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The .

TUESDAY, APRIL 1st, 1947

TELEPHONIACS.

It is learnt on almost the highest authority that, by the time this issue appears, a startling innovation will have taken place in the Kuching telephone system. In consequence of the departure of a number of experienced operators it is said that it will no longer be possible, for some time to come at any rate, to ask the exchange for a name instead of a number. The age-old practice of twisting the handle, lifting the receiver, and muttering down the mouthpiece. "Sam- bong Tuan Mack" will, except of course in the untroubled out stations, become a mere memory.

It can be easily understood that there are far more important things for the new operators to remember at the outset of their careers than the particular relations of numbers and names. It is indeed a matter for astonishment that their predecessors became so skilful in this peculiar branch of their work. Occasionally of course confusion occurred. Mr. Mack of the Bank had to be distinguished from Mr. Meek of the Government by saying "Tuan Mack Benk" or "Tuan Meek Perentah" as the case might be. On the whole, however, the system worked surprisingly well, and it was not the least attractive of the idiosyncrasies that have always distinguished Sarawak from other countries. With loving care the Post Office authorities produced year after year before the war a diligently compiled and beautifully printed volume entitled "Kuching Telephone Directory." Not only were the names of the persons in possession of the two hundred and more telephones in the town carefully set out. but on one page the Directory contained an injunction in heavy type: "Tell the Operator the number, not name, of the Subscriber to whom you wish to speak." But it takes more than the Postmaster-General to upset accepted conventions in Sarawak. In spite of this succinct

instruction it is doubtful whether half the 'subscribers' ever knew their own numbers, let alone anybody else's.

The first post-liberation number of the Directory has recently appeared and, unlike its predecessors, it is probable that it is going to be used. It is to be hoped, however, that this is not the thin end of the wedge, and that Sarawak is not going to be forced in all matters relating to telephony to adopt unfamiliar methods. We remember with no little appreciation the night, more than eleven years ago, that duty compelled us to sleep in the 10th mile police-station. As we composed ourselves to repose below the office table, we were rudely disturbed by the Corporal in charge ringing up Kuching Central, and instructing the operators that on no account whatever were they to connect any caller with the station before dawn, as there was a tuan slumbering underneath the telephone.

It is hard to believe that there is really room for two opinions on the telephone in principle. It is without doubt the greatest curse in an age of accursed inventions.

'Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments

Will hum about my ears:'

says Caliban, and who has not felt the same grievance? When one's telephone rings and wafts over the air the familiar voice of X, one feels a kind of spurious gratitude to the machine, as it means that X will not appear in person, but X's fathers, and grandfathers, and great-grandfathers would have written what they wanted to say and so should he. The telephone has developed an entirely new jargon of its own. It can

views the development with caution. It is difficult to be a suffragette before there is a suffrage, but there are many fields in which an organisation of women can play a great and invaluable part.

During the hearing of an appeal in the Resident's Court, Kuching, during March it came to light that the Datus had recently passed a sentence of one year's imprisonment in the case of an offence under section 50 of the Undang-Undang. It will be remembered by many of our readers that European officers have consistently and continually protested against this provision which imposes on a Court an absolute obligation to pass a sentence of two years' imprisonment in a case of incest by Malays, even when the offence alleged is what may be called the purely technical form of

?incest? committed with a sister-in-law. Until the occu- pation the invariable reply of the Secretary for Native Affairs was that the Datus refused to countenance any change. While welcoming this volte face, for it can only be described as such, the understands that, owing to ?the constitution," it is not so easy now as it was six years ago to obtain an amendment in the code. "Custom" ceases to be "custom? when it is changed, and consequently legislation will be necessary to secure statutory recognition for the Undang-Undang in the first place and to provide for amendment in the second. A Bill for this purpose was introduced into the 1941 Council Negri but has not been proceeded with, because experience has taught that such a step at this juncture would lead to the usual misrepresentation that accom- panies any legislative reference to native custom ui Sarawak. Meanwhile therefore the anomaly of a two year sentence must continue even though the Datus themselves are in favour of revision. Mere unlawful sentences cannot produce the requisite reform. We are reminded of the taunt flung it Sir Samuel Hoare when he was Home Secretary to the effect that he believed that the police had only to commit illegalities often enough for those illegalities to become part of the common law.

A correspondent, writes: "In 24 hours covering the night of 19th February and daytime of 20th over 6 inches of rain fell at Kuching, and 5 inches near Serian and at Simanggang and Sibu. This heavy rain then seems to have been general. It may be of interest to know that a fall of 6 inches of rain generally over Sarawak is over fifteen thousand million tons of water."

Most Districts report good prospects for the padi harvest, although the usual damage has been done by various kinds of pests. The news regarding the engkabang crop is not so promising. The fundamental trouble seems to be the uncertainty of shipping, which makes the dealers reluctant to commit themselves by making a linn offer of a satisfactory price to the producers. The fact that the crop coincides with the padi harvest is. however, a very important contributory factor.

Much to the regret of his many friends Mr. K. C. Gillett of the Chartered Bank left Kuching on furlough in March and it is understood that he may not be returning here. The first time we were privileged to cast our eyes on a singularly benign countenance was in 1936 when Gillett was captain- ing a soccer side of the.Singapore Cricket Club. The enthusiastic shouts of "Gilly, Gilly."

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spectators of all races whenever his foot came near the ball, still ring in our ears. He arrived in Kuching in 1940, left with the Volunteers, and returned again immediately after the liberation. For a short period he was transferred to Jesselton. He was one of the most popular members of the European community and the mainspring of every social gathering he attended. Wherever he may go we are convinced that he will always keep 'straight down the centre.'

The following interesting little bit of folk-lore comes from the annual report for the Serian District. The District Officer describes it as 'an obviously new practice.' It is claimed by the Dayaks that during the Japanese occupation the Japanese Government stole the padi spirit and kept it in the District Office, thus occasioning poor harvests and pest ridden crops. In order to induce the padi spirit to return the Dayaks, after seeking permission from the District Officer, hold a procession with gongs and drums and bearing food and drink around the inside of the Office. The procession is led by the Dayong Ngarumboi (Priestesses) of the Kampong chanting prayers and incantations. When a circuit of the Office has been completed a parcel of padi is left overnight in the Office. The padi spirit pleased with the music and prayers enters into the padi which is borne back to the Kampong the following day.

A correspondent writes: 'Mr. N. G. Padgett, piloting his own plane, an Avro-Anson, arrived at the 7th mile landing ground on March 6th from Australia via Koepang, Maccassar and Balikpapan. Other passengers were Miss Sylvia Padgett and Mr. R. Hardy. Mr. Padgett, a member of the timber firm of Padgett and Jaegar of Melbourne, is exploring the possibilities of exporting Sarawak timbers. The party flew to Labuan on the 9th, taking Mr. H. P. Buxton, Assistant Forest Officer. Fourth and Fifth Divisions, as an extra passenger. Mr. Padgett hopes to find suitable forests for his purpose in the Lower Baram river.' Private planes are rare enough in Sarawak for this incident to be worthy of record.

