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The .

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2nd, 1948.

Oh, My Ducats!

"One of the Old Brigade? asked for it and in this number he has very properly got it. Seldom indeed can anybody, who; as he informed us in a covering letter, had one foot in the grave, have placed the other more firmly in the soup. Nevertheless, even knowing him as we do, one must admit that a certain amount of respect is due to his good grey hairs for striking when the iron was warming up. Terms of service are a matter of almost daily discussion amongst Government officers and, we hope, amongst the public who have to stand the bill.

"Who steals my purse steals trash? has ceased to be a boast and become a complaint. Fifteen years ago a Government cadet would murmur to himself?

"Oh, what a world of vile ill-favoured faults Looks handsome in three hundred bucks a month!?

and think of getting married on his first leave if he could scuttle his way through General Orders. But times have changed. The horrifying rise in die price of claret in the last three-quarters of a century has been matched by almost as horrifying a rise in the price of rice during the last decade.

Some attempt has been made to struggle back to pre-war standards of living but for the most part has ended in ignominious failure. The bottle of whisky has ceased to be part of the landscape in European households and has become instead a shooting star. Pussyfoots no doubt will applaud but few Pussyfoots have got themselves immersed in Australian gin.

And so the public servant may be forgiven if he appears to be largely concerned with materialistic things. Tied as he is to his incremental scale he is flabbergasted by the impudence of the trader, who, in one case last month, charged six dollars for replacing the glass of a wrist-watch, and, in another, was only prevented from charging ten dollars for putting a rubber sole on a shoe by the fact

that at the last moment his prey was snatched away from beneath his avaricious eye. The weak protests of his victim are invariably met with the retort : "Apa boleh buat? Tuan punya gaji memang besar.? The fact of course is that the customer is paying something for his purchase or the service rendered and something by way of subscription to a society or good cause.

The public servants who remain uninterested amidst the turmoil are either those who are satisfied with their lot, and indeed have a sneaking suspicion that they are overpaid already, or those to whom material reward is of comparative unimportance. Strange though it may seem there are actually some people so interested in their work, and so confident that the job which they are doing is worth-while, that they reck little of pay. frequency of leaves, pension prospects and so on. These peculiar souls are bachelors or husbands whose wives possess similarly twisted minds or men who have grown out of matrimony. They are queer people, these Roundheads?the ones who do a job because they like it?but they possess the inestimable advantage of being able to smile at the antics of others. For there is many a modern Cavalier who echoes the faith of a hero of the Civil War :

"Yet this inconstancy is such

As thou too shalt adore

I would not ask for quite so much Were he not getting more.?

The fact that it is the public who pays the viper is sometimes forgotten. In their attitude to the claims of the civil servants, all of whom spend the best years of their lives working purely philanthro- pically for the interests of those dependent on them, with no thought of gain and no hope of reward, the "unofficials? fall into three principal categories. There are those, few perhaps in number but of high quality, who are properly thankful for an efficient and incorruptible administration and consequently consider that their benefactors are entitled to every- thing that the public purse can afford: there are those who, very conscious of the fact that they themselves stop at nothing in extracting money from the public servant, do not see why he should goggle at using what little power and influence he has to get something back out of them; and, finally, there are those who think that every cent expended on the emoluments of the members of an inept bureaucracy merely represents another futile attempt to square the vicious circle. Civil servants can express their gratitude to the first, match their wits

against the second, and exclaim to the third "Try it and see!?"

To what extent the recommendations of the Trusted Commission will be acted on cannot be predicted. No doubt many of those who forwarded memoranda and were given interviews are even now experiencing the truth of the old English proverb : "You can take a horse to court her but you can't make him wink." The public servant may be assured that only the establishment of full democracy will bring proper appreciation of his worth. Vociferous critics in Sarawak will find, as their kind has found elsewhere, that reductions in government expenditure do not look so easy from a position of power as from the serried ranks of opposition, and that a contented civil service is the major buttress of an efficient administration. On the other hand civilisation has never tried to do without lawyers, doctors, or parsons, and, when the day comes that it must make the attempt, it might as well throw the civil service into the bag in order to give the fates as free a hand as possible.

Notes and Comments.

The respectfully welcomes Lady Arden Clarke back to Sarawak. Greetings are extended also to Miss Jennifer Arden Clarke and Miss Katherine Arden Clarke. The family arrived in the M.v. "Pangkor" on January 19th.

The welcomes to Sarawak Dr. Chan Ying Wing, the first Chinese Consul to be posted to this country. After the failure of the m.v. "Pangkor" to reach Kuching on her schedule on the morning of January 19th, and the consequent putting away in disappointment of many flags, the ship bore Dr. Chan, together with his wife and fifth daughter, up to the Ban Hock wharf on the morning of January 20th. to the accompaniment of much explosion of crackers and past a huge crowd gathered at various vantage points on the river bank.

Our readers may be interested to hear that of the eight maias exported from Kuching last May by Mr. W. J. C. Frost seven reached London safely. Mr. Frost says that "the odd specimen, brought in at the last moment and accepted without proper examination, proved to have been injured in capture and died en route to Singapore."

The Editor has received from England a letter asking him to collect butterflies. If any of our readers can assist we would be very thankful. Spivs and drones will be returned unopened. The butterflies

must be killed "in the usual manner," and "placed each in a small envelope or folded paper with the wings closed over the back, and the date and place of origin noted on the paper." In addition "they must be protected against lice with some deterrent," and "placed in a tin box." In case it is not clearly understood what is required the first 49 plates of Seitz' *Macrolepidoptera of the World*, volume 9 (Indo-Austral Part) "contain all that I want."

We are very grateful to an officer of h.m.s. "Sharpshooter" for the article on "Hydrographic Surveying in Sarawak" which appears in this issue. It was sent to the , from Trincomalee.

We regret that in "Notes and Comments" in our last number we referred to Kampong Merbau as being in the Ulu Sadong. It is of course a Melikin village, in the Ulu Gedong, and it was this area that the Agricultural Officer (Mr. Kay) was visiting when he was told the interesting stories which we related.

A correspondent has heard from Terry Abbott, late Acting Director of Medical and Health Services in Sarawak. Apparently he spent only a short time in Tanganyika having been offered a better position in the Seychelles. It is regretted that, in a semi- official journal, his letter cannot be quoted. His travels, however, seem to have convinced him that the so-called backwardness of Sarawak has been grossly exaggerated. He liked Tanganyika but gives Sarawak points in a certain number of respects, particularly, it is interesting to note, for this has always been one of the chief of our local prides, in the closeness of the relations between the administrative officer and the native population under his charge. Needless to add Dr. Abbott emphasises that he is relating first impressions only.

The following is from the advertisement pages of the *Orient Illustrated Weekly*, a Calcutta journal, edited, so we are informed, by a Mr. Gosh.

'Hail, Holy Mother?

We, the Votaries of the 'GODDESS OF STRENGTH' must dedicate ourselves anew on this auspicious occasion to the cause of peace and progress in our glorious land now freed from foreign yoke.

Ours is the oldest and best firm for import and manufacture of firearms of all descriptions. Fresh supply just received and added to huge stock."

We hasten to add, in case there may be any misconception, that we do not for one moment ally ourselves with those who see, in the attainment of India's freedom, only confirmation of their worst fears.

Why Uncle Sam tore his trousers! ?America Is Forced To Fall Back On Malayan Tin.??Straits Times headline.

With this number the present editor takes leave of his readers. Recently the editorial springs have shown a tendency to dry up and the time has come for a change. The cannot be called a good paper but it irritates us personally considerably less than most of the other journals we read nowadays. It is believed that the general opinion in the Colony is that, whatever its short- comings, it serves a useful purpose. The job of editing it is, and is intended to be, a spare time hobby performed in consideration of the pleasure

which it gives and an honorarium of fifty dollars a month. The stands or falls by the support which it receives in the way of con- tributions and letters from those who have had a long and varied experience of Sarawak. Intimida- tion will not succeed where cajolery has failed, and so once again we softly remind our readers, and Sarawak administrative officers in particular, that most of them are in possession of a rich store of knowledge which they should grudge neither to the outside world nor to posterity. We trust that that senior civil servant who, about a year ago, promised us an article on Sarawak Place Names, a subject peculiarly suited to this paper, and repeated his promise on more than one occasion, will shed a tear over the departing corpse. We wish our successor, Mr. C. E. Sandbach, the best of luck in an interesting but not unexact task, and we hope that he is provided with a sharper tin-opener than we have been able to find in a post-war bazaar.

Wot! Wot Taxes!

The mind of Kuching, and no doubt of the remainder of Sarawak too, has been busied for the past month with consideration of the principles and practice of taxation. True, perhaps, that the mental activity has not always occupied itself with abstract principle and practice but has turned more to the attitude of "how does this affect me?";? none the less, it has been there and has resulted in a certain amount of public discussion. The new Customs Tariff gave the ball a push, the experience of our

Malayan neighbours with the Income Tax legislation added its weight and a review of the new fiscal measures of the United Kingdom which appeared in the local press kept the ball rolling.

Taxation makes unpleasant food for thought; one is understanding towards the taxation of others, one views the taxation of one's own self with a premier horror and loathing. The brewer applauds the taxation of the butcher and the baker as long as his own financial integrity is properly respected; the baker appreciates the need for taxing beer and beef, or rather the profits that accrue from them, but deplores that the hand of an improvident Chancellor should stray towards the baker's pockets. If the King can do no wrong, then in the murky world of taxation the Chancellor, or his equivalent, can do no right.

Nevertheless, no matter how much an honest citizen abhors taxation, taxation is necessary and its usage time-honoured. The principles are sound enough and if one is to criticise the application then the criticism must have the merits of being constructive and impartial.

In the Malayan Union, it was the proposed introduction of Income Tax which caused the tax-payers and the Advisory Council to get hot under the collar. In the United Kingdom the provisions in the emergency Budget which were designed to control inflation excited comment; in Sarawak, attention is concentrated on the Import and Export tariffs.

The initial criticism of the new Customs Tariff concerned itself with the 10% duty on canned foodstuffs as threatening the standard of living of the man in the street. In parenthesis, this same man in the street comes in for a great deal of kindly concern one way or another. On analysis, however, this concern seems to be unwarranted.

