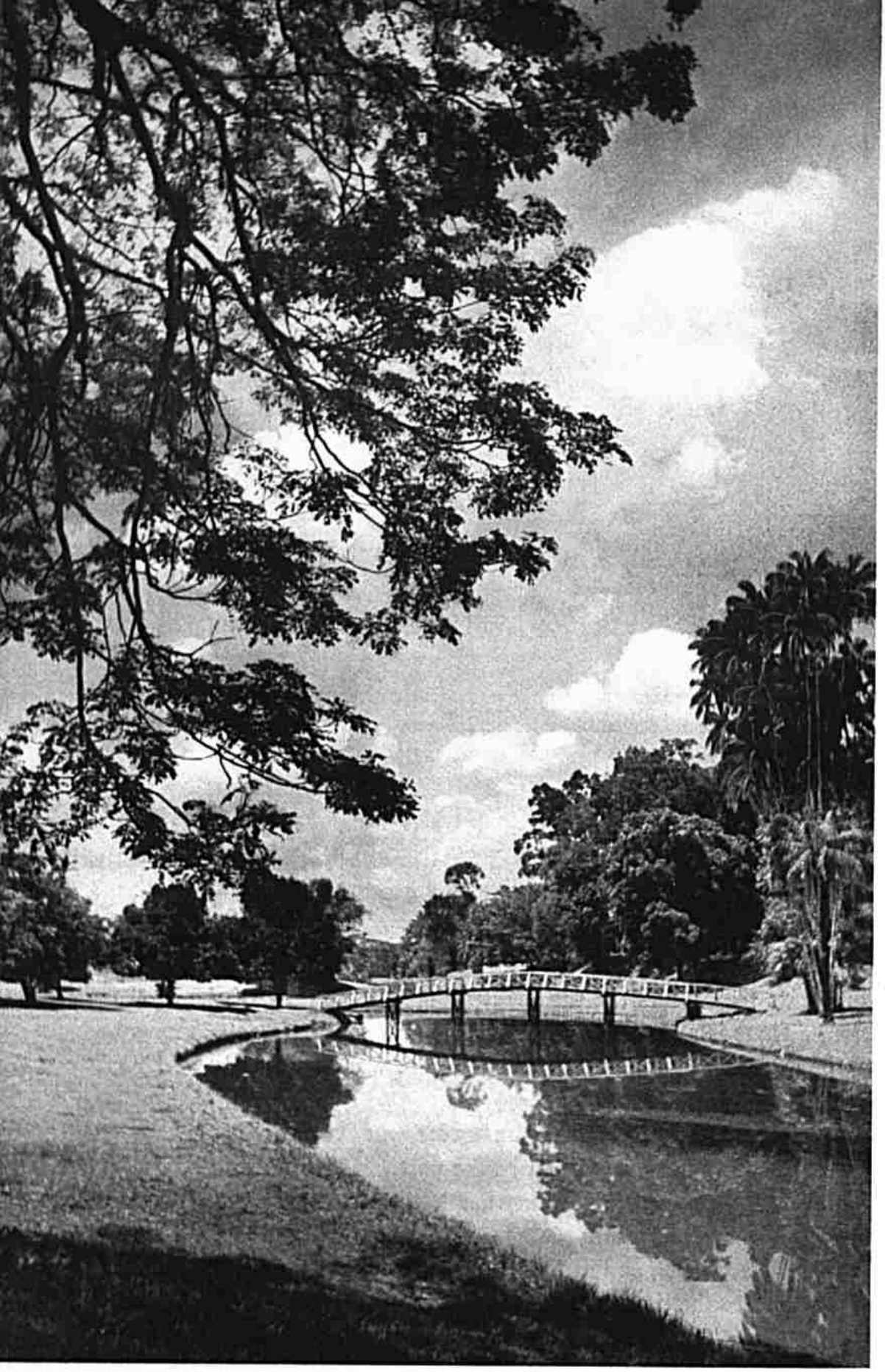


The railway station, Kuala Lumpur

Selangor

SELANGOR is the most 'synthetic' of all the states. Its ruling house sprang from Bugis chiefs and glories in its ancestry much as an Englishman in his unregenerate moments remembers the turbulent sailors of the time of the first Queen Elizabeth. There is a high percentage of Indonesian immigrants among the Malays, while its rubber estates and tin-mines are worked respectively by Indian and Chinese labour.

Its history is a confused record of disturbances, but Selangor has always considered that the future is as important as the past, and it need not be detailed. In the middle of the nineteenth century the Sultan endeavoured to restore order by engaging an able, energetic Malay from Kedah, Tengku Dziauddin, who was not wholly successful, and in the tin-fields the practice of keeping the peace by paying cash for the heads of rivals or enemies was not unknown. The



The public gardens at Kuala Lumpur

Sultan, an amiable, indulgent old gentleman, cried 'Peace, Peace', when there was no possibility of peace. In 1873 piracy at the mouth of the Jugra River forced the Governor of Singapore, Sir Andrew Clarke, to intervene. The pirates were caught and tried by Tengku Dziauddin; the kris with which they were executed was subsequently presented to Sir Andrew.

Frank Swettenham, who did for the Federation what Raffles did for Singapore, became British Resident in Selangor in 1874. The Sultan described him in a letter to Sir Andrew, 'We are very much obliged to our friend for the officer whom our friend has chosen. He is very clever in the customs of Malay Government, and he is very clever in gaining the hearts of rajas and their sons with soft words, delicate and sweet so that all men rejoice in him as the perfume of an opened flower.' Sir Frank, who was knighted and eventually became Governor and High Commissioner, survived till 1946. He built the railways, nursed the country's finances, and made the chief port of the Federation at the mouth of the Klang River, the eponymous Port Swettenham. The parochialism of the States was lessened by the Treaty of Federation which he arranged in 1895.

