



.-A typical street scene in Hongkong. The Chinese /ore errands. Leica camera Summar lens, 1120tli sec., f 12.2.

A Leica in China

By I. T. REES.

Having worked in conditions which would appal most photographers, our contributor tells how he overcame his difficulties and gives many practical tips.

ALTHOUGH China is teeming with interest from a photographer's point of view, photography in the Far East is by no means all honey and flowers. The light is superficially excellent, but it is essential to use a reliable exposure meter and a filter if you wish to obtain good results, as there is invariably a haze of heat, and in the big cities this is intermingled with dust in the atmosphere.

Owing to the tropical heat, the processing requires great care; if the temperature of the water falls as low as 78° F. you consider yourself lucky—so it will readily be under

stood that developing and printing are by no means easy.

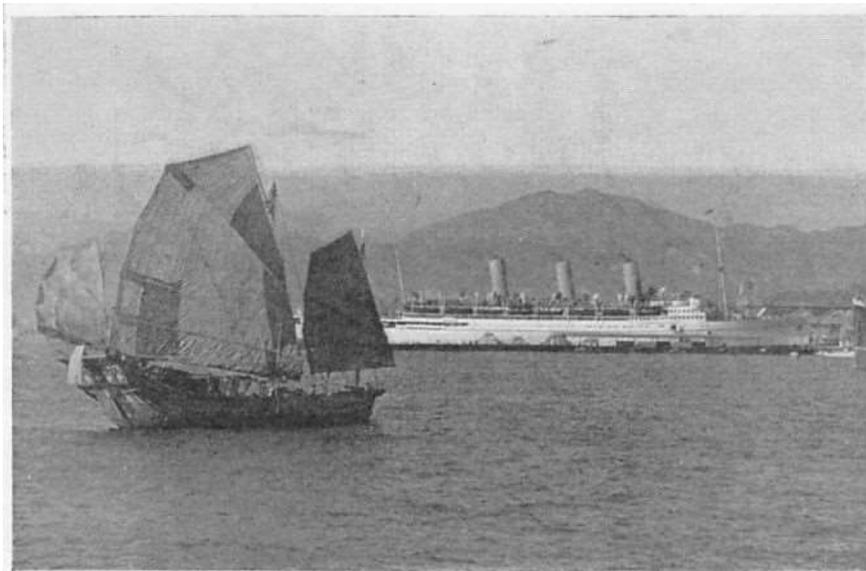
I quickly discovered that the use of a preliminary hardening bath, though excellent for larger negatives, was no good for Leica films, for though it undoubtedly stopped reticulation I think it affected the grain; it also became difficult to control development accurately in a tank.

I used a Correx tank, and found that by cooling the developer, fixing and washing water to the correct temperature 65° F. in an ice chest, these solutions did not vary more than 10° F. during the time

they were in the tank, even though the temperatures outside were between 80°-90° F. Latterly I used a hardening bath of chrome alum and sodium bisulphite between the developer and the fixing, and found this decidedly beneficial. I washed the films in eight changes of water, having first cooled it in the ice chest to the required temperatures. All this was very laborious, and one found oneself envying one's more

professional in these climates is more fortunate; modern invention has provided air-conditioned dark rooms, which are a pleasure to go into—and must be delightful to work in.

After a short time the temperature and atmosphere of the amateur's makeshift dark room becomes distinctly unpleasant and it requires tremendous enthusiasm to even start work—the dark room lamp and even the enlarger appear to radiate



Hongkong harbour, showing one of the junks plying its trade to Canton. This is typical of the vessels recently reported as being destroyed by a Japanese submarine. Leica Elmar 9 cm. green filter, 1/40 sec., f16.3.

fortunate worker in England who rarely had to do anything other than warm his solutions to the right temperature—a far simpler process. On the other hand he had not the opportunities of the interesting subjects available in China.

Naturally for the amateur his troubles do not end with the development of the film—this though the most important was the easiest—the necessity of improvising a dark room for enlarging the negatives presents its difficulties. The pro

heat and make things even more unbearable.

All my work was done on board ship, and one of the first problems which presented itself was accommodation of the various paraphernalia associated with the modern miniature camera. I soon found that I had a Focomat enlarger, dark room lamp, scales, dishes, tank, chemicals, and as space is limited in a cabin and it is necessary to sleep, live and work in it, I found I had to take immediate steps to prevent

myself being hounded out of my cabin altogether.

