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LEAGUE OF NATIONS

COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY  
INTO TRAFFIC IN WOMEN  
AND CHILDREN IN THE EAST

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SUMMARY OF THE REPORT  
TO THE COUNCIL

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THE JOSEPHINE BUTLER SOCIETY,  
(FORMERLY ASSOCIATION FOR MORAL AND SOCIAL HYGIENE)

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Geneva, 1934



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**Social Questions**

**COMMITTEE ON THE TRAFFIC IN WOMEN  
AND CHILDREN**

**REPORT OF THE SPECIAL BODY OF EXPERTS**

Report (in two parts) of the Special Body of  
Experts on Traffic in Women and Children.

Enquiry into the international organisation  
of, and certain routes followed by, the traffic  
between various countries of Europe, North  
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IN WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN THE EAST**

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## FOREWORD.

This summary of the full report of the Commission of Enquiry into Traffic in Women and Children in the East (document C.849.M.393.1932.IV. [C.T.F.E./Orient 39(1)]) is published in the hope that a smaller and cheaper edition containing a statement of the more important facts and conclusions found in the full report will secure a larger audience and a wider public distribution in accordance with the expressed desires of the Council, the Assembly, and of the Advisory Commission for the Protection and Welfare of Children and Young Persons.

### Origin of the Enquiry.

The enquiry in the East, by a League of Nations Commission, into traffic in women and children may be considered as the continuation of research work undertaken by the League in this field. This refers more particularly to the previous similar enquiry in Europe, the Mediterranean Basin and the Americas, which was carried out in 1924-1926 by the special body of experts whose report was published in 1927 (see documents C.52.M.52.1927.[C.T.F.E./Experts 55(1)] and C.52(2).M.52(1).1927.IV, including document C.592.1927.IV).

Both enquiries were directed to be made by the Council after the Governments concerned had consented and agreed to co-operate, and on the basis of resolutions passed by the Advisory Committee on Traffic in Women and Children.



They were made possible by the generous grant to the Council of the necessary funds by the American Bureau of Social Hygiene at New York.

### Organisation entrusted with the Enquiry.

According to the Council's resolution, the organisation entrusted with the investigation was to consist of :

(1) A travelling Commission of Enquiry of three members appointed by the Council;

(2) A Committee for which those Governments which have delegates on the Traffic in Women and Children Committee were to appoint representatives, if possible with experience of conditions in Eastern countries. This Committee, under the chairmanship of His Excellency M. Regnault, former Ambassador of France, was to sit from time to time at Geneva, jointly with the members of the Travelling Commission, in order to consider arrangements for the enquiry and, after the accomplishment of the enquiry, to discuss their report.

The Council appointed the following persons as members of the Travelling Commission of Enquiry :

Mr. Bascom JOHNSON (United States of America), Director of the Legal Section of the American Social Hygiene Association, *Chairman*;

Madame Dr. Alma SUNDQUIST (Sweden), Physician, *Member*;

M. Karol PINDOR (Poland), Counsellor of Legation, *Member*.

The Secretary-General appointed as Secretary to the Commission M. W. VON SCHMIEDEN, Member of Section of the Secretariat.

In each of the countries visited, the Governments had been invited to appoint an official representative who would receive the Commission, give it such facilities and advice as were necessary and act generally as a channel by which all official information could be supplied. This they did in every case.

### Itinerary of the Commission.

Bangkok, Siam	Osaka, Japan
Indo-China	Kobe, Japan
Hong-Kong	Nagasaki, Japan
Macao	Java
Manila, P.I.	Singapore and Malaya
Canton	Calcutta, India
Swatow	Madras, India
Amoy	Colombo, Ceylon
Shanghai	Bombay, India
Nanking	Karachi, India
Chefoo and Tientsin	Bushire, Persia
Peiping	Teheran, Persia
Mukden, Manchuria	Baghdad, Iraq
Harbin, Manchuria	Damascus, Syria
Dairen, Manchuria	Beirut, Lebanon
Seoul, Chosen	Jerusalem, Palestine
Tokio, Japan	Haifa, Palestine

(See map showing this itinerary annexed hereto.)

### Methods of conducting the Enquiry.

- (a) By a questionnaire sent in advance;
- (b) Official written replies to questionnaire with statistics and other annexes were received on arrival of Commission;
- (c) On arrival, witnesses were heard, official and unofficial;
- (d) An invitation published in local papers to people to give information (not much received in this way except at Harbin);
- (e) Brothel areas inspected when such existed and institutions visited.

### Plan of the Report.

*Part I.*—Findings of the Enquiry;  
Considerations and Suggestions submitted to the Council of the League of Nations.



*Part II.*—Studies of Laws and Conditions relating to International Traffic by Countries visited.

*Part III.*—Appendices :

- (1) Brief Statements of Some Cases of Traffic studied by the Commission.
- (2) Position of the Territories visited regarding Adhesions to the International Agreements and Conventions for the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children.
- (3) Lists of Conversations held, Testimonies heard, Institutions visited and Local Inspections made by the Commission.
- (4) Texts of Agreement of 1904 and Conventions of 1910 and 1921.
- (5) Map of Itinerary of the Commission of Enquiry.

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## Part I.

### I. FINDINGS OF THE ENQUIRY.

#### A. EXTENT AND NATURE OF THE TRAFFIC.

The Commission found that there was, at the time of its visit, an international traffic in women and girls in the Near, Middle and Far East. The number of both traffickers and victims of the traffic was, in the aggregate, large. The bulk of this traffic was traffic in Asiatic women from one country in Asia to another.

A rough idea of the extent and nature of this traffic can be gained from the fact that the Commission found approximately 17,000 women and girls of many nationalities as registered foreign prostitutes in the various cities visited. Only 174 of them were occidentals.

To this total may be added an unknown, but probably not less than equal, number of clandestine prostitutes. There should also be included as victims of the traffic many of the thousands of "slave girls", singing girls, geisha, dancing partners and waitresses, who were said to be recruited for service abroad in much the same manner as prostitutes and to be often subjected to a form of sexual exploitation which differed little except in degree from that to which the latter were subjected.

*Chinese.*—The Chinese "slave girls" and prostitutes, and the singing girls in particular, were stated to be recruited from the poorest classes whose social and economic situation was such that it seems quite out of the question to believe that these girls could go overseas alone and at their own expense. We must conclude, therefore, that most of the Chinese girls in these categories found abroad were victims of the traffic.

*Japanese.*—In considering whether, and to what extent, the Japanese, Korean and Formosan prostitutes found in countries outside the Japanese Empire were the victims of traffic, the following peculiarities in the situation of



the various groups of prostitutes concerned should be taken into account.

As regards the International Settlement of Shanghai, where a system of licensed brothels did not exist, it was stated by the authorities that the Japanese and Korean prostitutes found there were young women who, attracted by the possibility of better prospects to be found in a great commercial centre, arrived in Shanghai in search of employment and, not obtaining it, gradually drifted into prostitution. It is a matter of speculation to what extent such women were induced by traffickers to go to Shanghai.

For places under Japanese municipal administration in China where prostitution was found to be regulated in practically the same way as in Japan, the recruitment of prostitutes took place in the same way as for Japan itself. It was the usual system of recruitment of prostitutes for licensed brothels. The fact, however, that the majority of these recruits for brothels in China had to travel abroad, necessitated still more than within Japan the intervention of third persons, so that engagements of Japanese girls for these brothels in China undoubtedly involved an element of traffic. This may also be taken to be the case in respect of Japanese and Korean prostitutes found in Harbin as inmates of licensed brothels, and also of those Korean brothel prostitutes in Tientsin who were found outside the Japanese concession in territory administered by the Chinese municipality of that city.

The Formosan prostitutes in Amoy were, for the most part, employed by members of an association of Formosan restaurant-keepers in a capacity which, though connected in some way with the entertainment of customers of the restaurants, was admitted to involve chiefly prostitution. In view of the fact that the engagement of these girls was in the hands of an organised body, this procedure might well be considered as closely allied to traffic.

