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Contents.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 1st, 1948.

Births.

Dant.?To Elizabeth, wife of Alan D. Dant at the Kandang Kerbau Hospital, Singapore, September 5th?a son, Barry Geoffrey.

Snelus.?To Margot, wife of Bob Snelus at the Kuching General Hospital, on September 17th?a son, Richard Mark.

This Sarawak.

Last month we published a short letter from ?Semi-Kerani? in which the writer chides the for ridiculing the Chinese in their writing English; working on the assumption that the contributions to ?This Sarawak? are, in fact, Chinese in origin, our correspondent not unreason- ably suggests that we bestir our idle bones and corral a few European entries.

Critical letters to the are almost as seasonal as strawberries or new potatoes and just as welcome: as an amateurish journal it relies upon these expressions of opinion to mend its ways when necessary and to bring itself up to date?this, quite

apart from the valuable packing which the criticisms often provide.

However, in this instance, ?Semi-Kerani's? observations are superticial and his facts in- accurate; he would cap the mild head of ?This Sarawak? with an aura of malevolence and cast a sinister cloak of racial discrimination round its frail body. With a severe eye upon abuses, he would forbid the faintest flick of the heels in our sedate course; unduly anxious for the few, he would pass a literary Volstead Act for the many. Had there been grounds for his plaint and if bis opinion be common, that

?This Sarawak? exists to hold errors of syntax up to ridicule, that obscure column would have failed miserably in its purpose. If our intent- ion were malicious, the would have locked itself in a pillory to take whatever bludgeonings wit or malice might devise.

The suggestion that the selection of items for ?This Sarawak? shows racial discrimination is a palpable absurdity?during the first quarter of which we have exact knowledge, sixty-four per cent came from European sources and the pride of place usually goes to a European entry.

A point which observant and otherwise well- informed readers could not be expected to know is that a number of excellent contributed items are rejected lest susceptibilities be wounded. Whilst European entries are usually in a numerical majority, we hasten to defend ourselves against a counter-blast from the other side of the fence; it is not deliberately so, it is a question of whom or what the gods send to our aid.

By fortunate chance we were not left to our own unconvincing resources to reply to the charge. That valiant local character, Mr. Poggy had scented the fray before we suspected it. Under the powerful impact of Mr. Poggy's ingenuous dicta, the complaints of ?Semi-Kerani? pale into their true significance. When this distinguished new- comer to Sarawak has had his say, no reader will justly lay accusation of discrimination?unless it be at Mr. Poggy?s own doorstep. Indeed, as Mr. Poggy himself might agree, it is time we got over thinking in terms of racial origins, new boys or old boys, cessionists or anti-cessionists and remembered that we are unite of one Colony pledged for the major part to its welfare.

We venture to hope that, the innocent intention of ?This Sarawak? being known, our readers will view the column with a more benevolent eye.

If we offend, it is with our good will.

That you should think, we come not to offend, But with good will.

His Excellency the Governor?s tour in the Third Division.

Notes and Comments,

The Annual Report for Sarawak, 1947, has been published and is on sale at the Government Printing Office for the modest sum of $1.50. This is the first handbook of its kind to be published

since the Liberation and it includes, as an introduction to Part I, a brief account of the conditions here before the war and of the events leading up to the cession of the State to the Crown. The book is well illustrated with excellent photographs.

The Chinese in Kuching celebrated the anniversary of Chinese Victory Day on the 3rd September. The bazaar was decorated with flags during the day.

His Majesty the King has been graciously pleased to approve the following award :?

Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (Military Division) Lieutenant B. J. C. Spurway.

His Excellency the Governor accompanied by Colonel J. E. H. Boustead, a member of the Sudan Administrative Service paying a short visit to Sarawak, and the Private Secretary, left Kuching by the m.l. ?La Follette? at dawn on Friday, September 27th. and reached Sibu in time for dinner with the Resident, Third Division.

Next morning the party continued to Kanowit, where after being greeted on landing by local notables His Excellency heard requests in the Fort.

During the afternoon His Excellency inspected the Government Agricultural Station and took tea with Father Barry at the Roman Catholic Mission.

In the evening the Penghulus paid their custom- ary call on His Excellency at the bungalow. As they arrived a diversion was caused by the arrival also, but dripping wet, of the Assistant District Officer, Kapit. Mr. R. Rennick, and four of his Penghulus. They had been called at short notice to meet His Excellency, but a little way above Kanowit had the misfortune to strike a log and capsize.

His Excellency and party were entertained to dinner in the Chinese School by representatives of the Chinese community of Kanowit.

On Sunday morning His Excellency was conduct- ed round the Kanowit Rural Improvement School by the Principal, Mr. R. A. Bewsher. Although this school has only been functioning for four months considerable progress has been made. The student couples are at present housed in temporary, but comfortable, accommodation. A permanent model longhouse which will provide quarters for the staff is nearing completion.

After an early lunch the party left by outboard for Naga Julau, where His Excellency was accorded a warm welcome by Dayaks and the small Chinese bazaar community.

The small Government office was crowded with Penghulus, Tuai Rumahs and followers for a talk with His Excellency, after which His Excellency was entertained to dinner in the bazaar by the Chinese community. This was followed by a con- cert performed by the Chinese school children, for which they had constructed a special stage and gone to considerable trouble. After the first part of the Chinese performance, Dayak dancers took the stage for a while.

The following morning was occupied with re- quests, a visit to the Chinese school, and a walk through the bazaar. The party then left for Rumah Penghulu Banyan, a short distance above Julau, where His Excellency was entertained to lunch by the Penghulu.

Continuing on to Meluan, progress was slow as the river was unusually low. There was a high casualty rate in shearing pins of the outboard motor and the crew had at times to do some vigorous pol- ing or jump overboard and pull the boat through fast-flowing shallows. The journey took six hours and the party reached Meluan at dusk. His Excellency was greeted by large numbers of Dayaks who had erected notices of welcome on the gravel bank below the Fort. Fortunately, as everybody was rather weary, there were no engagements that evening.

Next morning began with requests, after which His Excellency inspected the station and visited the ?bazaar? of two Chinese shops.

His Excellency was entertained to a tea party in the Fort by the members of the Government Staff, for which the wife of the Wireless operator/clerk had produced some excellent cakes.

In the evening a talk in the Fort was followed by dancing outside. This was broken up just as some members of His Excellency?s party were beginning to think seriously about their dinner by a cry that the river was rising, which caused a rush to look to the boats.

In effect, the river had risen very little, but enough to permit a quick return journey next day to Nanga Julau in under three hours. Kanowit was reached in time for tea.

Using the ?La Follette,? the party then retraced their steps a short way to Rumah Penghulu Empam.

The Penghulu had made most efficient arrange- ments for His Excellency's reception. His people

were drawn up along the path from the binding stage to the house, but there was none of the usual indiscriminate hand-shaking en route. Instead, when His Excellency was installed on the ruai, each Tuai Rumah of the Penghulu?s area was called up separately by him and introduced.

Penghulu Empam made a speech of welcome, to which His Excellency replied, and a general discussion, then followed.

After an excellent curry dinner served in the Penghulu?s spacious bilek, there was dancing.

Penghulu Empam?s discipline also produced an exceptionally quiet night, since once His Excellency had retired to bed practically all noise ceased.

Leaving Rumah Penghulu Empam early next morning. His Excellency and party reached Sibu shortly before ten o?clock. Since this part of the tour was informal. His Excellency?s only engagement was to take tea with the Tua Kampong of the. Melanau Kampong Nangka.

On Friday, September 3rd, His Excellency and party returned to Kuching.?(Contributed.)

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The Secretary of State for the Colonies has made a Colonial Development and Welfare Research Scheme in favour of the Government of Sarawak providing a grant of £8,040 towards the cost of the appointment of four officers to carry out socio- economic research in Sarawak.

Dr. Edmund Leach who visited Sarawak during 1947 and who travelled extensively throughout the

country making plans for a comprehensive Socio- Economic Survey has written a detailed report. Dr. Leach has recommended several research projects. Four of these are to be undertaken now and are referred to as the Iban project, the Land Dayak project, the Melanau Sago project and the Chinese project. The research projects are intended to be confined to the interaction between social and economic forces and to provide the Government with data for gauging the probable local response to the various schemes of development now under con- sideration. Such research may also suggest new lines of approach to various types of previously intractable administrative problems.

Dr. Ju-K?ang T?ien, who has been appointed to undertake the Chinese project, arrived in Sarawak on the 2nd September. He was bom in China and attended the National Normal University (Department of Education) Peiping, and the National Southwest Associated University (Depart- ment of Philosophy and Psychology) Kunming. He also attended the University of London (the London School of Economics and Political Science) during 1945-48 as a post-graduate student preparing for a Ph. D. degree.

Dr. T'ien has had teaching experience as Head- master in Provincial Ling-ang Senior Middle School. Yunnan, and was Lecturer at the National Yunnan University. He has also undertaken research work in China.

The Kuching Municipal Commissioners have been considering a recommendation for the re-institution of the pre-war time gun. The gunpowder situation is easier but the cost of replacing the pre-war gun would be about £100.

It will he recalled that before the war time signals were fired at 5.00 a.m. and 8.00 p.m. and to announce the arrival of mails with occasional feux-de-joie on high days and holidays.

Apparently it was the custom to ram a wad of turf down the muzzle preparatory to firing; it is reported that, on one occasion, a stone got mixed up with the turf and a pedestrian on the far bank of the river was sharply rapped by the stone when the time signal was fired.

No hard feelings were entertained over the incident but the pedestrian remained convinced of the deadly accuracy of the cannon fire.

Sir Henry Lovell Goldsworthy Gurney, k.c.m.g., former Chief Secretary to the Palestine Government, has been appointed High Commissioner for the Federation of Malaya.

The new High Commissioner was born in 1898 and entered the Colonial Service in 1921. After service in Kenya and Jamaica, he became Chief Secretary to the Conference of East African Governors from 1938 to 1944 and from that time until 1946 he was Colonial Secretary of the Gold Coast.

Until the end of the British Mandate in Palestine, Sir Henry was active in promoting truce negotiations between Arabs and Jews.

The death of Peter Johnston Stewart, who retired from Sarawak in 1928, is reported from London.

Mr. Stewart entered the Service in 1902 and was attached to the Government Workshop, Kuching, later being transferred to Brooketon Collieries. His service was broken during the first World War and he rejoined in November 1920, retiring from the position of Superintendent Engineer in September, 1926.

Although aged seventy-two at the time of his death, he had enjoyed excellent health during his retirement.

The Secretary of State for the Colonies has intimated that with the Prime Minister's approval it was decided to include a Colonial representative in the United Kingdom delegation to the forth- coming session of the United Nations General Assembly as an alternate delegate. It is intended that the Colonial alternate delegate should deal specifically with Colonial and Trusteeship question at the Assembly and its various Committees.

After careful consideration the Secretary of State decided to invite Mr. Grantley Adams, Member of the Executive Committee and of the House of Assembly in Barbados and President of the Barbados Progressive League, to act as an alternate delegate for this session. Mr. Adams has accepted the invitation.

The first livestock to be imported into Kuching from Singapore since the Liberation arrived in the ?Rajah Brooke? on the 9th September, 1948. The shipment consisted of thirty sheep from Australia via Singapore : although the sheep were happy enough to get ashore, they stoutly refused to

exchange the security of the wharf for the hazards of Main Bazaar. To the satisfaction of a large and eloquent body of spectators, the impasse was resolved by promoting one of the sheep to act as leading ram and, at dragging pace, the flock entered Main Bazaar.

Incited by the traffic, the sheep broke into a spirited canter and were last seen heading in good formation for Mathie?s Road.

The Annual Report on Brunei for 1947 has been published. The report of some fifty-six pages gives an excellent survey of the activities of the Sultanate, illustrated with photographs. An interesting short history of Brunei is included in Part III.

