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Thursday Aug. 26

Last night we went to an Officer's Mess dance. The mess is beautifully situated on the side of the lagoon, on the road that turns off from the bridge between Lagos and Iddo (see accompanying map), and from the bridge you could see the colored lanterns reflected in streamers in the lagoon. It looked faeric. They had the dance out in the garden, under two stately palms, and incidentally, the moon. My friend the General was on hand, and several other British officers of our acquaintance. At first the circle was large, but with the advent of the General, our majors and captains and even one colonel drifted away, frightened by the larger game. The poor little ADC, the one who did so much scurrying at the Cocktail party on Monday, was of course on hand to smooth the path before the Great Man, and strew roses and insense. He confided in me that he was not a soldier, a fact that I had been almost certain of even before his confirmation, but that in reality he ~~was~~ painted porcelain- something I couldn't have guessed at, but which now appears wholly right and proper. The General, a good character, with blond hair, a sabre cut on his cheek, blue eyes, tall sturdy figgah, Old Malay campaigner look about him (quite correct), told funneh stories, danced well, and was still mildly wolfish. He said there ware all sorts of spots in the Orient quite like this, what.. and everbody said is that so sir how interesting. Dotted about, y'know. Quite. We ignored baseball this time, and concentrated on East Africa. ...

Unfortunately the party didn't end until one, with the result that William and I are dead, or moribund, ducks today. Still, all in the cause of United Nations solidarity, and the Adeah Commahndah is quite a big man in these parts. Also the party was a lot of fun, and I can always type better with my eyes closed.