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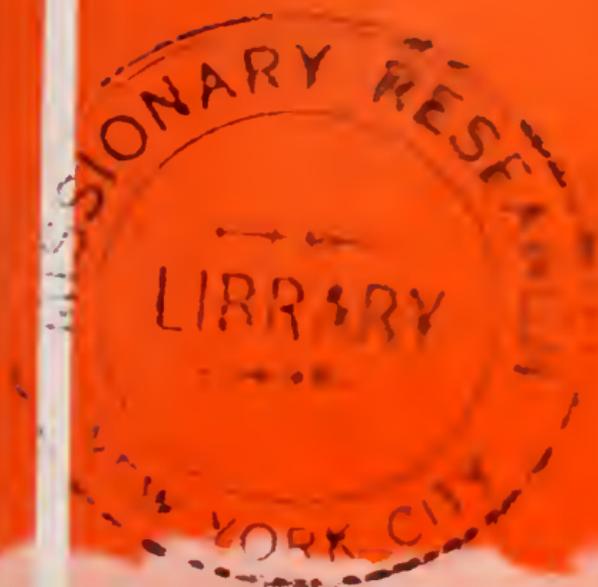
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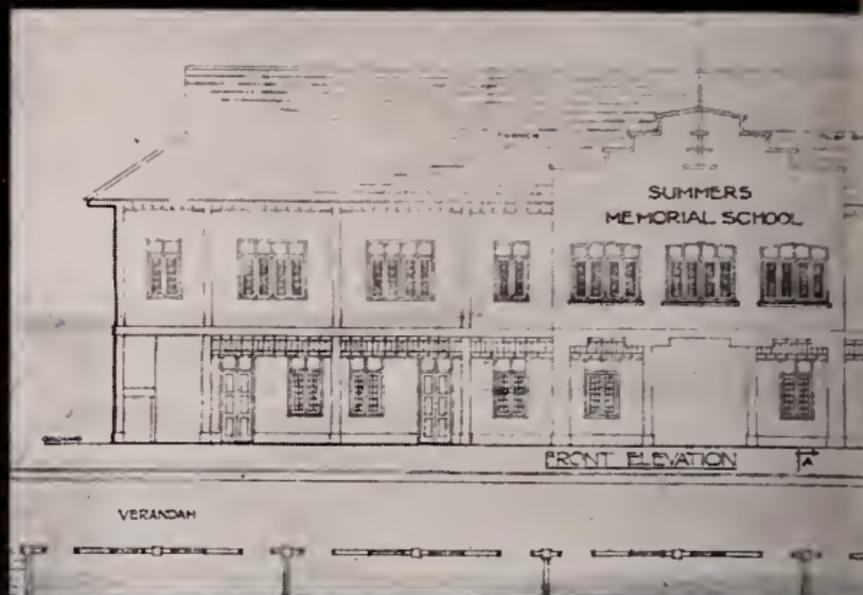
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Indonesia

The
METHODISTS

ON BORNEO





The Methoast

"Right this way, Ladies and Gentlemen! See the greatest wonder of the human race! Behold the Wild Man of Borneo!"

Many people still remember the circus "barker" who screamed about the "wild man of Borneo." Still vivid is the recollection of the pictures of strange people, of missionaries in pots over fires, with natives of Borneo or the Fiji Islands dancing about them.

Of course those lurid descriptions and pictures were slanderous caricatures and gross distortions of the actual situation. It is, however, true that cannibalism prevailed in that part of the world down to modern times, and that missionaries actually were devoured by natives of the island world.



ARCHITECT'S DRAWING OF A SCHOOL BEING ERECTED BY THE METHODISTS AT SIBU IN MEMORY OF REV. GERALD V. SUMMERS, MARTYRED MISSIONARY OF SARAWAK, WHO DIED OF STARVATION IN A JAPANESE INTERNMENT CAMP DURING WORLD WAR II.

its on BORNEO

The Dyaks of Borneo have practised head hunting up to the present, but they are not cannibals.

But nearly all of this has passed. Many of the formerly cannibal islands of the South Pacific are now nearly one hundred per cent Christian, and some of them, including Fiji, are ninety per cent Methodist. Considerable numbers of the head hunting Dyaks have also been evangelized.

At the Ecumencial Methodist Conference at Springfield, Massachusetts, a young Methodist preacher from Fiji addressed the large audience in faultless English. Among other things he said that it was indeed dangerous to visit his home island two generations ago, but today Fiji is the safest spot on earth!