Recent acquisitions to the Sarawak Museum include a Loriquet (Paraquat) of the species Loricitilus gulgulus, alive and to be seen any night hanging upside down asleep in its cage, presented by Mr. Hugo Low, Chief Clerk. Lawas : a set of snake's eggs, from Mr. Bewsher (Agricultural Education Officer, Kanowit); some scarce old beads from headman Temru Laban of Long Pelaun, ulu Baram : a pair of gold-embroidered collar-lappets of the old Sarawak Civil Service dress uniform, found in a safe at Kapit and forwarded by the Treasury.

The Museum is glad to receive gifts of all sorts of items, human, animal, vegetable or mineral.

And persons going on leave are welcome to leave precious belongings at the Museum on loan?for safe-keeping.

The revised schedule for the Borneo Courier Sendee has been in operation during September and has proved much more satisfactory than the old service. The Sunderland arrives at Pending on Monday each week and returns to Singapore on the Wednesday after calling at Labuan, Jesselton and Sandakan.

An issue of stamps to commemorate the Royal Silver Wedding will be on sale at all Post Offices in Sarawak on the 25th October, 1948.

These stamps, which are larger than the usual, and of special design, will be in two denominations, the 8 cents (red) and the $5 (chocolate). They will be on sale for a maximum period of three months, unless sold out before.

For various reasons, News from Far and Near has been curtailed this month; the remainder of the

items of interest will be published next month.

A Review: ?The Chinese in Malaya.?

2. THE ORIGINS OF CHINESE INFLUENCE.

In a previous article on Victor Purcell?s "The Chinese in Malaya" (Oxford University Press, 1948) I drew attention to his remarks on early Chinese influences in the area, but left these for separate consideration. Herewith.....

Dr. Purcell divides his book into three parts, and the first of these is entitled ?Early History.? If 1 understand his thesis correctly------for he has a cer-

tain majestic but confusing power of the near-pomp- ous prolix-----it is that, on the whole, extensive Chinese settlement was comparatively late. For this there is considerable evidence, though much depends on what one defines as "extensive.? Thus the author writes (Chanter V) :

?Chinese immigration into the Peninsula be- gins to be significant only after the establishment of the European settlements and the existence of a secure base enabled Chinese to sally forth on prospecting expeditions.?

He goes on to put the whole of early Chinese con- tact with the Malay States into six lines, and so phrased as to make it sound pretty insignificant (p. 97). Then, after referring to Fei Hsin?s 1136 visit to Penang??This is practically all we hear of the Chinese in these parts until the visit of an Englishman named Gray in 1827.? It is not quite clear to me how he has arranged his material? especially as the previous chapter dealt specifically with Penang?but after saying this, he puzzlingly goes on to quote a description of considerable Chinese population in Johore at the end of the seventeenth century; and some Englishmen ship- wrecked there in 1702 attended a palace revel at which there were some 600 Chinese. But even with these and other similar references. Dr. Purcell puts the emphasis on the unimportance of early Chinese settlement in Malaya, a view he extended to Borneo in conversations here last year.

Yet his fair-mindedness, so apparent in the rest of his book (as reviewed last month) leads Dr. Purcell to give us plenty of data which, to this reader at least, easts doubts upon part of his own thesis?and particularly where he appears to infer that not only was significant Chinese settlement

lateish, but Chinese influence also. He does not clearly distinguish the two things. He does not seem to have sufficiently appreciated this point : that it does not take a lot of people to orientate a culture. And, on the whole, major changes from minor contacts are especially notice- able in South-East-Asia. The history of Brunei and the conversion of coastal Sarawak to Islam is a his- toric case in point. The mass Christianisation of the currently somewhat bewildered and previously seldom visited pagan inhabitants of the upper Ba- ram. by the energetic internecine efforts of a single Dutch Catholic and an Australian Fundamentalist, is a modern example. The point is important too. The trend towards making little of early Chinese influences in Malaysia, should it happen to be incorrect, is liable to confuse the whole correct in- terpretation of native customs and the accurate reconstruction of local history.

This belief that ?our real interest begins when the Chinese started to effect permanent settlement,? (p.15) enables Dr. Purcell to avoid some of the deep-waters of Hino-Malayan scholarship (he repeats the formula on p. 95). Even if we allow the validity of this view he makes too light, for instance, of the 1379 statement by Wang Ta-yuan that the people in Singapore ?live mixed up with the Chinese.? Or the 1537 annals (as Purcell him- self says "probably referring to an earlier period?) comparing Malaccan and Chinese costs of living and how pork was eaten by the Chinese ?who live here.? Or the 1436 comment that there were fair people of Chinese descent in Malacca.

The records of other contact with China are similar. The Malayan Kingdom of Langkasuka, founded about A.D. 100, sent envoys to China in 515 and after, and before this Fa-Hsien had travell- ed through the area. Again, Dr. Purcell seems to me to make too little allowance for the natural paucity of early records, and this gives a somewhat uneven emphasis when he writes (p. 16): ?in fact it is not until the fourteenth century that the Chinese records begin to mention trading visits on any scale.?

This is not the place to plunge into the welter of Sino-Malayoid archaw-arguments. But it is necessary we enter a caveat, lest Dr. Purcell be taken more literally than he himself perhaps intends. Sarawak and Borneo are closely linked with Malaya in the same pattern of history and pre-history. Nor is this a local matter. Before us in this country lies the fascinating if trying task of

reconstructing that past ?for this is surely one of western civilisation?s duties to posterity, since we ourselves upset the traditional repositories of legend, lore and values. So far. the British have been far behind their French and Dutch neighbours in this work.

The links between Malaya and Borneo have as yet barely been recognised. They will prove to be numerous and important, and to involve not only the Malay peoples of today. (A leading family in Kuching can trace itself back to the marriage of ?the Rajah of Johore?s daughter? to the grandson of the ?Rajah of Java.? a typical genealogy). There are, for example, striking parallels between Malayan and Brunei legend. Dr. Purcell quotes the Ming period visits of Chinese envoys, including the mid- fifteenth century arrival of the eunuch Admiral Cheng Ho, deified as Sam-po-Kong and often referred to as Ong-Sam-Po.

In a Ceylon version he is said to have came to steal the sacred tooth of the Buddha. In the Bru- nei selisilah of the 15th century Ong-Sum-Ping

comes from the Rajah of China to steal the pearl of the dragon of Kinabalu. His daughter marries the 2nd Sultan of Brunei, just as the daughter of ?the King of China?s Captain" marries the second King of Malacca. Here, no doubt, fact and fantasy over- lap. It has been the habit of most Malayan historians to dismiss these early "legends" as "unreliable" and even "absurd." Far from it; they throw important light, and if we do not use them, we have practically nothing.

Almost too much attention has been paid, by con- trast, to literary (written) records. Thus for years, papers have been written on, to, by, from, about, over, under and through Fa-Hsien, 411 A.D. There has been much disagreement about the route of his journey; but on one thing most previous scholars have been agreed?that he did not come to Borneo. Recently, however, Mr. A. Grimes has demonstrat- ed from meteorological data (rather than these inconclusive arguments over whether Poli equals Brunei or Bali) that this traveller did visit and report upon Borneo in the Sung period. While in an important series of papers, still continuing in the Journal of the Malay Branch, Royal Asiatic Society, Dato Roland Braddell has re-examined the evidence of early Chinese records in an objective manner and shown that the place of Borneo in early Chinese contacts is much larger than had previously been supposed, and goes back at least to the 6th and 7th centuries; there may well

have been considerable Chinese colonies before Mohammed- anism.

There is also a mounting pile of evidence that some of the earliest influences came to this part of the world from the West, and even from the Mediteranean countries, and the Chinese influence may have only grown later to be paramount. Be that as it may, there can be no doubt that culturally by about the loth century the Chinese influence was a major external one, and that a large part of the arts and crafts, designs and symbols of all Borneo peoples have been influenced thereby. And there can be no doubt that there was plenty of Chinese influence long before this, perhaps back into pre-Christian times. As Professor Von Heine- Geldern has recently said :

"One may come to the conclusion that direct Chinese influence in Indonesia goes back at least to the early Han period, that is, at the very latest to the 1st century B.C. However, the ornament- al designs of the Dayak tribes of Borneo and of the Ngada of Flores are so closely related to the Chinese designs of the late Chou period that one can hardly avoid the inference that Chinese contacts started at least as early as the beginning of the third century B.C., and possibly earlier."

The subject has great historical significance but has so far not been systematically investigated. The recent quite accidental finds at Sambas, just over the Dutch border, of a collection of Buddhas and other objects in gold, silver and bronze (inside a jar) has underlined our ignorance on the whole subject. Mr. Y. S. Tan, a distinguished Singapore scholar, discussing this wonderful find, has further linked the Indian and Chinese influences in Borneo; he suggests Brunei itself was a familiar name in China in the Tang Dynasty?600-900 A.D. Professor H. Otley Beyer?s finds in the Philippines go back to the 7th century B.C., and there have been some very important recent excavations by the Ecole Francaise d'Extreme-Orient in Indo-China.

But the blanks are vast, and no one can safely

dogmatise as yet. It may well be that much of the estimate of Chinese and other influences has been in the direction of underestimate, and that further and fuller research will change the picture. Thus some of the Kelabit finds now on show in the Library raise new problems in this field. The official Scarborough Report of 1947 underlined the inadequate development of historical research in South-east-Asia, and in Borneo we know least of all. To quote Professor Von Heine-Geldern again :

"The pre-history of Borneo is as yet almost a blank."

This reviewer feels that Dr. Purcell's book has contributed most valuably to the whole subject of the Chinese in Malaya and in Malaysia generally, but that he has not shown his usual caution in re- gard to the earlier Chinese influences. By under- estimating them he has tended to cause us to neglect their further study. Perhaps in a later edition, which will certainly be called for, he will slightly revise his Part I, arrange it a little more clearly, and not treat the difficulties and contradict- ions of recent scholarship by merely jumping over them. A simpler arrangement of the historical material would be most helpful.

Triad.

Agriculture.

(Continued.)

Man?s wants in life were few to begin with. First it was just food and shelter. As civilisation developed, man?s wants multiplied. To-day it is staggering when we consider the number of agricultural products, their great variety, and the very complicated process which some of these products undergo to satisfy some of man?s needs.

With the advent of science and its application to agriculture great changes occurred. Chemical manures and insecticides, the use of mechanical cultivators and huge irrigation schemes involving the use of man?s present knowledge in engineering are some of the features of modern agriculture.

We have seen how agriculture has evolved from humble beginnings. We must realise that agri- culture is a deliberate interference with nature by man for his own benefit. What we take from the plant or animal as our crop are substances which are intended by nature for some special use in the plant's or animal?s own life. For instance the padi which we harvest contains starch which is stored in the padi seeds as food for the plant embryo when it germinates and before the young plant is able to synthesise its own food. The milk which we draw from the cow is intended for the young calf and the egg which we rob from the hen contains the young chicken with its store of food.

There are other ways in which man interferes with Nature in agriculture, sometimes with serious repercussions to himself. In the jungle one seldom sees trees of the same species all growing

together unmixed by other species. There is not a single plant in nature which is not attacked in one way or another by pests or diseases. In the jungle, however, because trees are mixed and interspersed, the attack of pests and diseases are restricted and isolated. When man cuts the jungle and replaces it with one particular species of plant he is providing ideal conditions for the growth and multiplication of the pests and diseases which attack these plants. There are many examples of this happening. The

coffee industry in Ceylon was wiped out by a leaf disease. The cocoa industry in the West Indies is now dying out because of diseases, whch are proving difficult to control.

Far more serious than the incidence of pests and diseases among his crops is the way Nature has retaliated for the manner in which man has des- poiled the earth by the indiscriminate removal of the forest or jungle. The jungle provides a canopy over the earth's surface. When it rains the water finds its way to the earth gradually. There it is held up by the fallen leaves and the roots of the trees, which act as a sponge and the water finds its way slowly into the streams and rivers. When the jungle cover is removed the buffer is gone and the water rushes immediately to the streams and rivers which are unable to cope with such a rush of water. Consequently flooding occurs. The devastating floods which occur from time to time in America and China are brought about by the indiscriminate removal of forests to make way for agriculture. Such floods have cost countless lives and millions of dollars to crops and property.

