

A Room of His Own in Chicago . . . 1894

crunching of wheels on roads of steel, the swift purr of resilient tires on the highways of far countries, the soul-stirring hum of tireless propeller-blades as they fend the ether of the skyways, shrinking the weary miles of yesterday to the mere paces of today. Give me, too, the throb of mighty engines in great ships and the dizzying revolutions of the whirring turbines that devour distances at sea. Give me, some day, those silent *individual wings* with which Science will surely endow us earthly angels—wings that will make us indeed masters of Space and, in degree, masters of Time itself.

“Give me a different place each day. Give me the stinging tonic of contrast and the exhilarating contact of the exotic and the unexpected. And for a destination, give me only such a one as I shall have earned and shall deserve. None other!

“Travel has always meant more to me than aught else: it has given me a sense of ownership in all the worth-while things that I have seen. But—“ownership” is not the right word. *Possession* is a better word,—all the joys of possession without the cares of ownership. That’s the reward of travel; or, as I put it in a sentence which I often



Orientalized Room in Old Chicago Home with the "First Buddha" Between the Windows



"Nirvana" in New York . . .

write in the autograph albums that are brought to me for signature: *To travel is to possess the world.*

"Now this is strictly true. The traveller possesses the world more completely than those who own vast properties. Owners become the slaves of what they own. Travellers possess,—and pass on to possess in other lands all that appeals to them, and for as long as they like. Then they pass on to fresher fields—and let the owners stay behind and pay the taxes! It is lucky we are not all travellers. There would be no one left at home to pay the

THE Nirvana Studio designed after classic originals by Thomas Rockrise (Tsumanuma) Eminent Japanese Architect. Collection assembled by Margaret and Burton Holmes.



Manhattan Towers from Nirvana

taxes and keep up all the interesting places for the traveller to possess.

"I am appalled as I wander about this world of mine and think of all the time, labor, and genius men have spent to make it beautiful and wonderful, and to keep it beautiful and wonderful *for me*. I'm really much obliged to everybody! I never could have done the job all by myself. And I do need a nice big interesting world to play with. Without it, I should feel quite lost. Life would not be worth living. I doubt if



Occidental City Lights from Oriental Windows



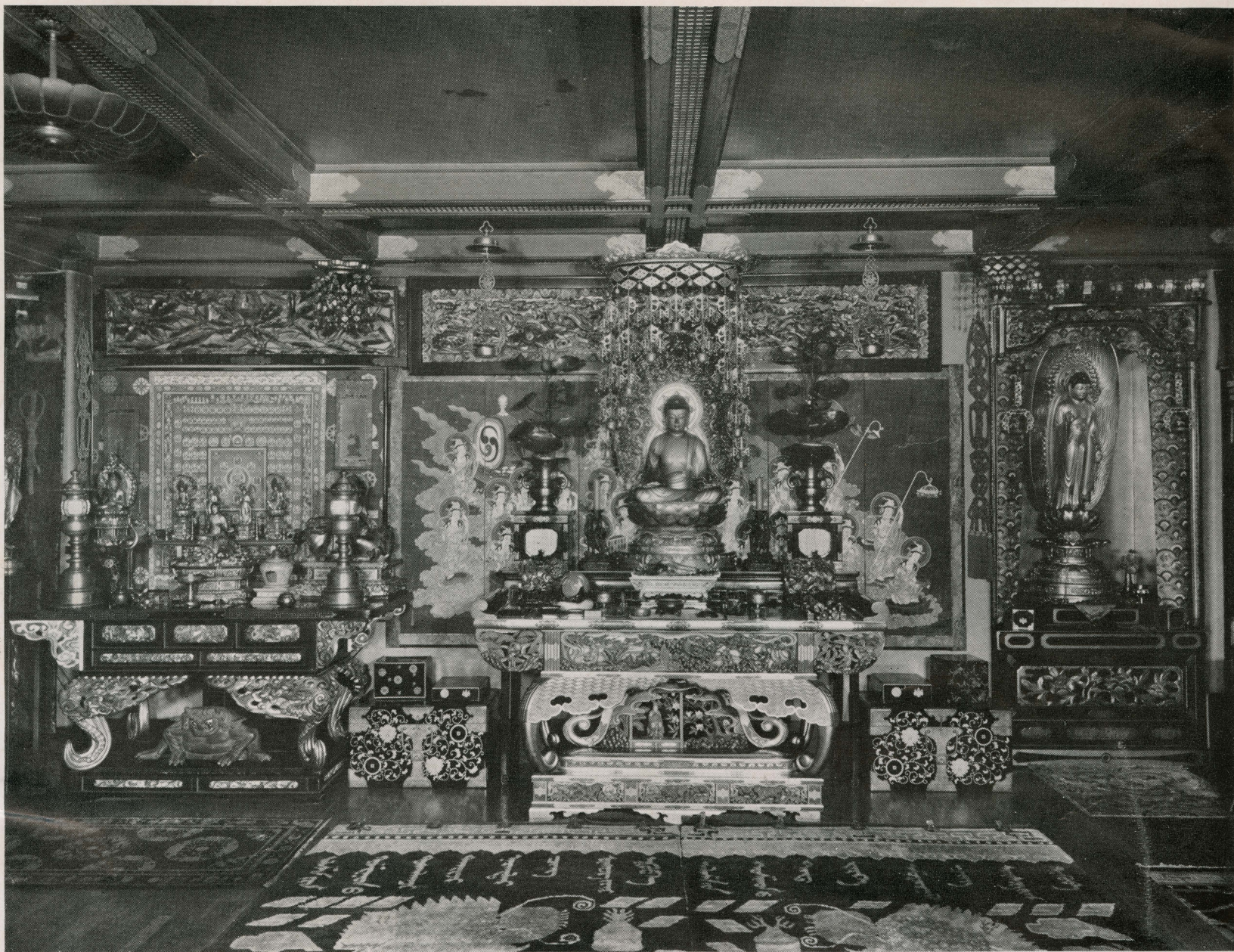
Where Things Chinese and Japanese Abide in Harmony