Selangor derived much of its early revenue from its tin-mines, the opium duties, and leases for gambling privileges. The old methods of dulang washing

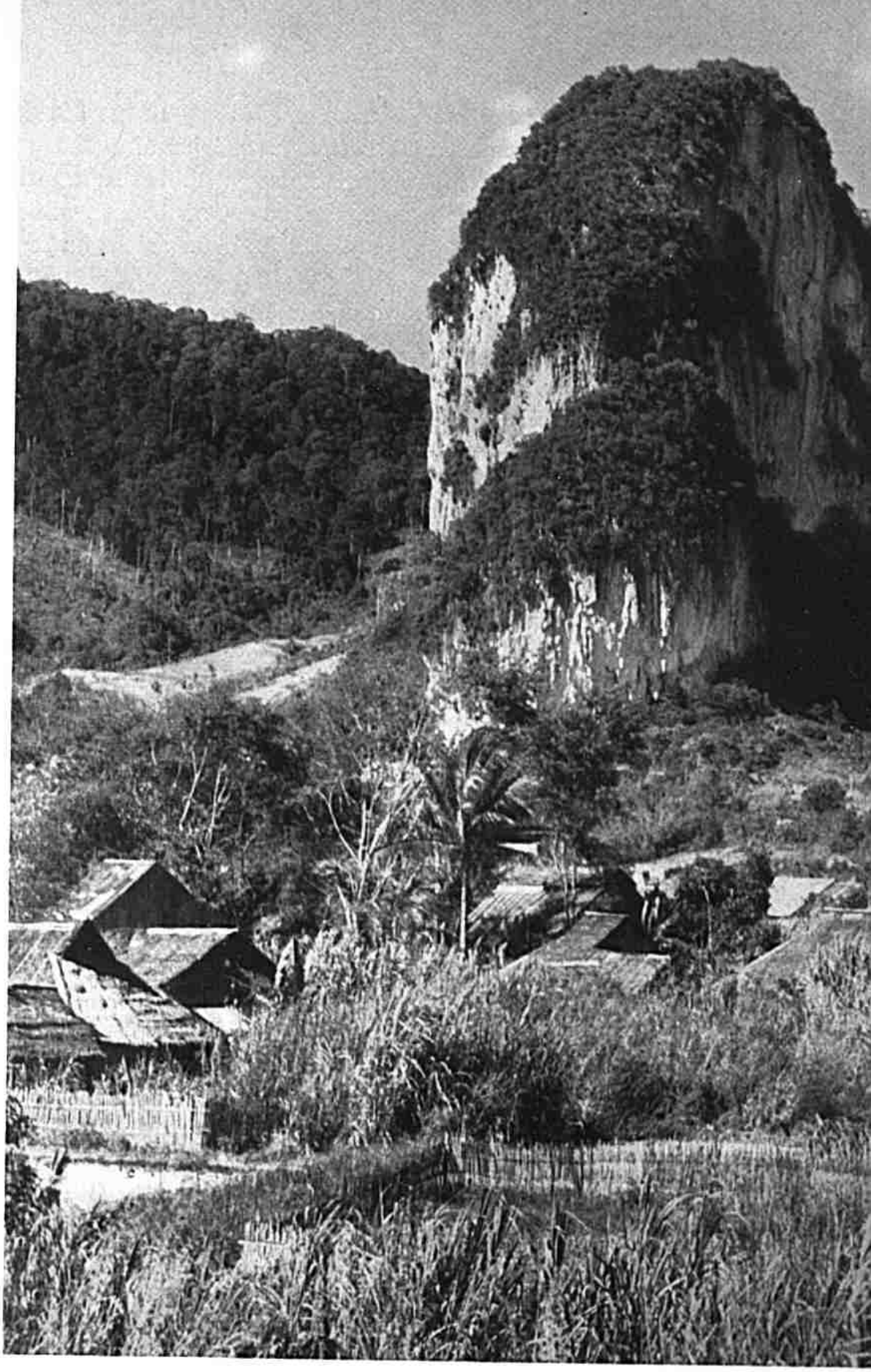
The Leper Settlement at Sungei Buloh

and open-cast mining have been replaced by highly capitalised dredging which has allowed land of lower quality to be worked profitably.

Rubber seeds, after their adventurous journey with Wickham from Brazil *via* Kew Gardens to the Botanic Gardens in Singapore, were first grown on a plantation scale in Selangor. When H. N. Ridley, the curator of the Gardens discovered a method of tapping that did not kill the trees, and preached the potentialities of rubber to all, he found his most attentive audience among the planters of Selangor. The rich swampy soil near the coast supports many coconuts and extensive rice areas are being opened up in the Tanjong Karang plain.

Selangor has always displayed a tough, commercial, enterprising spirit. It was in Klang that Sir Malcolm Watson tackled the appalling scourge of malaria. In much of Selangor the mosquito had denied the country to mankind as effectively as the tse-tse fly had lowered a poison curtain round parts of Africa. Sir Malcolm evolved the technique of a field control through which large tracts of country could be worked without undue danger. In Batu Arang Selangor operates Malaya's only coal-mine. Its *enterpreneurs* have taken numerous unrewarding risks. Attempts to make bricks and power alcohol were failures that had to be written off, but pineapples were grown successfully, and the change from primary production to industrialism has been more marked here than in any other state. Selangor has considerable factories for rubber shoes,

Batu Caves hill, near Kuala Lumpur



A limestone outcrop at Kanching, fifteen miles north of Kuala Lumpur

and a large soap factory is being built. Much attention has been paid to research. There are several technical schools, a School of Agriculture, the Institute of Medical Research, and the Institute of Rubber Research. The utilitarian note is instanced even at its hill station at Fraser's Hill, where there is a cattle farm that has taught many useful lessons in the animal husbandry of the tropics.

