
THE TOKYO SESSION IS OVER...

The transpolar plane fled over an ocean of multicoloured lights, it ran on the track and at last it came to a standstill. The Olympic visitors worn out by thirty hours of flying, stepped out of the plane and were met by Dr. R. Azuma and his colleagues of

the Organizing Committee who extended a very warm welcome to them. After the usual cameramen had taken photos and the introductions made, the group was then directed to one of the reception-rooms of the immense Airport station. There they received

refreshments served in their honour under the mocking eye of a parrot in its cage. The same warm welcome and solicitude awaited all the visitors as they landed from their various planes.

The Imperial Hotel, where the visitors were all staying, is a maze where every member of the International Olympic Committee got himself lost at least a dozen times while looking desperately for the Session -Room, or entry 'B' where the cars awaited him, or the Prunier restaurant with its delicious food, or the arcades or bazaars where all the treasures manufactured by Japanese art and craft were offered for sale.

If the Japanese language is a mystery to our occidental ears their writing remains undecipherable to us. The size of the city is tremendous and unbelievable, and, whoever loses his way has little chance to be out on the right road again as he has no hope to make himself understood by the natives. Because of this, young ladies interpreters had graciously offered their services and escorted the members of the International Olympic Committee in their comings and goings through the city. These ladies' charm and cheerfulness were duly appreciated by all throughout the visit to Tokyo, and in the course of the excursion through Japan. Their gracious and colourful kimonos made a charming contrast to the dark and severe clothing of the occidental visitors.

H. R. H. Hiro-Hito proved his interest in the Olympic Movement by attending in person the Opening Ceremony of the Session as well as that of the Asiatic Games. In addition, he graciously invited the members of the International Olympic Committee to a tea-party held at the Imperial Palace where everyone was presented to him.

Thanks to our Japanese friends whose kindness and devoted attentions were inexhaustible, the members present were able to attend performances illustrating ancient folklore, see geishas dancing, they went to the

opera, theatre or puppet-shows, etc. All these performances were strikingly beautiful, the costumes were sumptuous, the music strange and fascinating. The depth of meaning illustrated by the slow ritual acting and gestures of these actors is often very hard to understand to occidental minds.

Judo demonstrations and Japanese wrestling 'Sumo' were very colourful and raised a keen interest among the spectators.

Do you know anything about the ritual of tea-drinking? It does not consist of drinking black tea as British people are so fond of, but it is green tea, a ritual prepared with great precision and care by the mistress of the house and served with very sweet cakes. Every member of the International Olympic Committee was given the opportunity of visiting a private home where he came in close quarters with true Japanese hospitality. The visitors were overwhelmed by such kindness and delicate attentions.

As well as all this, let us recall the visit to the shintoists brotherhood of Tenri, where a most cordial meal was offered to us followed by the visit of the temple and of the marvellous museum. Let us recall the herd of deer answering the call of a hunting-horn. Then the fine excursion to the fisheries of cultured pearls of the genial Mikimoto, where the trade secret of this industry was revealed to the Olympic visitors as a special favour. The latter were even presented with a pearl oyster containing one of these splendid gems.

Lastly, the guests, who had not yet left for home, were able to attend the Derby run on the Hippodrome of Tokyo following a picnic luncheon served in the gardens of Baji Koen around a barbecue. This afforded a delightful day of rest just before the departure for the long voyage home.

The Tokyo Session will remain an unforgettable experience in our memory.

All thanks are due to Dr. Azuma and his colleagues of the Japanese Olympic Committee.