In our January number there was published a quotation from a speech by Mr. Maurice Edelman M.P.. indicating his catholic taste in newspapers. We are grateful to Mr. Edelman, and to Mr. Tom Harrisson through whom the message was dispatched, for the opportunity of printing, with

appropriate blushes, the following counter- blast to brickbats :

"In answer to an enquiry as to where he gets his information on Sarawak, Maurice Edelman says :
'After finding that Gammans and Rees- Williams in Hansard cancel each other out, and that the Times was out of joint with Brooke, I have now become a faithful reader of the , which is well-balanced with- out being pompous, informative but not didactic, light but not flippant, dear and yet not simple, and, all in all, the best paper on Sarawak which I have yet read.'

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M.E."

Land and Custom.

There is in the Secretariat a book, available for borrowing by (Government officers, entitled "Land Law and Custom in the Colonies" by C. K. Meek, with a typically interesting and informative introduction by Lord Hailey, This work is a most thorough and comprehensive study of the various systems of land tenure throughout the Colonial Empire and of matters associated therewith. Rights

appertaining to land are the fundamental factor in the economy of a primitive community, and in Sarawak it has always been recognised that the proper safeguarding of native interests in this respect is the most important function of Government. In Dr. Meek's book this country is only mentioned once, in a foot-note on P. 278. In this reference it is stated that in Sarawak "the Land Book" is "private." in contrast to the majority of administrations where it is "public." It is not quite clear what this means as there is provision here for search of the land registers and consequently nothing is hidden from the eyes of any person zealous enough to make inquiry.

The importance of the book to people in this Colony, however, lies in the lessons that it teaches from experience elsewhere. Roughly speaking the system of land tenure in Sarawak falls into two parts. On the one hand there are those places in which land is administered by the Land Office, or by District Officers acting under the instructions of the Land Office, and held under title, and on the other there are the vast "interior areas" in which no titles are issued, and no new rights may be acquired. This distinction is not entirely water-tight because in the "mixed-zones" and "native areas" under the jurisdiction of the Land Office there are some lands over which rights, particularly farming rights, are claimed, but to which no titles are issued, while in the "interior areas" there are some lands held by non-natives under titles which were issued prior to the constitution of the zones. The Director has pointed out that the actual boundaries of the "interior areas" are very doubtful in many cases, and that it is essential that these should be kept flexible so that such localities can gradually become "native areas." interspersed possibly by a few "mixed zones." and brought under fuller control.

It is not intended to give in this article an exhaustive account of the land laws of Sarawak but the application of Dr. Meek's book in this country is largely dependent on the difference between the two classes of land. In the areas held under title the law provides an abbreviated and inadequate version of the "Torrens System." Title depends on registration, but how far that registration is conclusive, particularly in places where "settlement" has not been carried out, is a matter of some doubt. The general principles that all land, with the exception of a few outright "grants" made in the early days, is held on lease from the Crown, that unearned increment accrues to the State by means of a power

to revise rent from time to time, and that land may be charged and sold at the discretion of the proprietor, form the basis of the law. although some attempt has been made to graft onto it rights arising out of native custom, such as the constitution of "kampong reserves," the privilege conferred on natives of holding three acres of land as pesaka without payment of quit rent, and the practice whereby property acquired by Mohammedans after marriage is registered in the names of both spouses. Sometimes disputes have occurred when land in "mixed zones" has been alienated and later a native has claimed customary rights over it. but on the whole the system has worked well and without serious trouble. Natives are fully protected against themselves by the provisions regarding "native areas," in which land may not be charged or sold to a non-native, unless and until the native has obtained the exclusion of his land from the "native area."

Even in these parts where the writ of the Land Office runs it cannot be maintained that the whole story is told on the face of the title. Questions of devolution on a native intestacy, for instance, must be decided in accordance with native custom, and it is probable that Mohammedan law or even the ancient customs of immigrant races might be invoked in cases where non-natives are concerned, in order to decide such matters as the respective rights of co-owners or the relations between the beneficiaries of a trust. The Malay custom of wakaf is based on, and can only be interpreted with reference to, the principles of wakaf in Mohammedan law. There is nothing in our Land Ordinances to exclude such reference and indeed, native custom being part of the law of Sarawak, it is important that, where the Ordinances so admit, it should be given full play. It was made clear in the judgment of the Supreme Court, published in our February issue, that Chinese custom is not part of the law of Sarawak except where it is expressly so provided in legislation and the same probably applies to Mohammedan law as distinct from local Malay custom. On the other hand it is possible that parties enter into contracts, constitute trusts or execute wills on the clear understanding that such contracts, trusts or wills should be construed according to certain customs or laws, in which case some knowledge of such customs or laws becomes necessary.

It is when we come to the "interior areas," however, and to those other lands over which rights are claimed, but to which no titles are issued, that the full significance of Dr. Meek's book becomes

apparent, for we find that throughout the Empire the same sort of problems have cropped up as have so often afflicted us in Sarawak. How frequently must land be cultivated in order to enable rights over it to be preserved? What are the respective rights of the village, the family and the individual? How far does a native, who goes away to Miri and works there for ten years, forfeit his interest in his ancestral land? Who gets the land of a long-house when it moves from one District to another? These are the sort of questions which are continually occurring and which will become of growing importance as the Colony develops. Lord Hailey says in his introduction : "In many of the African and Asiatic Colonies, the process of change has been accelerated, and is likely to be increasingly accelerated in the future, in proportion as the more primitive systems of holding and utilizing land become adjusted to the needs of a modern economy of production and marketing.?" And in 1943 the Anglo-American Caribbean Commission stated in their report : "The productivity of land and the social advancement of the people are dependent as much upon the evolution of sound systems of land tenure as upon the development of improved agricultural practice."

A thorough understanding of native custom is therefore indispensable, but it may well be doubted how far officers in Sarawak are sufficiently conversant with the details of land tenure prevalent amongst the many different races that dwell within the Colony. Indeed one can go further and say that in many cases it would be extremely difficult to extract from a native chief a comprehensive explanation of the rules by which land is administered and transmitted within his tribe. The one thing that is certain is that the whole subject is approached from a point of view radically different from that usual amongst Europeans. The book, which is the subject of this article, has printed on its fly-leaf the following remark of a Nigerian chief : "I conceive that land belongs to a vast family of which many are dead, few are living, and countless members are still unborn." This is more far-reaching than the Chinese idea of ownership by all the living and future members of one particular family, but both conceptions are entirely alien to the English theory that land, subject of course to qualifications, is the property of an individual who is entitled to do what he likes with his own. There is always a grave risk that British administrators will forget this fact, and the following words from a judgment of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in 1921 should be posted up in a prominent

place in every District Office: In interpreting the native title to land, not only in Southern Nigeria, but in other parts of the British Empire, much caution is essential. There is a tendency, operating at times unconsciously, to render that title conceptually in terms that have grown up under English law. But this tendency has to be held in check closely. As a rule, in the various systems of native jurisprudence throughout the Empire, there is no such full division between property and possession as English lawyers are familiar with." Such quotations from Dr. Meek's book could be repeated indefinitely. Fortunately the danger that native customs will be over-ridden by unsuitable legal conceptions is remote in Sarawak, as the officers charged with the heavy responsibility of administering the interior areas" would be the first to admit that they have but an indifferent knowledge of English real property law. Indeed it may well be argued that the exclusion of lawyers from Sarawak has had a most beneficial effect in that it has facilitated the application of local customs and the exclusion of foreign ideas. The District Officer on the whole finds the simple and straightforward ancient adat far easier to administer than the complicated principles of English jurisprudence, which are almost as unfamiliar to him as they are to the people under his guidance and control.