Indiscriminate removal of jungle cover has brought about havoc in other ways. The most serious of these is soil erosion, which is the washing away by water or the blowing away by wind of the soil on which man depends for a livelihood. Millions of acres all over the world are being damaged each year by soil erosion, and the problem is indeed a grave one for Governments the world over.

The Science of Agriculture therefore boils down really to being able to rob nature without nature hitting back. Apart from economic factors one?s success in agriculture depends primarily on the amount of crop one can get per unit area of land. What one is able to get in the form of crops is limited by certain factors such as the fertility of the soil, the variety of crops one grows and such external factors as the weather, pests, diseases. All these factors are called limiting factors to crop

production. It is outside the scope of this address to deal with these factors in detail. They may be briefly dealt with under three heads :?

1.

The Medium in which crops are grown? the soil and climate.

2.

The plant itself?whether the seeds are good and high yielding, and

3.

External factors such as the weather, insects and diseases.

The Science of Agriculture means nothing more than a proper study and understanding of these factors and devising ways and means of overcoming them. To enable one to do this, one has all the resources of modern science, which is playing a greater and greater part in agriculture to-day. For instance, the science of physics, chemistry and geology are employed in the study of the soil and in the production and application of chemicals to supply substances required in soils and in the destruction of pests and diseases.

The Science of Biology with all the branches of this science is employed in the study of the plant and the animal with the aim of producing better and better types. Finally, the science of engineering has in recent years been employed in lightening the work of cultivation by means of tractors, machines, etc., and also in improving the medium

of plant growth by means of irrigation, drainage, etc.

Agriculture to-day has become such a wide subject that not one man can cope with all aspects of the subject. Specialisation has become necessary. There are now Agricultural Chemists, who devote their whole time to the study of problems of chemistry associated with agriculture, Agricultural Entomologists, Plant Pathologists who study in- sects and plant diseases, Agricultural Engineers, Economists, etc., etc.

There is a wide open field in this country for those who are interested. In Sarawak agricultural development is still in its infancy. Our local agricultural problems are many, and there is still much we have to learn to cope successfully with these problems. Will you take your part in the

development of this country by becoming a 'Jack of All Trades? but master of one, namely agriculture?

Locusts: 3.

(Continued.)

The attack strategy is based on knowledge accumulated through reliable observations extend- ing over many years. During an outbreak, swarm migrations and breeding follow a similar pattern each year.

When locust swarms migrate from one country to another they are carried by the climatic tide. Species vary in their habitats and in their response to climatic conditions but no species can long with- stand extremes of wetness or dryness or high temperatures and migrations enable species to avoid adverse environments.

Thus, the Desert Locust, breeds in the moist tropical summer of the Sudan and Eritrea but with the onset of the dry season swarms of the next generation are carried to the Red Sea and Arabia where the rains fall in the winter. It also breeds in North West India in the monsoon rainfall period, the young swarms later flying westwards to the Persian Gulf to benefit from the winter rainfall there while some may travel southwards to Iran or to Iraq?a flight of 1,200 miles.

Arabia and South Iran are key dispersal areas dur- ing seasonal outbreaks and though they are not agricultural territories it becomes worth while to attack the locust hoppers there in order to minimise any subsequent invasion of richer lands.

Utilising the knowledge of this cycle of migrat- ions, British specialists during the war built up by 1944 a complex organisation with baiting parties penetrating almost the entire locust breeding area of Arabia. This British Middle East anti-locust Unit was assisted in Arabia by parties of Egyptians. Indians, Sudanese, and Palastinians and in Iran, by Russians, Indians and Iranians. This inter- national co-operation in the field was noteworthy. Through its activities and the efficient measures taken in India, for the first time in the history of locust control there, practically no damage was caused to crops in the fertile plains of the Punjab, Sind, and the United Provinces, normally the first targets of locust invasions.

Any anti-locust campaign requires a definite plan and early preparations, which must be flexible; all units must be mobile since last minute adjustments will frequently be necessary to meet any changing position of the invading swarms.

Methods of dealing with locust swarms have been varied. Hoppers have been beaten and burned since earliest times and even still?though rarely effective and always extravagant of manpower; trenching and driving hoppers into pits also was prodigal of manpower and is still used in India. The introduction of metal barriers to direct hoppers into pits was an improvement and is still employed in Syria while in the Argentine 20,000 miles of barrier are utilised, but the method is cumbersome and lacks mobility. Flame throwers are spectacular but inefficient and very costly; they are still used in parts of North Africa while in the Argentine, there are some 50,000 hand machines.

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lbs. of sodium arsenate and 10 gallons of water.

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A standard bait contains 5 per cent of gammexane and in these regions, rice bran is probably the handiest carrier for use. After mixing the above thoroughly, the mixture should be moistened to render it the more attractive and spread around and amongst the hopper swarms. A special form of gammexane known as ?Agrocide No. 7' has been found most effective in dealing with locusts. It is available through Imperial Chemical Industries Ltd., at a cost of $65 per cwt. It should be mixed with 20-30 times its weight of bran and the moistured mixture should be spread at the rate of 25-50 lbs. per acre according to density of the hopper swarms. The most advantageous dispersal
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Whatever technique is employed, simplicity of equipment and mobility favour effective kills. Hence the use of poison baiting rather than spray- ing or dusting machines, flamethrowers etc., which give constant mechanical troubles.

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to a widespread invasion with consequent costly damage to crops.

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Control is, however, accepted as a Government responsibility in each territory since locust infestat- ions cannot be compared with attacks by less mobile insects. Enquiries have indicated that the various Governments in the region are fully alive to the need for watchfulness and for active control as soon as even small outbreaks occur and it is hoped that this note may prove of interest and of practical value in the prevention of the spread of local out- breaks whenever and wherever they may arise.

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coffee industry in Ceylon was wiped out by a leaf disease. The cocoa industry in the West Indies is now dying out because of diseases, whch are proving difficult to control.

Far more serious than the incidence of pests and diseases among his crops is the way Nature has retaliated for the manner in which man has des- poiled the earth by the indiscriminate removal of the forest or jungle. The jungle provides a canopy over the earth?s surface. When it rains the water

finds its way to the earth gradually. There it is held up by the fallen leaves and the roots of the trees, which act as a sponge and the water finds its way slowly into the streams and rivers. When the jungle cover is removed the buffer is gone and the water rushes immediately to the streams and rivers which arc unable to cope with such a rush of water. Consequently flooding occurs. The devastating floods which occur from time to time in America and China are brought about by the indiscriminate removal of forests to make way for agriculture. Such floods have cost countless lives and millions of dollars to crops and property.

Indiscriminate removal of jungle cover has brought about havoc in other ways. The most serious of these is soil erosion, which is the washing away by water or the blowing away by wind of the soil on which man depends for a livelihood. Millions of acres all over the world are being damaged each year by soil erosion, and the problem is indeed a grave one for Governments the world over.

The Science of Agriculture therefore boils down really to being able to rob nature without nature hitting back. Apart from economic factors one?s success in agriculture depends primarily on-the amount of crop one can get per unit area of land. What one is able to get in the form of crops is limited by certain factors such as the fertility of the soil, the variety of crops one grows and such external factors as the weather, pests, diseases. Ail these factors are called limiting factors to crop production. It is outside the scope of this address to deal with these factors in detail. They may be briefly dealt with under three heads : ?

1.

The Medium in which crops are grown? the soil and climate,

2.

The plant itself?whether the seeds are good and high yielding, and

3.

External factors such as the weather, insects and diseases.

The Science of Agriculture means nothing more than a proper study and understanding of these factors and devising ways and means of overcoming them. To enable one to do this, one has all the resources of modern science, which is playing a greater and greater part in agriculture to-day. For

instance, the science of physics, chemistry and geology are employed in the study of the soil and in the production and application of chemicals to supply substances required in soils and in the destruction of pests and diseases.

The Science of Biology with all the branches of this science is employed in the study of the plant and the animal with the aim of producing better and better types. Finally, the science of engineering has in recent years been employed in lightening the work of cultivation by means of tractors, machines, etc., and also in improving the medium

of plant growth by means of irrigation, drainage, etc.

Agriculture to-day has become such a wide subject that not one man can cope with all aspects of the subject. Specialisation has become necessary. There are now Agricultural Chemists, who devote their whole time to the study of problems of chemistry associated with agriculture, Agricultural Entomologists, Plant Pathologists who study in- sects and plant diseases, Agricultural Engineers, Economists, etc., etc.

There is a wide open field in this country for those who are interested. In Sarawak agricultural development is still in its infancy. Our local agricultural problems are many, and there is still much we have to learn to cope successfully with these problems. Will you take your part in the development of this country by becoming a 'Jack of All Trades? but master of one, namely agriculture?

Locusts: 3.

(Continued.)

The attack strategy is based on knowledge accumulated through reliable observations extend- ing over many years. During an outbreak, swarm migrations and breeding follow a similar pattern each year.

When locust swarms migrate from one country to another they are earned by the climatic tide. Species vary in their habitats and in their response to climatic conditions but no species can long with- stand extremes of wetness or dryness or high temperatures and migrations enable species to avoid adverse environments.

Thus, the Desert Locust, breeds in the moist tropical summer of the Sudan and Eritrea but with the onset of the dry season swarms of the next generation are carried to the Red Sea and Arabia where the rains fall in the winter. It also breeds in North West India in the monsoon rainfall period, the young swarms later flying westwards to the Persian Gulf to benefit from the winter rainfall there while some may travel southwards to Iran or to Iraq?a flight of 1,200 miles.

Arabia and South Iran are key dispersal areas dur- ing seasonal outbreaks and though they are not agricultural territories it becomes worth while to attack the locust hoppers there in order to minimise any subsequent invasion of richer lands.

Utilising the knowledge of this cycle of migrat- ions, British specialists during the war built up by 1944 a complex organisation with baiting parties penetrating almost the entire locust breeding area of Arabia. This British Middle East anti-locust Unit was assisted in Arabia by parties of Egyptians. Indians, Sudanese, and Palastinians and in Iran, by Russians, Indians and Iranians. This inter- national co-operation in the field was noteworthy. Through its activities and the efficient measures taken in India, for the first time in the history of locust control there, practically no damage was caused to crops in the fertile plains of the Punjab, Sind, and the United Provinces, normally the first targets of locust invasions.

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Side Lights on Rubber.

At one time the product of what is known as Hevea braziliensis, came solely from Brazil and the industry was jealously guarded, so much so in fact, that severe penalties were threatened for any attempt to export seed from the country. In 1876 Robert Cross shipped 1,000 plants to Kew but Cross's plants of Hevea did not reach the tropics; they were displaced by plants from the ample supply of seeds which Sir Henry Wickham shipped, also to Kew (out of a reputed collection of 70,000 seeds, some 2,800 plants were raised). The first success- ful consignment of plants was received in Malaya in 1877 and from the early flowerings in Kuala Kangsar and in Ceylon the seed crop was used to supply stock for the East.

With very minor exceptions, all Hevea trees in the East are the progeny of Wickham?s seed and so started what is now one of the largest products in the tropical zones of Asia.

In about 1900, a few seeds were sent from Ceylon to Sarawak, and these were planted out in Kapit and in the present museum grounds by Government.

The first seed to be received in Sarawak for com- mercial planting also came from Ceylon (from the original offspring of the Kew trees) in 1904. Thus was the industry begun in this country.

The first commercial planting in 1904 was carried out at Dahan in the Bau district of the First

Division.

Little, if anything, was known at that time of ?rubber planting,? and in the light of present day methods, early experiments seem ludicrous. Clean weeding for instance was thought essential and on hilly areas this resulted in erosion of the topsoil during the rains, with drastic results.

When the first trees in Sarawak were ready for ?tapping,? this was done with hammer and chisel, and the hardiness of the rubber tree is proved by the fact that many acres of trees so maltreated (as we think nowadays) are still standing and yielding latex.

The first shipment of rubber sheet from Sarawak was an OCCASION and it might have been a shipment of gold or gems, so reverently (almost) was it treated. Each sheet was wrapped in tissue paper. The price realised was twelve shillings and sixpence per pound and a champagne breakfast was only a minor indication of the rejoicing.

