

Around the World

with
Stan Delaplane

HONG KONG—You buy a Swiss watch in Kowloon for \$100 — it would cost \$200 at home. This eats up the \$100 duty-free allowance you can bring into the U.S. The shopkeeper says: "I will give you a receipt showing you only paid \$50 for it."

Does this impress U. S. Customs at Honolulu? They decide you must be some kind of a nut. Either — Hong Kong shopkeepers have become philanthropists; or the watch has no works; or you think they are naive.

We all bring back the same things, more or less. Watches, cameras, silks, clothing, carved ivory. Customs men look at thousands of these every day. Know the retail prices in Hong Kong and Tokyo, Tahiti and Sydney as well as the shopkeepers know them.

This "I'll fix the receipt" thing is offered to you all over the world. It just makes the Customs man mad (you insult his intelligence). Makes you look foolish.

"If we go over our duty-free allowance — \$200 for each of us? — can we say what we want to pay duty on?"

You don't have to. Customs put the things that pay the highest duty in the \$100 duty-free bracket. You pay the lowest percentage of duty.

"If we drive down to Mexico this winter, is it possible to go down to Yucatan?"

Yes, and the new inland road is open now. You can go down on this and come

The pubs are warm and gay. The lighted streets have a Christmas card look.

In Dublin, lunch at the elegant Gresham. Dinner at Hammet's — all dark wood paneling and gleaming silver and white linen. In London, dinner after the theater at the Vendome in Dover Street. (Oysters are in season, the Colchesters are good.) London theaters open earlier than ours — 7-7:30. You have dinner afterwards.

Rule's in Maiden Lane is famous for after-theater dinners. It dates back to 1776 or thereabouts. Walls full of antique prints. Iron statuary. Stately waiters and good food. I ate here each time I went to London and wrote of its "chandeliered" atmosphere. There wasn't a chandelier in the place — though it felt that way on recall. Finally — (perhaps in embarrassment) — they put in chandeliers. Greater love hath no man.

"What are the best pubs to go to in London?"

Pubs are for snack lunch.

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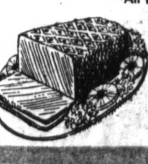
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