No doubt any suggestion that the time is ripe for a thorough investigation of native customs in respect of land tenure will be misrepresented and distorted as an attack on immemorial rights. Of course no such implication is intended. So long as the practice of shifting cultivation persists, so long will the quantity of land required for the sustenance of the population be out of all proportion to that population's numbers, and the practice must continue until some more efficient method, acceptable to the mass of the producers, is found to take its place. The fact that there is so little really "vacant" land in the Colony makes it all the more necessary that the rights of village, family, and individual to the land in use should be clearly defined. Even now cases are reported of chiefs, particularly in Land Dayak areas, purporting to dispose of land to Chinese, although they have no power to do so under the statute law in force in the Colony and probably not under the native customary law into which the statutes are dove-tailed. The whole of the land law in Sarawak has been and is based on the fundamental necessity for protecting native interests. The need for a survey arises not

so much from the desirability of defining the relations between the native and the stranger, since this is adequately done already, as from the need to ascertain the rights of natives inter se. The longer ignorance persists as to the power of a native to dispose of his farming land, or his fruit trees, by sale, or pledge, or will, or gift, or abandonment, the more probable does it become that the point will be finally argued out by English lawyers, trained in English legal principles, and decided by qualified judges with the same background. Dr. Meek's remark that, "The whole history of land legislation and litigation in the Colony of Nigeria during the last eighty-five years provides a signal example of the necessity of a sociological rather than a purely legal approach to problems of tenure in African communities," may be applied with as much force to Sarawak as to Africa.

We have been very fortunate in this country. Not only have we been bereft of lawyers but the Government has always steadfastly refused to countenance any large-scale alienation of land to European interests. We have no such problem for instance as that produced by the constitution of the "European Highlands" in Kenya. Dr. Meek's book makes it very clear that many colonies started off on the wrong road, particularly in respect of granting "freehold" titles, and have been struggling, often in vain, to get back onto the right lines ever since. In Sarawak such mistakes have not been made. and. primitive and unsophisticated as the country still is. we are in a position to profit by the experience of others. It would not be out of place to make sure that, even though we have only gone a short distance, all is still well with us. Our two statutes dealing with land, the one drafted by a lawyer without local knowledge, and the other by a technical expert without legal assistance, are both inadequate and unsatisfactory, but new legislation cannot be regarded as a matter of urgency. Far more important are the questions whether the "interior areas" are properly and clearly defined, whether there are sufficient safeguards against the alienation of land, scheduled as "mixed zone," in which a native has customary rights, and whether the avarice or ambition of local chiefs is not in some cases tending to injure the interests of their people. And then, before advancing further, administrative and land officers could not do better than read Dr. Meek's book, both as a warning of the pitfalls that lie in our path, and for guidance in avoiding them.

Note.

The above article was submitted in draft to a senior member of the Department of Lands and Surveys, who is at present filling another appointment and is unharassed by the cares of day-to-day land administration. As his comments are of particular interest they are, with his permission, printed below. It should be unnecessary to emphasise that no criticism of a sorely-tried Department, or of official policy, is in any way intended. "Settlement," like so many other good things, has been inevitably delayed and obstructed by the war. The Director has kindly consented to give his comments in the next number of the .

I think that your paper paints far too rosy a picture of land affairs in Sarawak.

We were on the right track before the war, but there is a grave danger that procrastination will now undo all the good work carried out and plans will be forgotten.

The whole policy of the Land Department was, and should continue to be, one of progressive investigation into land rights, and by investigation I mean land settlement carried out by officers with an intimate knowledge of native adat and their responsibilities as guardians of native rights. If this work of investigation is not forced ahead, and the Department should in later years become merely an official machine for recording transactions, collecting land rent and replacing lost boundary pegs, then it can lie written off as the guardian of right to land, native and alien. The reason for creating and maintaining Interior Areas is, to my mind, the need when planning to place first things first. Settlement is necessary throughout Sarawak but it must be planned?hence it must deal first with those areas wherein the most immediate problems of land tenure, affecting the greatest number of people in the greatest degree, exist. Thus Mixed Zones come first in the programme for land settlement and are followed in the dim future by Interior Areas. It may well prove that certain portions of Mixed Zones can be excluded from land settlement until the accumulating problems of certain Interior Areas, in the Third Division for example, are investigated.

Now, if this programme is attacked energetically it may, even so, take fifty years to complete. If it is not, then it will never be completed, and in twenty years time Sarawak may well find herself faced with formidable land tenure problems, although we are now patting ourselves on the back and congratulating one another for having done such a good job in safeguarding native rights. Inaction

will not safeguard these rights. Inaction is retrogressive, if we have a duty to perform, and however often we may tell ourselves that the law is our safeguard, that law cannot stand if it is not put into practice. We must go onto the land and discover what is happening and then settle and record in our registers the present rights of the people for future administration. This is an urgent duty?we have brought certain European concepts of land tenure to Sarawak and in a modern state land registration is unavoidable, but the great danger is that native adat will be swamped if we do not act now and translate it into a form of land tenure which will prove an adequate safeguard of those rights we are pledged to maintain. Postpone this work of settlement and in due course Sarawak must face the just charge that native adat has been submerged by the curse of sublime bureaucratic ineffectiveness.

Every day in this country opens the gap wider between personal administration and bureaucratic government. The bureaucrat can study text-books to his heart's content, but he'll never achieve anything unless he goes to the people and settles their problems. Settlement of rights to land is now a major problem for this Colony.

The Lawas Murats.

The Assistant District Officer, Lawas, toured the Ulu Trusan and Bah Kelalan from February 11th to March 3rd. The following extracts are from his report: "Communications and Kampongs.

Prior to 1941 the various houses and kampongs were widely scattered, and many moved every one or two years. The tracks joining them were thus winding and frequently changing. In that year, however, Native Officer Bigar was instructed by the then Resident. Fifth Division, Mr. F. H. Pollard, to improve communications with the Ulu. Native Officer Bigar, with the local knowledge of the Muruts, then constructed a track taking the shortest and easiest route from Lawas to the Bah Kelalan. This having been done, the various scattered houses were persuaded to move down and form kampongs at not more than one day's journey apart on the track. Now, with the exception of Punang Tengoa and Punang Trusan, all houses are on the actual line of the track, these two being also within two hours distance of it.

The next stage, that of building permanent houses instead of temporary ones, is still in process,

having been delayed by the war. At Long Beluyu this has been completed and elsewhere permanent houses are either being built or about to be built. In this connection it is worthy of note that the permanent buildings are mostly of one or two doors only and similar to Malay kampong houses in appearance, being grouped round a central padang. This does not, of course, apply to the Bah Kelalan, where smallish long-houses of a permanent nature are spread over the length of the Bah.