The working man spends little or nothing on canned goods, certainly not more than 5% of his income. And if he spends as much as 5%, then the incidence of the 10% duty will raise his cost of living by one half of one per cent. In other words, out of each dollar, a puff or two of a cigarette and not from an expensive cigarette at that. The higher up the salaried scale, the higher proportion of income, up to reasonable limits, tends to go on canned foodstuffs. This bogey of the critics can be decently interned ; the duty seems to coincide with the expressed wish for duties on luxuries.

The oft-heard cry for duties on luxuries (if duties there must be) is apt to be misleading. It is, more

properly, a demand for the greater burden to fall on the higher incomes. It is reasonable to suggest that spirits (the non-poltergeist kind) are a luxury; the writer might classify them as a prime necessity, much more so than, say, a new gown, but a consensus of opinion would probably write them off as a luxury. Here in Sarawak arrack and whisky circulate side by side. The revenue to Government for each bottle of locally distilled arrack is not known but dependant upon time and place. Arrack can be bought retail for between \$1.50 and \$2.50 a bottle. Whisky, and indeed other spirits, must pay \$3.50 a bottle for duty alone. Indeed, the Customs tariff suggests that it will pay even more duty if it boasts a proof spirit content of more than 81%. There is no suggestion of the higher duty being levied upon a commodity of greater value; if arrack of the same quality as the locally distilled arrack were imported it would bear a rate of duty equivalent to that of whisky. It is a smaller excise duty or whatever term is applicable to the revenue accruing from the farming system for the benefit of lower incomes.

The second luxury tax which leaps to the mind is tobacco and here also the same tendency is apparent, that the tax is not only on luxury but on income. The import duty on foreign manufactured cigarettes, including the wrappers, filter tips, salt petre and other deleterious or accidental inclusion, approximates to not less than \$532.00 per picul. On importations of 'local' tobaccos, exclusive of wrappers since there are none, the cigarette smoker will pay \$399.00 for each picul of tobacco that he consumes.

A third, before we weary of the descending order, is cloth. A person of modest inclination as regards size and decency, will probably cover the body with some three and one half to seven yards of material on which a 10% ad valorem duty is payable. The amount of duty can be quite modest. On the other hand if that same person covets a covering of cloth of gold or wants to have the garment assembled in Singapore. Paris, London or wherever fancy or fashion dictates then up goes the amount of duty accordingly. In fact, the duty paid on clothing made in Singapore might readily be ten times as high as the duty in an equal amount of cloth imported into Sarawak.

In a recent vigorous letter to the Kuching press, it was stated, with what relevance is not altogether clear, that 'They (i.e. the 'Authors of the New Customs Tariff') should also know electricity is

classified under articles of strict utility.? This may be true of certain countries but it certainly does not apply to Sarawak where some 87% of the total population gets along quite well without this strict utility. Rather in this country electricity is very much by way of being an urban luxury.

There does seem to be a tendency on the part of the taxpayer throughout the wide world to regard those commodities which lie consumes as necessities and those which he does not as being the legitimate target of the revenue collector. In any case, there are few countries, apart from those minor states which derive vast revenues from gambling, where the wheels of Government can be oiled sufficiently with the revenue which accrues from the taxation of luxuries.

If ever Income Tax is introduced into Sarawak the newspapers will need to be doubled in size to carry the comments and cries of ?Yours faith- fully, Taxpayer. ??(Contributed.)

Hydrographic Surveying in Sarawak.

In 1843, when Raja Muda Hassim still resided in Sarawak, and Mr. Brooke was known to all as the ?Tuan Besar,? the first surveying ship to visit Kuching arrived under the command of Captain Sir Edward Belcher, c.B., Royal Navy. The ship was called the Samarang, and had recently arrived from England to carry out surveys in Eastern Waters.

Samarang had difficulty in finding the entrances to the Sarawak River as there were no charts at that time, nor was local assistance at once available. But after an abortive attempt had been made to enter the Lupar River, a prahu was eventually captured after a stern chase near the mouth of the Lundu River and a Malay was taken on board, who. by signs and the placing of sticks on the deck to show the course of the river, piloted the Samarang to anchor in the river opposite Mr, Brooke?s residence at Kuching.

On leaving Kuching the Samarang got hard aground on the rocky ledge about one mile down river from the town. She heeled to an angle of 15 degrees at low water and many compartments were flooded. It was only after herculean efforts with tackles from the mastheads to the trees on shore, and the building of rafts of logs to form flotation ?camels,? that the good ship was saved and was able to commence her work on the survey of the approaches and entrance to the Sarawak river.

During these salvage operations the Officers and Crew were housed in huts erected on the orders

of Mr. Brooke. They were built on the north bank of the river abreast the ship, where Kampong Samarang and Sungei Samarang recall to this day the incident which might have ended so disastrously.

H.M.S. Royalist in 1848 continued surveying work along the Sarawak coast, under the command of Lieutenant D. M. Gordon. The surveying ship Rifleman was here in the eighteen sixties, and the name of her captain, 'J. W. Reed, Master' appears on many of the old charts of Sarawak. But these two men seem more reticent than Sir Edward in publishing their reminiscences.

Then in 1929 H.M.S. Herald came to make modern surveys of these parts, where she carried out a great deal of work up to the time of her

retirement just before the War. Her regular arrival at Pending on Friday evenings earned for her the name of 'Paketvaart' in the columns of this journal. Herald's boats resurveyed the Sarawak River as far as Kuching, but she herself only came up to Kuching on a few occasions, on the last of which she nearly emulated the Samarang. The Officers were at the Club Fancy Dress Dance when news came that an unexpected freshet was piling floating logs upon the ship, and that the hawsers were in imminent danger of parting. By the time the Officers in their fancy dress motley had reached the ship things were in a serious state, and Herald had to beat a hasty retreat to Pending.

In August 1947, a hundred years after Samarang's last visit, the surveying ship Sharpshooter arrived in Kuching and secured alongside the Ban Hock Wharf. Sharpshooter has been surveying in the Rajang and Batang Lupar Rivers from April till August last year. Some doubt had been cast on the continued existence of deep water at the mouth of the Rajang. This area, and other difficult areas between Rajang and Sarikei, were first surveyed, little change being found since Herald surveyed the river in 1935.

There never has been an Admiralty Chart of the Rajang above Sarikei, so on 26th May the survey of the river from Sarikei to Sibu was put in hand, the ship anchoring off the Island Club at Sibu on completion of the survey on 27th June. This was novel work for the ship and of great interest. The ship, acting as a floating base, followed the surveying boats up the river, which entailed shifting anchorage every four or five days.

The Sea Dayaks were amazed and then delighted to find a ship which moved up river so slowly and on which they could call at any time to see 'wayang gambar,' or dance or travel in the ship's motor boats or just wander through her crowded mess-decks to see how the 'orang kelasi' live, in much the same way that Europeans sometimes wander through their own long-houses to see the manner of their lives. All attempts to regulate visiting hours in the ship were soon abandoned, and, the Dayak having delightful manners, life went on in the ship unruffled by a constant floating population who came and went as they pleased. Some Dayaks usually attached themselves for a week or so to the ship to help in the clearing of the river bank for the siting of survey points. They were quick to understand the rudiments of survey work and were indeed a great assistance.

Hospitality on board was returned in plenty and highly enjoyable evenings were spent in some of the long-houses on the way. It is a delight in these modern times to go to a party that begins at no set time, and only ends when all are too tired to dance on; to be able to make as much noise as one wants without fear of the next-door neighbour's complaints; and to dance, whether expert or novice, with no sense of being a social failure. And then you are piloted along the slippery log path to your boat moored beneath Christmas trees sparkling with fire-flies, and you can shout farewell as loud and as long as you like as you travel away across the dark water. Only in the morning when you leave the ship with 'sakit kepala' caused from an overdose of tuak does the party seem to have gone on too long. But hours earlier your friends of the night before have gone off to work in their distant padi fields in much better shape than you are.

The visiting of the ship reached a climax on June 12th, the King's Birthday, when Sharpshooter was anchored off Selimas and announced a hari raya by dressing ship overall, and by early evening a raft of sixty large prahus was moored to the ship's gangway. On this particular day we had forgotten to warn some Dayaks who were working for us that they would not be required. So a boat was sent up in the morning to say that it was a hari raya. The Tuai Rumah had got all his men busy on an extension to the house, and many of them were on the roof fixing the new attaps, but the rumour soon spread and down they all came with smiling faces; only the Tuai Rumah was glum as all his great plans for the day came to nought.

Many camp parties were established in the rivers for watching tide gauges in connection with the work. These parties are usually in radio contact with the ship. Sometimes good accommodation is found, sometimes not. While one party may be residing at a Government bungalow in Sibuan, and sampling the fleshpots in their leisure hours, another party may be huddled in a tent on an uninhabited island. And all sailors not being used to jungle, life at times may seem a little strange. The following signal was received one day from a party on Pulau Lakei near the entrance to the Sarawak River: "Iguanas seen on beach under huts five in number stop native fishermen say these are dangerous and will not sleep ashore stop request instructions for night watches? . . . " Carry a torch? was the ship's unsatisfactory answer!

After the Rajang Survey was complete, work was commenced in the Batang Lupar, the channel being surveyed from the vicinity of Pulau Burong to Lingga. The Lupar is remarkable for its extraordinary strong tidal streams, which made our survey work difficult in the extreme, but the ship eventually anchored off Lingga on completion of the work, and leave was given in this little known town. This was probably the first naval ship of any size to anchor off Lingga since Admiral Keppel's Squadron came to harry the Lingga Dayaks about a hundred years ago.

Great numbers of the Dayaks visited the ship at Lingga and we met our first Christian Dayaks, those from Banting in the Sungei Lingga, who were noticeably less eager to enter into the party spirit and to dance than their brothers of the Batang Lupar. Owing to the strong tides, those who came to visit the ship had to wait up to six hours before they obtained a favourable tide to carry them home. So drums, gongs, mats and sireh boxes were brought and the quarterdeck resembled more a long-house than one of His Majesty's ships; changed days indeed since the First Lieutenant of the Samarang refused to shake hands with Raja Muda Hassim because he had spat betel juice on the glistening decks.

The Native Officers at Sebuyau and at Lingga helped us in every way possible and they were among the many friends we left behind in the Lupar.

And then, after a visit to Kuching, the Sharp-shooter sailed from Borneo, leaving many friends behind and taking many strange memories with us. By the very nature of our work our progress is

slow, and that, together with the frequent connections with the shore necessitated by the work, means that we come to know people and places more surely than does the passing seafarer. We have played

cricket and football on every padang encountered, including the first memorable match at Sarikei when large crab holes full of muddy water gave the players more grief and the spectators more pleasure than either had bargained for.