Kuala Kubu, the capital town of one of its districts, Ulu Selangor, was silted up by erosion started by tin-mining and aggravated by the heavy rains which wash more detritus into the rivers than they can carry further. It is a mark of the brisk resilience of Selangor that the area was abandoned without regret or delay and a new, well laid out Kuala Kubu Bahru built a short distance away. Signs of a similar doom for the Federal Capital were noted in the growing frequency of floods, and the rivers were promptly canalised so that the future of Kuala Lumpur is assured.

The seat of the Sultan, now at Kuala Lumpur, was formerly at Klang, twenty-three miles west of Kuala Lumpur. Six miles further down river lies Port Swettenham, the second main port of the Federation. It was planned with vision and enterprise, but extensive improvements are now necessary if it is to handle the increasing incoming and outgoing cargo that the expanding economy of the Federation has called forth.

The coast of Selangor is largely mangrove swamp, and its appearance must be not unlike the grim prospect that made life so difficult in prehistoric times. It can produce firewood but any further extraction or development needs the

Bamboos and tree-ferns on the flank of the Semangko Pass

Above, nightfall in the Semangko Pass, with the evening mist settling down over Bukit Kutu.
Below, a road through an estate of old rubber, Ulu Langat, Selangor

lavish equipment of drainage machinery. Conversion to agricultural land can be accomplished, and is being attempted piecemeal. But the capital cost will be immense. At present the area is in the nature of a reserve which will be exploited when over-population requires that all dormant land must be made to yield.

The town of Kuala Lumpur, with its 250,000 inhabitants, is the Federal as well as the State Capital. As such it has been a forced growth where the supplies of buildings and amenities lag behind an ever-increasing demand. It is inclined to sprawl and to break out occasionally into what has been stigmatised as 'Bastard-Moorish architecture'. The imperious demand for accommodation leads to compromises which will saddle the town with jerry-built houses. More and wider roads, better drainage, community centres, and schools are imperatively necessary. But nature which compensates a deficiency in one place with a double plus in another has provided a restless spirit in the town which may yet be able to catch up and overtake its troubles. The country is rich and its wealth, though sorely dissipated by anti-Communist measures, may yet be adequate to meet the need for repairing the omissions of the past and remedying the mistakes of the present.

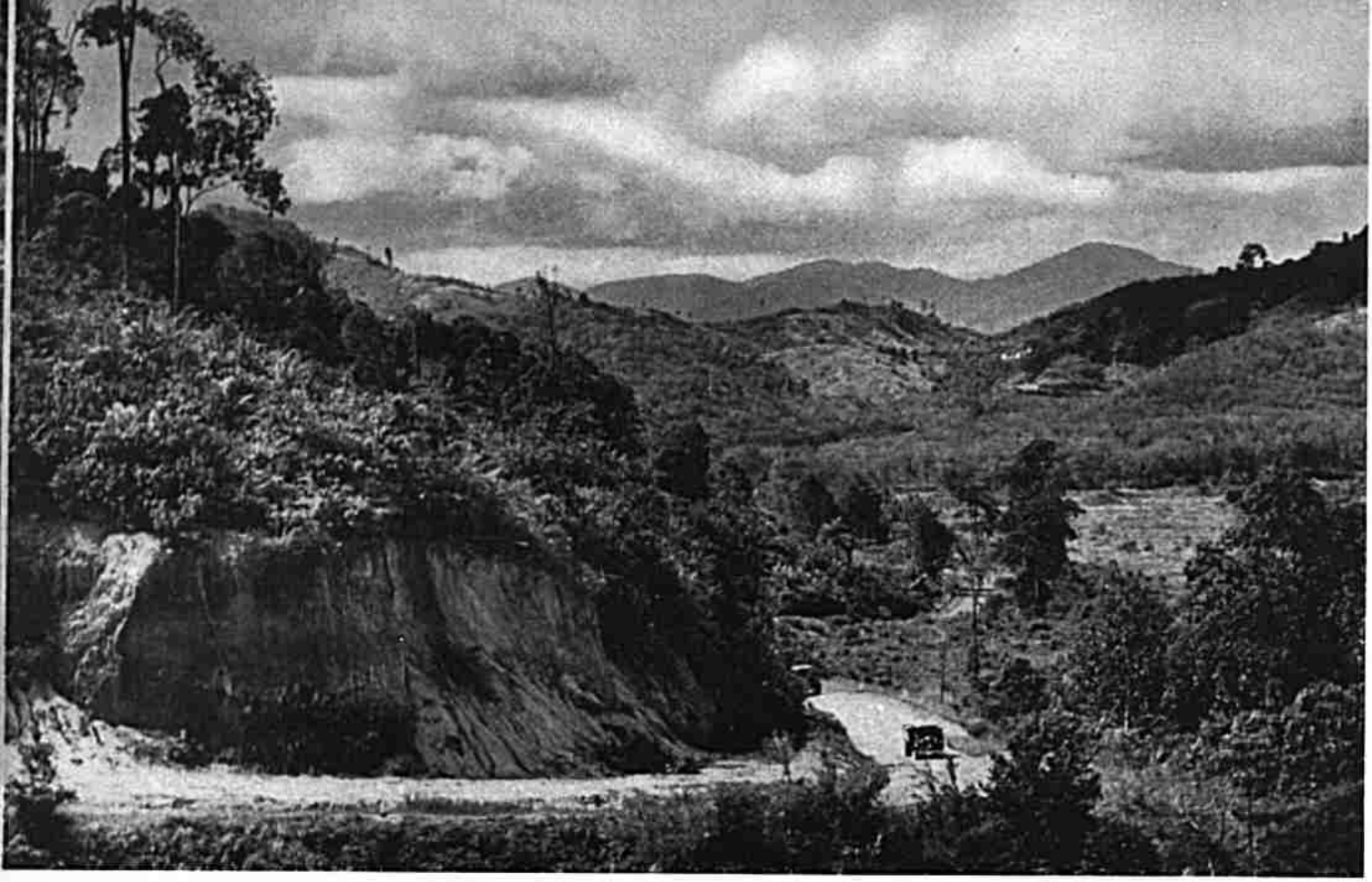
Kuala Selangor from across the Selangor River, early morning

