

Inle and Inthas

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Imagine a person, seventy years old, who has never owned a pair of shoes or slipper and who has never walked more than ten miles on land throughout his whole life, but yet able to move around and manage to survive for all these long years.

Myanmar is in the Southern Shan State. It is 2900 feet above sea level, 9 miles across North to south and 3 miles East to West. The water Yes, it is true. He or many other persons like him are no other than our Inle Lake Jewellers. With developments in transportation and com-

munication systems this may not be a true story for the present day. Yet, this is what our grand-mothers have talked to us about those Inthas (the name of these lake dwellers) of the very early days.

The Inle Lake one of the tourist attractions in



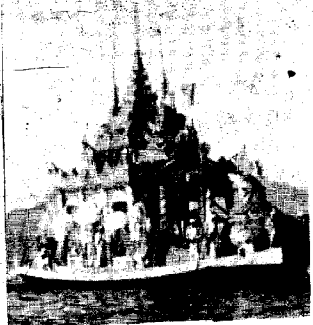
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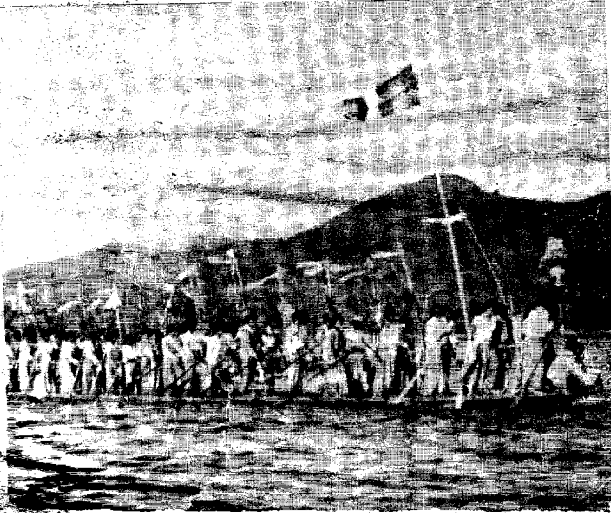
ing , Fish culture and Silk-worm Breedings for men and sewing, stiching and knitting by machines, fruit-preservation and jam-making for women. These alternative occupations have also been introduced by the Ministry of Forestry and the UNDP jointly. Moreover, transportation business have also flourished due to the increase in the number of foreign tourists day after day.

Inthas are devoted Buddhists. As Buddhism includes principles for

preserving and conserving the ecological and natural environment, it can be said that Inthas can adapt to circumstances and live in harmony with nature and the environment. Their Business practices have always contributed for an environmentally sound and ecologically efficient dwelling place. Inle therefore has always been a self sufficient and sustainable society. So it is a place that enjoys the fruits of living in accordance with nature. Poverty does not exist at Inle. This is due not only



for their adaptability to the environs, but also due to the people's industrious nature. Unemployment has never occurred among these people. Failure in agricultural buoinessies can change them into boat-rowers providing transport for both domestic and foreign tourists.



The Inthas have never lagged behind in many aspects of developments. They are ready for adaptation as long as "modernization" is not a hamper in religious practices. Inle has produced a number of educated and efficient persons who have, or, are serving in many parts of the country

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