In Hong-Kong and those places south and west of Hong-Kong where comparatively small groups of Japanese prostitutes were found, it is most likely that these remnants were originally the victims of traffic. Arrivals of fresh Japanese prostitutes in these places have almost ceased in recent years, owing to the energetic action of the Japanese Government, and the international traffic in Japanese women to this area may therefore be said to have been successfully checked.

As regards the Japanese geisha and waitresses found in China, it may be stated that they also were recruited in the same manner as were similar categories of girls and women in Japan. While there is no moral looseness inherent in the functions of either of these two types of professional entertainers, the separation of young girls from their parents at the age of twelve or younger to be trained for the exclusive entertainment of one or more men is recognised by the Japanese authorities as likely "to lead young women to do immoral acts". As this matter is further discussed later in this report, it will suffice at this point to state that the engagement of young girls in these categories for such service abroad under contracts to pay off over a period of years a debt contracted in advance may easily involve, and in some cases is known to involve, an element of traffic.

*Russian.*—With the exception of dancing partners in the better-class establishments, the Russian professional entertainers as well as prostitutes found in China may be said to have been under the control and management of traffickers to some extent. These women, because of their peculiarly helpless condition, were forced to rely on their managers, especially when they wish to move from one place to another.

The same conclusions apply in varying degrees to the prostitutes and entertainers of other races who were found practising their trades in other countries than their own.

With certain exceptions, to be found chiefly in the Mediterranean Near East, prostitutes who went to foreign countries in the East were found to accept only clients of their own races. Even occidental prostitutes who travelled to the Middle or Far East sought their clients almost solely amongst occidental men.

#### B. NATIONALITIES OF THE VICTIMS.

By far the largest number of such victims were found to be of Chinese race; the next in numerical importance were of Japanese nationality—that is, Japanese, Korean and Formosan. Following close upon the Japanese were the Russians—that is, those from Asiatic Russia who were not treated in the report as occidentals.



The traffic in occidental women to the East, which once was considerable, has markedly decreased in recent years. Those women were of various nationalities, including also a few Americans, Australians and Canadians.

Victims of Malay, Annamite, Siamese, Filipino, Indian, Iraqi, Persian and Syrian nationalities were also found abroad, but in much smaller numbers than was the case as regards Japanese and Chinese victims.

### C. COUNTRIES OF DESTINATION.

*Chinese.*—Prostitutes and singing girls of Chinese race were found in varying numbers in all the territories of the Far East south and west of China and in the Middle East as far west as British India.

The largest number, about 6,000, were found in British Malaya, followed by Hong-Kong, Macao and Siam. In the Japanese Leased Territory of Kwantung and in the Union of Indo-China, there were a smaller number of prostitutes, but in the latter place a considerable number of singing girls. Only a few of either category were found in the Philippines, Dutch East Indies and India.

*Japanese.*—Prostitutes, geisha and waitresses of Japanese nationality, including Koreans and Formosans, were not found outside their country in appreciable numbers except in those parts of North China, including Manchuria, such as Shanghai, Tientsin, Mukden and Harbin, where there were considerable colonies of Japanese. Approximately 2,000 such women and girls were found in this area by the Commission at the time of its visit to China.

The comparatively few Japanese prostitutes found in Hong-Kong and places south and west of that port seemed to belong to quite a different class from the Japanese prostitutes in China. Most of them are remnants of considerable groups who, prior to 1920, plied their trade in the shipping centres of the Far and Middle East. While some of them may have confined themselves to clients of their own nationality, the majority were at the disposal of men, particularly of sailors, of all nationalities.

Shortly before 1920, there were, for example, in the district of the Japanese Consul-General at Singapore, about 1,100 Japanese prostitutes. At the time of the Commission's visit, there were about 180 Japanese prostitutes

remaining in all these territories outside China. About 100 of them were located in British Malaya, 50 in India, 29 in Hong-Kong and one or two in Siam. There were also 20 or more geisha in Hong-Kong and a few in India.

*Russians.*—Russian prostitutes, dancing partners and waitresses coming directly or originally from Asiatic Russia were found, with few exceptions only, in China. Formerly, such women were frequently found also in the other countries of the East, particularly in the Philippines, Siam and Malaya. A few such women remained in those countries whose doors, however, have been closed to Russians to such an extent that this traffic is to-day a Chinese national traffic, in the sense that Russian women are recruited in China even in cases where they have come only recently from Russia and are transported to the large cities of Northern China for exploitation. At the time of the Commission's visit, there were about 140 Russians found in brothels in the large cities of this area, and not less than, and probably many more than, 1,000 dancing partners and waitresses who could be considered as victims of traffickers.

*Filipinos.*—No traces of the presence of Filipino prostitutes were found outside the Philippine Islands. A certain number of professional entertainers of that race, namely dancers, appear to have been engaged for the "season" by dancing establishments in Chefoo in China, a summer station of the American naval units which in winter have their base at Manila. Occasionally, also, Filipino dancing girls were engaged for dancing-establishments in Singapore. The American consular authorities in the places concerned and the Bureau of Labour in the Philippines, through its supervision over the contracts of these girls, make every effort to protect them against possible exploitation.

*Annamites.*—Only four Annamite prostitutes were found outside Indo-China, at Bangkok, Siam. In former years, the number was slightly larger, and the Commission was informed in Tongking that cases of kidnapping of Annamite children for the purpose of selling them in China had occurred. At the time of the Commission's visit, only a few cases in which such women were taken to China for the purpose of prostitution were known.



*Siamese.*—Siamese prostitutes were found plying their trade in several cities of British Malaya. There had been in Singapore nine brothels with Siamese inmates prior to the general closing of brothels in 1930. Many of the former inmates of these places had continued to carry on prostitution clandestinely. Eight Siamese women had recently been arrested for soliciting on the streets, which would seem to indicate an appreciable number of Siamese women engaged in prostitution in the city. In Penang, Kuala-Lumpur and in Ipoh, a few such women were known to be operating. There were also a certain number of Siamese prostitutes in the Federated and Unfederated Malay States, which border on Siam.

*Javanese.*—The Commission was informed that a certain number of prostitutes from the Dutch East Indies were inmates of brothels in several of the towns of British Malaya, and it was therefore considered that this traffic might not have been altogether negligible.

*Indians.*—Generally speaking, Indian women were not found to be victims of international traffic. A few Indian prostitutes were, however, found in British Malaya.

*Persians.*—There were only a few prostitutes of Persian nationality found outside Persia—namely, in Iraq and British India. It was, however, considered by the Iraqi authorities that almost half of all the prostitutes in Iraq were of Persian origin. The considerable number of prostitutes of Persian race found in Iraq who were nationals of Iraq was composed partly of women who were Iraqi by birth and partly of those who have acquired that nationality by marriage. The latter practice was said to be adopted to prevent their deportation as foreign prostitutes.

Shortly before the war there was a steady influx of Persian prostitutes to Mesopotamia. The number was increased during the war, probably owing to the presence of a foreign army there. A former Persian official who had been stationed at Baghdad and Basra stated that, during his term very shortly after the war, he had had occasion to repatriate 300 Persian prostitutes to Persia.

*Arabs.*—A small number of victims of Arab race, but of Iraqi, Syrian or Palestinian nationality, were found in India, and a more considerable number of Syrian prostitutes in Iraq and Palestine, and of Syrian dancers

in Iraq. A certain number of Iraqi women were said to be engaged in prostitution in British India—namely, about 75 in Bombay and a few in Karachi and Calcutta. A considerable proportion of them were believed to be Jewesses.

*Turkish.*—A certain number of prostitutes of Turkish nationality were found in the countries of the Near East visited by the Commission.

*Egyptians.*—A few Egyptian prostitutes were known by the authorities to practise prostitution in the countries of the Near East visited by the Commission and in India.

*Others.*—The Commission was informed by the authorities in Bombay that among the prostitutes practising in the Protectorate of Aden there were some who had come from Somaliland, both British and French.