Port Dickson from the coast road near Kampong Bagan Pinang at sundown

Negri Sembilan

THE NINE STATES have an individuality of their own. The country was populated by groups of Hindu Menangkabaus from Sumatra during the period when the Portuguese held Malacca. In the eighteenth century these groups entered into a loose confederation which they called the Negri Sembilan. By this time the Menangkabaus had been converted to Islam but they retained their old tribal *adat*, intensely democratic and based on an exogamous matriarchy. The people are divided into twelve *suku* (tribes), members of which are forbidden to intermarry. Land is entailed in tail female; if any lot of land subject to the custom is to be sold, it must be offered first to a member of the tribe. Only if such a purchaser is not forthcoming, can it be sold to a member of another tribe, and then only with the consent of both the vendor's and the purchaser's *lembaga*.

There was no written law. The *adat* was a tradition expressed in homely pithy sayings. Such an *adat* could readily become a clamp on progress, but,



The Mantin Pass, on the main trunk road between Mantin and Seremban

like the common law of England, it had quite astonishing flexibility and capacity for adaptation. Given the patience, shrewdness and independence of the Negri Malay it worked admirably. It was humane. The only crime for which capital punishment was fixed was high treason. Any other crime was, if possible, regarded as a civil matter which should be amicably settled by the payment of damages and compensation. The State was unusually peaceful and orderly so that its dauntless village Hampdens, quoting memorable sayings from the *adat*, could withstand the petty tyrants who tried to oppress them. Such sayings are startling in their homely expression of social sagacity. *Padang tidak bĕrpagar lalang* (an unfenced holding is weed) stresses the importance of protection. *Kambing bĕrkek* (goats bleat) is quoted to show that an expert doing the work in which he has skill is presumed to have acted carefully and without negligence. *Experto crede* could be used in the same context. Divorce is not uncommon and the distribution of property on divorce is condensed into a jewel of six words long which on the stretched fore-finger of the law sparkles

The exhibition Malay house in the public gardens, Seremban

clearly. *Chari, bahagi; dapatan, tinggal; pĕmbawa, kĕmbali* (joint earnings during the marriage are divided, legacies remain with the inheritor or inheritrix; property possessed by either party before the marriage returns to that party).

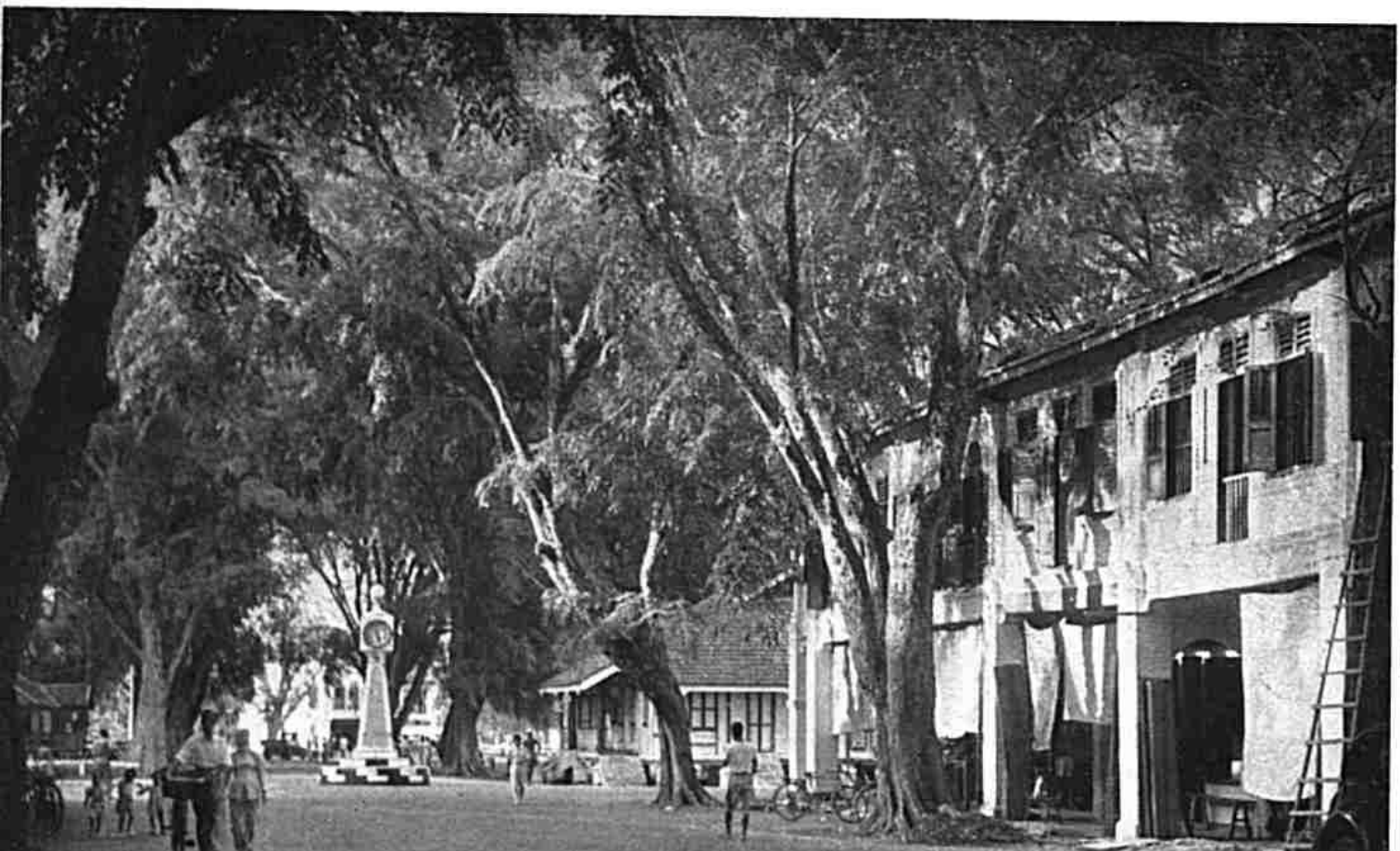
The administrators of the *adat* were the four *Undang*. Under them were the *lĕmbaga*, and under them the *buapa*. Appointments to the posts were made for life from the various *pĕrut* (families) in rotation. These officials were all elected and a serious defect of the system was that the election had to be *bulat* (unanimous). An unsatisfied claimant could keep an appointment vacant for years by exercising his veto. The only exception to the rotational change was the Head of the Confederation, the *Yang-di-Pĕrtuan*, where succession is from father to eldest son. Every third year the Yang-di-Pertuan holds a *mĕngadap* ceremony at Sri Menanti at which many of the customary officers assemble to do him honour and to express their fealty. The installation of a major chief is another occasion where many rites and ceremonies must be punctiliously observed. The effect of the *adat* is that the women are the most emancipated, the men the most intelligent and the State the most stable in the Peninsula.