Sharpshooter is too small a craft for extensive survey work in the East, and is returning now with a kenyalang at the prow to a more humdrum existence as a surveying vessel employed on the south coast of England. A new and larger surveying vessel, named after the surveyor Dampier, will be coming out to the East this year, and will no doubt eventually reach Sarawak to carry on the good work.?(Contributed.)

?La Follette.?

I wonder how many readers will remember the old "La Follette.? She was one of the famous class of steam launches comprising ?Lucille,? ?Chamois,? and ?Gazelle.? They were beautiful ships with their black hulls, yellow funnels and well polished brass work, very popular with their crews, and ideal for the work which they were expected to carry out.

For many years the old ?La Follette? was associated with the Baram River. Some few years before the opening of the Japan war ?La Follette? was withdrawn from Government Service and sold. Her purchasers altered her considerably and put her on the Kuching-Lundu run where, as far as I know, she was still operating in December. 1941.

And now in January, 1948, moored alongside the Pontoon Wharf in Kuching, there is a new ??La Follette,? a converted naval motor launch which came over from Singapore under her own power. The new "La Follette" is 72 feet in length, 15 feet beam, and draws 4 feet 7 inches. She is powered by two Thornycroft 120 H.P. engines and has a maximum cruising speed of 11 1/4 knots. Considerable conversion has taken place in the Thornycroft yard at Tanjong Rhu, Singapore, and she now has two cabins, two lavatories and a bath-room in the forward part of the ship, also a day cabin opening to the deck. The wheel-house is higher and free from interference by passengers, crews

quarters are roomy and comfortable and in the stern there are two galleys.

The voyage over from Singapore was accomplished in 54 hours, but from Tanjong Datu to Kuching the vessel was travelling on one engine only, and at no time during the voyage was her speed above 9 knots. The weather was not good but useful experience was gained and the Shipping Master is of the opinion that "La Follette" will be able to go to sea in any type of weather which we are likely to have off the Sarawak coast.

Congratulations are due to Juragan Addis and Engineer Abang as well as to Captain Matheson on the successful completion of their arduous voyage from Singapore to Sarawak. Captain Matheson should also be congratulated on the fine job of conversion which has been carried out on this vessel, making her a worthy successor to her famous name- sake and a very useful and welcome addition to the Government fleet.

"Periscope."

The Sarawak Constabulary.

"Taking one consideration with another, with another,

A policeman's lot is not a happy one."

Many will remember Gilbert's amusing lines, and, like many others which he wrote for Sullivan's immortal music, there is a considerable amount of truth in them.

Except glamorous American film stars who never omit to inform us that "your police are wonderful!" few have a good word to say for them. I suppose this is quite natural; no one likes the schoolmaster's cane.

The other day I was invited to go over to the Kuching Constabulary Depot and have a look for myself. No doubt they knew my censorious pen. So nice was everybody to me there, and so eager were they to let me see anything I wanted to and ask endless questions, that I find it difficult to say anything but praise for all I saw.

To start off with I listened to a short talk in the Central Police Station to Officers, Warrant Officers and others (including, I am glad to say a District Court Magistrate) on C.I.D. and what the police have been doing in the last few months to track down evil-doers and reduce crime in the Kuching

district. By means of charts and graphs it was explained how the system worked and with what results. Of course in these post-war years crime still exists among persons who previously would not have gone in for such tilings. Nevertheless, if one casts one's mind back to B.M.A. times and the early days of Civil Government (for which I must hold myself responsible) the labours of the police to induce people to get back to a more normal way of living have no doubt borne fruit. All the credit is not due to the police, but some of it is. Those days of a ragged little collection of dug-out policemen, badly equipped, short of officers, weak from malnutrition, and still dazed and bewildered from years of Japanese Army and Kempetai methods seem long ago.

We then went over to the Depot. Much of the glory and romance of Fort Margherita has departed. Those extraordinary pieces of artillery which were mounted on the Fort so as to command the Bazaar have disappeared. They were, I am told, specimens of the first breech-loading cannon made. The Hotchkiss from the old Zahora which used to be mounted as an ack ack gun has gone too. In other respects, however, this old fort, which so reminds one of Beau Geste, remains much as it was. The parade ground was as dazzling as ever, and across its hot expanse recruits were marching and counter-marching and doing those wearisome things which so many of us have had to do some time or other in our lives.

Here I shall digress. It has always been an argument in Sarawak that since the military force, the Sarawak Rangers, was disbanded the Constabulary has been neither one thing nor the other. People said that they were neither policemen nor soldiers, and that all this barrack square business and spit and polish was turning out a useless type. Now in my early days in Sarawak a policeman was a policeman and nothing else. He did no drill (at least not in outstations) and he was generally a local man. He was much more like the accepted version of the village policeman. He was recruited and dismissed by the District Officer and there was not a

vestige of a Constabulary manual! For instance, we issued red cloth for caps and cummerbunds and each man (or his wife or best girl) made it up into any shape he or she fancied. Most of the men invariably carried umbrellas and one of their evolutions was to bring their gamps up to the shoulder and salute by bringing the right hand over and slapping it smartly on the shouldered

weapon. I do not intend this to be ridicule : those outstation police were trustworthy and useful men. They were jacks-of-all-trades and in a great majority of cases retained the affection of all Civil Officers under whom they served.

When the Rangers were disbanded the police perforce became an armed unit. Many of the old type I described above were unsuitable and often too old to start to learn drill, and the ex-Rangers who agreed to transfer to the new force naturally became rather difficult when told to stand at street corners and wave their arms about to rickshaws and buses. With the withdrawal of our only military force it was inevitable that there must be some spit and polish and foot-slogging round the square if the men were to be fit to do the dual duty of police- man-cum-soldier. I do not think that this was always realised by some, and if it is true that the past policy of this armed constabulary was sometimes just stupid, it was not always so, and I often felt sorry for police officers when I reflected on their almost impossible job. A system of 'village constables' was tried, but they were no one's children. Their pay was scandalously small and naturally no real police officers would look at them or give any assistance.

Now, as I shall show, efforts are being made to overcome the difficulties of this military police force, and if I am any judge they are being over- come right well.

I suppose that now Sarawak is a Crown Colony it would be simple for us to apply to the nearest British garrison for assistance if needed. I do not for a moment think the occasion will arise, but it does simplify things for the police in that it gives them a chance to devote- more time to real police duties.

Before Cession and in peace-time the question of invoking such military aid in the event of trouble was a vexed one, and it is therefore not difficult to realise the troubles which must have worried the armed police authorities here.

I have made this digression lengthier than I intended but I do wish readers to get the right perspective or, if you prefer the present way of talking, be put into the picture.

At the Depot endeavours are being made to give a recruit a good grounding in his work and to make him think for himself. The actual ceremonial drill is cut down as low as possible but it is imperative

that the young men should learn to obey quickly and act together. In the British Army much of the old drill is being abolished, but no body of uniformed men can be of any use until it has received some drill discipline.

I visited a squad learning 'traffic drill,' another on Police Station work in a model Police Station, and another doing P.T. There was the police school and a general education school run under the direction of the Education Department. Wand- ing further afield I was shown an 'assault course.' This really is a pretty severe test of fitness. The men advance at the double, scale trees, jump on and off high banks, leap ditches and end up with

a high jump into a pool of water. This is done in full equipment with rifle and ammunition. Musketry, police duties, band practice and all the odds and ends which go to making a passed recruit fill up any spare time. The recruit course has now been extended from seven to twelve months. It is felt that-even if this entails a temporary shortage it is better to turn out a properly trained man than spoil the ship for a ha'p'orth of tar.

Everyday there is a ceremonial guard changing. To those who say that surely this is not a police- man's job I reply that no large body of uniformed men can be controlled satisfactorily unless there is some sort of glitter and esprit de corps.

One thing new to me was the small museum. This is an innovation and contains interesting specimens of confiscated weapons and other things found in the possession of evil-doers. I am of opinion that this praiseworthy work should be joined up with the Sarawak Museum, to their mutual benefit.

The bachelor police are fed by contract for which they pay a very modest sum when one thinks of present prices and there is a canteen. The Japanese did a lot of damage to the Depot but efforts are being made to improve the quarters and public buildings.

Nowadays the force contains many Land Dayaks who, I am told, make good policeman. The back- bone is of course Malay and Sea Dayak, but it is hoped that all races in Sarawak will send recruits. The Sikhs are not being replaced as they leave the Force. This is no reflection on that fine race of men, but in view of recent events in India and Pakistan it is obvious that the men who previously

filled the ranks of our Indian Army, and so much of the police forces in our Far East Colonies, will not be available. This is, I think, right as each Country should be able to police itself with its own nationals.

There is one thing that stands out, and that is the necessity of improving the educational qualifications of the present men and insisting on a higher academic test for future recruits. In the past it has always been said that the low pay would and could not attract smart and capable young men. There is some truth in this, although the educated youth did not always make the most dependable policeman. Yet in the long run the 4th, 5th or 6th standard lad will generally make a better job of it than the old stalwart who finds it difficult or impossible to read and write anything at all.

The ranks of the Constabulary should not be considered a come-down for any educated lad. His chances of promotion are now greatly improved and in these days more and more young men must, if they keep their eyes open, realise that this "black coat and white collar?? business should not be the aim of every boy leaving school.

A great deal will depend on Government's reaction to the recent Borneo Salaries Commission. If the pay and conditions of the Constabulary are brought more into line with other Government Services then I think, that there should be little difficulty in recruiting a good type of man and, what is more, keeping him. There have been outbursts of fury and acrimony against the Malaya Commission and I suppose that when it is published the Borneo one will come under the guns too. We can but wait to see.

In the meanwhile, with all their faults, which I am sure the Commissioner himself would agree are many, the Constabulary are making the best of things and it behoves all good citizens to aid them in their work. This is a thing which many of the public forget. There is no doubt about it, the force will improve and be a credit to Sarawak. Until then take to heart the opening words of this article.

O.F.

Many Years Ago.

(Continued.)

In my first instalment I left off on a horticultural note, but it is true that much of the centre of Kuching

has been shorn of its trees and flowering shrubs. Angsenna blossoms used to carpet the lawns in front of the Government offices, and old photographs in the Sarawak museum show what a country-lane appearance the road from the Pavilion to the present Residency had. The latter was then the Sarawak Club.