Those were the days! Estates of a thousand or fifteen hundred acres employed as many as eight or ten Europeans and costs of production didn?t matter at all. In fact, more than one manager was threatened with dismissal when, in an effort to economise, his costs fell below one dollar per pound, the contention being that he could not be admin- istering the property well!

More and still more rubber began to be planted up in Sarawak, until in 1937 (when it was decided to issue coupons) there were about 239,000 acres under cultivation. Sarawak, however, is essentially a small holder?s stamping ground so to speak, and only about 5% of the total acreage is accounted for by big estates. The average small holding is about two and a half acres. When it came to assessing the potential output of rubber from Sarawak, the powers that be just could not credit the figures. And, judging from the type of rubber one sees round about Kuching, Bau, etc. this is not surprising.

However, yield per acre was the basis for assess- ment and the majority of small holdings have between 700 and 900 trees per acre.

As more and more rubber was planted in the Far East, and the supply began to outdo the demand, so the price began to drop until in 1921 came the first big slump. Estates just could not produce at the selling price and many had to close down, or just keep things going on a care and maintenance

basis. With many estates out of production, stocks of accumulated rubber got shorter until in 1925 came what is known as the ?second boom.? Full pro- duction. in fact over production, was once again in force, with the obvious result that supply again out- did demand and so came the second slump in 1928.

This time, it was really serious, and with the price dropping to something less than fourpence a pound, drastic measures were called for and ?Restriction? was the result.

In Sarawak, the ?holiday? system of restriction was tried, i.e., allowance of tapping for a period and then a closing down of all tapping for a time. This was not a success, as during tappable periods, estates were tapped twice and sometimes three times daily aud the result was that as much, if not more, rubber was produced than would normally have been the case.

Eventually Sarawak came into line with other countries and the potential output was assessed and exports allowed as decided by the authorities.

Except for the few ?big? estates, the quality of rubber exported from Sarawak is of a low standard. As mentioned earlier on, the major part of the rubber planted in Sarawak is in the hands of the small holders, and whereas the difference of a cent or two per pound on a monthly production of say 30,000 or 40,000 lbs means a lot, the same difference on 80 or 90 lbs. per month does not seem to the small holder to be worth the extra trouble involved in obtaining a better product, and so he does not bother.

While assessment was being carried out in Sarawak, many local men were engaged to act as inspectors of scattered small holdings in out of the way places and some of the reports read rather amusingly. The writer recalls one particular report:??Number of trees on estate, two; plant- ing distance, irregular; general appearance, absurd!? Other reports of root fungi diseases were reported as ?eaten by mushrooms,? a literal translation of makan kulat. And lastly, one inspector must have got so fed up with reiterating on estate after estate under the heading of ?Diseas- es???attacked by white ante? that when he found, at long last, a tree with ?black? ants swarming over it, he just let himself go and itemised this in capital letters in red ink.

At the time of writing, the price of rubber has fallen away from the higher prices prevailing in

mid-1948. The decline emphasises the need of the rubber industry for a stable price at a remunerative level.?(Contributed.)

[Before the introduction of Hevea braziliensis into Sarawak, rubber was derived from the genus Ficus and exported under the name of India rubber. From 1890 to 1900, annual exports varied between 1,041 piculs and 5,416 piculs, the value being in the neighbourhood of $90 per picul. Rubber derived from species of Ficus no longer has any market as it cannot hold a place against the purer product obtained from Hevea.?Ed.]

Sea Fishing.

[The following is the text of a lecture given by Mr. E. Banks at the Sarawak Union Club.]

That portion of the sea wherein fishing is carried on can be divided into three parts. The first and most important, but by no means the largest, of them is the shallow water area round the sea shore from the beaches down to about ten fathoms, including all the sand and mud banks on which rest the fish traps and fishing stakes of the large inshore fisheries. Here, too, operate most of the cast-net, drift-net and seine-net fishermen, who between them supply nearly all the fish for the market. The shallow water area varies vastly in extent, in the Bay of Sarawak it stretches some thirty to forty miles out to sea, narrowing gradually further northwards off Oya, Mukah and Bintulu until in the Miri-Kuala Baram districts the shallow water area extends no more than four or five miles seaward from the shore.

This shallow water area within the ten fathom line is suitable for certain kinds of fish and for certain types of fishing. Outside the twenty fathom line live quite different kinds of fish, found just as little within the ten fathom line as the shallow water fishes are found in twenty fathoms. Somewhere between the ten and the twenty fathom lines comes the dip, usually a short steep slope, covered with long, pointed, dark green sea-grass, not at all unlike lallang grass to look at. Just as nothing grows on lallang, so this dip with its sea- grass is almost devoid of fish, the shallow water species which differ so markedly from deep water fishes being separated from those deep water fishes by this short steep slope in from ten to twenty fathoms, where few or no fishes occur.

If you try to visualise what the sea bottom would look like dried out, the Museum lawns will perhaps

suggest a general impression; a flattish top representing the shallow water area, then the short steep bank comparable to the dip, followed by the long, gently sloping lawns corresponding to the deep water area. One lot of fishes live in the Museum as it were, the other lot on the lawns, separated by the short steep bank which they do not negotiate up or down.

The fishes of the shallow water area are most familiar to all, Manchong, Malang and Senangin, Dueh, Puput and Trubok, prawns and crabs, sharks and rays. In any question of fisheries, a comparison of those of Sarawak with the quantities taken in other parts of South East Asia naturally arises. The Bay of Sarawak has over a hundred fishing stakes, Jongkats, Jeremals and others, which places it high as local fisheries go but scarcely in the front rank. The prize must go to the estuary of the Rokan river and town of Bangan Si Api in the Straits of Malacca on the coast of Sumatra, where in pre-war times some seven hund- red fish traps made this district not only the greatest fishing area in these parts but one of the most concentrated fishing sites in any part of the world.

It is well known that tropical seas as a rule are not nearly so productive of fish as the temperate waters of Europe and North America, owing to a shortage of those microscopic food plants on which fish ultimately depend for food. These food plants rely for their growth on the nitrogenous vegetable refuse brought down to the sea by rivers. It is unfortunate that the warm tropical seas favour the growth of certain bacteria, rare or absent from colder waters, which fasten on the nitrogen from the organic material for themselves, thus depriving the microscopic plants of their means of growth?no plants, no fish food and thus no fish. The further away from the estuaries, the fewer the fish, as the nitrogen has been taken by bacteria and it is only in the inshore waters that fishes have any chance.

The mudbanks and sandbanks are exposed at low tide for several hours to the sun, rain and air over vast stretches three miles or more to seaward, where these particular nitrogen-absorbing bacteria can obtain their needs by other means than attack- ing the nitrogenous vegetable matter brought down by rivers. Only then can the microscopic plants get their share and function as a source of fish food.

These mud flats are in fact huge fish pastures, the only places over which so many kinds of fish can

find sufficient plant and subsequently animal food on which to thrive. Hordes of fishes therefore follow the advancing tide like children let out from school?the manchong says to the senangin. ?Out of my way? and both go roaring across the flooded flats to pick up what food they can. On the return journey when the tide goes out they are caught in the jongkat, jeremal, blat and stake nets to provide the fish for the market. When the tide is right out the fishes are gathered off the edge of the mud- banks, inside the ten fathom line, waiting for the tide to flow. This congregation of fishes off the mud banks at low tide gives the drift-net rantau fishermen their chance and they spread these nets in the shallow water a few fathoms down, where the fish are gathered awaiting their dinner gong.

It is here that the Malay and Milanau fishermen of the jongkat and jeremal fishing stakes think that the Chinese Heng Hua fishermen in their kotaks with their long fine of drift nets, are shutting out these shoals of off-shore fishes, waiting to come in and feed on the flood tide and enter the fish traps on the ebb. Sometimes the Malay or the Milanau loses patience, slips out quietly at dead of night and cuts the Chinese nets, not because he wants them for himself but because he thinks they are shutting out the fish which would otherwise enter his traps.

The dip or slope from ten to twenty fathoms is usually steeper than any other part of the continental shelf and when well marked is covered with sea grass. It grows as long as eight feet and can be a perfect menace to bottom fishing, choking the trawl nets and for some unknown reason being almost devoid of fish, or if they are there they escape being caught. The presence of sea grass is therefore a poor sign and fish should be sought else- where.

There appears to be very little movement of fish from the shallow area to the deep water area below twenty fathoms and vice versa. The catch from each area is quite distinct, and quite unlike the catch in the other area. Three or four kinds of snapper or Ikan Merah make up one-third to one quarter of the catch in deep water, not one in a hundred of the fishes taken in the shallow water areas belong to these species. Only the sharks and rays bear any resemblance to each other in the two areas?in the deep water they are larger but so few in num- bers. nearly twice the weight of smaller individuals can be caught in the same time in the shallow water area.

One of the species of the groups, the kerapu or kretang so characteristic of the deep waler area

may be taken occasionally in shallow water but the file- fishes, bream and most squids, characteristic of twenty fathoms and over, are absent from the shallow seas.

On the whole the deep water fish run larger and heavier individually than those in the shallow area but the latter are far more numerous. Trawling in the deeper area gave no more than a picul of fish per hour?s fishing, in the shallow area from two to five piculs can be taken per fishing hour. They are less valuable individually than the deep water fish but the quantity may be sufficient to make fishing a commercial success, which is more than deep water fishing has proved.

Conditions appear to be very different in Malayan seas when compared with those around the shores of Britain, where great seasonal variation occurs. There are months of plenty when fish grow fat, and seasons of scarcity when growth rate is greatly reduced. Things in Malaya are comparatively stationary. Sunshine and warmth are nearly always present and vary very slightly, only the mon- soon changes make for winds and currents but they leave the fish?s environment comparatively quiet. This comparative serenity of the surround- ings affects the reproduction of fishes, whose spawn- ing is continuous rather than seasonal.

It is fairly easy to tell the age of fishes in tem- perate waters, growth is quickened in summer time leaving a wide circle on the body scales, slow in winter leaving a narrow circle on the scales, so that by counting the alternate wide and narrow rings it is easy to tell the fish?s age.

Owing to the absence of summer and winter seasons in the tropics, there are no alternate wide and narrow scale rings. Growth rate so far has only been discovered by keeping live fish in tanks and measuring them. The results are truly astonishing and a fish like the krapu will attain a length of three feet in the comparatively short time of only three years, and fishes eight or ten inches long when adult arc no more than six or seven months old.

Similarly the development of fishes eggs in tropical waters is very rapid, the smaller ones will hatch in twelve to twenty-four hours and the largest of them in two or three days.

As most fishes spawn in the evening or during the night it is only in the early morning that fish eggs can be taken in the fine, conical silk nets towed through the sea to filter them out. By the after- noon fish eggs are almost absent from the sea. having already hatched out.

The almost legendary richness of tropical seas is a myth, such richness as there is results from the much faster growth and comparatively shorter lives of tropical fishes on their meagre diet and this has an important bearing on fisheries in general. None who have seen the blat, stake-nets and the pukat or beach seine can fail to feel that the smaller mesh- es are killing off masses of young and immature fish, now too small to be much use, and a dead loss instead of being allowed to grow. There is some truth in this, if such fishing went on in temperate waters it would not take long to exterminate the fish, but here in warm tropical waters the growth rate is so fast that what is taken one month is made up in the next two or three. Masses of ikan

kikit, each a couple of inches long, are taken?of little use save as duck food and to put on the garden, but they are full grown and their young grow so quickly it seems almost impossible to affect their numbers.

Overfishing, which is the curse of so many seas, seems so far to be almost unknown in the tropics.

In English waters there are herrings and mackerel and sardines in enormous numbers, so that a catch of ten tons of herrings is quite an ordinary night?s work. Here there are half-a- dozen kinds of herrings, such as trubok emprit, three or four kinds of mackerel and many kinds of sardines, none of the species are as numerous in individuals as the English ones, but put together they are quite a lot of fish but of different kinds all mixed up together and not just one species at a time. It is in fact a fewer number of individuals of several species rather than the enormous number of one species at a time that makes tropical fisheries so different from temperate ones.