It was stated at Bombay that there had at one time been a certain traffic in women of mixed African and occidental blood from the Seychelles to India. Detailed information was given regarding the activities of one woman trafficker, who used the bait of a good position in a dressmaking establishment at Bombay to obtain inmates for her brothel in that town. It was stated that action had been taken by the Seychelles authorities to prevent further traffic of this kind.

*Occidentals.*—Occidental prostitutes of either American, Austrian, British (including Australian and Canadian), French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, Roumanian, South Russian or Swiss nationality were found in British India, Syria, Persia, Indo-China, Hong-Kong, Shanghai or Manila. The largest number were found in India—65—and the next largest—53—in Syria. There were 20 in Hong-Kong, 19 in Saigon and 16 in Shanghai. In the Philippines, there were no registered prostitutes, but during the last five years 28 occidental prostitutes have been repatriated for practising prostitution clandestinely, of which 23 were French, 3 were American and 2 Russians.

#### D. CAUSES OF THE TRAFFIC.

Some of the more important causes which underlie the traffic in the Occident operate also in the Orient, but in a different manner.



*Ignorance and Poverty of Victims.*—Chief among these causes, in so far as the supply of victims is concerned, are poverty and ignorance. In the Occident, these conditions, when combined with bad home environments, sometimes result in girls becoming sexually delinquent. In other cases, girls leave good but poverty-stricken homes, in the hope of bettering themselves, before they are old enough or wise enough to manage their own lives successfully. From these two and other groups, there are some girls who lend credulous ears to the spurious promises of procurers and traffickers that they will help them to contract marriages with wealthy men or to lead lives of luxury and ease abroad. As a result, they go off with these traffickers generally without the knowledge of their parents.

In many parts of the Orient, however, even where stark poverty exists and starvation is an ever-present menace, such independent action by children is far less frequent than in the West. When the children from oriental homes fall victims to traffickers, as they not infrequently do, it is generally the parents who are primarily responsible because they have entrusted the guardianship of their young children to strangers.

In China, for example, although the social organisation is in a state of transition and the old patriarchal structure is giving place to newer forms of social life, these newer forms have not yet been fully assimilated. The old conceptions still persisted to some extent, especially in the interior of the country, to which the modern and progressive ideas which had been promulgated by the Central Government have not wholly penetrated.

Under these old conceptions, the welfare of the family and the clan was pre-eminent and that of the individual subordinate. These interests of clan and family were considered to be bound up in the maintenance of an unbroken line of male descendants from a common ancestor. Sons were therefore highly important and daughters of less account, especially as the latter severed all relations with their own families after marriage, when they became wholly identified with the families of their husbands.

When, therefore, Chinese parents of large families were very poor, or sick or, as sometimes happens in all countries,

selfish, they might find it impossible or inconvenient to support all of their children. Rather than see them starve or in order to relieve themselves of burdensome responsibilities, they sometimes arranged, for a cash consideration, in accordance with ancient custom, to transfer the guardianship of one or more of their daughters (rarely their sons) to other persons. When these "other persons" were friends or relatives who lived in the neighbourhood, the children were often better off than at home. When, as sometimes happened, these "other persons" were strangers to the parents or, in some cases, were even known to the parents as brothel-keepers or agents of brothel-keepers, the girls were almost sure to become domestic slaves, concubines or prostitutes and to be sold and re-sold at home or abroad, wherever they would bring the best price.

That ignorance may have been an important factor in the recruitment of Japanese prostitutes for China is suggested by the fact that out of 50,149 registered prostitutes in Japan, 1,654 were illiterates, 2,906 attended no school but were able to read and write, and that 39,546 more had not advanced beyond primary school. That poverty may have been a still more important factor in that recruitment is shown by the fact that most of the Japanese applicants for registration as prostitutes, in China as well as in Japan, received money in advance from the brothel-keepers, which they were required to pay back from their earnings in the brothels. This money was obtained in many cases in order to help parents or relatives in distress. Public opinion, however, is more and more concerned with the social aspect of this recourse by parents to such filial sacrifice. According to the opinion of the Japanese police, legitimate employment for many of these girls was impossible. This opinion was apparently based on the fact that the police did not permit any girl to enter a licensed house unless the girl stated that she had no other way of making a living and the official concerned accepted her statement.

The same causal factors were found in connection with traffic in Russian girls. Owing to the Bolshevist revolution, many of the Russians residing in Manchuria had become exiles and had lost their normal source of income, while many of their compatriots had poured into China from Russian Siberia as refugees. Both impoverished



residents and refugees very frequently being entirely destitute, it has been the fate of many of the young women amongst them to sink into prostitution. These unfortunate victims fall into two different categories. One was composed of women refugees who in their flight were stranded, without means of subsistence, in remote parts of Manchuria, where in exchange for the expense of their maintenance they were made use of as prostitutes by local Chinese. The other consisted of destitute Russian women of the Railway Zone of North Manchuria, both refugees and impoverished residents in that part of the country, who formed the source of supply of almost the entire prostitution available to occidental men in the great international commercial centres of China.

*Demand.*—Another important cause of the traffic was found to be the demand of large groups of men living alone abroad, who desired the companionship of women of their own races. This was particularly true of the Chinese, who have emigrated in large numbers to all the countries of the East and in many cases have not found it practicable to take their families with them. In addition, many of them were bachelors without families. In Siam, for example, out of nearly half a million Chinese, only 29 per cent were females. Approximately the same proportion existed in Malaya, whereas, in the Philippines, the percentage of Chinese females to the total Chinese population was about 7 per cent. In such cases, two courses of action were open to the foreign men living abroad. They could either associate with native women, in marriage or otherwise, or they could await the arrival of women of their own races. In the one case, they might be naturalised in the countries of their residence and their children be assimilated in the population; or they might, as a result of their association with the native women, produce illegitimate children, whose standing was such that they frequently drifted into prostitution. It was the case of the foreigners who would associate only with women of their own races—and they were in the majority—who constituted the demand which the trafficker and brothel-keeper were quick to satisfy.

This cause of international traffic has decreased in importance in recent years, owing to the tendency of the

number of female emigrants to increase. This was particularly true among occidentals, in whose cases marriages with women of their own races and the opportunities thus created for better family life in the East have increased. It was also true, however, that there was found to be an ever-increasing number of recruits for prostitution from among women of mixed Asiatic and occidental blood.

*Greed.*—The principal cause of international traffic, however, was found to be greed—greed to make large profits out of human misery and human sex hunger. The fact that the victims of this traffic in the East were so often very young and, in addition, peculiarly helpless to protect themselves, because of their traditional training in respect for and obedience to parental authority, made the task of the trafficker and the brothel-keeper whom he constantly supplied with new recruits particularly easy and very profitable.

#### E. TRAFFICKERS AND THEIR METHODS.

*Chinese.*—Under this title are included brothel-keepers, their agents, intermediaries and all others who live on the proceeds obtained from the sexual exploitation of women. The status of Chinese traffickers and their methods are clearly set forth in official testimony taken by the Commission at Hong-Kong :

“ It is possible to distinguish broadly between persons who procure girls in order to live on the proceeds of their prostitution and traffickers who procure girls and hand them over to brothel-keepers in return for a lump sum. The former are generally middle-aged or elderly women who may be prostitutes or ex-prostitutes, brothel-servants or brothel-managers. Their practice is to purchase children who are introduced by them into brothels at an early age. It is usual for them to claim these children as daughters. The latter are also as a rule middle-aged or elderly women who describe themselves as maidservants or perhaps more commonly as ‘ travelling traders ’ (pedlars, commission agents, or guides). Their social status is low, and the funds at their disposal at any one time are probably small. In fact, it is not unlikely that these persons are usually agents working



on commission. Their employers may be individuals or possibly syndicates working through a Chinese boarding-house. In one case, the method is believed to have been to advance money to these agents in return for a promissory note. No doubt, also, credit is given by the boarding-house on the same terms."

The motives of the traffickers who, as already described, had secured these girls either directly from their parents or from intermediaries, were obviously none other than to profit from deals in which, from their point of view, these children were merchandise.