Where the new style kampongs have been constructed, they are fenced to keep out cattle, the habit of keeping cattle and pigs beneath houses thus gradually being eradicated. In all cases, however, the interior cleanliness of houses leaves much to be desired.

Communications can now be described as the best possible in view of the country, and a laden man can do the journey from Lawas to the Bah Kelalan in ten days, staying at a house each night, with the exception of the stage from Lawas Damit to Fa Tengoa, where he must use the sulap constructed by Government in 1941 at Ruan Sepakoi. The longest distance between houses is about 18 miles, from Long Beluyu to Bah Kelalan, and the whole distance from Lawas to the Bah Kelalan estimated at 90 miles.

The nature of the ground, however, renders the track passable only for men on foot, as in many places there are very steep climbs round or over rocks with roots only as foot or hand holds. At these places there are no alternative easier routes. Rivers present impassable obstacles in the event of rain, as unfortunately the Muruts do not build rope bridges after the Kelabit style, and are mostly too wide for batangs. I consider that at present it would be unwise to instruct the Muruts to make rope bridges, as they would not maintain them and thus they would be dangerous.

Crops, etc.

Regarding cattle, kerbau and sapi are kept by every village, but the kerbau are not used for work, nor the sapi milked. Moreover they are now very rarely used for meat, the old habits of feasts having been discarded. These cattle therefore are regarded as a form of wealth only and used for practically no purpose other than currency.

Penghulus and TUa Rumah.

Although these are coveted titles, I found that everywhere there was a tendency to disregard Penghulus' orders and decisions, whilst Tua Rumah seemed to consider their titles sinecures. This I consider to be all part of an inferiority complex

under which these people distrust the ability of their own race, and want to work to orders from a Government officer or gum only.

I made a particular point of insisting that Tua Rumah arranged such simple matters as coolies, not leaving it to Native Officer Bigar to detail, as previously, while all concerned were informed that any matters of dispute must be reported first to the Penghulus. Several attempts were made by people to get Native Officer Bigar to hear adat cases (mostly brian disputes) which had not previously been referred to the Penghulus.

Of the three Penghulus, Itai Lakai, Ating Mugang, and Panai Abai, I am of the impression that if properly backed up they will assume sufficient authority. They are certainly the ablest men available. None can read or write but except for Panai Abai they are Malay speakers. Ating Mugang impressed me most favourably.

Adat.

There is everywhere confusion regarding the reconciliation of adat and their particular brand of Christianity. I emphasised everywhere that adat was a matter that only they themselves could change, as they seemed to expect Government to lay down the law on the matter in order to save themselves trouble.

The matter of brian is a particular matter which all concerned agree requires amendment. Penghulus have been told to collect ideas from their anak biak, and I consider that in say six months' time a meeting of all Murut Penghulus should take place at Lawas to thrash the matter out.

In spite of the fact that the Muruts generally want to be saved the trouble of thinking out any matters of adat, it is noticeable that, when such matters as District Advisory Councils were mentioned, fears were immediately expressed that adat might be interfered with. I found it very difficult to deal with this contradictory state of mind.

Education .

I inspected the school at Long Beluyu, which at the time of its closing owing to the transfer of the teacher, Pantalusang, to Fa Mein had 30 pupils.

It was re-opened on 13th February, 1947, but at the time of my visit only ten pupils were attending. I hope that this number will increase, but consider the large attendance previously was due to the personality of Pantalusang, who combined school teaching with preaching. I met this man on leave at Long Beluyu, and was greeted by a band of 30 performers on bamboo flutes which played the National Anthem and gave continuous performances during my stay. This band, which was a considerable attraction to the school, had not performed since Pantalusang's transfer, as they say they must have a guru to lead them, and the new teacher, Pagag Agong, though keen lacks the ability and personality to run such attractive sidelines. He has, however, been instructed by me to organise games which may only be played by pupils.

District Advisory Council.

This was carefully explained everywhere, but not properly understood. The idea of Native Officer Bigar being their representative was received with such relief as saving them trouble, that I shall replace him with a Murut, probably Penghulu Ating Mugang, after the first two meetings.

I hope that when Native Officer Bigar has been able to visit and explain proceedings after the first meeting it may be possible to overcome the idea that any council which contains representatives of other races than Muruts cannot be of assistance to them.

It was emphasised that no Government scheme of this or any other nature could succeed unless they were prepared to make an effort and give their share of help.

Co-operative Societies.

Explanation of the idea of trading on a co-operative basis brought forth a number of protests, mainly on such lines that one man might do more than his neighbour. Although it is to their detriment, they are at present strong individualists in financial matters.

A trained local man, however, might be able to gradually lead them out of this frame of mind by perpetual reiteration of the arguments in favour of co-operation.

I append to this report a list of possible candidates for various courses of instruction.

General.

It is disappointing to find that, as well as discarding bad habits such as drinking to excess and pantangs, the Muruts have also lost all their old songs and dances. Several attempts to produce an entertainment were a complete failure as nobody knew anything but hymns, which are now, except for a few houses in the Lower Trusan and at Lawas Damit, their only recreation.

Similarly arts such as making mats, parangs, blow pipes, etc., are not being passed on to the younger generation. These articles are now brought from Dutch Muruts and Kelabits.....

London Letter.

12th March, 1947.

I was hoping that by the time I was due to write this letter, I should in fact be packing my bags?or the one bag they allow one to fly with these days. But having been completely fit for eighteen months at Bareo, and for several months after getting home, amoebic dysentery has now caught up with me. and I am fated to spend another few weeks on ice.

I say on ice, because there is still no sign of things letting up here, after weeks of snow and freeze, which have not only paralysed the country as a whole, but each individual in it, and particularly me?or so it seems to me! Although the critics announce all sorts of new films and plays and ballets, it is almost impossible to bring oneself to go out at night or work one's way into the West- end. On the other hand, as the gas pressure is right down, and fuel of all sorts short, you are liable to be wanner in a cinema than in a sitting room. I have seen one or two films, and there are some excellent ones about at the moment. "Hue & Cry,? a English picture with Alistair Sim and a gang of schoolboys is superb?very exciting and extremely funny, against a beautifully photographed background of blitzed districts along the Thames, plus passages of Covent Garden. Then there is "Odd Man Out? with the inevitable James Mason.

who here shows that he really can act?he is the hunted Irish terrorist, wounded and dying, helped by everyone, but everyone trying to push him on to somebody else as the police draw their net closer through the labyrinth of Belfast. This film is the finest I have .seen in years. Both are British pictures, which go on from strength to strength, The best of the American films is ?The Best Years of Our

Lives,? with Frederick March, Myrna Loy, Dana Andrews and Teresa Wright, which lasts for two-and-a-half hours, but for once doesn't try to show off or shoot a line or ask us to believe the impossible. Most of the American films around the place just now are quite unbearable.

The fuel cuts have stopped all the magazines for several weeks. As a matter of fact, one finds it rather a relief. Especially as the daily papers have had some extraordinary stuff to work on and work up lately, particularly the case of Mrs. Cornock and her husband dead in the bath. That seems to have been occupying the most newspaper space in the past fortnight, and now that Mrs. Cornock has been acquitted, the inner story of her life with her perverted husband is the chief Sunday menu for the tired English housewife or husband! A strange tribe!