It is a well-known truism that during neap tides in these parts far less fish are caught than in the high spring tides, the customary empty fish market during ayer medoc bearing eloquent testimony to a temporary off-season. Figures of fish landings show this is the rule, save when fish really are so plentiful that spring or neap tides make no difference to the catch.

We now come to the local fisheries and the question of how much fish are taken. If you ask a fishermen he does not know, if you ask him to keep an account?usually he couldn?t care less. Nobody wants to licence or charge income tax on the strength of the amount of fish caught, but it is a piece of knowledge absolutely necessary. From the amount of fish caught it is easy to determine

the number of fish in the sea and to judge whether too many are being caught, or too few, which is just as bad.

There are several ways of determining the number of fish in the sea, marking them being the favourite method. For this purpose a fisheries research vessel operating in the fishing season will catch say 10,000 dueh, mark them and let them go again. The markings are two little buttons with numbers on them clipped together through the back fins without hurting the fish, and fixed for life. A reward is then advertised for the return of these buttons from any fish taken by the fishermen over a period of a year or two, and the number of buttons returned gives approximately the percentage of fish caught?7,000 buttons back out of 10,000 allows a 70% fishing intensity and it is clear that the total weight of dueh caught in a similar period will re- present 70% of the stock of dueh in the sea.

To know how many fish are caught, and when and where, is commercially desirable to direct new ventures to the best localities at the right time.

Four kinds of fish stand out far beyond all others, the terubok or shad from the drift-nets of Chinese and other fishermen, the benong or manchong so dear to Singapore, skates and rays and large prawns. Occasional hauls of sardines, mackerel and pomfret are very large but they are not so consistent as the other four.

As far as seasons go, June and August show the largest catches of most species, July was not so good, perhaps owing to the Bulan Puasa or the urge to plant padi.

It is a well-known truism that during neap tides in these parts far less fish are caught than in the high spring tides, the customary empty fish market during ayer medoc bearing eloquent testimony to a temporary off-season. Figures of fish landings show this is the rule, save when fish really are so plentiful that spring or neap tides make no difference to the catch.

The burning question is?who catches the most fish, and where? The Chinese fishermen in their kotaks have the longest nets, catch the biggest fish, supplying most of the manchong and terubok, two of the most numerous fish. The large catches from Kabong and Matu are sent to Kuching and Sibu where they mix with fishes from other places and it is hard to say how many they are. The most consistent village is Buntal, at one of the mouths of the Kuching river, and in good months it

averages a ton of fish a day or just enough to feed Kuching. Small out-of-the-way villages like Tebelu at the mouth of the Batang Lupar often take over 300 piculs of prawns a month, Simatan will go gay and weigh in with 100 piculs, but so far Buntal and probably Bako catch the greatest weight of fish, and I only hope this announcement will not spur other villages on to seek first place by "cooking their returns" as well as their fish.

Opai Simaring: A Fragment.

[Note by Curator, Sarawak Museum and Government Ethnologist.

One of the least known of Borneo's culture heroes is Opai Simaring, who operated in Sarawak, B.N.B. and Dutch Borneo. I first heard of him from. Mr. George Jamuh, then Dresser-in-Charge, Lawas, who had heard a little about him from some Muruts. When I went up the Trusan in October 1947 I made enquiries, but got little. Later, I found he was well-known as "the first man? in Dutch Borneo and in the ulu Baram, though very few remembered any legends and songs about him. However, with the help of my friends Guru F. Manis (who spent many years in the interior of Dutch Borneo as a teacher), and Mr. W. S. Singgal, (D.O. of Balawit, N.W. Dutch Borneo), some Dutch Muruts were tracked down who knew some of the songs. A specimen will give some idea of Opai Simaring, whose general conduct is unlike that of most ?heroes?? for instance he easily runs away! Further inform- ation on him. or persons like him, will be welcome and valuable from other areas. The song frag- ment was recorded from Chief Sigar Malog of Balawit, age 50, in April, 1948; he also told the story that follows?incomplete as it is. The text was recorded verbatim in Sigar Malog's long-house: the translation is provisional.]

"Oh I, Opai Simaring

Live at Lun Ruab Paru Ridan(l)

I live in a rock dividing the moon?

Opai Simaring, man, who hears nothing? Angry man, throwing things against the . fire place.

I, Opai Simaring, whom none can rule? Angry man, hurling away the packages of rice."

"Opai Simaring lived at Mount Tegal(2) near Long Bawang. In the old days men did not know how to make and secure the handles of parangs. So when the elders of Balawit and Pa Bawang wanted

these(3) made they went and placed the unfinished parang handles in a hole in the rock: at the mouth of the hole they turned away their

heads and said : "Hai, Opai! good you make ready this handle." And during the time that their heads were turned, the parang handle would be ready and securedly fixed on the blade I There was one foolish man who took his parang and said : "Hai. Opai! Make me a good handle for this parang of mine." At this Opai was angry: he threw out the parang, saying: "Make it yourself if you're so clever." From that day on, if anyone brought a parang to him, he no longer would secure it.

Some time after this, half the sky appeared to be darkened?for Opai Simaring and his followers were flying. There were very many of them. The people of Balawit saw them, but they did not see all of them, because they were afraid to go on looking.

Then down came one man to earth and said to the Balawit people: "Hai, you Balawit people, if you would like us to make wings like this for you, you could fly and then we could all go and drink at Lun Ruab.? But the Balawit people didn?t want to, because they feared to fly. So this man returned, flying straight up to join the others on their way down-river.

After they had returned from the drinking on this occasion, one day Opai Simaring went down to bathe. There be found the mouth-ring of a bamboo fish-trap(4). He thought it was the leg- band of another man. He picked it up and tried it on his leg; he was amazed because it was much too big. Said he: "Without a word of a lie, these Dayaks have huge legs if they are like this. How can I stand up to such people.? When he had bathed (and before he put his clothes on). he brushed against a stinging-brush. Where the leaf touched his skin he began to itch, and felt most uncomfortable. Said he: "Oh dear. If these Davaks have trees like this, how can I hope to live and survive among them? I must run away." That is why Opai Simaring left Mount Tegal and went to Lun Ruab Paru Rudan(l).

During the time Opai Simaring lived at Balawit the people there had much power and skill. When about to start making a ladang, they simply left the hoes. A man did not need to hold on to it by hand at all; the hoe went along by itself work- ing, uprooting the plants. Each day all the hoes went and worked in this way, together.

One day there was a hoe which, halfway through the work, saw some cattle droppings, and stopped

?because it did not feel so good on coming close to this. Along came the man who was watching over the hoes, and said to this hoe: "You are absolutely lazy! Why don?t you work at your weeding?? On hearing this, the hoes were furious; they replied to the man : "If you human beings are so clever, you'd better do your own work."

From that day on, men themselves must use the hoes(5).

The fire place of Opai Simaring is still there below Mount Tegal?three stones, the size of big baskets, about an armspread apart.?

Notes.

(1)

Ruab is the inland name for the Trusan River, to which Opai Simaring later moved, as in the story. He is said to have started in the ulu Baram, and gone on at

least as far as the Padas (B.N.B.), leaving various upright and carved stones en route, including a fine hornbill-design near Bario.

(2)

This is a 4,000 foot sandstone peak with razor-edge sides, fearsome to climb.

(3)

It is no apparent contradiction in Bornean legends for the tale of the "first man? to refer to others already present.

(4)

"Bubu," the cone-shaped traps of bamboo slats which the fish enter through a central cone, opening into the wider chamber.

(5)

The link between Opai Simaring and the hoe may seem tenuous. Both represent, in the teller's mind, the "good old days? when all work was easy. This pre-utopia was spoiled by stupid, greedy or hasty individual nets. There are a number of other tales on this theme.

Birds in a Bornean Garden.?I.

Around the garden was a rubber plantation with thick undergrowth on hilly undulating sandy soil, the

undergrowth being gradually cleared and trees felled from time to time as clearings were made for tapioca, sweet potatoes, beans, egg plants, bananas, papayas and other vegetables and fruits. There was also a fruit grove on a hillside and another one down in a swamp, both of which were felled and cleared in time; besides these there was a former buffalo swamp which was dug over and planted with tapioca in addition to which were two sets of fish ponds where Chinese once bred carp.

Few birds were found in the thick undergrowth, Button Quail were seen only a few times, the large Crow Pheasant feeding on Giant African Snails was the commonest, the Smaller Crow Pheasant occurring more rarely.

In the rubber trees were seen the Common Green Pigeons, the crimson-winged Green Woodpecker and the very small black and white Pygmy Wood- pecker. Conspicuous was the White Collared King- fisher, as soon as the land was cleared they sat in the trees on the edge and swooped down on large grasshoppers, locusts and possibly other insects; two were observed repeatedly settling on an old rubber stump, breast and tail to the bark exactly as in the attitude adopted by woodpeckers and feeding on some large black Elaterid beetles. The cry of their three or four notes ?Be-ka-ka? is surely onomatopeic and responsible for their Malay name Bekaka.

The Black-Capped Blue Kingfisher was normally on the fish ponds, but also frequented the clearings rather less commonly than the White-Collared species without being seen to share its insectivorous habits. The monotonous gong-like call of the small green Barbet was frequent in the evenings; during the night, especially monsoon times from about November to March, the querulous cry of the Hawk Owl was continuous, sometimes with the four to five note call of the Black Jay, though a pair were only once seen during the daytime. The little Scops Owl was also often heard and on several occasions an unidentified species called at night.

A family of five jungle crows frequented one clearing with an old nest in a rubber tree; they drove off a large Hawk Eagle and discovered some very large Hawk Moth caterpillars which had split and rolled up transverse sections of banana leaves for making cases for the chrysalis and these were eagerly tom open.

(To be continued.)

This Sarawak.

(With apologies to the New Statesman and Nation.)

That the.....Department was just as good,

as well as bad as any other department.?A monthly report.

It is consulted here almost as often as the Standard Dictionery.....?A letter.

Full credit must be given to the Kampong people for the way in which these robbers were apprehended?three of them are still in hospital.?A report.

Do it NOW?you know ?N-O-W" when spelled backward is ?W-O-N" means $uce$$.?An advertisement.

(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 , OCTOBER, 1898.

BINTULU MONTHLY REPORT.

August 2nd I sat in Residency Court, with me Abang Galau and Haji Hassan, and inquired into the charges brought by several Tatau Dyaks against an elderly man, a native of Tringganu, for selling charms. Jerabatu is the name of the accused, it appeared from the evidence that purchases were made of three kinds of charms (1) Tahan Kulit. this renders the wearer invulnerable from wounds, (2) Pelias, this causes a weapon to glance off when coming in contact with a body, (3) Obat paddi. this is warranted, by the vendor, to obtain good crops of paddi for the purchaser.

The price was $2 each which seems reasonable taking into consideration the results promised.

Haji Hassan opened some of these jimats, and found some scribbling on paper. The guilt of the accused having been proved, he was sentenced to be fined $50 in default to be imprisoned for the space of 6 months with hard labour, he is now in jail.

This is a similar case to that of one Inchi Omar, a Kalatan man, who was practising the same business at Tatau, not very long ago; he was imprisoned for 6 months and forbidden to return to

Tatau; I brought this case before Your Highness at the time.

On the 7th private Janting, S.R. an old soldier with three good conduct stripes, was fined $5 for assaulting private Moyan of the same corps. They are on bad terms, Janting is an elderly man with a young wife and private Moyan is a young man.

On the 13th I sent per s.s. Lorna Doone a small box containing $10 Sabah copper coin, this was addressed to the Acting Treasurer.

I have since heard from this Official that $8 only were in the box when he received it at the Treasury; $2 had been purloined on the way.

On the 14th I received a report from Abang Galau, from Tatau, at which place he was on duty, stating that a Muka Dayak named Jimbai had amok- ed and murdered his wife and child, and wounded another man at Tatau, he was secured and tied up in the Tuah?s house. I sent off and had him brought here in irons, there being a doubt as to his sanity I sent him to Kuching, after some corres- pondence with The Hon'ble The Administrator and The Hon?ble The Divisional Resident, a full report of the affair has been furnished, and sent to Kuching, and another to Sibu.

Thursday 19th the relieving guard of Rangers arrived per s.s. Lorna Doone, they are a tall well set-up lot. the returning guard have done well here, I am sorry to loose them.