The fate of the victims of this traffic depended on the physical and intellectual qualities which they developed. If they showed aptitude they might be trained as singing girls. These girls, because of their looks, vivacity or brightness, were brought up from childhood and trained in the art of embellishing the feasts of the wealthy—usually confined to men—by agreeable manners, gay chatter, quick repartee and conventional musical performances, consisting of singing and accompanying themselves on the zither. Their work consisted in going to restaurants when called, for which they were paid at so much per hour. They were usually under the management of women, who had authority over them and exploited them. In general, it may be stated that there were some very successful singing girls who reached financial independence of their managers and enjoyed the favours of rich and influential men, but many of the less fortunate ones, especially when they grew older and were little in demand, had no other course left than to sink more and more into ordinary prostitution and some were practically forced into it by their impresarios, with the object of extracting from them all the profit possible.

The girls who did not appear to be sufficiently promising to warrant the investment necessary to their training as singing girls might be sold when quite young for domestic service, which, in cases where the original transactions with the parents amounted to unconditional transfers of guardianship, often amounted to a species of slavery. These girls still had a chance, it is true, of getting into the hands of kind-hearted people who would not ill-treat them, but sometimes provided them with certain limited advan-

tages and even arranged for their marriages when they reached marriageable age. In other cases, and they were not infrequent, these little "slave girls", as they were called, were subjected to severe and sometimes to cruel treatment, and they had no one to defend them at the time against their callous employers. A considerable number of such girls have been rescued, however, from their cruel masters and placed in rescue homes such as those which exist in Hong-Kong, Singapore and Penang. The serious physical and mental condition of many of them at the time of their rescue bore eloquent testimony to their ill-treatment.

A certain number of girls might also be kept by the traffickers to be disposed of at a profit in marriage or concubinage. But if none of these methods proved sufficiently profitable to the traffickers, the girls were sold to the brothel-keepers to become prostitutes.

Brothel-owners in places outside China who required fresh girls went themselves, sent representatives or employed intermediaries to kidnap or "buy" such girls in China and arrange for their transport to the places where the brothels were. The measure of secrecy required in these transactions depended entirely on the attitude of the authorities at the points of departure and of destination.

One of the reasons rendering the detection of Chinese traffickers in girls of their own race extremely difficult is the fact that no law requiring civil registration existed in China prior to 1929. It therefore was, and may still be in many cases, quite easy for any person accompanying a victim of traffic to pose as her parent or relative, and there is hardly a possibility that the girl herself, who was carefully coached as to what she should say when questioned by the authorities, would contradict such a claim of relationship. It was, moreover, quite common that the victim, who in a great many cases was a mere child, regarded the "adoptive mother," who exploited her by prostitution, in the best of faith as having full parental authority over her and was accustomed to address her as "mother".

In the majority of cases, such girls were willing to follow their exploiters, but it would appear that sometimes force and intimidation were employed to make them submit to their fate. This is illustrated by the following remark of



a Siamese official at Bangkok concerning Chinese girls brought for prostitution from China to Siam :

“ Sometimes they say they were given medicine and became dull and were taken on board and on the way they recovered their senses and found an old woman who threatened them if they said anything to the police, and they got licences (to practice prostitution) and they were (now) wanting to get back to their country.”

An official in the Straits Settlements described traffickers in Chinese women and children in the following manner :

“ Traffickers are ordinarily middle-aged or elderly Cantonese women. They are often themselves ex-prostitutes and they profess to be seamstresses, hairdressers or domestic servants. Their social status is low. They are occasionally found, when the question of bail arises, to be able to produce considerable sums of money, far more than would have appeared possible from their appearance, dress and manner of living. The male trafficker is generally a runner in connection with some lodging-house, a passage-broker or an employee on board ship. They are usually Cantonese or Hokkien, and their ages vary considerably.”

The usual procedure of a trafficker in the Straits Settlements before the abolition of the recognised houses was described to be more or less the following : Chinese girls of 6 to 8 years, bought or received in pledge from poor people in China or sometimes kidnapped, were brought into the colony, after having been coached to answer the questions of the protectorate officials in a suitable way. They were brought up to be prostitutes, receiving no education of any kind which could stimulate an interest in work or make them able to earn a decent living. When a girl reached the age of 13 or 14, she would be offered to some wealthy man who might be willing to pay \$200 or \$300 for one or more nights. Afterwards the trafficker would give the name and address of the girl to runners of lodging-houses or Chinese eating-houses and, for about a year, would exploit her in this way, the girl being paid \$10 or \$20 by each client. When she got a little older, she would be put in a brothel. On the average, girls had to serve about five years before they were set free “ to eke

out an existence as best they can—prostitution at reduced fees being their only resort ” (protector in Penang). In most cases, the traffickers succeeded in this way in reimbursing themselves for their expenses and making a good profit in addition. Prices considerably higher than usual were said to be often paid in China for girls destined for British Malaya. The protector in Penang knew of girls who had been bought in China for \$1,000, \$2,000 and, in one case, \$8,000. Consequent on the prohibition of brothels in the Straits Settlements, the activities of the traffickers had been very considerably checked.

In the Dutch East Indies, the difficulties put in the way of traffickers by strict Government measures have redoubled efforts by the latter to bring Chinese females into the country under various false pretences—*e.g.*, as adopted children, as famine and flood refugees taken for charitable motives, etc.—with the intention of letting them grow up in the Indies until they can be exploited for immoral purposes. Under the pressure of new regulations, the traffickers have been quick to change their methods. According to official information, some years ago, one of the commonest devices employed by them was to introduce Chinese women into the Dutch East Indies as members of *wayang* troupes (travelling theatrical troupes). As soon as they entered the Dutch East Indies, the women appeared once or twice at performances and were then taken to clandestine brothels. By keeping *wayang* troupes under observation as they proceeded from place to place, the Government succeeded in checking this practice. Then another device was tried in connection with a recently introduced rule requiring that Chinese marriages must take place before an official of the register office for Chinese immigrants. The traffickers began to use this rule for their purpose in the following manner. A trafficker living abroad would write to an accomplice in the Dutch East Indies, at Semarang for example, that he wanted to smuggle in a Chinese woman. The accomplice would go to the Immigration Office and state that a certain woman coming—say, from Singapore—was his wife. If his statement was not credited, he would offer to be married to her by the registrar at Semarang. The ceremony would take place. After some time, the woman, though in possession of an official marriage certificate, would be found in a



clandestine brothel. The "husband" had vanished and would probably be trying to play the same game elsewhere.

As long as the profits in the business may be expected to compensate for the difficulties in smuggling Chinese girls, the traffickers do not seem to be deterred by the most prohibitive immigration procedure. The Commission was informed that Chinese girls destined to be smuggled into the Philippines on the pretext of being minor children of Chinese established in the islands were actually made to live for as long as two years in the village in China which they would later be required to claim as their native place and to undergo a veritable course of instruction in the manner of answering the questions of the immigration officials in Manila.

The Siamese police stated that they had complaints from Singapore that Chinese girls were being sent there through Siam, probably because, after the adoption of restrictive measures at Singapore, it was more difficult for Chinese women and girls to get into Malaya by ordinary channels than into Siam. The Siamese authorities stated that this traffic was very difficult to stop, because the girls got off the trains before arriving at the frontier and got into Malaya by crossing the frontier at some unguarded spot.

In Kwantung Leased Territory, Chinese traffickers contracted false marriages with the women whom they subsequently victimised, or deceived them by pretending to find for them lucrative positions as servants, nurses, etc., and, when they found themselves in danger, they pretended that the women concerned were their wives, sisters or adopted daughters. As most of them came from China, where the system of registration was anything but complete, it was extremely difficult to bring out the truth.

*Japanese.*—The system of licensed brothels brings in its train a well-organised system of recruitment of women as inmates. The keeper of a Japanese brothel in China must get into touch with persons in other places of China or in places within the Japanese Empire in order to keep his establishment supplied with inmates. The recruitment of Japanese prostitutes for places in China was also effected through employment agencies. According to Japanese laws and regulations, special employment agencies for the engaging of prostitutes were permitted, and this

referred to engagement of prostitutes for brothels abroad as well as for brothels within the Japanese Empire.