Down by the Borneo Company Offices Dayaks were regularly employed lopping the great branches off the angsenna trees there. From there one meandered down a long straggling road bordered by fishermen's shacks and small kampong houses : this is now prosaic Padungan Bazaar. The houses stopped, however, before the Padungan corner and the race course was almost in the country. Ban Hock road was certainly there (Mr. Yeo Ban Hock was a famous Towkay in the years that have gone by) but I do not remember much about Central road and I am inclined to think that it was in the making.

Down the other way Satok was very much a country neighbourhood. There were few dwellings after what is now the railway crossing. Beyond, towards the river, was what was unofficially known as St. John's Wood, and the reason for this is left for you to guess. The present horticulturally-named roads round that way were not existent or being made, and of course there was no bridge over the river. I shot snipe on the low-lying land round Satok, and punei where the Roman Catholic Mission at Padungan now stands.

Actually, with the exception of Padungan bazaar and "Old Venice," the Chinese trading part of Kuching has not changed much. It is true that shops have been rebuilt in more modern style and certain slums cleaned up but the newcomer in 1912 should not lose his way if he revisited the town to-day. What has changed, however, is the character of some of those places. What was perhaps in those days a rather disreputable part is now probably a model of propriety. For instance Khoo Hun Yeang street was the home of the Japanese brothels. Despite the stigma these establishments were efficiently and, one might almost say, respectably run. Where there were once frail daughters of the Rising Sun plying their trade are now Banks, offices and dispensaries.

There were big bridges near the present Power Station and at the end of Main Bazaar, and much of the rubbish of the town found its way into the stream. It may interest those hard-working officials in

the Treasury to learn that a river runs right underneath their feet.

Much of the fun has gone out since public gambling was prohibited. Naturally gambling goes on but it is behind doors, up stinking alleys and in rural hideouts. I do not for a minute question the decision of the authorities to stop this gambling, but it has not made for the gaiety of nations. It was worth while spending an odd hour or so looking on, or even having a mild go oneself; it taught me what a good gambler the average Asiatic was. In all the years I watched I never saw one instance of outward vexation or bad temper or, what is more, undue jubilancy at winning. The Chinese croupiers compelled my admiration and had nothing to fear from venturesome European gamblers.

Everybody of consequence says that opium smoking is wrong so it certainly must be. but here again a lot of local colour has been lost. It was remarkable what a lot of opium the well-to-do Chinese could take without showing it, but of course we did not always see the people who could not.

For many years opium was remarkably cheap in Sarawak; I think it was nine cents a packet when I arrived. It therefore paid persons to smuggle it into Singapore. On one occasion two well-known and highly respectable Europeans found themselves in a Police Station in Singapore. A zealous official unexpectedly insisted on searching the luggage of the first class passengers arriving there. Their suit cases were found to be packed with the stuff and in a most mysterious manner their Hylam "boys" had suddenly disappeared. I am told that there was a well organised smuggling kongsi in Kuching. The participants paid into a fund which not only paid the fines of those who were occasionally caught but looked after the wives and children of the unlucky ones who got jailed.

When I arrived in Kuching the Chinese were in the transition stage of removing their queues. Certainly many of the older men still retained them and did so for years afterwards, but younger men were getting rid of theirs. I remember my first clerk, who had a particularly fine queue, of which he took immense care, appearing one morning in office With a close crop; I think that he felt as awkward as I did when I hesitated whether to congratulate him or not.

There was very occasionally a silent film at a very smelly theatre hall off Carpenter Street. It was well-called silent as more often than not even the "sounds off" failed as well. The band invariably

played "Three O'clock In The Morning." I seem to recollect, too, another hall off Khoo Hun Yeang Street. At both halls there was the rigid rule that no Asiatic woman could sit among her menfolk. They were packed cheek by jowl into a balcony where I gather what with their head coverings and veils few of the women could see much more than a corner of the screen.

It is queer how trivial things stick in one's memory. I remember the excitement at seeing the first Asiatic lady bicyclist. Chinese and Malays stopped and regarded the scene with goggling eyes; she, too, was the first lady shop assistant and attracted tremendous custom at the shop in which she served scents and toilet soap. The first motor bus was a peculiar affair. It did not always go but on one occasion a party of us hired it completely and touted the town blowing a hunting horn.

It is hard to believe that Kuching once had a regular daily train passenger service. The tickets were rather odd, being printed on a long strip with all the stations on it. The booking office clerk tore off up to the station of one's destination, and if one made the return journey to the terminus the ticket was about a foot or more in length. I have never quite gathered where the railway was eventually to go, but it was a pleasant friendly affair and if one was a pal of the driver or guard it was simple to get the train to stop to pick one up at almost any point on the line.

It is strange but true that sea communication between Kuching and Singapore was more regular than it is now. The "Rajah of Sarawak" and the "Kuching" maintained a regular weekly service and one could almost set one's watch by their arrivals and sailings. I heard in the Lintang Prison Camp that up to the outbreak of the war with Japan both these ships were in commission on the China Coast and they may be afloat still.

The Sibu/Singapore run was started soon after my arrival by an opposition Chinese Company. Their first ship, the "Flevo," was one of the old iron ships built somewhere around 1875 and appeared to be indestructible. Her engines I am told were an engineering freak.

For lovers of the sea, however, the pride of Sarawak was the big fleet of schooners which carried all the sago trade, most of the coal and anything else to be transported up and down the coast. I think they must have been built on some long ago European model. The local shipyards built these graceful ships for many years. Generally two masted (there were a few three masted vessels) they

carried an amazing spread of canvas. One or two crossed topsail yards on the fore, and in addition they used what one might call a sort of spinnaker in a following wind. This was spread on a spar lashed to the heel of the foremast and in a good breeze these schooners could overhaul a steam vessel. The ports of Mukah, Oya, Bintulu, Matu and Balingian knew these vessels well, and as the crew were almost all Melanaus one can well understand that they were in no hurry to sail from those places. There was a Kampong in the Oya River always known as St. John's Wood (another one) off which there was always at least one ship lying; another favourite mooring was off Penyakup Kubu at Mukah. What with the girls ashore and the fishing these ships were apt to stay overlong, but when they did sail the crew handled them magnificently. I have seen a fleet of fifteen of these schooners standing out from Mukah and Oya on the first part of their voyage to Kuching after a week or two of N. E. gales. From where I was on the beach I could see the line stretching for miles and miles, all sail set and gathering speed in a freshening wind from the east. I once spent two days tacking backwards and forwards off Mukah waiting for an opportunity to slip in. It would not do in these days of wireless, and telephones and office routine but it was exhilarating to me. and I was genuinely disappointed when we managed to catch the tide and the sea breeze at a suitable moment and sailed in, all drawing, over the bar.

Although it was a compact little town Kuching was not at all a smug little town. Despite the absence of buses, taxis, talkies and electricity the streets at night were gay with oil lamps and people. There was gambling, or a spot of opium, and quite often a Chinese Wayang. The people liked a bangsawan, and we had a circus once. Bukit Passu, now remembered by few, was an attraction for men who should have known better. Many Kampongs had their own Bands and there was even a Christy Minstrel troupe. Whisky a dollar a bottle (or ten

dollars a case, duty included), square face gin a dollar twenty, but it was a very big bottle. Beehive brandy was under a dollar, Londres cigars about six cents apiece and cigarettes between thirty and forty cents a tin. Beer was expensive, at least three dollars a dozen, and a gin at the Social Club cost five cents.

Sharp at eight every night the gun was fired; stay-at-homes went to bed, night-birds started their

evening's fun without the help of neon lights, noisy radio sets and hooting motor cars. The cica- das were in full chorus, the scent of frangapanni, jasmine and tuberose filled the air. Lovesick youths flitted by bellowing pantun to keep their hearts up and evil spirits away. The trees round the offices were a glitter of fireflies.

Gradually the lights went out; even the fireflies departed. Shutters closed on the quiet houses, doors banged-to. 'Last Post' had gone long ago. Rajah Brooke's Kuching was asleep. (To be continued.)

O.F.

Note. After I had written this I went down to the old Government offices and found that the big Court Room, the scene of so many historic events, had been turned into a noisy office. There must be a good reason for this but it made me sad. It was here that Rajah Charles Brooke sat almost daily in Court. It was here that the great Secret Society trials were held. The old-time regatta 'breakfasts,' the reading of proclamations and edicts. Even in my time it was the scene of Rajah Vyner Brooke's installation as Rajah, of the first meeting of the Council Negri under the new constitution, of the momentous Council Negri which decided Cession and that sad morning on which the old Government went out and the new one came in.

I wonder what Charles Brooke, up on his bracket on the wall, thinks?

O.F.

Impressions of Jesselton.

At the risk of incurring a very high place indeed in the noble order of those who pay a fleeting visit, lasting perhaps a mere matter of weeks or months, to a country, and then presume to write about it, thereby incurring the scorn and scratching the irritation of the 'man on the spot' (what spot anyhow?) it is proposed to record in this article a glimpse of the capital of North Borneo during a sojourn there of approximately eighteen hours, five of which were spent on duty, not counting eating, sleeping, changing and bathing. Any dim ray of enlightenment shed into one of these sister Colonies and reflecting the conditions prevailing in the other has some sort of a defence to offer for itself. Far too long has an 'iron curtain' enveloped the waters of Brunei Bay. I felt a little ashamed

when, in reeponse to the courteous inquiry of His North Borneo Excellency's private secretary, "And when were you last in Jesselton Mr. Galioleh?" I had to confess that I had never set eyes on the town before, but I found on my return to Kuching that this great emptiness in my life had its counterpart in the lives of far more senior and experienced officials than me. Local leavers, en route for Hong Kong,

have in the past provided almost the sole European immigrant traffic to the North, although the enterprise of the late Mr. Wyndham Hankey in taking a holiday from his work with Sarawak Oilfields Limited in Miri in 1933 or '34 to ascend the heights of Kinabalu must not be forgotten.