ABOVE: THIS SARAWAK GIRL ESCAPED FROM CRUEL PARENTS WHO BEAT HER AND WAS REARED BY THE METHODIST MISSIONARY AT SIBU.





ABOVE: DYAK CHILDREN ON THE PLATFORM
OF A TYPICAL LONG HOUSE ON BORNEO



LEFT: ROADSIDE STALLS IN SIBUAN ON MARKET
DAY

All this is due to the missionary movement. Thousands of American boys in the armed services found friends in that part of the world because the missionaries had been there before them.

Borneo

Borneo is the largest island of the Netherlands East Indies; in fact it is the third largest island in the world, being surpassed in size only by Greenland and New Guinea. It has an area of nearly three hundred thousand square miles.

This great island lies east of the southern tip of the Malay Peninsula, directly under the Equator. Westward lies Sumatra; to the south is Java; to the southeast is Celebes.

The Netherlands East Indies covers a vast area. Until recently it was relatively little known, but it has always been an interesting and romantic part of the world. It was fought over during World War II and was then seen for the first time by many Americans.

Part of this area is British, but most of it is a part of the Netherlands East Indies, and this constituted a part of the colonial empire of The Netherlands, or Holland, and was the source of much of the Dutch wealth. Since the war there have been rebellions and attempts to secure independence from Dutch rule, and these possess large political significance. While these difficulties have not been adjusted, an agreement has been worked out to set up an Indonesian Republic.

Sarawak

On the northwestern rim of Borneo is Sarawak, a narrow strip of territory about four hundred miles long and with an area of around fifty thousand square miles.

This is the domain of the once-renowned White Rajah, Sir James Brooke, and his successors. That colorful figure was a British seaman whose career in

the South Pacific was filled with somewhat amazing adventures. He secured Sarawak from the Sultan of Brunei, another section of North Borneo, by suppressing an insurrection, and he became the Rajah or king in 1840. The position was hereditary in his family.