The intermediary of the employment agency was necessarily resorted to by women entering prostitution who wished to make use of the system by which loans were granted, and, if the employment agency had on its books an enquiry by a brothel in China, she would be given the opportunity to fill the vacancy. The agent who engaged these girls therefore did not need to make use of illegal or secret methods. He was carrying on a legitimate business, even if not a savoury one.

It was only in the International Settlement of Shanghai, where the system of licensed brothels had been abolished, that other, and therefore illicit, means of procuring Japanese girls were suspected to have been used. Some years ago, there had been a number of prosecutions for traffic in Japanese girls in Shanghai.

A different system prevailed in the recruitment of Formosans for prostitution in Amoy. This was evident from the fact that 73 per cent of the Formosan prostitutes in Amoy appeared as "adopted daughters" in the family registers of their employers—that is, of restaurant keepers who were members of the Formosan Restaurant Keepers' Association, while only 25 per cent were "employed". The remaining 2 per cent were found to be actually daughters of such restaurant keepers. Practically all these girls lived on the restaurant premises, and, although classed as entertainers and waitresses, were required at the same time to serve as prostitutes.

A custom which formerly existed also in Japan of adopting little girls with the intention of bringing them up as geisha has been forbidden by law throughout the Japanese Empire. It appears, however, that this law was circumvented in Formosa, where the prospective victims, usually 14 or 15 years of age, were falsely adopted into the family of a relative or friend of the intending employer in some other locality, "engagement money" of a few hundred dollars being paid to the parents of the girl.

As regards professional entertainers, it is universally known that the traditional rôle of the geisha was to entertain by her conversation and her artistic attainments. She contributed to Japanese society the feminine grace and charm which the comparative seclusion and austere



education of most Japanese women prevented them from contributing to social gatherings. In this way she was an integral part of Japanese social life.

As the traditional seclusion of Japanese women gave way before modern conceptions of social life, the demand for the type of entertainment supplied by the geisha decreased. Moreover, in many ways, the entertainment given by the geisha has, in the course of centuries, developed a stereotyped form, which does not altogether accord with the present-day mentality.

This may explain the rapid development in recent times of another form of professional female entertainer amongst Japanese. This is the café waitress, who now vies in popularity with the geisha.

That there are serious dangers to children and young women involved in this system which easily lends itself to abuses has already been suggested. Information from unofficial sources in Japan indicated that geisha girls were sometimes compelled by the geisha keepers to practise prostitution. The Chief Officer of the Salvation Army in Japan said that, in the preceding year, thirty-four geisha had been received into the Salvation Army rescue homes, some of them quite young. He stated: "Most of the cases of geisha coming under our protection are geisha whose keepers have wanted to compel them to be prostitutes, and they have run away".

According to statistics provided by the Government of Kwantung Leased Territory, which furnished the nearest clue to conditions of Japanese geisha in China, of the 1,904 geisha employed in that territory there were 1,532 who had had no fixed occupation before they became geisha, 107 were farmers' daughters, 71 had been waitresses, and 65 had formerly been licensed prostitutes. Small groups of various occupations made up the rest. The group of geisha who had had no previous fixed occupation and who, as the figures show, constituted a large majority, represented undoubtedly girls who, from an early age, had been destined by their parents or guardian to be trained for the profession.

While the regulations in Chosen and Kwantung regarding geisha girls did not contain provisions limiting the age at which geisha may be employed, the regulations of the Metropolitan Police Board of Tokio and those of Formosa

specified that a geisha must not be employed before she was 12 years old. It was the general practice for geisha girls to receive money in advance on their contracts of service. These contracts were very similar in regard to advances of money to those of prostitutes, and there was in each territory a single set of regulations governing contracts of prostitutes, geisha and waitresses.

*Russians.*—The demand for Russian women as prostitutes as well as professional entertainers in the large commercial centres of China proper was a strong incentive for traffickers to arrange for the transfer of such girls from Manchuria, especially Harbin, to Peiping, Tientsin, Chefoo, Tsingtao, Shanghai and Hangkow. The attraction which these places had in the imagination of Harbin girls made it very easy for traffickers to obtain control of their victims by persuasion and deceit. A girl whose one desire was to leave Harbin for those great centres where she hoped to find many opportunities of success did not examine too closely any offer which seemed to provide an easy means of making the journey, and it was only when she found herself forced into a brothel or a dancing-establishment of the class which amounted to the same thing that she realised the folly of her action. She was at that stage already in debt for the cost of the journey and of the outfit she had procured to dress herself suitably for the fashionable situation which she had been vaguely expecting to fill.

She was helpless to protest, she was in a strange place, she could make no proposal for the repayment of money advanced, she saw no hope of finding the easy position which she imagined was to be hers for the seeking. Moreover, she had left to the agent all the arrangements regarding her papers of identity and her permit to travel, without which no Russian could move about in China, and these documents were in his possession. She was entirely ignorant concerning the measures she could take to oppose the demands of the traffickers and she felt that she could do nothing but submit.

*Abuse of Marriage and Divorce Customs.*—The abuse of Mohammedan marriage and divorce law and customs afforded to traffickers a ready method of taking women for prostitution from the Dutch East Indies to Singapore.



They could marry their victims an hour before departure, take them to Singapore as legal wives and divorce them an hour after arrival. A certain amount of this traffic was found to exist, and it was facilitated by the fact that Javanese women easily disappeared in the mass of a population of kindred race.

*Evasion of Immigration Restrictions and Deportation Provisions.*—The extremely strict control of immigration into Palestine appeared to almost exclude the possibility of the admission as immigrants of girls who came or were brought for immoral purposes. Persons who wished to evade control, therefore, tried to obtain from a British Consul a traveller's visa which would entitle them to stay three months.

A certain number of foreign prostitutes, especially Syrians, found in Palestine seem to have entered the country either on a traveller's visa or even by walking over the northern frontier, where, in the mountainous parts, they succeeded in avoiding the control posts.

When later, in the course of their stay in Palestine, they began to fear discovery as foreign prostitutes, such women avoided deportation by marrying Palestinian citizens and thus acquiring Palestinian citizenship. Even if these women were divorced afterwards, as often happened, they remained Palestinian citizens. The records of the Department of Immigration for 1931 disclosed ten such cases of evasion of deportation by marriage.

## F. METHODS OF PREVENTION AND SUPPRESSION.

### I. *Emigration Measures.*

Many of the measures found in operation in China at the time of the Commission's visit which were designed to prevent Chinese women and girls from being taken abroad for immoral purposes were easily evaded by traffickers by the simple device of shipping their victims by train from Canton or by foreign ships from other points in China to Hong-Kong, which they pretended was their ultimate destination. By this device they avoided the necessity of securing passports, which were not required by the Chinese Government for passengers going to Hong-

Kong, and the Chinese control of their documents, from which all passengers on foreign ships were exempted, except in cases where a special agreement to the contrary had been established.

Two important exceptions to this general rule should be noted. (1) The anti-kidnapping society of Shanghai, by employing trained detectives to visit certain ships leaving that port, did excellent work in assisting the police to detect and prevent cases of attempted traffic in girls who had been kidnapped from distant points in China and had been brought to that city for transshipment to other parts of China or to Chinese ports, such as Amoy and Swatow, or to Hong-Kong for transshipment abroad. This activity was regarded as doubly important, because no guarantee of any kind was required by the Chinese authorities from women and children leaving Shanghai for these ports.

(2) As there were direct steamship lines between Swatow and several foreign countries in the South Seas, notably Siam, the emigration procedure set up in Swatow for the protection of women and children was considered as a valuable effort in the direction of such protection.

The Director of Emigration at Swatow described as follows the emigration control of women and children going abroad (it being remembered that Hong-Kong was not considered as a foreign country): "There is protection in the municipal government for women and children leaving Swatow. They must pass through the enquiry department, which questions them as to why they are going abroad, their profession, who is accompanying them and who guarantees them. This is our method of prevention and also of protection."