It is much to be hoped that in the future closer relations will prevail between the two colonies than has been the case in the past. Some of us can remember the arrival at Lintang in September, 1942, of the internees from the West Coast, interlopers, as we then thought, from a company-ridden clime. For years we had believed that there was a wide gulf between Sarawak, the country saved for the natives, on the one hand, and North Borneo, the country ruled by European capital, on the other. We found, however, that, after a few months of discussion and comparison, our ideas needed a little shaking up. Planters, who were very substantially represented in the West Coast contingent, hotly denied that it was their practice to string their labourers up to trees by their thumbs when they failed to produce their allotted quota of work. District Officers looked much the same and talked much the same as their Sarawak contemporaries, the only important differences appearing to be that they were better educated in the law and worse paid. One went to Jesselton in 1947 with a more open mind than would have been the case ten years ago.

The plane lands on the sea with the town of Jesselton on one side and sundry islands on the other. Behind the town the cliffs rise up sharply and it is difficult to understand how all those planters find their way back to their estates on Sunday mornings. The capital of North Borneo has recently been moved from Sandakan on the east coast to this metropolis of the west. Jesselton, nevertheless, does not at first sight look as if it could control a vast hinterland. The impression of the writer at any rate was that here was a little settlement, plumped down on the sea-shore under the kindly shelter of the towering hills, hoping with might and main that nobody in the interior would notice its

presence. After landing from the launch in an undignified manner via an unstable raft and manifold steps, and coming up level with faces that seem to remember that they have seen people fall off that raft before and perhaps with luck one day it may happen again, the suggestion that this is a natural haven for the enterprising squatter is quickly dispelled. The bazaar drags out along the sea-shore and the car finally takes leave of the coastline over a low hump which one had noticed from the plane but ignored as being outside the immediate sphere.

It must be clearly understood that the war damage which was inflicted in Sarawak does not compare, except in the Fourth Division, with the war damage that was inflicted in North Borneo. When our fellow-sufferers arrived at Lintang some of us wondered to ourselves what they knew about war. (The 1914-1918 episode was of course a back number). After all there had been hostilities in the neighbourhood of Kuching for approximately twenty-four hours. During that period most of us had been safely tucked away in out-stations or behind the enemy lines but vicariously we had smelt blood. North Borneo had been tamely surrendered and many Europeans, particularly the West Coasters, had for five months lived outside the barbed wire, enduring experiences which, looking back on it now, one can see to have been

among the most humiliating suffered by civilians in Borneo. It was ironical that Kuching, garrisoned by a hopelessly inadequate number of Punjabis, escaped any real destruction, while the undefended towns of North Borneo were in the end razed to the ground, principally owing to the "softening-up" activities of allied aircraft to prepare for a landing which was subsequently rendered superfluous by the glory earned by the atom bomb.

For these reasons Jesselton is a town of kajang and daun, but of kajang and daun extremely well regulated and well controlled. To the passing eye the appearance of the bazaar reflects enormous credit on whatever authority is responsible for it. It is possible that the sanitary condition of those houses erected on the mud-flats behind the shops would not bear examination; it is possible, on the other hand, that examination would fully justify the impression recorded by the eye. To a hasty glance the shops appeared to be well-stocked, but there is little doubt that for the most part their customers are not so well-dressed as the customers of Kuching. The war wrecked havoc in the

residential as well as in the trading quarter. The problem, as far as senior government officials are concerned, (and I had no opportunity of delving into it further) appears to have been solved for the present by the erection of temporary houses, cool and airy, with push and pulls, two bedrooms, a living room on the verandah and dining room behind it, for the approximate cost of \$11,000 each. I was informed that the estimated life was about fifteen years but that considerable repairs would be required within that period. (A caveat must be entered here that there may be a wider variety of such houses than one encountered).

Jesselton seemed to me to combine the early morning air of Kuching with the topography of Tanjong Lobang in Miri. The roads in the residential area sheer off into precipices and the skeletons of much-beditched cars are the last relies, so I was informed, of the British Military Administration. An outstanding feature of Jesselton's highways is the roofless jeep, an exciting vehicle to drive about in Kuching during the landas. It was probably to one of these that the charming and beautiful European lady was referring when, leaping boldly into the dark, she remarked on that single evening in Jesselton: "Oh, Mr. Galioleh, my husband has told me so much about you and I see you driving down to the office in a jeep every day."

North Borneo has no anti-cession movement but the aftermath of the war has inevitably brought its share of complaints and disgruntlements. I was told that there was a popular story in Jesselton that the man-in-the-street was saying: "Let's have the Company baek; if we can't have the Company, let's have the Japs; if we can't have the Japs, let's have the B.M.A." It is perhaps necessary, for the benefit of those few of our readers who are inclined to take such things a little too literally, to emphasise that the story is, as I was assured, purely apocryphal. The strength and popularity of any government can best be judged by the gusto with which its members feel themselves free to retail such yarns. In Kuching one would keep an ear flapping to hark for applause from some corners.

In addition to doing untold damage to life and property in North Borneo the war seems to have left large gaps at least in the higher ranks of the civil service. Pre-war faces in the seats of the mighty are much rarer than they are in Kuching. Ex-internees in particular will appreciate the

width of the gulf when they are told that the query, "How's Smelt?", addressed to a quarter which might reasonably be supposed to be in the know, was greeted with the retort, "Who's he?". Lintang figures indeed were seldom encountered. Michael Edge boarded the plane in his capacity as police officer, and Harold Read was hovering about in the vicinity of the wharf, apparently in order to collect a couple of cases of whisky which a fellow-passenger was carrying to the Borneo Company's branch in Jesselton. Macartney, now District Officer there, came down to speed the parting guests just before the launch bore them out to the plane. Dick Evans and Jack Bryant are on leave. Many others may have been about somewhere but the kindness and hospitality of one's hosts, and the short time available, did not afford an opportunity of meeting them.

The North Borneo phoenix is arising from her ashes. She has a greater disaster to recover from than has Sarawak but it is inevitable that the two Colonies should go forward hand in hand. Political considerations are outside the scope of this article but an indispensable condition precedent for any real co-operation must naturally be a close understanding between the two Government sendees and an extensive knowledge of the problems and difficulties confronting the two administrations. In the past there has been a little too much prejudice, particularly on the part of Sarawak, to enable any very useful relationship to develop between the two countries which economically and geographically are really tied together. Even as in war-time the compulsory removal of North Borneo personnel to Kuching was of enormous value in up-rooting misunderstandings and establishing a community sense, so in peace will frequent and, if possible, prolonged visits of the officers of one Government to the territory of the other help to lay firm foundations for the future prosperity of British Borneo.

Galioleh

News From Nowhere.

Bario. 1/1/48.

Kelabit Plateau.

As I have received no mail, memoranda, Xmas cards or newspapers for 2 1/2 months back, and don't look like getting any for various unreasonable reasons, I live in blissful unawareness of

outside importance. I do not have to be worried by the latest horrors at UNO (if it still exists) or of the world's food situation (I presume it is appalling). I am even unconscious of bitter marginal comments in Secretariat files, or if Dr. Leach came back at me in the Gazette (or Major Fisher?). Everything here is local, myopic, minute, walled in by the great mountains and a million pro-white leeches. Thus, in reverse, this note reflects that remoteness, and its intense (if earthy) triviality, supremely insignificant and wholly adequate to ordinary living?

Mr. and Mrs. Hudson Southwell, of the Borneo Evangelical Mission, are in the offing and say they're coming to stay with me and rest up for a few days before the long trek back to Lawas. That will be a real pleasure. I am hoping they'll arrive just right to tell me what to do with a large crop of spinach just ripening from seeds the

Agricultural Department gave me before I left Kuching. Shameful to admit, I find that I don't know what you eat in spinach, and don't. Popeye always had it from a tin and I from a plate. The garden here was in a horrible state when I got back. A pity, because it should have been kept up as an experimental place; this is the highest inhabited area in Sarawak, and tests here could be important. In spare evenings I've done my ignorant best, and within the next few weeks expect to crop potatoes, tomatoes large and small, French and Scarlet Runner beans, peanuts, brinjal, cucumbers and marrow, eggfruit, silver beet and onions, all back in profusion partly Kuching seeds and partly old stock established here in 1945 and self-seeded. Alas, I have no green peas, radishes or cabbages, all of which prospered before, but have now vanished.

Incidentally, Mrs. Southwell has been the major incident of the Kelabit "Season." She will now take a proud place in the short and select line of orang patch so often recited in the borak bowl saga of visiting Europeans. It starts with Tuan Send-inglass (Douglas, 1908), climbs to the epic of how Tuan Pollard tore his shirt in rage (1930?) and has lately had the heroic conclusion of "how we carried the Tuan 6 days" (Morgan, 1947). They indeed portered Mr. Morgan and two of his friends right across the Plateau and over the Tomabos (6,000 feet), a feat which anyone who has been here will scarcely credit the climb up Pungga Pawon alone is a major operation in itself.

Mrs. Southwell is a great asset to the mission's growing hold on this area. She has charmed

everyone?above all her knowledge of the Murut dialect.

Other stray moments have been spent rearing ducks, and the first hatch of 9 (now 8) has attracted visitors from far and near. They do well in this wet-padi area. The study of the unique Kelabit wet-padi system and its related sociology has been my main job, along with exploration of now uninhabited valleys once they cultivated, and excavation of the remarkable stonework often associated with them.

Unfortunately, this has been a plague year for rats up here?and no doubt elsewhere, and a remarkably promising harvest is now endangered. This is life?s major worry here to-day. It?s sad also that old Salutan, the expert on the Balang cycle of folksongs, has died before I could complete the record. On the other hand. I?ve helped bring two Ba'rio children into this quiet upland world?one on New Year?s Eve. The remotest Sarawak School, at Pa Mein, carries on, but in urgent need of supplies, and other help from the coast. The place is overrun with game, but the guns have been taken away, so we go meat hungry and the pigs eat the padi (a logic which escapes me !). Almost daily I am asked when the new government of Rajah King will supply some of the medical aid so long and urgently needed by these (and other) inland peoples. The Museum collectors have nearly 500 birds, 100 mammals and much else?some of it new, I hope, to science.

I long for a letter, a Gazette and a cool cold drink. But this great basin set in harsh mountains has its compensations?and lots of spinach!

Tom Harisson.

Helping the Museum.

It was unfortunate that it should have happened the morning after I had been to a very successful party. My husband says that if you are feeling pale the best remedy is hard work in the garden; so into the garden I went bravely and began to cut off the dead flowers. Presently I decided to arrange a vase for the dining room; ?Honolulu? seemed to be in good supply so I gathered a large bunch and took it into the house. To my very great surprise, a pink blossom sprang lightly from the rest of the flowers onto the table. I was keeping my eyes half shut that morning but now I opened them wide. What had jumped onto the table was not, as you might have supposed, a dainty fairy, but a

pink praying mantis. And when I say pink. I don't mean a pale washed out colour, for this handsome insect was as deep a shade of blush rose as you could hope to find. Devout too: it immediately set about its devotions in the most praiseworthy manner.