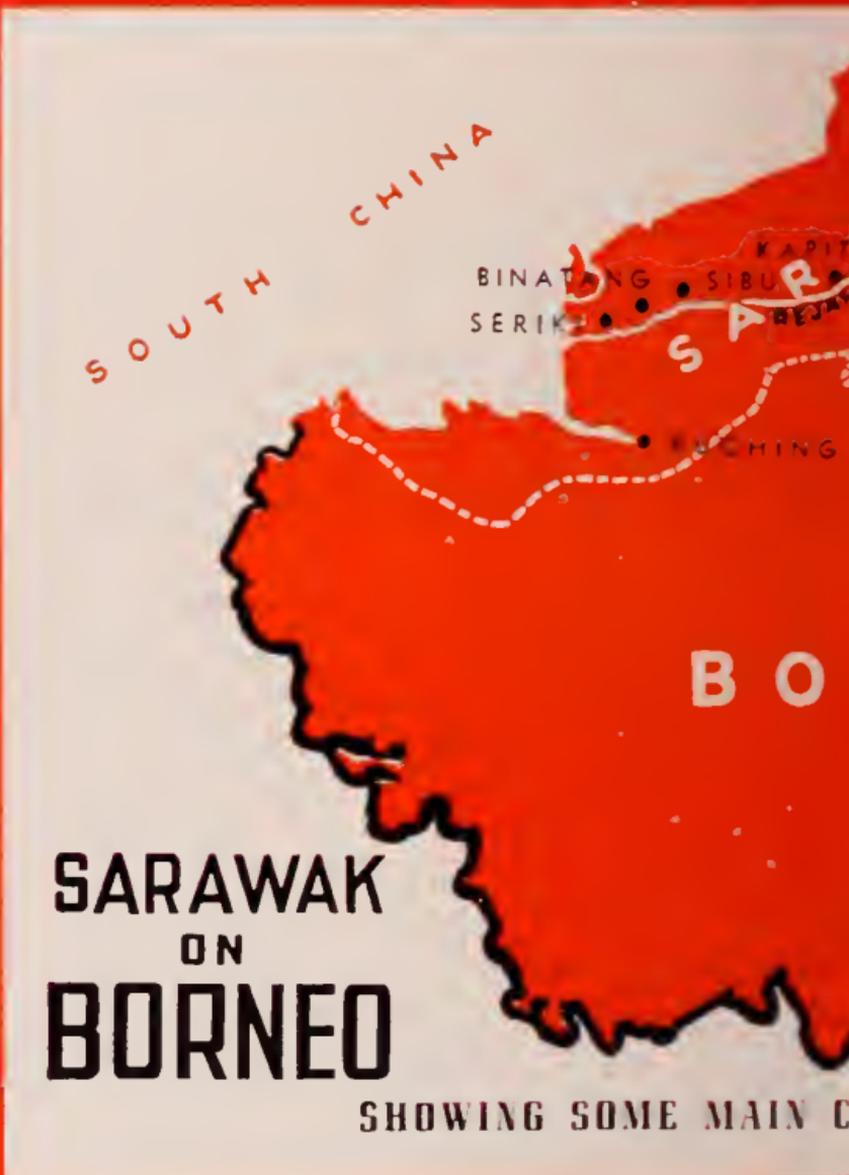
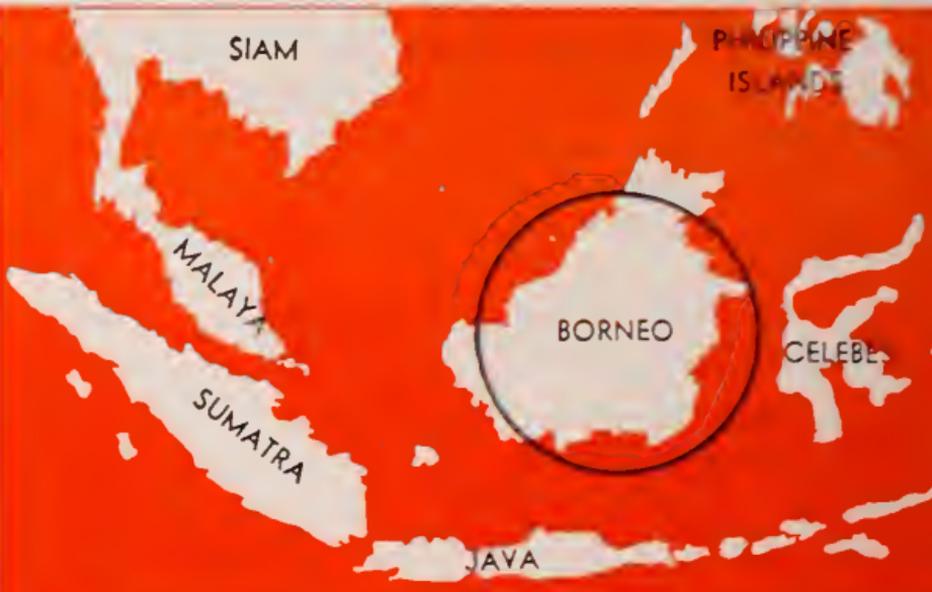
In 1888 Sarawak became a British protectorate, but the authority of the Crown was exercised mainly in foreign relations. In 1904 the position of the Rajah of Sarawak was formally recognized by King Edward. From time to time, as the original domain of the White Rajah was enlarged, concessions were made to the rising aspirations of the people until Sarawak became virtually an independent state. The capital of the country is at Kuching.

The People

The Sarawak population is about half a million, made up, as elsewhere throughout Malaysia, of diverse elements. There are a few British and very many Chinese. The native people belong to several tribes, such as the Malays, Dyaks, Kayans, Kenyahs and Murtus. Many of these are primitives, and only recently was the dreadful practice of head hunting abolished.