It was stated that no prostitutes or singing girls were given permission to embark, that no women or children were allowed to travel alone, and that the guarantees for the latter must be shop guarantees that they were not being taken for immoral purposes. "If anything wrong were found out afterwards, the guarantor would be held responsible and his shop would be closed."

No case in which the guarantor was called to account for the mistreatment of any young female emigrant in the country of destination was mentioned to the Commission. It is believed, however, that, if this procedure were generally adopted throughout China and were followed up by



systematic communication between the Chinese authorities and the competent officials of countries of destination, it would go far toward realisation of its beneficent purpose.

*Hong-Kong.*—In an attempt to provide measures for the protection of Chinese generally and to supplement the Chinese measures above described for the protection of Chinese women and girls leaving China for other countries, the British Government has set up at Hong-Kong the Office of Protector of Chinese. As Hong-Kong is a free port and the most important centre of communication and transit between South China and the countries of the South Seas, and, for the reasons stated, may well be a centre of potential traffic in women and girls to these points, the Protector of Chinese subjected each Chinese woman or girl to careful and detailed questioning before permitting her to embark. The purpose of this questioning was to determine whether such women were going for prostitution and to what extent they had been deceived or intimidated into leaving Hong-Kong for other countries and to find out the persons with whom or to whom they were going and for what purpose. If there was doubt as to the legitimacy of the voyage or whether the migrant was the victim of traffic, embarkation was refused.

*Japan.*—With the exception of Japanese women and girls of any category who went to China, the Japanese Government required all Japanese going abroad to secure passports. Such passports were only granted after careful investigation and were not granted to prostitutes, geisha or waitresses. Minors and married women were not permitted to travel without the consent of parents or guardians or husbands respectively. The officials of the Emigration Service and the port police investigated carefully, at the place of embarkation, to determine whether the rules and regulations had been strictly observed. These provisions, when combined with the measures of repatriation hereinafter described, have largely checked international traffic in Japanese women to all countries except China.

*Persia.*—The Persian Government, largely for economic reasons, has recently issued regulations greatly restricting

travel abroad by all Persians, and has inserted in the marriage law provisions prohibiting marriage of Persian women to foreigners without special authorisation. These two measures have been mainly instrumental in the stoppage of the traffic in Persian women to other countries which had formerly existed, especially during the war, and which was facilitated in some cases by the migration of such women as the wives of Persian pilgrims to the holy places of Iraq, where they had been abandoned, or as wives of visiting Arabs who returned to that country and divorced them.

*British India.*—The tendency among the South British-Indian emigrants who leave their villages has been to go abroad without their families, for whom they send home maintenance out of their earnings. With a view to improving their conditions of life on the plantations, the authorities of British India insist on a given proportion of females to males among the "assisted immigrants". The present rule is that, in every five assisted emigrants to Malaya, there shall not be more than one man without a wife—that is, for two married couples there may be one single man or a married man who is not accompanied by his wife. The increased possibilities for family life thus obtained have had such a healthy effect on the living conditions of these labourers that any demand for prostitutes that may formerly have existed among them may be said to have practically disappeared.

## II. Immigration Measures.

*Straits Settlements.*—Amongst measures against traffic taken by countries to which Chinese go in considerable numbers, those taken by the Straits Settlements and the Dutch East Indies are of special interest and value. In both territories, licensed brothels have been abolished and the entry of women for prostitution was prohibited. In the Straits Settlements, there were three stages in the measures taken in respect of Chinese women who were suspected of coming or being brought for prostitution. In the first stage, the competent official may demand an informal security by a local shopkeeper guaranteeing that the girl will report to the official concerned at fixed intervals



of time; in more suspicious cases, a formal guarantee, which can be estreated at court, was required; finally, the official may refuse entry to the woman and have her sent back to the port of embarkation.

Since August 1930, there has been, in the Straits Settlements, a restriction on male Chinese immigrants of about one-third of the number which had been arriving previously. The restriction was carried out by not allowing the steamers to bring more than a certain number. There was no restriction on females. The Passenger Restriction Ordinance did not apply especially to traffic conditions in its actual form. The Government had under consideration an amendment which would permit the police to refuse permission to land to any woman who appeared to be coming for purposes of prostitution. The amendment was proposed in January 1931.

*Dutch East Indies.*—In the Dutch East Indies, the system of shop guarantees was in similar cases not so much used as in the Straits Settlements, but minors who were suspected of being victims of traffic were either temporarily left under the care of guardians who were strictly supervised by the authorities or, if any guardian appeared to be untrustworthy, the girl was placed in one of the homes for girls approved by the Government for this purpose. There she remained as long as the official responsible considered it advisable in the interests of the child—that is, in very many cases until she reached marriageable age, when a suitable marriage was arranged for her under the auspices of the home. On no account did the authorities of the Dutch East Indies send a Chinese minor child suspected of being a victim of traffic back to her port of embarkation, taking it for granted that an unsuccessful attempt to smuggle a girl into the Dutch East Indies would merely be followed by a new device on the part of the trafficker to dispose of her as a prostitute in another place.

Immigration to the Dutch East Indies is regulated by the Royal Decree on immigration. Chinese immigration, as every other Asiatic immigration into the Dutch Indies, is free. A practical measure of restriction exists in the form of a comparatively high landing tax of 150 guilders per head for every foreigner who wishes to enter the

country. This provision is intended to keep away automatically persons who are entirely without means of support. Only persons whose presence is considered dangerous to public peace and order and, further, persons who have already previously been expelled from the country and prostitutes are refused admission.

A short account of the immigration procedure in the Dutch East Indies will be of interest. People who enter the Dutch East Indies have to appear, in the first place, before the port officer in control of the landing service, who goes on the steamer and whose principal duty is to check whether persons arriving are residents or non-residents of the Dutch East Indies. If they are able to prove that they are residents, then they are, as a rule, free to land. Those who are not able to prove residence of the Dutch East Indies are given a landing permit, which permits them to go on shore, where they have to see the Secretary of the Immigration Commission for that port. There are approximately twenty-five ports of entry for persons coming from abroad, and no person from abroad is allowed to enter by any port which is not indicated as a landing port for foreigners. Corresponding to the ports of entry there are approximately twenty-five Immigration Commissions. Each Commission consists of the head of the local Government and a police officer and a medical officer, who will be present at hearings only if medical questions are involved, and a Chinese officer where Chinese are concerned. The decisions of the Commissions are judicial, not administrative. The Commissions are judicial bodies, and appeal from their decisions is to the head of the provincial Government, and his decisions are also judicial decisions. Non-residents who have been seen by the secretary of the Commission will not always be called on to appear before the Commission, because the secretary is delegated to act in cases which are clear. If there is no objection to the entry of the immigrant, then the secretary of the Commission is empowered to issue an admission permit. In cases of doubt, the secretary will bring the matter before the Immigration Commission, and, if the Commission is satisfied, the immigrant will be given an admission permit. These admission permits are valid for two years only and have to be renewed at the end of that time. Renewals



are made, first for one year, then for one year more and then for six years more, so that for the first ten years of his stay an immigrant must present himself three times for renewal of his permit. Generally speaking, only after he has been in the Dutch East Indies for ten years can an immigrant obtain a paper indicating that he has the status of a resident in the Dutch East Indies.

*Philippines.*—Prostitutes and every sort of trafficker were debarred by law from entry to the Philippines, if identified, and were deported after entry if found practising their trades. Immigration of Chinese labourers of either sex was prohibited. That repeated efforts were made to evade the immigration laws by Chinese especially is indicated by the fact that, during the last five years, 900 Chinese women who had obtained illegal entry were deported or obliged to leave the islands.

*Japan.*—The Japanese law provides that foreign prostitutes and traffickers shall be excluded at the time of entry and deported after entry if found practising prostitution. Very few such women were found practising prostitution in Japan proper or have been either excluded or deported from that country. In Kwantung, many Chinese prostitutes were licensed and few were excluded or deported.