I have been doing a bit of writing myself lately. as a lot of people here have been wanting to know what the war was like in Borneo and that part of the world. As a result of writing a series of articles about it, and doing some broadcasts along with Edward Shackleton, (who was the Surveyor on the Oxford Expedition of 1932 and is now Wing Commander, o.b.e. and Labour m.p.) many people with Borneo associations have written to me and I have been seeing all of them within range.

I met the Aplins at the Royal Geographical Society, not looking a day older than when I last saw them and stayed with them at Miri in 1932. They live in Queens Gate Terrace, Kensington. Mr. and Mrs. Donald Owen, who have a charming fiat in Ealing, decorated with Milano vases and Murut baskets, gave me one of the best lunches I have had since I have been home. And Mr. Owen has given me the manuscript notes of his trip up the Trusan and over the Dutch border into the area where I built an air-field in 1945. He made this trip in 1912, and was the first white man to get so far in. His account is fascinating, and I hope to submit it for publication in the Gazette when I arrive. George. Crowther turned up recently from S.O.L., and is living in well-merited retirement at Beckenham. I had a meal with him in the Royal Air Force Club the other day, during which we both cursed the weather and the waiter alternatively. I would not be surprised if he did not somehow or other cunningly work his way back into a warmer climate before long!

I also had a note from another S.O.L. friend, Pip Hume, who is now on his way to Egypt. Paul Bartram, who was with the Singapore Harbour Board and then B.M.A.?he was in the first B.M.A.

forward party to be landed at Brunei with the Australians?has gone into an estate agent's business at Oxford, and even by some miracle found a house there for a friend of mine. I also heard from David Slee?he used to edit the Miri magazine ?Mirage.? And I am hoping to see Delaney before I go; he was all lined up for a job with the Sarawak Police and very keen to get back, but when he got home on special leave because of

his father being so ill, he found the old man too poorly to carry on the family business at Liverpool, and so, reluctantly, he had to take over himself. Mrs. Noble came to tea the other day, as charming and alive as ever, though we disagreed rather strongly on the inevitable question of Cession! Sometimes I feel that if anybody else mentions Cession to me over here, I will go screaming mad. I have certainly been asked about it by not less than 4,000 people, including at least 40 M.P.s.

I was able to give Mrs. Noble, Miss Party, Mrs. Mansel and others information they anxiously needed about the sad happenings at Long Nawang.

Really, everyone is fairly fed up with everything here, but making the best of it in the usual British way. Most people do not blame the Government or anything particularly, though there is a theory around that we went too far with the Atom Bomb and it has upset the North Pole! Everyone is pretty well resigned to the fact that we are going to have a lot more of this sort of thing. The general feeling is that there is no one better available to run the country and that it is best to pull together, rather than spend too much time squabbling among ourselves. There is a good deal of talk in political circles about Coalition, but I do not think much will come of that for the time being.

I wish I could suggest some good books going around, but nowadays they seem to be out of print before they are printed! I have found the translated detective stories of a Frenchman, Simenon, the most peaceful and relaxing pastime. And there are some good Penguins coming out?Allen Lane, the head of Penguin Books, has promised me he will give a complete set to the Kuching Museum Library. I have been trying to fill in the terrible gaps in the Library due to the fact that the Japanese removed all the serious books. Luckily I was able to get a good many from the old Sarawak Government Offices in Millbank House. It is quite an expedition getting in there nowadays. The front door is walled up and no flag proudly flies. Only half the office is open, and with the lighting

restrictions it was in pitch darkness when I got there. But as usual the darkness was illuminated by Mr. Smith's cheerful laughter, and I spent a delightful afternoon listening to his stories of the old Sarawak days, occasionally shooting in an SRD one of my own?just to keep my end up.

The recent awards to SRD have caused considerable interest here: I do not think people had really believed what I had written and broadcast until the London Gazette announced four D.S.O.'s, five Military Crosses, an M.B.E., one D.C.M., four M.M.'s, a B.E.M., and a whole list of Mentions in Dispatches for SRD operations in Sarawak and B.N.B. I was particularly pleased that Sgt. Sanderson, one of my original party who dropped at Bareo, got the D.C.M., second only to the V.C., for his magnificent work in the Upper Limbang, which an outside officer (arriving months later) attempted to decry and belittle. One feels that there has been much too much petty bickering and misunderstanding in the past as regards SRD, BMA, etc. After all, there was a war on. And it is all over now. Live and let live. This late recognition by H.M. the King can surely be taken as closing the argument once and for all.

Tom Harrison.

British Reward Mission.

In a farewell message, the War Office Reward Mission (Major R. K. Dyce) mentioned that his investigations had covered British North Borneo, Brunei, and all parts of Sarawak, where instances of direct aid to British Prisoners of War could be traced. It was very gratifying, now that the Mission is concluded, to be able to record that it has been satisfactory and beneficial. A great deal has been learned, of historical and of human interest, and a major impression has been the unfailing and generous co-operation of Government and Administrative officials.?(Contributed.)

Mr. Ha Buey Hon.

There died on 21st February, 1947, at his residence in Ban Hock Road, Kuching, Mr. Ha Buey Hon one of the best known and respected Chinese in the country.

Mr. Buey Hon was born on 14th December, 1871, the son of the late Mr. Ha Khiat Jee, one of the earliest Chinese pioneers in Sarawak. He was baptized by the Rev. John Kemp in St. Thomas' Church in 1872 and was educated at the S.P.G. School in Kuching, leaving there in 1886.

He was first employed in the Resident's Office at Kuching, but soon afterwards went to Singapore, where he was in the Central Police Office from 1887 to 1889. In that year he joined the Borneo Company Limited, Kuching, and was with that firm for the next twenty years. In 1909 he became an employee of the newly-formed British Malaysian Manufacturing Co. at Goebilt, staying there until the following year, and again from 1917 to 1923. For a few years he was in the Sarawak Trading Co. under the late Mr. James Brodie.

On his retirement in 1923 he became busily engaged in his many hobbies. The chief of these was no doubt photography. For many years he was recognised as the best photographer in Sarawak, and, among other exhibits of his art, there are to-day beautiful pictures of old Sarawak in the Sarawak Museum.

Mr. Buey Hon was also a very keen philatelist and butterfly collector, and for years he kept up a big correspondence with experts in these two subjects all over the world. He was a good musician and a member of St. Thomas' Choir as long ago as when the late Rane Margaret took such an interest in it.

In his latter years he developed a flourishing business in the sale of guns, and was part-time Secretary of a number of mining and business concerns. Mr. Buey Hon did not enter into public affairs, but his knowledge of Sarawak and its people, and his readiness to help anyone in search of help or advice, endeared him to all, and by his death we lose a loyal and good citizen.

He leaves many children, grand-children and great-grandchildren to mourn his loss.?(Contributed.)

Sidelights on Internment: 8.