The method I used may be of interest to lots of other amateurs with a limited space at their disposal. I had a cupboard made measuring 3 ft. 9 in. high by 21 in. wide by 19 in. deep. A shelf was fixed 2 ft. 4 in. from the bottom and the upper part divided vertically into two compartments. The top right compartment also had a shelf halfway up. The divisions being used as follows:—•

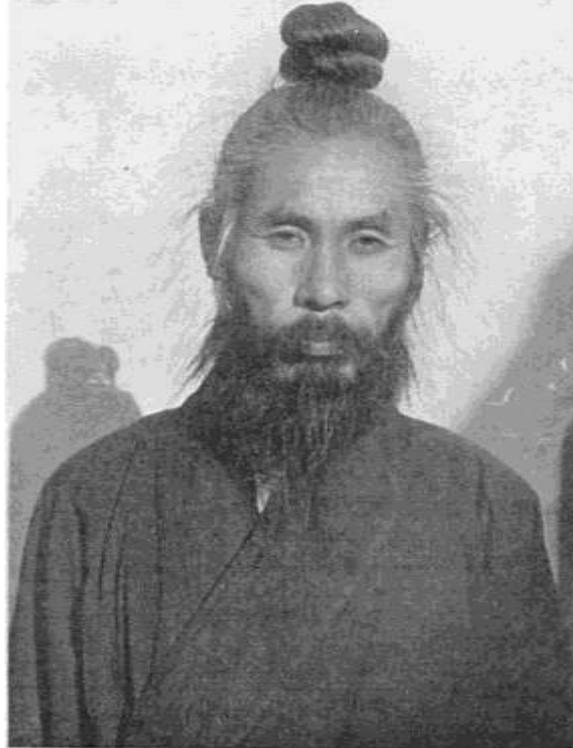
Top left: dark room lamp, Correx tank, scales.

Upper top right: chemicals.

Lower top right: dishes, more chemicals.

Bottom: enlarger.

This cupboard effectively solved the problem not outfit tidy, but also dust-

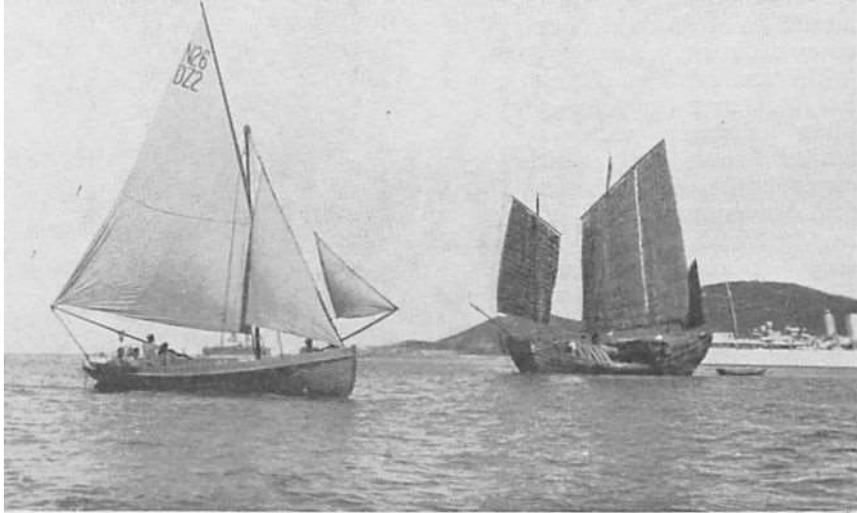


Priest seen at Putushan, a type of mendicant met with in North China. Leica Summar green filter, 1160th sec., f/4.5. of portion of negative.

proof, and though this last point weather being met, as it often was, won't appeal to many amateurs a very important matter so far as I it secured the whole lot against was concerned. The "c o o l i e" damage in the event of rough class of Chinese obviously present



Linkungtao, Weihai wei. This is the island leased by the British Government for the China fleet during the summer. Leica Summar green filter, 1/100sec., C/6.3



A contrast between the centuries old rig of the sailing junks in North China and the modern rig of vessels in the H'est as shown by the Naval cutter. Leica Summar green Jilter, 1,60 sec., f (6.3).

the most pictorial subjects, they seem to sense a camera from the distance, and are not fooled by the right-angle view-finder. I am not reproducing the hackneyed photographs of Peking which are familiar to everyone and which it is difficult to resist taking, but pictures of the people who are now undergoing such terrible times in their struggle with their more powerful neighbour—the Japanese.