*India and Ceylon.*—There are severe restrictions on the issue of visas to persons of questionable character desiring to go to India, Burma and Ceylon, and undesirables are deported.

### III. *Abolition of Licensed Brothels.*

In the Dutch East Indies, several cities in China, the Philippines, the Straits Settlements, the Federated Malay States, Hong-Kong, British India, Burma, Ceylon and Palestine, neither brothels nor prostitutes were licensed, but in Hong-Kong and in some of the larger cities of British India they were tolerated. In several of the Unfederated Malay States, while these conditions existed at the time of the Commission's visit, these were subsequently abolished. In Hong-Kong, the situation also changed after the Commission's visit. (Since the visit of

the Commission, the Government of Hong-Kong have closed the seven European brothels and also all the Chinese brothels catering for Europeans. These latter brothels contained 197 Chinese prostitutes, who all refused assistance and stated their intention of resuming the practice of their trade in Canton or Macao. The Japanese brothels have also been closed with the co-operation of the Japanese consulates.) In Japan proper, foreigners, including Koreans and Formosans, were not licensed to conduct brothels or practise prostitution. In Chosen and Kwantung, Russians were not licensed, and, in Chosen, licences were not given to Chinese, though they were in Kwantung.

This system of regulation in Japan has been abolished in principle in nine prefectures, in two of which it has been put into effect. This result has been achieved largely by public agitation, assisted by a strong and growing official opinion which exists among certain influential men.

### IV. *Criminal Laws against International Traffic.*

Appendix 2 of Part III of the report shows the position of the territories visited regarding adhesions to the Agreement of 1904 and the Conventions of 1910 and 1921 relating to the Suppression of Traffic in Women and Children. In general, it may be said that the countries visited have either adhered to, acceded to, or ratified this agreement and these conventions and have passed much of the criminal legislation required to carry out the agreement and conventions. France had, however, not adhered on behalf of the protectorates of Cambodia, Annam, Tonkin and Laos, nor the mandated territories of Alexandretta, Djebel Druse or La Hakakia. Japan had not adhered on behalf of the territories of Kwantung, Chosen or Formosa. The United Kingdom had not adhered on behalf of the Federated Malay States or the Unfederated Malay States. The United States had not acceded to the Conventions of 1910 and 1921, though the legislation and administrative measures required had been adopted and extended and applied to the Philippines.

As an example of one of the most complete types of criminal enactments against traffic, there is quoted here-



with Section 3 of the United States Act of June 25th, 1910 (36 Stat. Laws, page 825) :

“ That any person who shall knowingly persuade, induce, entice or coerce, or cause to be persuaded, induced, enticed or coerced, or aid or assist in persuading, inducing, enticing or coercing any woman or girl to go from one place to another in interstate or foreign commerce, or in any territory or the District of Columbia, for the purpose of prostitution or debauchery, or for any other immoral purpose, or with the intent and purpose on the part of such person that such woman or girl shall engage in the practice of prostitution or debauchery, or any other immoral practice, whether with or without her consent, and who shall knowingly cause or aid or assist in causing such woman or girl to go and to be carried or transported as a passenger upon the line or route of any common carrier or carriers in interstate or foreign commerce, or any territory or the District of Columbia, shall be deemed guilty of a felony.”

#### V. *Repatriation.*

Considering that the presence of many Japanese women of ill-fame in foreign countries “ reflected on the prestige of Japan and adversely affected the sound development of Japanese interests abroad ”, the Japanese Government invited Japanese consular representatives in the Far and Middle East to take steps designed to bring about, more or less gradually, the repatriation of Japanese prostitutes from their districts.

According to local conditions in the various places, this policy was carried out with different degrees of vigour. Prostitutes were in no case repatriated forcibly, but it was the duty of the Consuls to persuade them to leave, and the Consuls were assisted in their endeavours by Japanese residents of their districts, who grouped themselves together to bring pressure to bear on Japanese women engaged in the trade of prostitution to return to Japan.

## II. CONSIDERATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS SUBMITTED TO THE COUNCIL OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS.

The problem of traffic in women and children in the East is immensely complicated by economic factors and by social customs and traditions.

Any solution, therefore, that is suggested must take these factors fully into account. There are in most of these countries, however, forward-looking individuals, men and women, missions and private organisations engaged in preventive and rescue work in connection with prostitution and traffic in Asia, many of whom are also striving earnestly to educate and consolidate public opinion to change these customs and traditions and to stimulate official action against the traffic; a list of some of them appears on pages 496 *et seq.* of the report.

It will be a long, slow process in some countries, but there is special ground for hope in the growing interest in the problem of these missions and private organisations and of women and in their increasing influence.

That public opinion carries weight is evidenced by the fact that the visit of the Commission to these various countries has already borne fruit. In Hong-Kong, since the Commission's visit, the authorities have closed all the European brothels and, in co-operation with the Japanese consulates, the Japanese brothels. In addition, they have decided that no further Chinese prostitutes are to be admitted to brothels and no transfers of inmates from one brothel to another are to be allowed. In Siam, the Government has informed the Commission that, since its visit, an enquiry is being made into the present situation as regards *souteneurs*, and it has raised the age of consent from 14 to 18. In the same country, the Immigration Amendments Act, which defines the class of persons who may be excluded from entry, has been amended by adding another class covering prostitutes. Since the visit of the Commission to Syria, the mandatory Power has announced the intention of raising the age of registration in brothels from 18 to 21. In Saigon, hotel-managers were instructed, in July 1932, not to tolerate soliciting in their establishments and not to let rooms to prostitutes.



The immediate steps which might be taken are :

1. The appointment of central authorities in China and Persia and the more thorough-going collaboration and exchange of information by such authorities throughout the East. Since the return of the Commission to Geneva, the intention of establishing a central authority for China has been notified by the delegate of the Chinese Government.

As was suggested to the Chinese Minister of the Interior, at a conference which the Commission held with him in Nanking, the contribution which a particularly vigilant central authority and his staff could make towards the protection of Chinese girls throughout the East would be immense.

2. The appointment of more women protective officials, especially in cases where the victims of traffic for whose benefit they are functioning are distrustful of men officials and make it difficult to gain their confidence. Instances of very useful work of this kind by women officials are mentioned in the report.

These have done most useful work in Palestine, Straits Settlements, Calcutta, Colombo and Bombay. In some places in the East, it would perhaps be difficult to invest such women with police functions to penetrate the haunts of vice, but such authority would often be very valuable and has been effectively used in the questioning of women and girls for their protection in Rangoon and British Malaya.

3. The adoption of a more constructive policy in dealing with minor immigrants, victims of the traffic, so that the vital interests of the child are not lost sight of in the effort to thwart the criminal. Such a policy has been adopted in British Malaya and in the Dutch East Indies and is described in detail on pages 31 and 32 of this summary of the report.

4. Closer co-operation between the Chinese officials and the authorities of the foreign settlements in China, particularly at Shanghai.

A regrettable example of lack of co-operation in the fight against traffic in Chinese women and children is to be found in respect of measures taken by Chinese authorities on the one hand and by administrations of foreign settlements in China on the other. This is particularly

noticeable in Shanghai, where the authorities of the Chinese City, the French Concession and the International Settlement have no agreement whatever among themselves with regard to the prevention of traffic. In conversations the Commission had in Shanghai with Chinese officials, the British and French Consuls-General, the Settlement authorities and the representatives of several shipping companies, British and Chinese, the question of collaboration locally in combating international traffic in Chinese women and children was discussed. It was suggested that, on lines similar to those of Swatow, embarkation certificates might be issued, after enquiry, by the Mayor of Shanghai for Chinese women and children leaving for abroad or for the principal ports of emigration of South China, and that the Consuls and shipping companies should assist to ensure that women and children embarking at Settlement wharves are provided with such certificates.

5. Preventive work with Russians of the Far East. "While the Commission does not overlook the needs of the hosts of other potential victims of traffic in the East, it would like to call special attention to the urgent necessity of preventive work among the young women of the Russian refugee communities in China."