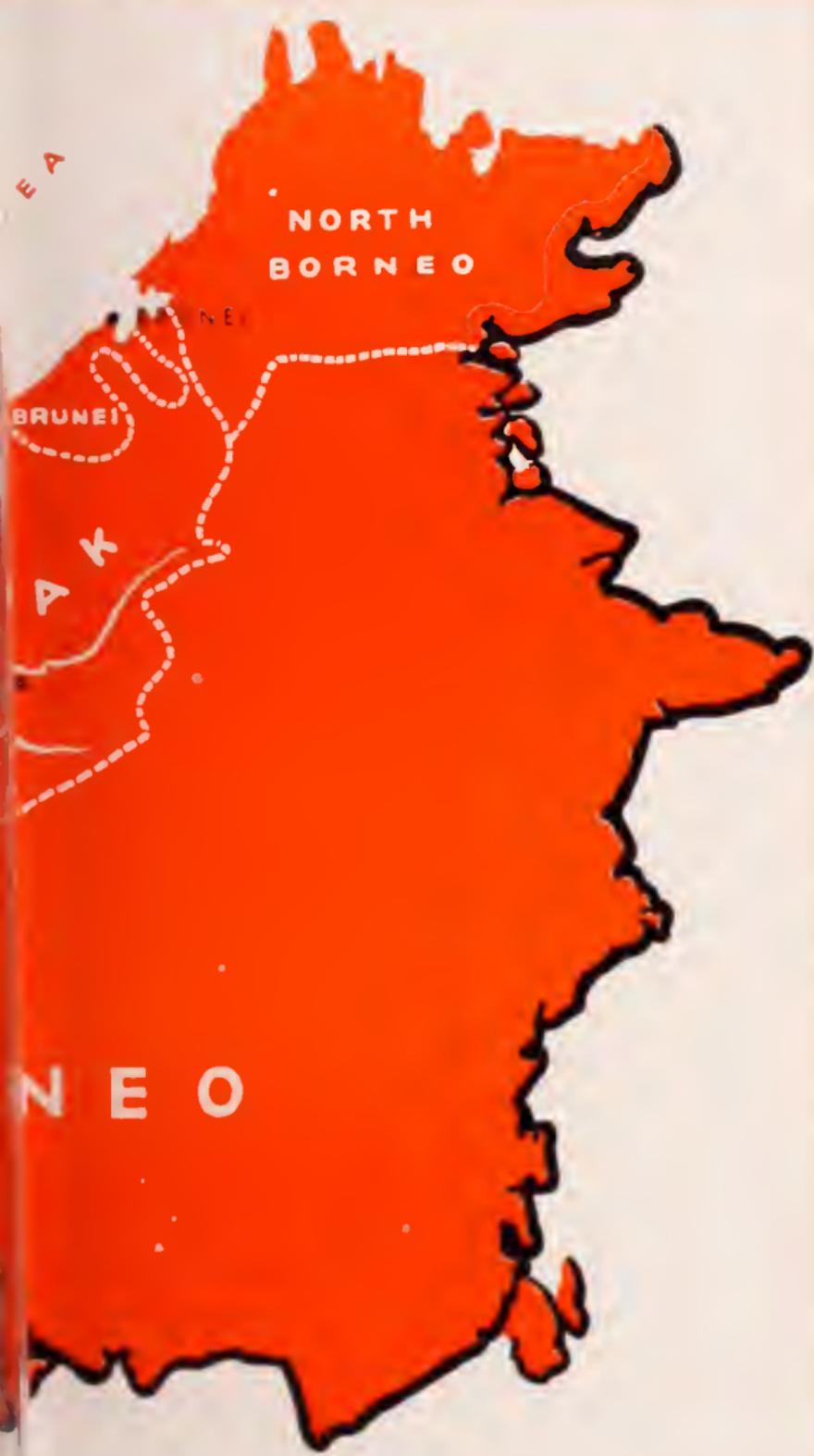
Until recent years there was no government educational system, but an educational code has now been formulated. All educational work is under the Roman Catholic and Protestant missions or is maintained by the Chinese for their own group. The government grants subsidies to aid certain Chinese and Malay schools.

In religion the primitive Animism is wide-spread among the tribes. But Islam has captured some of the Dyaks, while other Malay groups make up the large per cent of Moslems. A Sarawak pilgrim officer is stationed at Jeddah on the Red Sea to serve those who come from Sarawak to make the holy pilgrimage to Mecca. The Chinese have erected a



**SARAWAK
ON
BORNEO**

SHOWING SOME MAIN C



S OF METHODIST WORK

few Taoist temples, but for the most part the idols have been abandoned and Christianity has a wide open field.

Methodist work on Borneo is now confined to Sarawak.

Methodist Beginnings

In 1890 two Methodist missionaries, Benjamin F. West and H. L. E. Luering, went from Singapore to Borneo on an exploring expedition. They ascended the Kapuas River from the west coast and penetrated about 250 miles into the territory of the Dyaks. Luering went back the following year and explored other areas in the north, but the actual beginning of the Methodist work was delayed for a decade.

A Chinese Methodist in the Fukien Province of China, Uong Nai Siong, having read about the adventures of the Pilgrims and the *Mayflower*, started a project for Chinese emigration to Borneo. He succeeded in obtaining from the Rajah of Sarawak permission for a thousand Chinese colonists to settle there. Most of them were Methodists. Bishop Frank W. Warne of India, on his way to the Philippines, heard of them and joined them when their ship called at Hongkong and accompanied them to Sarawak.

The colony did not flourish. Crop failures, floods and disease cut the numbers in half and life was grievous for the first few years. But the Chinese first planted pepper and later rubber trees, thus adding greatly to the prosperity of the country.