A complaint was lodged regarding the conduct of a man named Panyis, he is an elderly man and is somewhat crazy, it appears that one evening he was caught stealing cocoanuts from the garden of Mat at K. Lama.

Upon Mat remonstrating with him he cut at him with his parang and threatened him. Mat left him, not liking his manner; later in the evening Panyis stole Mat?s boat.

I had Panyis arrested and placed in irons: his relatives, a son and some married daughters, became responsible for his future conduct, and they were permitted to take him away; it appears that it has been his custom for years past to prey on his neighbours by petty thieving: however this has now ceased.

LUNDU MONTHLY REPORT.

On the rocks near Kuala Bakuching was a whale in a very advanced state of decomposition. I was

told it had been measured by one Anang and was nearly 70 feet long. Instructions were given that it was not to be destroyed as it might be wanted for the Museum.

News from Far and Near.

SECOND DIVISION.

The following is an extract from the July report of the District Officer, Simanggang, (Mr. Bruen) : ?An attempted gang robbery took place at Tebelu on 19th. Seven Chinese arrived from Kuching by boat and spent the night at Tebelu; in the small hours of the morning armed with guns they robbed a Chinese shop house and made away with cash and valuables. The alarm was given and the Kampong people gave chase. The robbers who were making their getaway by boat were overtaken and in the ensuing struggle their boat was over- turned, four of them were badly wounded and six of the seven robbers were captured. No sign could be found of the seventh person?it is thought likely that he was drowned."

The District Officer, Simanggang, reports that a Chinese trader was found guilty of submitting a false return for his padi stocks and was fined $500 and sentenced to two weeks? rigorous imprison- ment.

The District Officer, Simanggang, reports that a meeting of the Local Treasury and Native Authority took place on 7th, 8th and 9th of July. The main work of the meeting was to consider the 1949 estimates. The emphasis was again laid on education, and the members decided to impose an education rate of twenty-five cents per door per year in the whole district. This rate is not to be known as a pupu; it is to be known as penyukong skula (school support fund).

The local Treasury has deluded to erect a central boarding school in Simanggang next year. This school will cater for the education of brighter youths and maidens who are unable or unwilling to enter Batu Lintang.

The District Officer, Simanggang, reports that the usual pre-farming litigation started in earnest during the month.

After strenuous efforts the. Dayaks near Engkilili have promised to start building a school at Engkilili immediately. Although keen on having a school there they had made no efforts to build one as they could not come to an agreement as to the actual site of the school.

The following is an extract from the report of the District Officer, Simanggang: "There was a shortage of local rice in the Simanggang Bazaar, and a small quantity of imported rice was brought into the district. This shortage of rice has been deliberately engineered by the local traders who. by a stranglehold on the stocks, forced the price of local rice up to $1.80 a gantang. There have been a few convictions under the Controlled Goods Ordinance and severe sentences were imposed.

There is no real shortage of rice. The small quantity of imported rice is almost unsaleable.?

At a tuba fishing near Engkilili a record catch of over one hundred piculs of fish was obtained.

A large crocodile was caught and killed in Sungei Meranti. In the stomach were found four gold teeth, a silver ring, the tip of a .303 bullet and a ball of buck shot.

The following is extracted from the July report of the District Officer, Saribas : "The Agricultural Field Assistant is directing this year's padi plant- ing along the banks of the Sungei Entanak. Many good drains have already been dug and the Dayaks of Rd. Chabu (Lampaong) have decided to try out fertilisers this year.

Penghulu Ulin of Spak has made enquiries as to the market possibilities for locally grown cotton. He states that his people have considerable quantities which they wish to offer for sale.

A number of applications for land were received during the month from Dayaks wishing to plant rubber. On inspection the land was invariably found to be unsuitable for planting rubber: alter- native crops suggested evoked no interest in the applicants."

FIFTH DIVISION.

The Honourable the Resident, Fifth Division, (Mr. Anderson) comments that it is interesting to observe that a few cocoa trees, one in Lawas and three in Trusan bazaar, are thriving quite well in spite of lack of cultivation or attention. There are

now about ninety cocoa seedlings, the majority of which are doing very well, on the Limbang Agricultural Station.

Commenting upon discussions regarding padi cultivation, the Honourable the Resident, Fifth Division, writes: ?It is becoming more and more obvious each year that the Ibans must learn methods other than shifting cultivation as soon as possible.?

The Honourable the Resident, Fifth Division, reports that ?several meetings of the Divisional Price Control Board were held. It is, perhaps, worthy of record that traders are obliged to buy tinned milk from a single agent, and so, having no choice to buy in a free market, prices are naturally bound to remain as high as the distributors or makers may dictate.

There was a temporary cigarette shortage which caused much inconvenience.

Over 1,000 tons of padi have been purchased by Government in this Division this year, and it is estimated that there will be a surplus of about 262 tons. If and when the people follow the example of the Government (irrigation) and concentrate on irrigated swamp padi there is no telling how much greater this surplus might be, in a good harvest year.?

The Cadet Officer, Limbang, (Mr. Harper) reports that, on the 18th of July, a Tuba Fishing was held by Kampong Permukat in a small side stream of the Limbang during which eight piculs of fish were taken.

The Assistant District Officer, Lawas, (Mr. Smith) reports that very few Muruts were seen in Lawas during the month as they were busy working in their padi fields.

CORRESPONDENCE.

NEWS FROM LONDON.

London.

15th August, 1948. The Editor,

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Kuching.

Sir,

The last time I read news direct from London in your columns was, I think, a series of letters from Tom Harrisson, and whilst I cannot con- template a series (any more than you could!) I thought some of your readers might be interested in some current news from England.

Conditions here are generally improving, and whilst living is nothing like in pre-war days, and a permanent stay could hardly be contemplated with equanimity, there is no reason why a few months' leave should not provide the maximum enjoyment, provided one can safely negotiate the

first few days in the food office! Regulations, rations and cou- pons are confusing in the extreme, but almost without exception, every official does his or her best to be patient with the overseas visitor and to make his path smoother.

Of food rationing let me say that it is nothing like as bad as I had been led to believe, but let no one think that food is plentiful. There is no rea- son why anyone in England should starve,?there is more than enough bread, potatoes, fish, and fruit,?but there is very little choice. The serious deficiency to my mind is fresh meat,?1/2 to 3/4 lb. of fresh meat per person per week is ludicrous and rarely lasts beyond Monday, and how the harassed housewife manages until the end of the week is beyond my comprehension. Fats and bacon are also inadequate, and whilst milk supplies have been good throughout the summer, there is no guarantee that this will be kept up during the winter.

Hotel accommodation differs remarkably, and whilst some places manage to maintain almost a pre-war standard, and I am thinking particularly of seaside resorts, others are depressing in the extreme, and one can only be thankful when the bill is presented at the end of one?s stay.

Cigarettes are presenting a big problem at the moment, and with yet another cut, in supplies of tobacco to manufacturers in an endeavour to con- serve dollars, due in a few day's time, the outlook for the regular smoker is most depressing. There is current now a suggestion that cigarettes may be rationed, and with food rationing working smoothly, there should not be great difficulty in its effectual organisation, and will at least ensure that everyone who requires cigarettes is able to get at least a share. I know several people who have to stop smoking intermittently, because their regular tobacconist has no supplies, and they have just not the time to go round searching for shops which may have meagre stocks for sale.

The position regarding clothes is serious, but this is one direction in which there has been a certain amount of relief during recent weeks. Certain articles have been released altogether, whilst others have had their coupon value lowered, but things are still very difficult for the resident Englishman. A man?s suit requires 20 coupons, and one shirt is 7 coupons,?to be obtained apart from any other garments, from an allowance of 24 coupons to cover about eight months. The trade has claimed for a long time now that stocks are building up in warehouses, and very much greater relief should be

given, and there are signs that the Board of Trade may take action before long.

Of politics I will say little. There is criticism of the Labour Government, particularly of one or two Cabinet Ministers who seem to have little better to do than indulge in public personal slanging matches with members of the Opposition, but it is generally felt that there will be no change now before the next General Election due in 1954). The crisis with Russia in Berlin has held everyone's attention for a long while now, and the general opinion regarding the possibility of a war in the near future seems to be about equally divided, with everybody determined that the Allies must be firm about' their Berlin stand. The English press is profoundly shocked at the news from Malaya, and almost every national daily carries the latest reports, together with strong criticism of action having been delayed too long.

English sport is at a low ebb, but regrettably enough, opinion seems to say it is no worse than was expected. This is no way in which to re-build our great sporting traditions. The Olympic Games were a great success financially and brought thou- sands of visitors to London. With victories in one yachting and two rowing events only throughout the whole Games England has not done well, but this is more than counteracted by the general feel- ing regarding the organisation and sportsmanship shown. I quote a headline from to-day?s ?Sunday Express???Britain did win the best Olympic victory of all." At every Olympiad of the modern era, bar the XIVth which finished yesterday, there have been unpleasant international incidents of major or lesser importance, but the world?s verdict to-day is that these Games have been a huge success, and principally due to Britain?s efforts. According to the "Sunday Express,? one of the Danish officials stated, inter alia, ?In particular we admire the spirit in which the Games have been con- ducted. Before we came we had little faith in the value of the Olympic Games. That faith is now restored, and the honour belongs to Britain.?

At Wimbledon, the honours all went overseas? Britain?s tennis strength can seldom have been weaker. Now, if not before, we are feeling the almost total absence of serious sport played in this country during the war years.

Alas for cricket! Is there an Englishman, how- ever pessimistic, who didn't secretly feel that the

tables would be completely reversed in the last Test, and that we would give the great Don something to think about in his final Test match in England? By three o?clock yesterday afternoon, the first day, the cream of England's cricket was back in the Oval pavillion for 52, the lowest total recorded by an England side in a home test match. I can bring myself to write no more of cricket.

Mr. Aikman went to enormous trouble, I gather, to get seats for the Second Test at Lord's, but although I looked, I didn?t see him. There were some 20,000 others there as well, so perhaps it is hardly surprising. I met Arthur Taylor in Smithy's office in Millbank,?the latter extends a pre-war welcome to all old friends. I found George Oakley buried in a most unprepossessing clerical accommodation house, and hastily took him out for a bottle of beer in more congenial surroundings, and immediately raised his spirits. At the Annual Dinner of the Association of British Malaya in June, there was a Sarawak table, where we saw Mrs. Kathleen Brooke, Mr. and Mis. Boult and others who were in Sarawak many years before the war. We spent a weekend with Mr. and Mrs. Edwards at Selsey. and saw them again in London. Amongst other hectic doings, they went to the Second Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace.

On June 16th, at the Old Bailey, Frederick Calderwood, alias Catherwood, was acquitted of bigamously marrying Miss Joyce Mathiew at St. Joseph's Church, Kuching, on September 21st, 1946. The prosecution produced Mrs. Eileen Catherwood, with whom the defendant went through a form of marriage at Newcastle in 1940. but the defence proved that this was not a legal marriage by testifying to the satisfaction of the court that Catherwood was married to a girl in Australia several years previously. The judge directed the jury that if they were prepared to accept the Australian marriage as valid, and it undoubtedly was, then the marriage to Mrs. Eileen Catherwood, who has two children, was not legal, and therefore the prosecution had not proved its case, and the defendant must be acquitted. In discharging Catherwood, the judge (Mr. F. A.

Beazley, the Common Serjeant) remarked, "You have been acquitted, but, on a technicality only.?

In the entertainment world two of the beet films at the moment are undoubtedly ?Hamlet? and "Oliver Twist.? The latter may be seen in Kuch- ing before many months are over, but the former will be a loug time yet. It has been shown twice daily at the Odeon, Leicester Square, to full houses,

since the World Première three and a half months ago. and there is no sign yet of a falling away in interest.