Assistance of this kind seems to be a worthy opportunity for the activities of missions and private organisations engaged in preventive work, and the appeal for it should be strengthened by the fact that those who are to be benefited belong to that unfortunate class of persons who, as a result of the world cataclysm of war and revolution, and through no fault of their own, are without home or nationality.

6. The abolition of the licensed or recognised brothels in the countries concerned. In addition to the various reasons for this recommendation which were advanced in the report of the body of experts published by the League in 1927, there is the additional reason, as applied to the women and girls of the East, that they are so frequently separated from their parents at a very early age and are therefore brought into contact with bad characters in the formative stage of childhood and learn to look upon the life in the brothel as their natural and inevitable fate. "Oriental traffickers have so complete a control over their victims that the latter regard them sometimes in the best



of faith as guardians invested with parental authority over them." Under such circumstances, efforts to combat traffic by influencing the mentality which causes this hold of the exploiter on the victim, indispensable as they are, can only make themselves felt gradually. More immediate results can be achieved by striking at the traffickers' business organisations. Such efforts should be directed, in the first place, to removing conditions which tend to ensure a market for the trafficker. The surest market is the licensed or recognised brothel. The Oriental brothel also ensures in a country of transit a depot where the victim can be housed without cost and even at a profit pending a decision as to her ultimate disposal. Hong-Kong and Macao were typical of such places of transit for traffic in Chinese girls from ports in China to the South Seas. The existence of licensed or tolerated brothels in these two colonies, through which practically all ships from Chinese ports to the South Seas have to pass, allowed traffickers to use these ports as clearing houses and distributing centres for their wares. Without such brothels, these geographically convenient points could not be used in this manner, as the employment of clandestine brothels for this purpose would be unsafe and to keep the girls idle would be unprofitable.

"The recognised brothel in the East, moreover, is a definite obstacle to the efforts to protect women and girls in danger of being victims of international traffic. This is well illustrated by the remark of an official in British Malaya who, in comparing the efficiency of such efforts in respect of girls coming from abroad before and after the abolition of the brothel, said: 'Every girl we examine now is a potential victim, and if there is any doubt we make them put up a bond. We are not hindered in any way now by the mere fact that, if a girl said she wanted to be a prostitute, it had to be allowed. Previously our moral sense about them was blunted because we had to allow some.'"

7. Collaboration of authorities with missions and private organisations.

"In calling attention to a series of administrative measures as the most urgent in the interest of reduction of international traffic in women and children in the East, the Commission by no means underrates the value of another

branch of activity in this field, which, while of even greater basic importance, calls for long and systematic action, in which official as much as missionary and private initiative is indispensable. This is educational work. The social changes now taking place throughout the East affecting the position of women are undoubtedly a most powerful agent in the fight against the evil with which this report is concerned. The spread of education, now making tremendous strides in all countries of the East, will more and more show this evil in its true light. It will arm parents, guardians and victims against the blandishments of the traffickers and their agents, awaken in the masses of the people a sentiment of indignation against the injustice and degradation forced on innocent victims and, by widening the possibilities of useful employment for girls, automatically reduce the number of cases in which a family in distress sees no other way of avoiding starvation than by disposing of a daughter in a manner which directly or indirectly involves prostitution."

8. "The combined efforts of the authorities, who combat international traffic in women and children in the East by administrative measures, and of society, which holds out a helping hand to the victim, will, the Commission hopes and believes, result in a not too distant future in bringing about a noticeable reduction of the evil."

## Part II.

This part contains studies of laws, conditions and further details of administrative measures relating to traffic by countries visited. It comprises two-thirds of the whole report and contains in its 368 pages much useful and detailed information which cannot be included in a short summary.

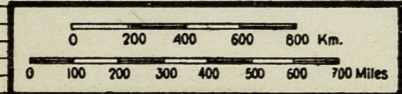
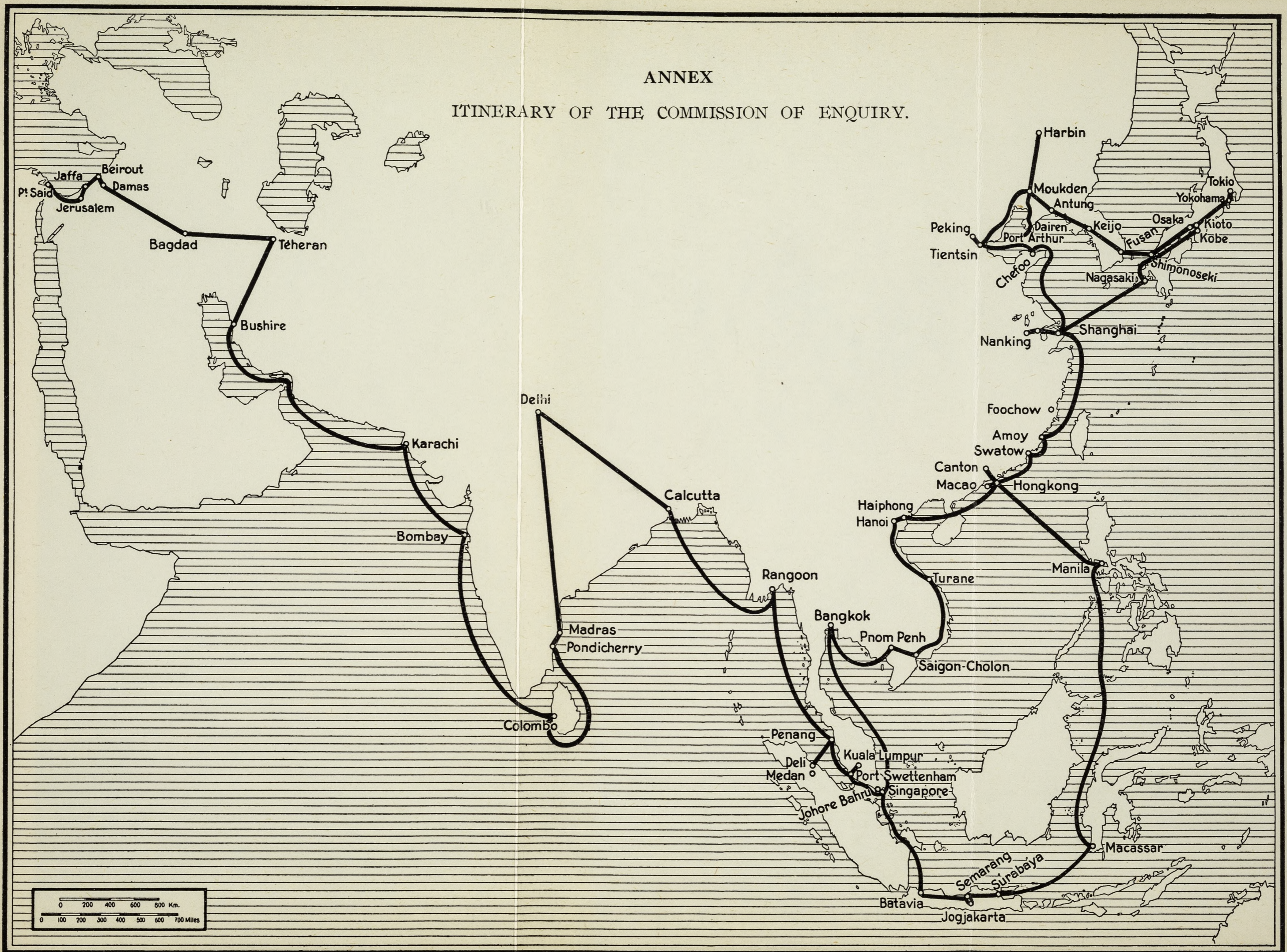
## Part III.

This part consists of ninety pages and contains a few illustrative cases of traffic and certain technical information of value for reference purposes to students of the problem; also an index to the whole report.

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ANNEX  
 ITINERARY OF THE COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY.





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