The Roman Catholic priests are growing some very excellent papaya in their compound. They are therefore not altogether surprised when one morning they receive a visit from the assistant of the Japanese quartermaster. The Formosan says that his chief requires three papaya immediately, no, not those, but those large yellow ones over there. The fruit are surrendered with reluctance and inward meditation unconventional in the Church. Within an hour a messenger arrives post-haste from the office of the camp commandant. Colonel Suga would like to see the three priests who are over seventy years of age. The message is passed on and the trio of fathers forthwith assume their

best robes and proceed up the hill. They are immediately ushered into the commandant's office. Colonel Suga informs them that, while he treats all his prisoners sympathetically and with "magna-magna-magna-imity," he is particularly considerate of the aged. That being so he trusts his visitors will accept, as a token of his respect and appreciation, a small gift. He hands to each priest one very succulent papaya.

This Sarawak.

(With apologies to the New Statesman and Nation.)

It is precisely absurd to tackle this opportunity during this present condition of living, however I pray that circumstances in respect to my request will be pondered upon sympathetic humanity feeling which could be based upon comprehensive sense of humour and scale of reasoning. A letter.

Why are our two new Educationalists ex-church men? If also experienced humanitarians? good! A contribution to the .

A temporary bee-tight store was erected under the kubu during the month. The next problem is how to get the sugar, minus bees, into the new store. A monthly report.

Apabila saya datang dari ladang nya maka saya beri tahu pada mereka ada yang sudah masak, maka mereka seperti orang terpranjat. A report.

The Association will not hold responsibility for any member who commits any deed or act of crime not for the sake of the Association against the Government. Draft rules of Society.

I then all at once realised the incident and unknowingly handled a tool and knocked into my head and sleep on it. A letter.

Samples of coal from Temudok, near Sabu, are trying to be obtained. A monthly report.

Relations with Girl Guides. Item on Agenda of meeting of Kuching Boy Scouts authorities.

(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 , APRIL 1st, 1897. TUBA FISHING IN UPPER SARAWAK.

(Contributed.)

On Friday 26th ult. a goodly number of the inhabitants of Upper Sarawak, including eleven Europeans, were Mr. Moir's guests at a "tuba" fishing. Besides those invited, a small army of pedestrians, and some score or two of boatloads of natives were present, thus swelling the number of boats to from eighty to a hundred, on a rough computation. The spot chosen for throwing in the tuba was a nice clean gravel-bed a little above Karangan Bruang (just below Bidi), where we all rendezvous-ed at about 8.30 a.m. some riding, some walking, the natives having arrived some hours earlier. After duly pouring out libations to the gods, and all the necessary pounding and soaking of the tuba being over, the poison was baled out of the boats into the river, even-one seizing his spear or net and standing in readiness for the rising of the unfortunate fish. Those of us who had played the game before secured coigns of vantage at the head of rapid water or in the sluggish backwaters of deep pools, and distinguished ourselves according to our ability, and as the fickle goddess favoured us. whilst the more recent arrivals had as a whole somewhat indifferent success. The biggest fish, a Kalui of some 8 to 10lb. was speared by a native. One at least of the older hands and several natives caused considerable amusement by losing their balance and falling overboard.

There must have been several pikuls of fish killed: many boats had very fair cargoes, whilst none that we have heard of were altogether unsuccessful; the waders were perhaps as a whole the most successful, amongst these being a crowd of Chinese from Bau.

On reaching Lobang Angin at about mid-day the European contingent sat down to a most sumptuous breakfast, finishing up with a few songs by a well-known vocalist. Then Jupiter Pluvius interfered, and subsequent proceedings so far as fishing was concerned, interested us no more, and we made our way down river to Bau or Buso under whatever shelter we could find.

From the fly fisherman's point of view perhaps the sport is not all that can be desired, though it cannot be denied that considerable skill in the use of the spear is necessary before one can strike with even a moderate degree of certainty: but, as a day's outing fraught with many interesting or even exciting incidents, there is no doubt a day's tuba fishing is a welcome change from work; and

on this occasion the large number of participators in the day's sport are indebted to Mr. Moir who arranged and organised the expedition.

News from Far and Near.

FIRST DIVISION.

The Honourable the Resident reports that the paupers marched to Kuching during February and complained about the rations. A new contract has since been made for the supply of food to the camp.

The providing of accommodation for the passengers and crews of aircraft is an administrative headache, says the Honourable the Resident. The entertainment of these people falls on a few residents in the town and is an expensive matter.

Li Nam Hian, a well-known trader of Siniawan, was sentenced in Bau in February to one month's rigorous imprisonment and a fine of \$200 for being in possession of contraband chandu. A stay of execution was granted pending an appeal against sentence.

Local traders in Bau District have been offering \$6 a picul for engkabang. A letter of introduction was given to a Kampong Grogro Dayak to take down a consignment of nuts for sale to Messrs. Sime. Darby and Co., Ltd., the price quoted by this company being \$12.20 a picul for nuts delivered in Kuching. The Honourable the Resident comments that the manager of that company informed him that no nuts were brought in from Bau District in February, although the District Officer has since reported that the Dayaks did bring down six or seven piculs with strict instructions to see Mr. Dant. Apparently they were short-circuited by a clerk, not necessarily one of the company's clerks, who pushed them round the corner to a Chinese shop where they were given \$9.00 a picul instead.

The District Officer, Bau, reports that visitors during February included an unidentified European who toured the roads of the District on a motor-cycle one Sunday, in decidedly unpleasant weather, steadfastly refusing to make himself known or to come in out of the rain.

From February 6th to 8th the Native Officer-in-Charge, Kuching, carried out a patrol around Bako, Buntal, Telok Nipah, Santubong, and Pasir Mas in connection with the salvage of S.S. Matang. Two hundred piculs of rubber were recovered and subsequently handed over to the Borneo Company

Limited. On 23rd?24th he again proceeded to Kampong Bako, with Chief Police Inspector Abang Adeng. and recovered a further three hundred and fifty piculs of rubber.

The Native Officer, Lundu. reports that considerable interest is being shown in the possible revival of pepper production.

Harvesting has commenced on the Sungei Pasir Padi Scheme. Assistance was requested from the Dayaks living near by and a good many have turned up to help with the harvest.

On February 16th Mikai anak Benang, a Sea Dayak from the Third Division, arrived in Lundu. He was removed to that District, by order of the Chief Secretary, as dangerous to the peace and good order of the Colony. He now lives with ex- Penghulu Asun at Sungei Prian.

SECOND DIVISION.

The District Officer, Sirnanggang, reports that in January an inquiry into the spearing of a Dayak boy. named Peter anak Likoh, by another Dayak boy named Kibong, while out hunting with dogs in the Ulu Undup, was heard in the District Court. Kibong was to be charged with murder.

Narok, the son of Penghulu Bakar, who gained a considerable reputation for himself by leading a bala of Skrang Dayaks on Simanggang, while the Japanese still occupied that place, was called down on the occasion of the visit of His Excellency the Governor.

Rice was very difficult to obtain in Simanggang in January and the price was in the region of \$3 a gantang. In the Ulu Lingga, however, a bumper padi crop was harvested in February. Padi was selling at 30 cents a gantang and rice at one dollar twenty cents a gantang in Pantu bazaar. The Dayaks there have been irrigating their land for the last two seasons. They all agree that their crops have improved and that weeding is much less.