I wondered if I could possibly be dreaming, so I called the boy, and when he came I said,

"Do you see this?"

"Yes Mem. I can see."

"Good," I thought. "He sees it, at least it is THERE."

"What is it?" I asked him.

"This one very nice I think." was his next helpful reply.

"Yes," I said, "I know it's very nice but did you ever see one like it before? What colour Would you say it was?"

"Yes I not see this kind before. Colour best called red."

"Best called pink," I said. "Well bring me a box for I think Tuan Harrisson might like it for the Museum."

A box was found. We made holes in it and lined it like a maidens' bower with pink blossom. Then with a polite, "Sir or Madam as the case may be," we persuaded the doomed insect to enter its fragrant prison.

It Was ortly then that I remembered that Mr. Harrisson had departed to talk to admiring Kelabits, and I had no idea who was now in charge of the Museum. Our telephone was rather under the weather that day, but after long and involved enquiries some one was kind enough to tell me that the Resident was keeping an eye on things.

I rang up the Law Courtis and a clerk informed me politely that the Hon. Resident Was conducting a case. "May I give him a message Madam?" he asked.

"I have been told," I said, "that the Resident is now in charge of the Museum, and I can supply him with a pink praying mantis if you think he would like to have one."

"Very sorry, really cannot say, but will inform the Hon. Resident of your message. A pink what did you say Madam?"

"A mantis," I said "And please tell him that it is an extremely nice one. Apart from its very unusual colour it really prays beautifully."

Perhaps my message was wrongly delivered, for later in the day I received word that if I had any pink elephants, nice or otherwise, I was to send them to Mr. Archer, who was now kindly looking after the Museum in the absence of the Curator.

This message rather exhausted our telephone which refused to work further. "Never mind," I thought, "I will just take it down quietly to-morrow morning and see if anyone is interested."

So next day, down I went with my box, but the Museum grounds were by no means a quiet spot that day. Hundreds of school children had met there for some special occasion and there were loud speakers and a band and much cheering. With great difficulty I made my way to the Library where I found Mr. Rozario. who was most courteous and appreciative. He said, "No, he had never seen a pink mantis before." Gingerly we lifted the lid, and eagerly we peered into the box. I was afraid that my captive might have faded during the night, but oh joy I here it was, just as pink as ever and Mr. Rozario said he would be pleased to have it for the Museum.

So there is a happy ending to this story : except of course for the praying mantis.

K.S.

Mem Pandai.

Malay for Mems by Maye Wood?Fourth Edition. Published by Kelly and Walsh Ltd., 1947.

Although the authoress (?) of this little book says in her introduction that it "does not pretend to be anything more than kitchen Malay" I cannot truthfully recommend its study by mems in this part of the world.

I cannot help but think that the authoress herself damns it from the start by saying "there is practically no grammar in kitchen Malay. It is mostly a matter of stringing words together, following the same order as in English. There are, however, a few matters to be observed, such as " that there are no auxiliary verbs, no tenses, no genders, no cases, no number and no article."

Admittedly some mems can, and do, get on fairly well with a very small vocabulary and much gesticulation, but I do think that if anyone goes to the trouble of writing a book about the subject he

or she might go to the further trouble of being accurate even if it does not go beyond the very elementary stage.

It would be tiresome to make a list of all the errors, and in such a book it is not good to be meticulous but does Maye Wood really think that rendum is to soak, hujun rain or tungoh (or tungu, you may make your choice) to wait?

One thing which Maye Wood makes a great point of is the word tabek. This word ?is not used by Europeans unless a native has said tabek first.? How delightfully insular, how charmingly snobbish and how devastatingly rude! Nevertheless, mems are warned that ?Chinese servants speak very badly;? for instance she mentions ?sossi-loll,? ?minci-pap? and "ayam debil.? I am afraid, however, that the mems will have nothing on the Chinese if they perseveringly learn the odd pronunciation, singular spelling and the grammarless, tenseless language as set out by Maye Wood, who, by the way, sells her work for \$2.50 a copy.

O.F.

Stories of Old Sarawak: 8.

Once upon a time there was a distinguished Resident who married late in life and became the proud father of a son. Visitors to the Residency were always required to admire the prodigy. The interview was invariably more short than sweet and went like this. ?Ah-mah,? called the Resident, ?bah-wah Tuan Baby.? The infant was duly produced and placed on his father?s knees where he was forthwith bounced slowly and solemnly up and down. ?Dickory-dickory, dock-ah,? said the Resident, ?the marse ran up the clock-ah. Ah-mah, take Tuan Baby away.?

This Sarawak.

(With apologies to the New Statesman and Nation.)

Colds developing into influenza have been prevalent owing to the fruit season being upon us.?A monthly report.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of China,

Nanking.

Sir,

In continuation of my application dated 6th instant, herewith enclosed are 6 photos of mine, which kindly acknowledge receipt.

By the way, please add one line between 'who attempted to annihilate the Asaks' and 'with poisonous gas engaging an expert from Europe through H.S. Kierkegaard' who are to keep back or hold back the Mongols at Paitashan Chinese Turkestan (Sinkiang). With oblige.

Copy to Generalissimo Chiang, who is honourable Chairman of our Overseas Chinese Association, who is to look after our Overseas Chinese interests, and copy to the Government of Sibu, Sarawak, Borneo. A letter.

Most respected sir,

I the undersigned----- have the honour

to beg to bring to your kind and sympathetic notice that I was born in a noble family. My father was late ----- the proprietor of the Estate of

-----still holding his name in the record of Municipal office. But as ill luck would have it and through irony of fate Sir, I have fallen in a miserable circumstances owing to my late father's Estate having mortgaged to different peoples' hand owing to heavy burden of debts.

Last time Sir, I think you remember once I disturbed your tranquil peace even going up to your Bungalow with '-----' of Messrs.-----

on behalf of my poor self for a job. But owing to my hard luck I could not get it.

Now I beg to request you Sir, to be so good as to give me a job of any kind on any pay under your kind control for which act of kindness I shall ever be grateful.

Thanking you very much Sir, for causing unnecessary disturbances. A letter.

Dear Sir,

Being given to understand there is a vacancy in the Printing Office I wish to be a typewriter. A letter.

To,

The Honourable, Resident.

MIRI.

Why A is allowed to use one number for two jeeps, while his jeep No.-----is under overhaul

in his own garage Workshop, the same number is used for another jeep, which he recently brought from ----- . Is this only permissible for A or for the public of Miri. Is the Government help him for such cheating in vehicle taxes. Is this the lack of your administration in this district.

Yours obediently.

TRUTUN ? A letter.

The Forest Checking Station has been completely done.?A monthly report.

Selling pork without being inspected under Chapter XVI, sections 1, 2, 3, and 16.?Court charge.

(The Editor is unable to follow the example of our illustrious contemporary and offer a prize for the best entry in this column. Contributions from all parts of ?This Sarawak? will, however, be warmly appreciated and the most favoured will be given pride of place.)

Fifty Years Ago.

THE , FEBRUARY 1st, 1898.

ORDER.

No. II, 1898.

Finding that the passes now granted to cart owners before they can ply their carts inland on Rock and other Roads lead to too much restriction, and are liable to prevent cultivators and others from getting their regular supplies of food, I direct these passes shall in future be abolished, and that the carts after being registered, can ply without hindrance at any time excepting when the Roads are found to be impassable on account of unusual wet.

I also direct that the Order that all carts shall be provided with 4 inch tires shall not be enforced. This increase of breadth may lead to too much Weight for animals to draw on imperfectly made roads.

A fair tax namely of \$4 a year on each cart drawn by cattle, two dollars to be collected every six months. Hand carts are free from payment. This Order to come into force from 1st day of January, 1898.

Previous Order relating to above matters to be cancelled.

Under my hand and Seal, this 1st day of January, 1898.

C. BROOKE, Rajah.

ORDER.

No. III, 1898.

Any person found stacking firewood on the Bazaar frontage for more than twenty-four hours will be fined five dollars.

Building Materials and Merchandise not of unsightly character may be kept on frontage for a reasonable time.

Under my hand and

Seal, this 6th day of C. BROOKE,

January, 1898. Rajah.

News from Far and Near.

FIRST DIVISION.

The Honourable the Resident (Mr. Morse) reports that, in connection with the problem of Chinese squatting on Dayak land, it is interesting to note that the Rayang Dayaks are being employed by the Chinese to work on their own land on behalf of the Chinese. The Resident comments that it would be hard to imagine a more ridiculous situation.

The District Officer, Kuching, (Mr. Outram) says that an unusual case of house trespass came before the Court on December 20th. The accused was reported to have been trying to force unwelcome attentions on the witness, a married woman, but he had been so man-handled by her that he had been admitted to hospital. In view of the lesson he had learnt the accused was released with a warning and ordered to sign a bond for good behaviour.

The District Officer, Kuching, reports that two cases of unnatural death were reported by Orang Kaya Batek from the Left Hand Branch in December. In the first a Dayak, attempting to collect honey, had, with the help of his friends, scaled a jungle tree to a considerable height. The tree was hollow and he was reaching inside a large hole in the trunk when he over-balanced and fell in. His friends summoned assistance, let down a plumb-line from the hole to ascertain the depth of the fall, which proved to be sixty feet, and then cut a hole in the trunk at the height indicated. The hole revealed the man who was found dead in a sitting position. In the second case a party of Dayak

women were weeding their farm, when a large tree trunk, previously felled, became dislodged and rolled down the hill, crushing one of them to death.

The District Officer, Bau, (Mr. Lloyd Thomas) reports that in December two Chinese were convicted for removing guano from a cave without a licence under the Land laws.

A Chinese was fined \$15 for selling gold to a person other than an authorised dealer in Bau in December. The Krokong Gold Mining Syndicate Limited and the Tai Ton Gold Mining Syndicate produced gold in Bau during November. The District Officer, Bau, says that three other mines have reported that they had not yet been able to produce any gold although they had been in operation on a small scale for some time. The proprietor of the quick-silver mine at Gading has reported his intention to resume prospecting and

preliminary operations on a small scale. The District Officer adds that the fact that many mine areas have been left idle by their owners has undoubtedly increased the difficulty of supervising these places and has encouraged unlicensed persons to "cash in" on some of the proceeds of the mines. Two separate home-made plants have been found to date in the Sarawak Mining Syndicate's area at Buan and six persons charged in connection therewith. Similar plants had previously been unearthed in two other temporarily abandoned mines.