On the stage the two American musicals ?Annie Get Your Gun? and "Oklahoma!" are without doubt the cream of London?s West End. I read their reviews in Kuching over a year ago now, and was a little sceptical. An entirely unanimous and laudatory press does not always agree with public opinion, and the adjective's used by the critics were, from hard-boiled Londoners, to say the least of it, superlative. But they were and are entirely right, ?both are really sparkling shows, which will cure any depression, and can stand any number of visits. And let those whose leave is not due this or next month, not despair,?these shows will be playing to packed houses at the end of 1949 if I am not far wrong, and there is no time like the present for securing seats ! Despite the fact that these two are American almost in toto, other theatres house old established favourites such as Leslie Henson, Jessie Matthews. Ralph Lynn, Robertson Hare, the Crazy Gang (alas without Chesney Allen) and the Baddeleys who have been performing nightly during our leave, and lose none of their brilliance with the passing of the years.

Yes, England is a grand place. There are many shortcomings,?one has to be patient and cheerful, and if the overseas visitor finds it difficult, he or she has only to look to the Londoner, or to the resident anywhere in the country, to find the characteristic and indomitable spirit of the English-man. which will carry him through anything,? higher praise than which I cannot give to those who stay behind and are giving everything they can to make the world a happier place in which we are all to live in peace.

Yours faithfully,

Alan Dant.

LIFE IN SARAWAK.

Kuching,

6th September, 1948. The Editor,

,

Kuching.

Sir,

Our attention has been drawn to a report, in the Malay Mail of August 21st, 1948, of an address to Malacca Rotary Club. The subject of the address was ?Life in Sarawak," and the speaker was Mr. Sagar, formerly of the Borneo Co., Kuching.

While we do not object to the free expression of opinion, we do ask that speakers should get their facts correct. Mr. Sagar is reported to have said- ?The Medical Service, outside the Government, is not satisfactory and not inspiring at all. There is one Indian Doctor who left Government Service and has taken up private practice but this is not sufficient to tend the needs of the population of the country.? A very gloomy picture indeed. Now let us examine the true facts. There are two European, five Chinese, and three Indian qualified Doctors in private practice in Sarawak. Five in Kuching, four in Sibu and one in Lawas. In addition there are three locally qualified men in private practice, two in Sibu and one in Kuching making a grand total of thirteen Doctors in private practice. In addition to this there are the Doctors. Nursing Staff and the hospital maintained by the Sarawak Oilfields.

Mr. Sagar is also reported to have said ?Sarawak teas note adopting the Indian Penal Code with modifications to suit the needs of legal adminis- tration.?

In actual fact, the Courts order of 1922 applied the Indian Penal Code, with modifications, to Sarawak. In 1933 The Sarawak Criminal Pro- cedure Code was enacted, and The Sarawak Penal Code followed in 1934. Where therefore does Mr. Sagar obtain his information that "Sarawak was now adopting the Indian Penal Code??

Mr. Sagar apparently concluded his address with the following astonishing remark. "Lack of recreat- ion is one of the main problems and except for two cinemas, and the club for Europeans there is nothing at all in Sarawak."

We can only say that Mr. Sagar cannot have seen very much of Sarawak during his stay here. No reference is made to the Sarawak Union Club, The Junior Service Association Club, The Kuching Football Association, The Bau Recreation Club, The Simanggang Recreation Club, The Sibu Recreation Club, The Island Club, Sibu, The Gymkhana Club, Miri, and The Miri Recreation Club. In addition there are pre-war clubs which may re-open shortly, plus hundreds of Chinese and Malay

associations throughout the country nearly all of which provide recreation of some kind. There are also cinemas at Sibu and Miri, and a number of travelling cinemas.

Before the war there were Golf Courses in Kuching, Simanggang, Sibu, Miri and Limbang which of course the Japs destroyed, but some of them have been, or will be, re-constructed. Tennis Courts were available in Kuching, Simanggang, Sibu, Mukah, Miri and Limbang. Of these, only Kuching, Sibu and Miri have been put into order since the re-occupation. In even the smallest station in the country one can get badminton and basket or volley ball.

Finally, Mr. Sagar, what about the Sarawak Turf Club of which Messrs. The Borneo Company are the very able Secretaries. You make no reference to its pre-war brilliance or to the fact that the reconstruction of the Course is now under way.

Yours faithfully.

L. K. Morse, K. E. H. Kay

THE NEW DIVISION.

Kuching,

9th September, 1948. The Editor,

,

Kuching.

Sir,

The letter from the gentleman signing himself "Belom Pandai? in your last issue raises a matter of wider interest than his references to the Gazette Calendar, important as these are. He says, apropos the Calendar, "some of us new boys find it hard to fit into the groove.? I suspect that a good few people feel a bit the same about things in general here. There is, naturally enough, a certain division between those Europeans (what an inadequate outdated term !) who were here before the war and those who came after. And some of those who came after are young and farouche (as they should be. being young). Some of them are brash largely through over-enthusiasm?a healthy fault. It would be a pity if the ?Old hands? kept up an attitude of barely suppressed resentment to the new. After all, it is all one Colony. And it is not "the new boys? who made it so! It is just as futile for a

European to live in the thirties past as it is hopeless for an anti-cessionite to wallow in displaced Brookeana.

Would it be impertinent to suggest that a few of the ?old boys? need to look to their lesser linen in this respect? That some are too hasty in judg- ing newcomers, and not ready to encourage, to mix or to advise the new? And that some of the new boys try sometimes to be too clever by half? Some of them reached rank and distinction in the war years, and it must seem hard to come in and start again as Cadet or Junior. But it is very necessary the new lads should come out to Sarawak in a mood of learning and listening. They should try not to generalise, to criticise destructively or to condemn until they know the Sarawak score at least from S to A if not R. Those who have been here a long time, on the other hand, need to disabuse their minds of the idea that anyone can ever know this country from S to K.

It is just as possible for old hands to learn from the fresh ideas of new boys as it is for new boys to benefit from the experience of even those they regard as the hoariest old fossils.

If a minority on either side persist in making two camps of it?pre-Jap and post-Aussie?I suggest that they are neither giving their best to the country nor facing the realities of 1948. To-day we can ill afford a mind divided or a two-stroke heart.

I put forward this gentle argument with diffidence, sir. But many of your readers will be honest enough. I hope, to recognise that I describe what is a real situation?not serious, but liable to become serious if left to drift through a flat con- spiracy of silence.

I am, Sir, Your civil servant,

Satengah Pandai.

THIS SARAWAK.

Kuching,

10th September,1948.

The Editor,

,

Kuching.

Sir,

That letter from ?Semi-Krani? seems alright. But while we are on the subject and he is getting so shy and thoughtful, let?s remember something else.

Those who happen to speak English and not, say, Chinese, find themselves the subject of plenty of ridicule from time to time. Anyone with a tiny smattering of Chinese can tell the sort of things the corner children are saying about the red-skin. And in a recent Kampong ?bangsawan? great fun was made of a British naval type speaking dog- Malay.

The difference between me and "Semi-Krani" is that I am prepared to laugh at myself being made ridiculous and he is not. Look at Mr. Poggy in the last Gazette! He held the typical Tuan speaking Malay up to sublime ridicule and con- tempt. Look at the selection from the Curator's letter bag?every item showing the absurdities of other European races trying to write English. There is no need for "Semi-Krani? to feel he and his friends are being singled out. The learner must always stand leg-pulling. Wait till he tries to learn Iban and see the hysterics the long-house will throw itself into at his mistakes.

That is not to say that I disagree with him entirely. I think "This Sarawak" should throw wider net. Even some of the asinine mal mots of newly arrived poto-Sarawakians would be worth putting into the horror of immortal record. Treasury Malay should not be overlooked.

While on the subject. I would point out that an occasional contribution in Malay would not be out of order surely. In the old Gazettes there are many such.

Yours, etc.,

Super-Kerani.

Kuching,

10th September, 1948. The Editor,

,

Kuching.

Sir,

As you seem to be in trouble over your ?This Sarawak? item (long may it continue), perhaps you will

permit me to point out one or two old Gazette ideas which might be worth looking at and reviving again.

(1)

Before the war. the Gazette. fairly regularly printed authoritative commentaries on European affairs?analyses of Hitler?s speeches, for instance. They gave valuable background to newspaper reading. For instance the October 1940 issue prints articles by Professor Ramsay- Muir, Wickham Steed and from the New States- man.

(2)

Speeches by Ministers, such as the Secretary of State for the Colonies (October 1940 issue)?altho? in tliese days we were not a Colony I

(3)

Commentaries on public functions, such as a fete given by the Martines; a gala perform- ance at the Lilian; and a musical evening in Miri (all October 1940).

(4)

News of Rotary and other bodies.

(5)

Bowls and Bridge scores, School Com- petitions, Sweepstakes, and so on.

I do not see that any of these are out of date. All would be of interest in their wider 1948 forms ?e.g. golf competitions, badminton of Senior and Junior Service, the Rotary children's outing to Santubong, lectures at the Sarawak Union Club, etc., etc.

Yours, etc..

Gazebo.

The Editor,

,

Kuching.

Sir,

The letter from ?Semi-Kerani" rather dis- tressed me. If ?This Sarawak? is really causing

widespread offence then I suppose it will have to stop and this I would regret very much. But it is inconceivable that any considerable proportion of your intelligent readers can seriously regard this column as "ridiculing the Chinese? and the other estimable people mentioned. Indeed it is surpris- ing to find that anyone at all could regard your singularly inoffensive little jests in such a sinister light and his suggestion, which, broadly speaking, is that it is quite time Europeans? efforts at speak- ing Malay were ridiculed too, is extraordinary. It is rare indeed that your rather sedate journal ridicules anybody but when it does it is invariably the European who catches it and often enough it is his distinctive manner of speaking Malay that is the target. By a happy chance there updated in the same issue as your correspondent?s letter, a very delightful article by one ?G? on the subject of European Malay which is probably one of the most slashing bits of ridicule that has ever appeared in print and does all that is necessary to answer "Semi-Kerani's" point.

As to the question of ?students in examinations" ?as has already been pointed out "schoolboy howlers" have for long been a feature of periodicals of the lighter variety the world over and have never, as far as I am aware, been known to cause offence before. The recording of amusing mistakes in no way implies contempt for the writer. Nobody ever despised the schoolboy who wrote "The pleasures of youth are indeed great but they cannot be compared with the pleasures of adultery? but if some weak-minded Editor, motivated by the sentiments which seem to have inspired your correspondent, had refused to publish this rare piece of insight the world would have been the poorer.

I hope, Sir. that you will defy the man and con- tinue to publish ?This Sarawak.? That is the page which I invariably read first and often enough, owing to pressure of work no doubt, that is all I do read so please do not rob me of my innocent monthly amusement.

Yours, etc.,

P.

3.30 p.m.

Sunday, 12th September, 1948. To The Editor, .

Friends, Locals, Countrymen.....

I?m told there is much to be said

For telephones kept near one?s bed

In fact this handy little toy

Can be a source of frequent joy

But Sarawak has certain hours

Deemed sacred here by all the powers

And in these times it does one ill

To make a telephone bell trill

It?s most important not to worry

Folks Sunday afternoon post curry

And even if you're on the spree

For heavens? sake don?t ring at three

This is the very worst time Sunday

To make arrangements for the Monday

Though too at other hours no doubt

One?s temper may be tempted out

You must regard if friends you'll keep

The Sunday post p?randial sleep.

B.

From ?Adversity?: Internment Quarterly.

The following story was published in ?Adversity" on the 1st July, 1944, as an experiment in non-co-operation. The story was written in three parts by three authors without exchange of views or opinions.

It may amuse readers to guess where the breaks occur.

THE GREAT MISUNDERSTANDING.

Alice said to her husband George : ?You are positively mediaeval.?

George had heard this before. He had heard it quite often before, his wife, Alice, being convinced

that, no matter how many times a man may be told something, the information will always bear repetition. Men, she thought, need to be educated. She continued : ?I?ve never known anybody so superstitious. ?

George knew better than to start protesting. Besides he was superstitious, but only about certain things, like so many men. He would never light three cigarettes with one match, having once known a man who died after having done so. Neither would he start a journey on a Friday. He hud known a man who had died after having done so. He would not hesitate, however, to sit thirteen at a table as he had not even been informed of the mortality statistics in. connection with this ex- periment.