Twin "Dogs Foo" from Mandalay

Heaven will be as interesting to me as is this earth of ours. The "other place" may be. Could I but come back from the one place *and* the other and bring back pictures (some of them, of course, would have to be made on asbestos film), what a wonderful course of lectures I could then prepare! And think of the big houses they would draw;—"Capacity," "Standing-Room Only," "Hundreds Turned Away" would be the rule, season after season.

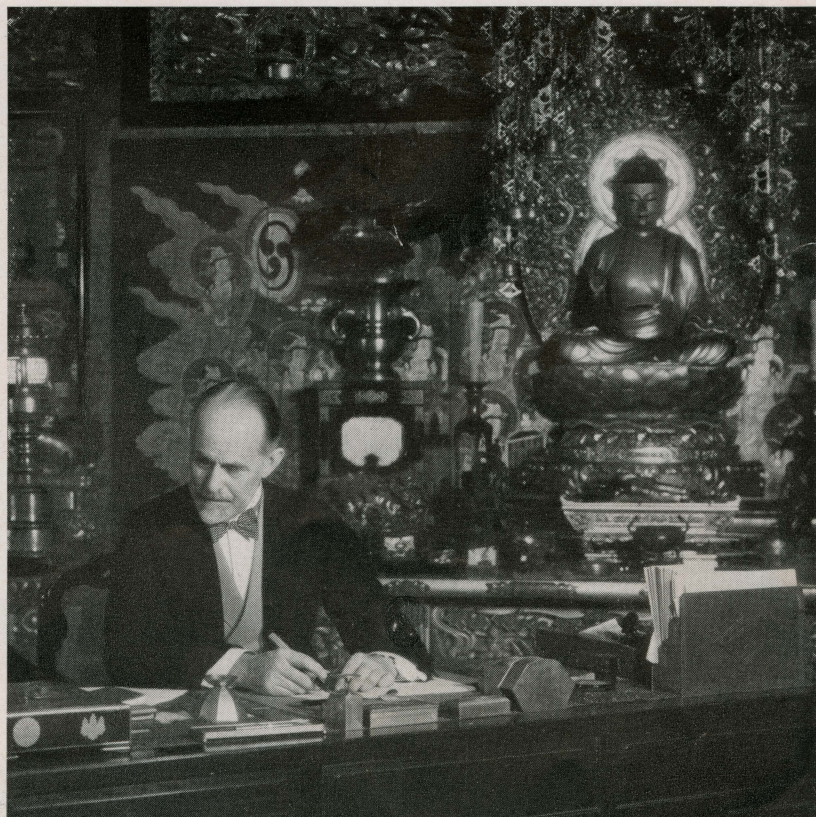
"But one world at a time is enough. I am content with my possession of this very pleasant planet. It has been good to me, and I have tried to reciprocate. *WE* have been the best of friends. Let this not lead me into reminding you of what must happen even to the best of friends—yet, when it does happen, it will be good to know that we have gotten on so well together, and for so many years.