The District Officer, Bau, reports that his bungalow was struck by lightning at the beginning of December. Guttering and pipes were torn from the house and large holes were found to have been made in some of the pipes, while cement on the walls, and asbestos roofing, was smashed in some places, and telephone wires vanished in others. Fortunately no injury was caused to any person by this somewhat startling occurrence.

The District Officer, Serian, (Mr. Roberts) reports that in December there was a rumour on the Samarahan that Anthony Brooke had landed in Sarawak, where he had been met by a band of welcome and a guard of honour. He had immediately called his Government together and held a meeting and celebrations had taken place in the Astana. This fable was eventually traced to its source. An Iban lad of undoubted loyalty and good sense had witnessed the opening of Council Negri and described it to his kampong. As is quite common he had referred to His Excellency the

Governor as "Rajah Baru" and gossip had distorted the tale.

The Native Officer, Lundu, (Mr. Edward Langgi) reports that "the Malays are getting on muddling up among themselves especially in Kampong Stunggang. I should say, they are having different opinions in the way they live and mixed together." The Honourable the Resident comments that the District Officer, Kuching, looked into the matter during his recent visit to Lundu. The District Officer is of the opinion that it is nothing but the age-old feud between the Brunei Malay element and the Sambas Malay element. The fact that the former are now "pro-cession?" and the latter "anti-cession" is incidental.

SECOND DIVISION.

The Honourable the Resident (Mr. Ditmas) reports that early in December P.W.D. Road Engineer Mr. Ng Shui Hon completed his investigation of the proposed road trace from Lidong to Betong. He said that the building of a path was quite practicable. A small river near the Lidong end would require clearing to avoid flooding. The two longest bridges would be seventy feet and forty

The District Officer, Simanggang, (Mr. Jacks) reports that in December two Malay children, a boy and a girl, both of the same family, died of eating some rice which their father had found under the wharf. On examination in Kuching it was found that the rice contained arsenic. Apparently it had been used for the destruction of rats in the godown and the remains had been thrown out.

The District Officer, Simanggang, reports that on December 30th triplets were born to a Dayak woman named Limang anak Untong of San, Batang Ai. Two girls weighed four and a half and four pounds respectively and a boy five pounds. Mother and children were all well.

A crocodile, twenty feet and five inches in length, was killed at Skait, just below Simanggang, on December 17th.

The District Officer, Saribas, (Mr. Waine) reports that a case of some interest was settled in the Resident's Court during December. A Chinese, who was properly married according to Chinese custom, deserted his Chinese wife and children, embraced the Mohammedan faith, and "married" a Malay woman. The Chinese wife brought a claim for maintenance against her husband. The Resident's Court ruled that the second "marriage" was void because the change of religion did not alter

the fact that by his racial custom the Chinese was entitled to only one "principal wife." As the second marriage was a Mohammedan one the Malay wife could not thereby become a "secondary wife" within the meaning of Chinese custom.

The District Officer, Saribas, reports that he has found it necessary to postpone the football competition which has been organised for teams through- out the District. During the last two or three matches tempers have become frayed and free fights followed. The last game to be played developed into a "free-for-all" and was followed up by fighting in the bazaar in which the police intervened and three prosecutions resulted.

The following is an extract from the December report of the District Officer, Saratok. (Mr. Wilson) :
"On Christmas night the children of Nanga Grinjang school presented a tragedy. The plot was of a young Dayak who thought the object of education was to become a clerk and left his native soil for Kuching. There he rose to be head clerk to a great British merchant. Wine and women beckoned and the hero was soon hungry and in rags. Returning to his native hearth he found that his parents had died of starvation and there- upon he committed suicide. The scenery and stage lighting were remarkably good and the children remembered their lines in spite of the convivial chatter and movement of the audience. A little more rural vulgarity or love interest would, how- ever, have made this six hour epic more digestible."

"The life of a Chinese boat hawker," says the District Officer, Saratok, "seems to be one long breach of the regulations pertaining to his occupa- tion. If the Constabulary continue their present policy of energetic patrolling and the Dayak shop- keepers of reporting their business rivals' offences hawking boats will rapidly disappear from the ulu."

THIRD DIVISION.

The following is an extract from the November report of the Honourable the Resident (Mr. Barcroft) :
"The Divisional Advisory Council was held at Sibu on the 21st and 22nd and on the whole was a great success. Most of the Council- lers had something to say and many made valuable contributions. One Councillor from up-river rose to speak in support of all the draft Bills scheduled for presentation to Council Negri and was particularly eloquent in support of the Customs Bill which

in some strange way he linked up with an issue of guns and medicines to Belaga. Another Councillor seized the opportunity during the debate on the Extradition Bill to press for pigs and arrack for the celebration of the opening of the new Station at Song."

Towards the end of November the Honourable the Resident was joined in Sibuluan by his Great Dane, Caesar, since when, he reports, the number of visitors to the Residency has noticeably decreased.

The District Officer, Sibuluan, (Mr. Fisher) reports that on the occasion of the Royal Wedding the Bomb Disposal squad fired a Royal Salute of 21 guns. This was most ingeniously done with an elaborate system of fuse and reels of gun-cotton on the lawn by the offices and no gun was actually used at all.

On November 8th an ex-servicemen's dinner was held in Sibuluan under the presidency of Lieutenant-Colonel T. St. J. Dilks late R.A. And so the world wags! Mr. Dilks is a Government cadet stationed in the Lower Rejang and nearly the most junior European Officer in the Third Division. To say the least of it it must be an interesting and instructive experience to start at the bottom in peace when you have already achieved eminence in war.

The District Officer, Kanowit, (Mr. Drake) reports that many Dayaks were in during November to enquire about guns. The word has apparently at last got round that there are some guns for sale and the demand is now tremendous. A total of 37 guns has been received, while a total of 115 applications have already been approved or forwarded for approval. A great deal of time is taken up every day dealing with these queries and explaining the system of allocation.

The following is an extract from the November report of the District Officer, Kanowit : "Loans of sago for Dayaks in the District were approved during the month, to be repaid in cash or padi after the harvest. It is hoped that this will allow Dayaks to look after their farms properly between now and next harvest, instead of having to spend all their time looking for food. or for work to get money to buy the necessary food. This should do something towards ensuring that next year's crops are rather better than last. Present reports seem fairly hopeful, pigs and deer being the only pests reported from everywhere?and I suspect these reports are grossly exaggerated in the hopes that more guns will be forthcoming."

The District Officer, Kanowit, reports that on November 12th, he accompanied the Protector of Labour (Mr. Cromwell) on a visit to the Leng Hak Huon (late Rejang) Estate. About an hour and a half was spent in trying to fathom the system of accounting employed. At the end he was none the wiser but hopes that the Protector was. The coolies employed on the estate seemed satisfied but the District Officer feels that if they ever brought a case to Court about under-payment of wages he would have no alternative but to resign.

Prosecutions under the Defence Regulations (Controlled Articles) Rules were taking place in the Lower Rejang District in November so that perhaps the time is not yet ripe for the revocation which it was hoped would soon be possible.

The District Officer, Lower Rejang, (Mr. Dilks) reports that all Lower Rejang District members of the Divisional Agricultural Board attended a meeting of the Board at Sibu in November. At its conclusion they expressed satisfaction at the usefulness of the meeting and their pleasure at being able to discuss agricultural problems on a Divisional basis. They felt that it was a real indication of Government's desire to help agriculturalists in every possible way.

The District Officer, Mukah, (Mr. Morison) says that reports from the Ulu Mukah tend to show that the once promising crops of illipe nuts has been rather badly damaged by the heavy storms of wind and rain in its flowering stage. The Honourable the Resident comments: "It now seems almost certain that there is little or no prospect of a good illipe crop in any part of this Division."

The following is an extract from the November report of the District Officer, Mukah : "The Melanau population are literally working day and night in the production of sago. Owing to the new mechanical means of sago grinding it is now a common sight in and around Dalat to see boat loads of split sago logs being taken to the local factories for grinding. The present price per log (krat) is, I understand, in the nature of \$25 to \$30 per krat. There is an apparent difference in the set up of the factories in the Mukah and Oya rivers. Generally speaking there would appear to be a greater desire on the part of the Chinese in Mukah to set up factories for washing and pressing as well as grinding, while the mill-owners and would-be mill-owners in Dalat seem desirous to do the sago grinding only and to employ native labour in the old time-honoured method of pressing and washing

by foot. It would appear that whole households are now closing their houses in the small karri ponds of Penipah and Bedengan in order to move to Mukah for the purpose of working sago.? The Honourable the Resident comments : ?The District Officer?s report on the intense activity on sago production is viewed with some apprehension. No less than thirty applications have been received from Chinese in the district for sago factories and at the present rate of production there is considerable danger of the Melanau-owned palms being exhausted before very long, an alarming thought when it is considered that many of these persons have no land suitable for rice production.?

The District Officer, Mukah, reports that during November a Fish Board was set up in Mukah largely for the purpose of fixing the price of fish and to arrange that all fish should be sold by weight from the market-place and not from the fishing boats. Tua Kampongs and the fishermen themselves, together with the Kapitan China, constitute the Board. So far the results have been more satisfactory than was expected.

There are now six registered motor vehicles plying between Mukah and Oya. Unfortunately at the end of November it was found necessary to prohibit all such traffic on the road owing to its condition in certain places. The Honourable the Resident thinks that it would seem unwise to allow any additional cars on that road.

The Assistant District Officer, Kapit, (Mr. Rennick) reports that the Dayak Penghulus of that District led by Penghulu Jugah (Merirai) have opened a shop in Kapit under the sign ?Melaya-Iban Sherikat.? A Dayak gong, found on the site of the new Government offices in Song, has now been recognised by Penghulu Jugah (Musah) and Tuai Rumah Joss as having been stolen from the Dayak burial ground at Nanga Rerek. The gong has been duly returned in order to avert the bad weather and unsuccessful padi harvest which would surely have followed any other course.