The District Officer, Simanggang, toured the Kalaka District in January, via the Roban, Ibus, Seblak, Awik and Krian. He says that the trip was all the more enjoyable as it was a number of years since he had visited those rivers, but he remembered and recognised most of the old faces. The worst feature of the tour was the appalling number of cases of yaws. At the long-house of the late Penghulu Enti at Lichok he was called on to ketas ulit. In his opinion it was an impressive ceremony. He comments that luckily he inflicted no injuries on the mourners but the parang given to him was

very blunt and rusty. When he asked why such a weapon was produced it turned out that the rusty blade had been used on the three Japanese taken at Kabong. He could not help feeling that they must have had a singularly unpleasant ending to their lives.

The District Officer, Saribas, reports with regret the death of Penghulu Andil of Paku on January 23rd. The Penghulu was taken ill on January 17th and brought by the dresser to Betong Hospital. Although he showed some improvement it was decided to send him to Kuching for treatment and a special boat was arranged to collect him. Before this arrived, however, Penghulu Andil decided that he would go home, and he left the hospital, against medical advice, on the night of January 22nd. He died soon after he reached his house.

Both the District Officer, Simanggang, and the District Officer, Saribas, state in their January reports that the recent lifting of the restriction on planting rubber has resulted in a rush of applications for titles to land. In Simanggang District the position is complicated by requests for titles in respect of land planted with rubber during the Japanese occupation.

In Betong the prevailing price for engkabang in January was only \$6. In February it had risen to \$8.50 a picul, delivered in the bazaar, and \$7 delivered to hawkers up-river.

The District Officer, Saribas, reports that a shortage of rice was experienced throughout the District during January. Inquiries revealed that none of the Malays of Debak or Betong had heeded Government warnings earlier in the year, and no vegetables or catch crops had been planted by them.

The District Officer, Simanggang, reports that a trading company has been registered by a number of Simanggang Dayaks, most of them being from the Undup.

A report that stone and spear throwing had occurred in the Ulu Kesit, Lemanak, was investigated in February but no evidence could be found to support the rumour. Further reports from the Ulu Ai were being investigated at the end of the month. The District Officer, Simanggang, says that it seems that the Ulu Ai think there may be reprisals from the Third Division for the deaths of the Arundell murderers. On the other hand whenever there is an engkabang crop stone and spear throwing at night is not uncommon, especially amongst the Skrang Dayaks.

The District Officer, Simanggang, reports that in February "the hunt for the flat bottomed valleys was started. The experts appear to be more hopeful."

The Malay school at Meludam has one teacher and 130 pupils.

The District Officer, Simanggang, reports that there are still three pepper gardens in production in the Ulu Lingga and adds that the owners are in a happy position.

The following is an extract from the February report of the District Officer, Simanggang : "On the 11th the Honourable the Resident, Second Division, accompanied by the District Officer, visited Engkilili, returning on the 13th. A visit to Marup was made for the purpose of panning gold. Traces were found, but no nuggets were brought back to Simanggang, despite the many rumours to the contrary."

The first meeting of the Chinese Advisory Council was held in Simanggang in February, and various matters affecting the Chinese community were discussed. The District Officer says that there was a friendly spirit about the proceedings. The meeting of the Malay District Advisory Council had to be postponed owing to some of the more distant Tua Kampong failing to appear. The Saribas Malay Advisory Board met at Betong on February 6th. Thirteen out of eighteen Tua Kampong were present. The first meeting of the Saribas Chinese Advisory Board was held in Betong on February 5th.

THIRD DIVISION.

During January the Honourable the Resident visited Nanga Julau and Meluan. He reports that at Meluan he met "the redoubtable Bakir," and, after having heard his side of the case, severely reprimanded him for his constant refusal to answer Government tongkat. The Resident comments that this matter provides an excellent example of the Dayak propensity for spreading false rumours. Before his meeting with Bakir he was informed that (a) he had assembled a force of 100 young men to defend his house, (b) he had stockaded his house, (c) he had sent his women and children to a place of safety, (d) he had established food dumps in the interior, and (e) that he was about to take to the hills and become an outlaw. All these stories were quite untrue and the Resident found an aggressive type of Dayak with a strong personality and a deep distrust of Government. The

Resident thinks that he convinced him that, provided he behaved himself, he had nothing to fear from Government, and that, his past misdemeanours having been cancelled, he could make a fresh start. After being fined a picul by the District Court for failing to appear when called upon to do so Bakir promptly paid his fine and then proceeded to get gloriously drunk.

The Honourable the Resident says that it is time that a proper station was established at Nanga Julau. It has a very well stocked bazaar of ten shops and the place is humming with activity. Binatang, too, needs a resident Senior Service officer, a permanent dresser with a dispensary, and additional shop-houses. The Resident says that it is a place much neglected in the past and the trade there certainly justifies additional attention from Government.

The District Officer, Sibulayan, reports that several cases of contravention of the Movement Control Rules were heard in January. Twenty bazaar shopkeepers and hawkers were prosecuted for selling cigarettes above the controlled price. All were convicted and fined varying sums according to their economic status. They all excused their action on the grounds that they were forced to purchase disproportionate quantities of matches with the cigarettes, which meant that they had to make good their losses on the matches by selling the cigarettes above the controlled price. The excuse was, of course, not accepted as exonerating the accused, but this alleged practice of the cigarette distributors was commented upon at some length by the Magistrate.

Up-river Dayaks, says the District Officer, Sibulayan, in his report for January, are likely to lose confidence in the much advertised illipe nut market if something is not done soon to provide regular shipping facilities out of Sibulayan. The Sibulayan merchants have made large contracts up-river but have had to instruct their agents to stop sending the nuts down to Sibulayan because there is no storage space. This is directly due to the lack of shipping, which means that all available space, and most of the land anywhere near the main wharf, are piled high with rubber, sago, jelutong, rattan, and illipe nuts awaiting export. The District Officer comments that, if this continues, the Dayaks will naturally believe that the Chinese cannot fulfil their promises and will stop collecting the nuts.

On January 29th in the course of unloading the Empire Adur one of the electric light standards set in cement on the main wharf was broken off and fell into the river. The District Officer, Sibulayan,

understood that a sling got caught up in the wire and the post was dragged over. On the previous day the Resident Engineer, S.E.S. Co., had warned those responsible that their slings were passing dangerously near to the electric light standard. This kind of damage, says the District Officer, is all the more regrettable at the present time when spare parts are extremely difficult to obtain.

The District Officer, Sibu, reports that three applications for night classes attached to various associations, two Chinese and one Malay, were submitted and approved during January. The Chinese Headmen were asked their opinion regarding such night classes and strongly recommended them as an antidote or alternative to illicit gambling.

The District Officer, Lower Rejang, reports that the Dayaks have difficulty in finding a lodging when they come to the bazaar, unless they have something to sell to the Chinese traders. To avoid this trouble it is suggested that Dayak Rest Houses be erected at Sarikei and Binatang.

The natives in the Lower Rejang District are prepared to sell any surplus padi to the Government on condition that they receive cloth in lieu of cash.