The Buddhist Pantheon of Burton Holmes

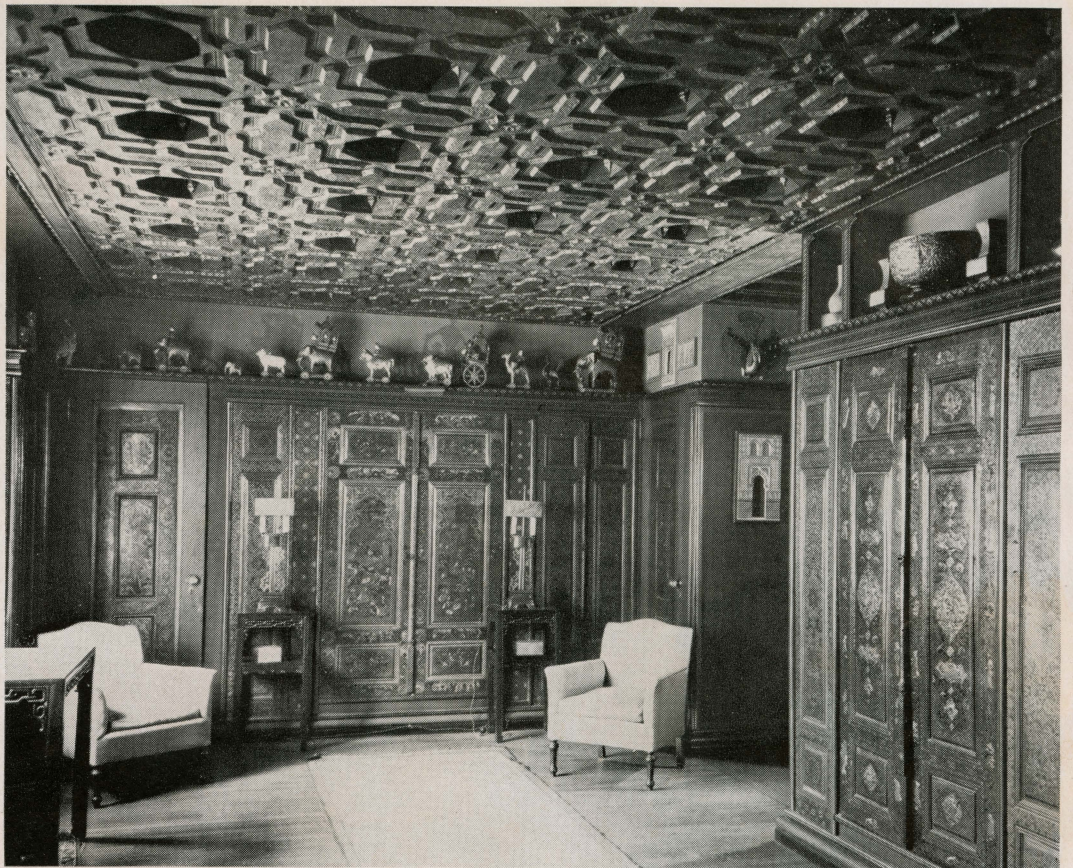
"I should be glad, of course, to have another three-score years or more of comradeship with this dear planet, that I might know the good Earth better than I do,—find out all her secret places,—speak all her tongues,—taste all her pleasures. But, as I have said, I am content; for in degree, far beyond the limits of my best deserving, I have indeed *possessed* the world through travel; and I have tried to make my wonderful possessions vividly, pleasantly, and pictorially available to those who say they envy me the life that has been mine."

Thus spake America's Number One Traveller.



"What more can I say?"

In charming contrast to Nirvana with its atmosphere of the Buddhist lands of the Far East, is the Near-Eastern Room with its treasures of Moslem art. Overhead spreads an original Fifteenth Century ceiling of pure Mudejar design, formerly in a Moorish Palace in Granada.



How charming a philosophy! Burton Holmes has so shaped his life-course that he sails serenely athwart our harassed, crisis-ridden world; ignoring its darker side; revelling ever in its sunlit beauty. Yet all this

beauty he has not selfishly hoarded. Rather has he distilled it and shared it with his fellows through voice, screen, and illustrated prose.

Truly a useful life and an inspiring career!



In this Near-Eastern Room, designed by Margaret Holmes, the walls are panelled with painted and lacquered doors from palaces of Ispahan—save at the western end where bronze doors from India appear to reveal through their exquisite perforated patterns, the soft luminosity of a moonlit Persian garden.