In spite of this the Negri Sembilan suffered a mild attack of the troubles that affected the States in the seventies of the last century. Some of the chiefs asserted an unlawful independence, but in 1874 the Dato Klana and the Dato Muda of Linggi signed bonds not to break the peace. The Dato Bandar offered a limited resistance, but a small force of 150 men quelled the disturbance. The Dato made peace and survived happily and in dignity for many years.

The nine states are, Sungei Ujong, Jelebu, Jempul, Johol, Gemencheh, Rembau, Ulu Muar, Inas or Gunong Pasir, and Sri Menanti. There are no broad stretches of emerald rice fields such as are seen in Krian but the country is well watered, and in each valley moderately large areas produce fair crops. Kampong economy is admirably diversified. The small-holder has a patch of rice-land for his own food, a kampong that holds his house and some fruit trees, a buffalo shed, and a few fowls, and, if he is lucky, he may have two or three acres of rubber which acts as his cash crop.

Long training in discussion in the *adat* councils has borne fruit in the far-seeing deliberations of the Negri Sembilan State Council. Its members know their territory, its limitations, and its capabilities. The council has therefore been

The main street, Port Dickson, April 1950



Rubber trees in southern Negri Sembilan, near the Malacca border. Above, old rubber, ringed and dead ready for felling. Below, young rubber, just coming into bearing

Rice fields near Kuala Klawang, in the Jelebu district of Negri Sembilan. These pictures were taken in May. The timing varies in different areas in Malaya. In Jelebu the seed rice from the nurseries is usually planted out in the fields in June