When Benjamin F. West again visited the area in 1902 he found that Chinese Methodist local preachers had established preaching centers among their own countrymen and had reached out and touched some Malays and Dyaks.

In 1903 James M. Hoover went from Penang on the Malay Peninsula to Sarawak as a missionary, and for more than thirty years "Tuan Hoover" provided notable leadership for Sarawak Methodism.

He died in 1935. The Hoovers were succeeded by Rev. and Mrs. Gerald V. Summers. He was interned by the Japanese during the war and died of starvation during his internment.

By that time strong Methodist work had been established in Sibü, the largest town of upper Sarawak, and up and down the Rejang River churches and schools had been built and congregations were flourishing.

The War

During the war Sarawak was invaded by the Japanese, and the pattern of events followed that of the other occupied areas in the Pacific. Suffering was very great and property destruction was widespread. Many Methodist schools and churches were destroyed, numerous Methodist people were killed, and devastation was spread far and wide through the country.

When the country was recaptured from the Japanese by the American and Australian forces much of the economic and religious life of the area was in a sorry state. Reconstruction and rehabilitation began at once. Methodist work was revitalized and made rapid progress in recovery, though it lagged somewhat behind the Malay Peninsula in that regard.

Among the Dyaks

While Methodism was started and has principally flourished among the Chinese, it has also not forgotten the native tribes. Several years before the war Methodist missions were started among the Dyaks, jungle people who were once famed throughout the world as head hunters. The White Rajah had done much to restrain this uncivilized propensity among them, but during the war it sprang up again and many Japanese and Chinese lost their heads.

In 1938 Mr. and Mrs. Paul H. Schmucker were sent as missionaries to the Dyaks near Kapit. Na-



ABOVE: THE CHOIR OF THE PROTESTANT CHURCH AT KUCHING SARAWAK, MARCHES TO THE SERVICE THIS MISSION CHURCH SERVES A THOUSAND PARISHONERS

ABOVE RIGHT: DYAK MEN IN FORMAL ATTIRE
BELOW: CHINESE STUDENTS AT SIBU SARAWAK



RIGHT: GIRLS
OF BANJERMA
SIN LARGEST
CITY ON
BORNEO



tive help was not available, so Bishop Edwin F. Lee transferred to Sarawak a Batak preacher from Sumatra, Rev. Lucius Simamoera. He mastered the Dyak language and made valuable contributions to the evangelization of the tribesmen.

He remained with the Dyaks during the whole period of the war, when the American missionary had to leave. His life was in danger on more than one occasion when the head hunting practice flared up again during the war, but he was saved by the fact that he had won the respect of many Dyaks who befriended him.

The combination of Mohammedanism and primitive animistic superstition which permeates Dyak life has made Christian work unusually difficult. But some progress has been made.

A Dyak district has been established with its headquarters or center at the town of Kapit. A district missionary for the tribesmen was stationed there and a little school was started. During the war the American missionary was removed and the school at Kapit was closed, but the Batak missionary family remained during the war and continued the work among the Dyaks in the upper reaches of the Rejang River. After the war the missionary residence was again occupied by a missionary family, the school was reopened, and an additional Batak missionary was added to the staff.

The Dyak work is being pushed. Another station was established, farther up the Rejang River and nearer the jungle dwellings of the Dyaks. The tribal people have been stirred by the events of the war and realize the need of education for their children, and the prospects of success among these natives are quite promising.

Sarawak Methodism

Methodism in this part of the world has been variously organized. At one time the conference or mission organization included the Malay Peninsula,

Java, Sumatra, Borneo and the Philippines. Long ago, however, the Philippines were separated from the Malaya Conference, and the Methodists dropped their work on Java in 1922 as a result of the depression.

Sarawak is now a part of the Malaya Annual Conference, which has over one hundred churches and ten thousand members, with as many more in a parallel Chinese conference.

In the Sarawak section of the conference there are around sixty churches. It is expected that the work will be organized as a separate Provisional Annual Conference. Here, as elsewhere throughout Malaysia, the Methodists have laid heavy emphasis upon education, and their educational work has been aided by government sympathy and subsidy. Every church in Sarawak has a coeducational school, and in the fifty-five or sixty church-school centers there are approximately four thousand pupils under instruction. Church and school work was almost entirely self-supporting before the war. The center for Chinese work is at Sibü; that for the Dyaks is at Kapit.

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ON BORNEO**

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