

Travellers Tales of the South China Coast



Collected for the first time in a single volume are these true and often comic stories of Hong Kong, Canton and Macao. Seventy visitors from around the world give at first hand, vivid accounts of their experiences-of high society at Government House and low life in Canton gaols, of spies in Hong Kong and pirates on buccaneering junks, of typhoons, burglars and Eastern magic, of gambling, opium and slavery. Most revealing of all, they write about their encounters with the people. The misunderstandings between East and West, the constant battle of wits between Chinese and foreigner, united only by a pidgin lingo. This was a time of punkahs and palanquins, a time when men wore pigtails and women hobbled on golden lilies, a time when the Colonial Secretary could say with confidence: I have in vain sought for one valuable quality in Hong Kong...I can see no justification for the British Government spending one shilling on Hong Kong.

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