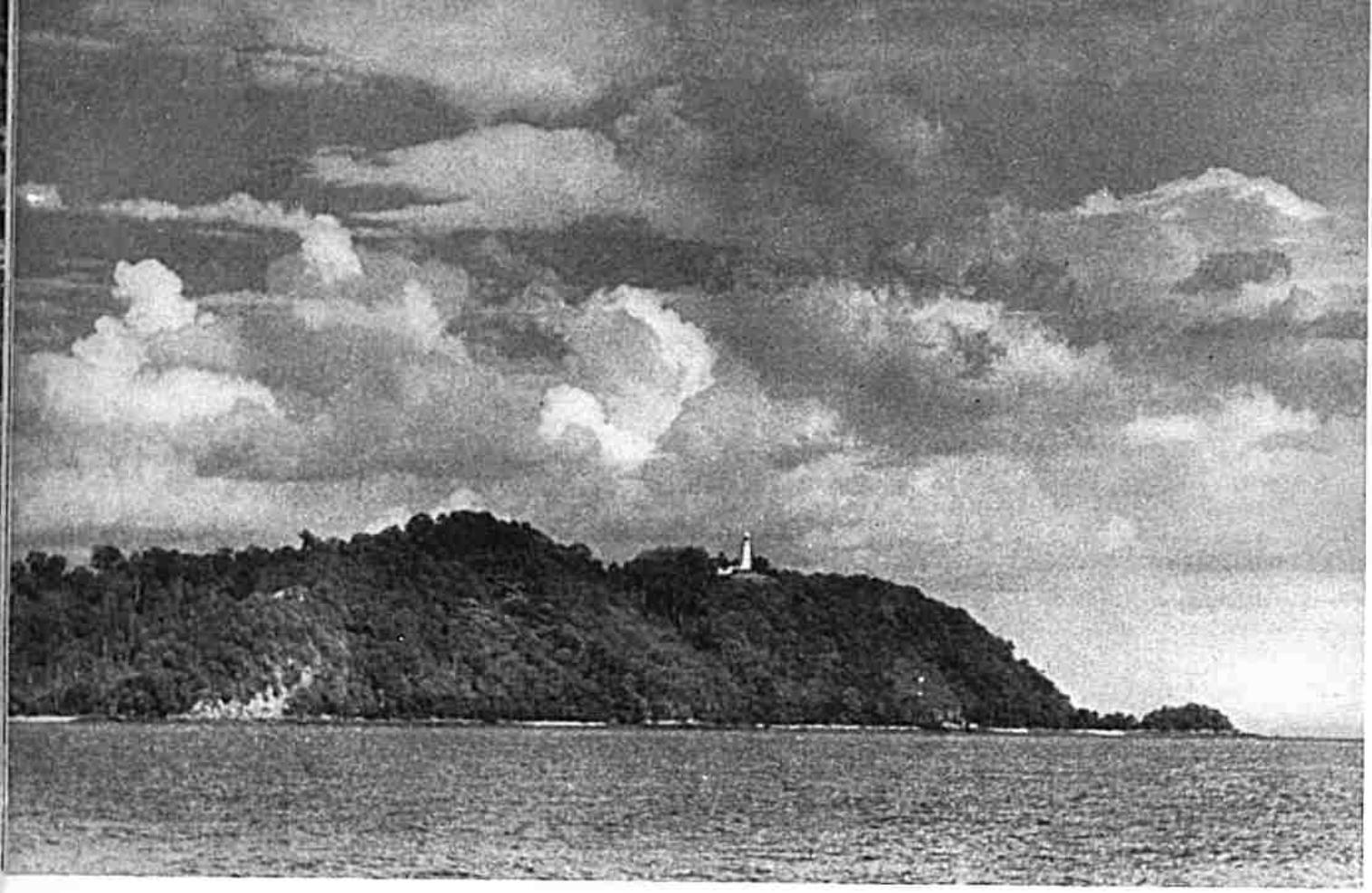
able to design a model state. Forest reserves, rubber areas, palm oil areas, have been set aside and are in use. Tin mines in Jelebu and in Seremban still rely on Chinese labour, but plantation rubber companies are adjacent to Malay small holdings and many employ Malays on their estates. The Malay finds the routine of estate labour irksome, but there are always a number of under-employed men and women who welcome the chance of temporary or seasonal occupation. Once inured to the discipline of estate work, a Malay worker is as good as the next man.

The Yang-di-Pertuan resides at Sri Menanti near Kuala Pilah. He himself has been called to the Bar and he carries on the tradition of gracious hospitality and dignified charm which made his father, the late Sir Muhammad an impressive as well as popular ruler. Seremban is the seat of government. Less than eighty years old, it was at one time a mining centre and much of the town has been erected on the levelled sites of worked out tin mines. Port Dickson is a

seaside holiday resort which will grow in popularity if the habit of periodic excursions and short jaunts becomes more general. It offers yachting and bathing among its attractions, and is the headquarters of the Malay Regiment. Jelebu remains one of the unspoiled parts of Malaya and looks today much as it must have done many generations ago. The last district, Tampin, contains the important railway junction of Gemas, where the main trunk line from Singapore sends a tenuous branch north-east towards the backward states of the east coast. Before the war it ran up through western Pahang to Kelantan and thence, after a ferry change for passengers and goods at Kota Bharu, through Tumpat to the Patani States, but the Japanese removed much of the metal to construct a strategic railway in south-western Thailand.

On the European planter, miner, doctor, lawyer, or official who lives and works there, the Negri Sembilan exercises an unforgettable charm. Its people, trained by the unwritten law and adept at conversation and social intercourse, are an unfailing joy to meet, for they are always ready to argue and to disagree. While Malay politeness in other states considers it rude to contradict, a Negri Malay will fight every step and stage of the argument and bring up a store of homely sayings to substantiate his case. He alone among the Malays is litigious.

Rice fields near Kuala Klawang, in the Jelebu district of Negri Sembilan



Cape Rachado from the sea

Malacca

MALAYA'S recent acquisition of wealth and its sudden expansion have produced a certain sameness in its mass-produced towns and its utilitarian villages. A paratrooper alighting at many points would find it hard to locate his landing. He would see the same pattern of bungalow or two-storied house, the same shops, the same Main Street, High Street, Cross Street, Jalan Sultan, or Jalan 'Abdu'llah. But he would soon identify the singular charm and distinction of Malacca. The chief bridges and buildings are painted a rich terra-cotta. The streets are mediævally narrow, and bear such names as Jonker, Heeren, Tinsmith, Goldsmith, Tranquerah, Bona Vista, Banda Kaba. There are old Portuguese and Dutch churches. The walls of some of the houses are six feet thick. A common building material is baked laterite which appears to grow harder and more enduring as the centuries pass it by.

Rice fields near Malacca town in October. Above, ploughing the fields for planting. Below, gathering the young stock from the nursery: the planting out is done mostly by young women

Old Malacca. Above, the gateway through the town walls built by the Dutch shortly after their occupation of Malacca. Below, the main altar at the Cheng Hoon Teng Temple

St. John's Fort, Malacca

Malacca cherishes as well as breathes history. An admirable Historical Society has attached plaques to the venerable buildings, recording their features and periods. A reverent care preserves the Fort of St. John's Hill. St. Paul's Church, the tomb of St. Francis Xavier, though his remains were translated to Goa, the grave of Dias, the broad span of Christ Church, and the Stadhuis. The latter is still in use as the Government Office, for Malacca not only preserves and admires but makes all possible use of her treasures. While the visitor is deciphering the names on the graves in St. Paul's, he can see from the church the long walls that induce the sluggish river to flow into the sea with enough current to scour a slightly deeper channel for its excessive load of silt; and south of it, the retaining wall which piled up the muddy flat on the seaward side of Banda Hilir Road, now converted to a handsome park that offers a children's playground, two football fields, and a cricket pitch, and is still further accruing from the sea.