The Assistant District Officer, Kapit, reports that the towkays have been buying damar as fast as the Dayaks can fetch it. There was a rumour current that a boat would be coming from Australia on purpose to take away all the available damar. The Honourable the Resident comments that the rumour is almost certainly false. He says that a recent shipment of damar to Australia proved unsaleable there.

It is said that some Chinese in the Kapit District fear that the new Song will eclipse Kapit.

The words "November" and "October" in the first paragraph on of our last issue, referring to the export of rubber from Sibu, should have read "October" and "September" respectively. The error is regretted.

FOURTH DIVISION.

The Honourable the Resident (Mr. Gilbert) reports that on November 8th a civil marriage took place in Miri between Pauline Louise Crandall (American) and Adolph Ugano (French).

The Honourable the Resident says that Miri, Lutong, and Seria are looking forward to resuming the Easter Cricket match against Kuching. The wonders which Easter.

The District Officer, Miri, (Mr. Lascelles) reports that more and more Dayaks are arriving to look for work with Sarawak Oilfields Limited, and often appear to think that it is the Government's fault if there is no work for them. The vast majority of Dayaks who worked for the Company before the war, says the District Officer, were employed by the Geological and Survey Departments, and until these Departments renew their pre-war activities the prospects of Dayak labourers are bad.

The following extracts are from the November report of the District Officer, Miri :

"To the great satisfaction of all the 'orang dahulu,' and against the opinion of a number of the 'new' Sarawakians, it has been decided to reform the old Gymkana Club, Miri. (He thinks he means re-form). The Club building to be built on the actual old site will at first be merely temporary of wood and kajang. Of the wonderful pre-war grounds remain a dry swimming pool, two hard tennis courts and a very rough padang. An enormous mechanical grader is at present battering out Japanese ubi kayu beds and it is hoped that, now we have a start, we shall make rapid progress towards our return to the proud position of being the best club in Borneo.

A start has been made in the drive to get rid of the collection of kajang shops which clutter up the Refinery gates and space has been made available for them in Lutong Bazaar Area. Many of these traders are just glorified hawkers with no capital, and will probably close down, much to the relief of the genuine traders of Lutong Bazaar who ever since the 'liberation' have been starved by these Refinery mushroom shops. It is amazing, the number of former cooks and cook boys who have

opened up coffee shops and are carrying on living from hand to mouth.

Sarawak Electricity Supply Company have arrived and are in process of producing light for the bazaar. They expect to be in a position to do this early in December. (December, 1947. Ed.) Owing to the generous help of the S.O.L. the Government quarters at Tanjong Lobang, Brighton and Kubu Road have been supplied with light.?

The following is an extract from the November report of the District Officer, Bintulu, (Mr. Drake-Brockman) : "An application was received from one Chieng Hee Lieng of Sibu to set up a plant for the dual purpose of pulverising sago and rice milling. This sounds a good project but how long it will last remains to be seen as only a limited quantity of sago palms is available in the District, and no one seems to be interested in replanting. The Honourable the Resident comments : "The Bintulu Melanaus are not lazy by nature, and I have never understood why they have of recent years stopped replanting. Sago is still their staple food and in addition to this the working of lemanta is a profitable business. I am told that a worker is now able to make \$4 per day at the present price of lemanta."

The District Officer, Bintulu, reports that, owing to the competitive price offered, the Chicle Development Company have obtained enormous supplies of raw jelutong from Kuching, Sibu, Balingian, Baram, and Limbang, and have now reached the stage where boats have to queue up to unload.

The District Officer, Baram, (Mr. Morgan) reports that eight local launches were regularly running between Kuala Baram and Marudi during November.

FIFTH DIVISION.

The Honourable the Resident (Mr. Anderson) reports that there was a fire in Limbang towards the end of November which destroyed a big shed at the sago factory. Police and prisoners were called out and with the help of the voluntary bazaar fire squad the flames were eventually extinguished. It was largely due to the lucky chance of the wind blowing away from the kampong, says the Resident, that the fire did not spread. The cause has not been discovered. The Resident adds that it cannot be emphasised too often that there is a great danger of heavy loss to property, shops, padi stores, etc., without constant propaganda and precautions in these days of temporary buildings. He says that the

bazaar fire squad worked hard but in a haphazard manner. They need more and constant drilling and control.

The Honourable the Resident reports that the Colony Flag was flown for the first time in a Sarawak out-station during the visit of His Excellency the Governor to Lawas in November.

The Cadet Officer, Limbang, (Mr. Smith) reports that meetings were held in November by "the committee of the Divisional Agricultural Show." The , remembering that the person holding the appointment of Resident. Fifth Division, was the pioneer of these shows in Sarawak many years before the war, finds this particularly interesting.

According to the Cadet Officer, Limbang, "the only interesting person brought to light" in the preliminary enumeration of the recent census in that District was a Malay woman who claimed to have accomplished 151 years. On investigation "she stilted that, when the first Rajah took over Sarawak in 1841, she was 18 years old, so her age was changed in the schedule to 126 years." (The trusts that she was not referring to the annexation of the Limbang District in 1890). Natural scepticism appears to be silenced with the arguments that to) "the enumerator is quite certain that the age of 126 years is about right," and (b) that an interpreter was needed "as the enumerator could not understand the woman's Malay."

CORRESPONDENCE.

TERMS OF SERVICE.

15th January, 1948. The Editor,

,

Kuching.

Dear Sir,

I wonder if "One of the Old Brigade" is pulling our legs and whether he wrote in your last issue with his tongue in his cheek?

As the Editor rightly says the salaries in 1873 were undoubtedly reckoned in the four shilling dollar: indeed until the death of the late Rajah all furlough pay was counted as such, an anachronism which was never satisfactorily explained. Statistics they say can be made to prove anything, but it is the

truth that in 1873 duty on claret was 75 cents a dozen bottles whilst the duty on wines (distinction without difference?) was only 50 cents. Beer and porter were 25 cents for a dozen quarts, spirits 50 cents a dozen and gin (another distinction without a difference) \$1.20 for a case of 15 bottles. If you were a cigar smoker the duty was \$2 for 1,000.

As for the prices I see that "The Rajah's Arms" sold you a pint of "dry and exquisite" champagne for 60 cents, while the really heavy toper could get a quart of it for two dollars. Sherry and brandy was 10 cents a go and gin 5 cents.

Good rice was round about 6 gantangs for a dollar and a dollar would buy six fowls. The late Rajah once suspected his cook of devilry over the vegetables in his kira, and giving a dollar to his orderly told him to go and expend it all in vegetables. He did so but had not sufficient money with which to pay the ricksha which was necessary to carry the purchases home.

I think that it is possible that some of those who are "perpetually hankering" after the luxuries of Europe may well wish that they had been born in those days. When it comes, however, to hankering after the women of Europe I really wouldn't know. Are they all indolent, I wonder? I did hear that quite a number have proved most effectively that the Hylam cook is not indispensable and that house-keeping can be kept down to reasonable limits. In addition some of them are most decorative, so what more can you want?

And now having gone right against my convictions and prejudices I subscribe myself

Yours faithfully,

One of the Even Older Brigade.

Kuching, 16th January, 1948. The Editor, ,

Kuching.

Sir,

Although no longer so young, I do not wish to associate myself with your correspondent of "The Old Brigade" so conclude that I am necessarily one of the litter.

Old Brigadier, however, does not complete the story and leaves readers with a very wrong idea.

I first came out East (to Ceylon) in 1919, my salary was the princely sum of Rupees 190 per month,

plus quarters, but out of this I lived well, smoked, had a drink when I wanted one, played all the games, kept a personal servant and still was able to send Rs.45 per mensem to the Post Office Savings Bank in England.

You will notice that this was after World War 1, and I have been given to understand, on good authority, that prices had by then risen sky high in comparison with pre-war standards.

I should imagine that some of my younger brother puppies would be very pleased to serve on quite small salaries in such circumstances.

I also fail to see anything derogatory or un- natural in a lad wishing to marry a woman of his own nationality and, having done so, live with her and keep her in reasonable comfort.

In my 'old days,' I never noticed European's wives doing much in the way of work, but now quite a number do their own cooking and shopping for economies' sake.

It would be interesting also to know what salary this Old Brigadier is now drawing or was drawing when he packed up work, and if he refused any increments which came his way.

Also, if he had served for five or six years in a real but not so old Brigade in, say, Burma or France whether he would not have considered "Young Puppy" to be an offensive title.

Yours sincerely,

F. Harding.

Kuching,

23rd January, 1948. The Editor,

,

Kuching.

Dear Sir,

References to the time when men were men, such as that contained in 'One of the Old Brigade's' letter in your January issue, remind me of the senile reminiscences of Justice Shallow and of Falstaff's comments thereon : 'Lord, Lord, how subject we old men are to this vice of lying! This same starved Justice hath done nothing but prate to me of the wildness of his youth and the feats he hath done' and every third word a lie?

I should have thought that the sneers of the elder generation at luxury loving ?young puppies? would have ceased after the Battle of Britain, El Alamein etc. The methods and manner of living of the modern Cadet may differ from those of the old brigade, but I have no doubt that he will serve Sarawak equally faithfully and well. Nor, do I suspect, is the difference in purchasing power between his salary and those of 1873 nearly so great as the bald figures quoted by ?One of the Old Brigade? indicate.

No reasonable person will, I think, quarrel with the statement in your admirable Editorial in the same issue of the ?Gazette? that ?it is a vulgar and a dangerous error to assume that the old must be all wrong and that the new must be all right.? It is also a vulgar, though not, perhaps, a dangerous error, to assume that the old must be all right and the new must be all wrong.

Yours faithfully,

R. N. Turner.

From ?Adversity?: Internment Quarterly.

(The following verse was published in "Adversity" on July 1st, 1944.)

Far Ago and Long Away.

Was it a hundred years away We saw the lights of London play?

Was it ten thousand miles ago

We said:?"Good-bye."? I hardly know.

The years and miles have blended, blurred, The hands that lingered, voice that stirred, Have faded in a humdrum drone, A man-made, maddening monotone.

Yet sometimes, unforeseen, time stands

And telescopes the miles of sands? A flash, as swift as lightning, dies, But holds the sparkle of your eyes.

Was it a hundred years ago

I heard the steamer?s siren blow?

Was it ten thousand miles away

We said "Good-bye some day some day. . . .??

Kuching Market Price List.

Average monthly Market Prices (December 22nd, 1947, to January 20th, 1948)