His wife?s remark was inspired this time because he threw some salt over his left shoulder. Having spilt about ten grains he scattered approximately half an ounce on to the carpet behind him. This was because an acquaintance of his had died having first spilt salt and then ignored the propitiatory rites. It was all this pagan behaviour that his wife

apostrophised as ?mediaeval.? She also called it Voodoo worship, hokus pokus, ju-ju nonsense and many other meaningless names, she being of an inventive turn of mind; but it made no difference. The leopard would not change his spots.

They had been married a year, and in that year Alice had discovered all there was to know about her husband George; nil, that is, that she needed to know. True, she was unaware of his political bias, of his religious prejudices, whether or not he was a good sport and to what extent?if any?he had benefited from the curriculum of the school he attended. But these things concern a woman so little us to be not worth bothering about. But she will inform herself thoroughly of all in his character that vitally concerns her and makes living with him a torment or a joy. Such things for example as his favourite colour, his table maimers, his fashion of preparing for bed and the innumerable trifles that control his change of mood from grave to gay, from surly to gracious and from provident to spendthrift. Alice had learned very quickly all these things so as to be able to exploit the know- ledge to her own advantage which she did always with such charm of manner that it left George convinced that his wife was a very angel of unselfishness.

But what did George know of Alice after a year? The self-centred fellow knew nothing at all that

mattered. He could not have told you her favourite colour, or whether she preferred pears to peaches, or whether she was obstinate by nature or merely to make things difficult. These, and a hundred such details he had completely ignored, and if asked he would have asserted that such trifles were of no slightest importance. But he discover- ed, one day, the enormity of his error. There came, very soon after the salt-spilling, the Great Misunderstanding.

He had never been one of those husbands who display their wives like prize cattle. Some men wear their womenfolk on their arms with exactly the same motives as others wear gold chains across their bellies. George was not one of those. Alice was simply a dear if provocative companion, a good hostess to his friends and an able housekeeper. If he took her to a theatre it never occurred to him to match her with the decorative pieces that dangled languidly from other men?s arms or ostentat- iously applied their maquillage in the stalls.

And so, a week or two later George introduced an old friend, Jim Stone to Alice, the remark : ?Why George, I?m delighted to see you've picked a winner!? surprised him.

Was Alice a winner? The comment seemed to him pointless. Jim had been pumping oil out of the Venezuala and three years absence from England had perhaps reduced his conversation to platitudes.

However : ?Very good of you to say so, Jim. And you yourself??

?Oh, I've anchored at last as well. You must come and meet the lady and we?ll all compare notes. We?re in a flat in Kensington. Mrs. Dashwood, may I ask my wife to 'phone you for a suitable evening??

?Of course Mr. Stone, I shall be delighted.?

That evening in Kensington Jim Stone recounted the meeting to his wife.

?Of course, dear, I?ll get her on the 'phone to- morrow morning. What?s she like.?

"Oh?passable to look at, but she doesn?t know how to dress like you do, and I can?t imagine her starring in a crowd.?

"You old devil. I suppose you complimented your old friend?what was the name??yes?George Dashwood?I suppose you complimented him on marrying such a charmer??

"Naturally, but it?s not everyone that can have the most attractive dame in the world, like I have, and she wouldn?t be too far down among the also- rans.?

"Jim you were born with honey in your mouth? it?s a pity you hadn?t a silver spoon there as well."

And the same evening in Welwyn, Alice said to George:?"What sort of man is this friend of yours, Jim Stone??

"Oh, decent fellow. We used to play rugger to- gether at one time?when he was in his firm?s London Office.?

"Is he rich, poor, clever, dull??

"Oh,?just a decent fellow. Bit flashy per- haps.?

"Interesting to see what sort of woman he?s married."

George did not answer. He just was not interested.

"My dear Mrs. Dashwood?such a charming dress! You make me feel quite hors de monde, frumpish. I do not know London, you must show me where you get such things.?

"Oh, no, Mrs. Stone George and I live quietly and don?t get about very much. Why that cut away coatie of yours is absolutely exquisite. You have travelled a lot and have no need of my assist- ance to find a dressmaker. That?s quite clear.?

The two ladies were chatting in the bedroom of Stone?s little flat, whither they had withdrawn to powder their noses after dinner.

"You?re right in a way. My husband is really my adviser. You know Jim is terribly fussy about what I wear and, oddly enough, he?s got very good taste. I always follow his suggestions.?

"Do you? Your husband must be versatile. George is very unobservant about things of that sort.?

"That?s a pity. It?s so easy to let oneself go and not trouble. Then before you know where you are you?re almost dowdy. But still-in your case you've nothing to worry about. Any clothes would look well on a figure like yours.?

The seed was sown. Alice?s evening was spoilt. Dowdy. After only a year of married life. No surely not. Yet what Mrs. Stone said was true enough. George was so indifferent that it would be all too easy to be slovenly, not to trouble. Really George ought to take a little more interest in her. Nor was

her mind put fully to rest by a cavalier remark of Jim?s which she remembered in the even- ing :

"Why Mrs. Dashwood, what a happy chance. You are wearing a dress that was made for the armchair." No. The seed was sown. Back at Welwyn. Alice stood before the mirror in their bed- room. It was a pretty frock, unquestionably, but were the shoes quite right? She turned to George.

"Am I getting dowdy??

"Don't be silly, dear. Of course not. Don?t let a flashy bit like Mrs. Stone upset your equanimity.?

"Do you like my dress George? You think it?s as pretty as the one I used to wear before we married??

"Oh, really, Alice. What the hell does it matter? You?ll break the mirror if you stand there much longer, and that?ll be seven years bad luck.?

"George, I think you?re a brute!?

The words were out. It might only have been a tiff?but there was a bitterness in her voice which shook even George?s urbanity.

?Come Alice, dear. Your out of sorts. You?re always pretty in my eyes and that?s all I care.?

It was a clumsy apology. For Alice, of course, was not troubling about what George thought of her. The admiration?more, the devotion?of one man was not enough. Vanity demanded more and above all it demanded all those little words of flattery, those little white lies, which, like lip-stick and rouge, make a woman confident to face the world. And suddenly she felt that she hated George.

She stamped her foot.

?I said a brute, and I mean a brute !? she storm- ed. ?I might be a servant or a mere acquaintance for all the interest you take in me. Why did I marry you? I hate you?hate you!?

George jaw dropped. This couldn?t be Alice, his Alice, his bride of a year, speaking to him like that, He hesitated, opened his mouth to speak, thought better of it. then turned and left the room.

After a restless night, George had evolved a plan of sorts.

Reflection had brought repentance. There was no doubt that he had been lax and lackadaisical in his attitude to Alice. He had been far too much inclined to take her for granted. And if only for his comfort, his peace of mind, something would have to be done.

So he had worked out this plan.

He knew that Alice had an appointment with her hairdresser this morning, and he guessed that it would occupy several hours. He would have no difficulty in getting away from the office; then back home, to go through Alice's wardrobe, meticulously memorise every dress, and think of something to say about each one. Not just to praise them all. But to be discriminating, to particularise, to have a special remark about each individual frock.

And so it was done. By ten-thirty he sat, triumphant, on a chair in Alice's bedroom. He had carefully replaced everything, and now he knew all the dresses by heart. But wait?he must go through the chest of drawers to make sure he had missed nothing.

Ail underclothing. He was tidying up after his search in the bottom drawer, when his eye was caught by a small heap of clothes tucked away in a back corner. He drew them out.

What was this? A little knitted woollen shawl. . . tiny woollen sock affairs .... many pairs of little knickers.....little squares like tiny towels.....

dolls? clothing?

No, it wasn't. It was baby linen.

George sat down again with a bump.

So that was it! And Alice had never breathed a word to him about it. Strange creatures, women. She must be saving up the news for him for some special reason or occasion. And of course that accounted for her outburst of the previous night. He had heard that women behaved strangely, capriciously sometimes, when they were expectant mothers.

But why on earth hadn?t she told him? She had once accused him of being mediaeval. But wasn't she being mediaeval?or at least Victorian ?herself? He remembered a spoof melodrama in which a bride of a year had, with tears in her eyes, held up something in her hands to show her hus- band. ?Can you not see by this tiny garment that I am about to become a mothah?? But women didn?t do that nowadays. They were more matter- of-fact and announced the news openly with joy or dismay as the case may be.

A wave of tenderness swept over him. He hoped it would be a boy but. he wouldn't say a thing until

she told him the secret. He would reform. Alice, he swore, would no longer have cause to complain his attitude towards her.

Nor did she. She found herself suddenly over- whelmed with solicitude, made a fuss of, guarded carefully from draughts, admired?both herself and her frocks; every little whim gratified.

She could not account for it at first. George was no longer a brute; he was a dear, such a dear, in fact, that she became quite contrite about that explosion of hers although she quickly realised that it must have been the cause of George?s change of heart. It couldn?t have been anything else.

It wasn't, she thought, merely that George now took an interest in what she wore; he obviously loved her for herself, a recrudescence took her back to the early days of their engagement, when love was young. She would a million times rather have George this way than like that friend of his, Jim Stone, who actually advised his wife on her dress. There was something a bit?what was the current phrase??a bit pansy about that. She disliked it almost as much as she did the other kind, the type of man who went all smarmy in the presence of women, praising and admiring what they wore, and then, when only men were present, affected to despise women so ns to appear manly, and no damn woman nonsense, before his fellow-men. She had met that hyprocritical type once or twice.

But George was consistent. There was obviously no pretence about his attitude.

But one night about a fortnight later, he got another shock. They had just returned from the cinema, and were discussing the programme in front of a cosy fire before going to bed.

"A bit dull in spots, wasn't it, darling?? remark- ed George. "Those educational pictures aren?t always good entertainment.?

"No dear. But that one tonight about the care of babies, wasn?t bad in spots.?

She yawned prettily; but George became tense. Perhaps she?d break the news now.

"It did me a good turn, anyway? Alice went on. "It reminded me to burry up and finish making that set of baby linen for May Ellingham that I?ve been dawdling over for some time. You remember her? She married a stockbroker a few months before our wedding, and she?s expecting her baby any day now. This is meant as a surprise for her, and they say you can?t have too many sets of baby linen.?

She glanced at the mantelpiece.

"Good heaven?just on midnight. Good night, dear. Don?t be late.?

George sat utterly still for what seemed an age after Alice had gone upstairs. A nasty blow. Fate waiting around the corner with a loaded sock, all ready to hit you when everything looked fine. What a blow !

He fixed himself a stiff whisky-and-soda and sat down again. Sip, sip. Well, it might have been worse. In fact it might have been a lot worse.

He wasn?t going to change his attitude towards Alice. He found, faintly surprised, that he didn?t want to. Things had been going so fine lately. Life had been fuller, more interesting, more fun. Jim Stone was right?Alice was a winner, and he, George, had picked her.

The baby?well it wasn?t true now, but it might be true any day.

A nasty disappointment for him, indeed. But a very small fly in a sea of delicious, healing oint- ment.

He drained his glass and stood up, happily. A glance at the clock showed that it was ten past midnight. Then his eye, ranging along the mantel- piece, was caught by something else, and he stared at it.

Of course, damn and blast. That accounted for it. That had been the cause of the nasty jar he?d just received.

He reached up. grasped the offending calendar and tore off the one-page date. He crumpled it up and tossed it into the dying fire, the date of the day that had just ended.

The scrap of paper uncurled in the heat before it burst into a fiery red smile. If you had looked quickly you could have read the legend it bore : "FRIDAY, 13th?.....

Kuching Market Price List.

Monthly Average Market Price from 20th August, 1948, to 20th September, 1948.

Notice.

The Control Commission Authorities in the British Zone of Germany are now prepared to con- sider applications from non-German nationals who were former residents in the British Zone or British Sector of Berlin, and who wish to return there on compassionate grounds.

Applications should be made to the Chief Secretary, Kuching.

Notice.

October Rice Ration.

The basic Rice Ration for October is 20 lbs. of either Siam Grade I, Whole White Rice or Rangoon Whole White Rice.

Heavy and Special Workers get an additional 10 lbs. of either of the above qualities.

Glutinous Rice (?Bras Pulut?) will not be included in the October Ration.

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