Pride in the past has developed pride in the town. The Malays remember the hey-day of the Malacca Sultanate of the fifteenth century. Descendants of the Portuguese who conquered Malacca in 1511 still speak in part the language of their heroic ancestors. Dutch Eurasians remember the conquest of the town after a valiant defence in 1641, though it was under the Dutch that Malacca began the slow regression that may be a gradual death. Their headquarters remained at Batavia, and Malacca became a small outpost. At the end of the eighteenth century the British arrived, left, returned, and then in the nineteenth century finally stayed as diplomatic manœuvres in the Napoleonic campaigns suggested. A delightful picture of Malacca in the days of change is painted in

Above, a village mosque near Malacca town. Below, a small-holding near Serkam in the rice-growing district along the road from Malacca to Kesang

The foothills of Mount Ophir from the road between Tangkak and Asahan

the Hikayat of 'Abdu'llah, the Malay, Arab, Tamil, autobiographer who, no mean achievement, was in his time the teacher and friend of Raffles.

It is stated that St. Francis Xavier, despairing of the wickedness of the Portuguese, and of the obstinate refusal of the Malays to embrace Christianity, shook the dust of Malacca off his shoes, cursed the place and embarked for Macao. The rubber industry insulated the curse and revived former prosperity. During the Japanese occupation Malacca was a health resort for the Japanese army which liked it greatly, and showed its appreciation by picking up the rails of the branch line which led to the main trunk line of the Malayan Railways at Tampin. This theft has been serious for Malacca, but not, of course, in an unjust world for the Japanese. Transport has been hampered, and Malacca, which is of time has not got time on her side. The shallowing port has a doubtful future. Lighters may help to solve the problem but the extra handling charges are a handicap in competition with Penang, Port Swettenham, and Singapore.

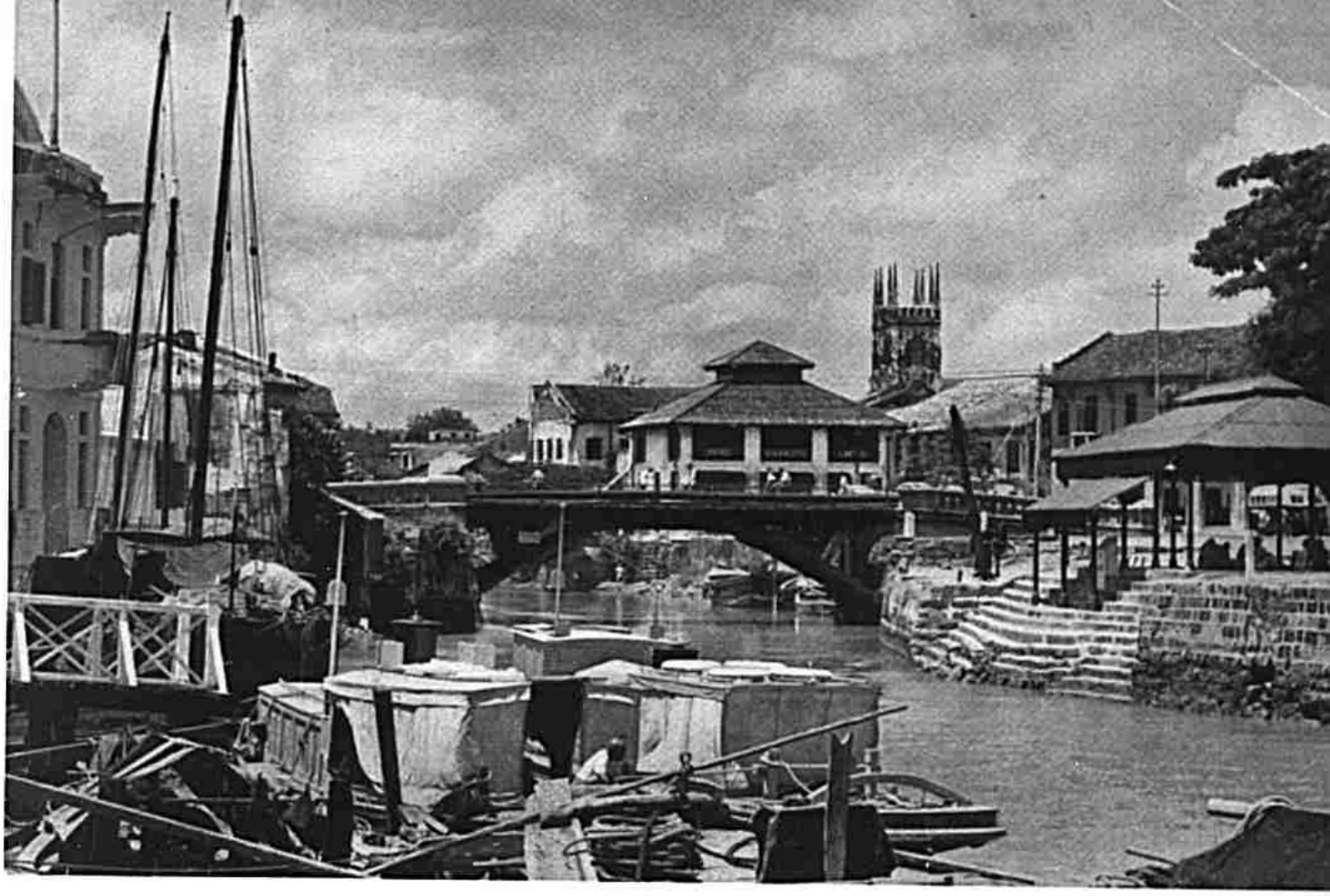
Malacca is the most stable of all the States and Settlements. Its population is the most attached to the soil and the least disturbed by immigration. Chinese families have lived there for several generations: some can trace their ancestors

back three or four hundred years. Many of them speak more Malay than Chinese. They have lived harmoniously with the Malays for generations and in this area have solved the thorny problem of a plural society. From such an environment there have sprung many able and ambitious men who sought the greater opportunities offered in Singapore and the Federation and have carved out honourable careers. Some have seen Malaya as a whole: it is significant, perhaps, that Dato Sir Cheng-lock Tan is a Malacca man.

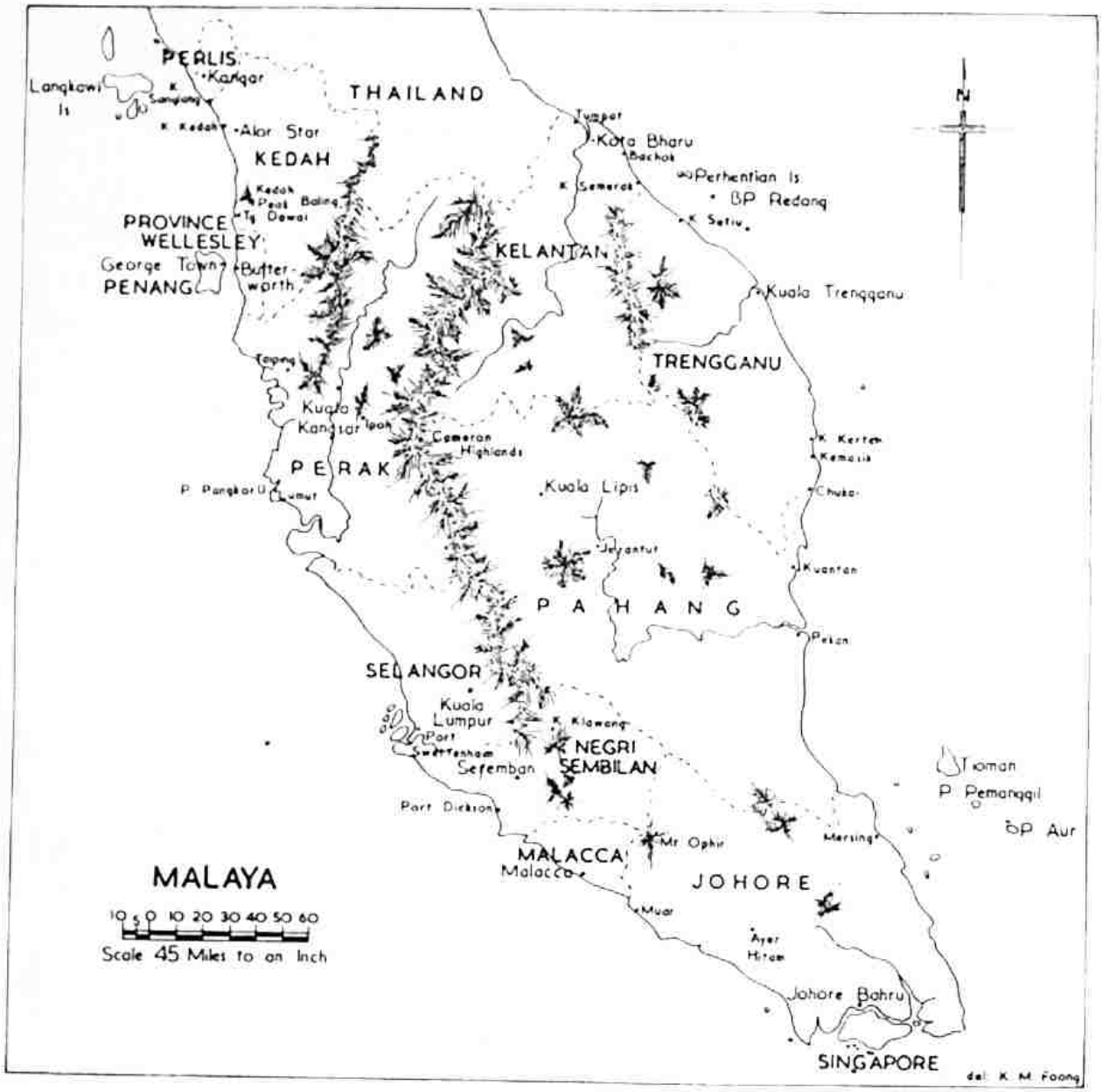
The beauty of Malacca is considerable. Private houses are handsomer than elsewhere. The Malay houses show an architectural design that is less opportunist than their counterparts in the rest of the Peninsula. The soil has been producing for over three hundred years but is not yet exhausted, and, given normal cultivation and manure, yields excellent crops. Nearly the whole of the land is in use for rubber, kampong or rice, and the reserve of jungle is very small. A little tin has been worked but the main occupation is still in agriculture and fishing, and Malacca is probably the most advanced state in animal husbandry.

But Malacca is losing her trade as her port is silting up. To recondition the port must be a prime object of her people who must liberally apply capital and energy to the task.

A Sampan Kotak of the Malacca fishing fleet returning to port at dawn



Above, the river front at Malacca, with the tower of the church of St. Francis in the background. Below, a village near Jasin



INDEX