An alleged murderer named Lias anak Beti was reported to have escaped to Dutch Borneo from the Lower Rejang in January. He was brought in by Dayaks and a party of police arrived from Sibu to make a formal arrest on the 12th. The Honourable the Resident comments that "the police, seven of them, then apparently held a meeting as to what to do with Lias. While they were thus engaged Lias walked out of the house and escaped."

The following is an extract from the January report of the District Officer, Mukah : "On the 2nd of the month the Rev. Father Anthony Mulder left Mukah via Sibu en route for Europe. Father Mulder has been in the Coastal District for over forty years. It is his energy and keenness, which was largely responsible for the good name of St. Anthony's School, Mukah. It cannot have been anything but a severe blow to him that the school was completely destroyed, near the end of the occupation. Despite this, however, he was energetically proposing plans for the erection of a new school and the general rehabilitation of the school grounds. Father Mulder was much beloved in the Coastal District and should he not return to Sarawak his ever cheerful and inspiring presence will be sadly missed."

The District Officer, Kanowit, travelled the Poi in January. Houses there are mostly in good order and the lower Poi have had considerable success with umai tekak for several years. This has been one of the reasons why the pak have been respected. Many requests were made for permission to move to Uka. The District Officer says that these were, of course, refused, but he was surprised to find that nobody had actually moved beyond the pak during the occupation.

In Kanowit in January a Dayak claimed the price of land felled by his father, although he himself had moved to another district and had never used the land. Defendant claimed right of user over twenty years and referred to the "settlement" of Dayaks carried out in 1941. The defendant succeeded.

The District Officer, Kanowit, reports that the Jagoi people began trading operations at the end of January. The success of the venture remained to be seen. Their capital is small and the bazaar Chinese dislike their presence, but they have been put into touch with the Borneo Company Limited, and have the general support of the Jagoi and other rivers below Julau.

The District Officer, Kapit, reports that a "crime wave of boat stealing" hit Kapit in January. It began towards the end of December, and during January nine cases were reported to the police, and further cases, amounting to a dozen or more, were

not reported. In all cases the victims are Dayaks, who leave their boats tied up to the bazaar wharves. It is suspected that down-river Dayaks and Malays, who arrive by launch, may be the culprits. Finding there is no launch sailing at the time they wish to return, they merely take the nearest boat and paddle off.

The following is an extract from the January report of the District Officer, Kapit : "On January 2nd word was received from the Honourable the Resident that four Kayans and three Dayaks, all from the Batang Rejang. had been awarded the B.E.M. for services rendered to S.R.D. during the re-occupation. This news was received with mixed feelings. While nobody denied that the recipients had thoroughly deserved recognition, some regret was expressed at the omission of the Balleh Dayaks from the list. From what I have gathered there can be no doubt that some of the Balleh Penghulus actually did far more, in sum total, towards helping S.R.D. than did these seven. It is to be hoped that this is only a first instalment and that further awards may be made to the Balleh to

restore their morale." The Honourable the Resident comments : "This is bound to happen when honours are bestowed. There will always be people who feel that they should have been decorated. It must be remembered that the persons decorated were recommended by the Officer Commanding the S.R.D. Forces and that upon the people in the Belaga and Pala Wong areas depended the entire success of the expedition."

The District Officer, Kapit, says that the distribution of cloth is a job thoroughly disliked by the Penghulus. as there is never enough to go round. Their anak biak invariably accuse the Penghulus of reserving more than their fair share and thus causing the shortage. The District Officer, Kanowit, says that in his District the odium attaching to Penghulus is now avoided by selling for cash to Tuai Rumah or their representatives.

The following figures of telegraphic transfers into Kapit are instructive, November \$2,900; December \$6,150; January \$19,755. The increase is mostly accounted for by the amount of damar brought in, but all jungle products have been coming in and most are obtaining a good price. Engkabang prospects are, however, disappointing principally it seems because of the hard work involved in splitting and drying the nuts.

FOURTH DIVISION.

The Honourable the Resident reports that during January Sarawak Oilfields Limited started work on the re-opening of the Miri field. New drilling sites were located and a considerable influx of labour and heavy materials was noted. This increase in the labour force considerably embarrassed Government because most of the Government staff were housed in Company quarters and were ordered to quit at very short notice. The Company's slipway was completed in the same month. The Resident says that this enables L.C.T.s to be slipped in such a way that throughout the whole length of the vessel the bottom plates can be exposed for replacement or repairs. The first L.C.T. was successfully slipped, and, although this vessel has been in continual use, and was by no means new when purchased), the plates are in amazingly good condition. The Resident comments that "there is no doubt that these vessels are the answer to the coastal trade for Sarawak."

During January the Honourable the Resident visited Bintulu, the main object of his tour being to

meet Tuai-Tuai Rumah who have moved out of Dayak areas into Kayan, Punan, and Malay land for farming. All were informed that they must follow the Resident's original ruling and return to their old benoa after this harvest, after which, if it was proved that they had insufficient farming land left, they could make application to Government for new areas which must be within Dayak farming areas. The Resident suspected that there will be considerable resistance to this order, especially in the Labang river, and he had already heard that, certain of the Tuai Rumah had proceeded to Kuching to appeal to His Excellency the Governor.

The District Officer, Miri, reports that Chiew Fatt, who escaped from Miri prison in June, 1946, was recaptured at Lutong in January. He was sentenced to six months imprisonment for escaping from lawful custody. He was found in possession of personal property belonging to Europeans, which had been reported stolen during the last few months. Investigations were continuing in an attempt to recover more of the stolen property.

Dr. Webster of Sarawak Oilfields Limited, who is now stationed at Seria, visited Miri at the end of January. The District Officer, Miri, says that the doctor's long pre-war experience of Miri should prove very useful in planning for the rehabilitation of health in that District. Unfortunately, as he is stationed at Seria, he will only pay periodical visits to Miri.

The Dayaks in both Niah and Sibuti rivers are causing trouble by their encroachments on Kedayan and Penan farming land. In some cases the latter are themselves to blame, says the District Officer, Miri, as they originally "lent" the land to the Dayaks and now cannot get them out.

The District Officer, Miri, reports that the Honourable the Resident fired two explosive charges under the lighter sunk off the former immigration wharf, but with only partial success; further charges will be necessary if the lighter is to be got rid of. In its present position it is rendering the wharf useless.

While playing chess in the five-foot way at Labang on January 29th a Chinese is alleged to have been suddenly attacked from behind by another Chinese with a hammer. The District Officer, Bintulu, does not mention whether the assailant was also the opponent.

In a room in Rumah Leng, a Penan house, the District Officer, Bintulu, found, in January, a very fine clock, which registered time corresponding almost exactly with Bintulu time. The clock is adjusted

periodically by the sun shining through a hole in the roof onto a mark on the floor. On the same trip the District Officer saw in a Kayan house a Japanese skull contained in a basket hung from the roof. This can be let down on a string for visitors to view. He was informed that when fresh the head made a very good soup, which, he says, is the first he had heard of cannibalism in Borneo.

The leading towkays in Bintulu have agreed to pay \$7.50? \$8.00 per picul for engkabang nuts delivered to the bazaar, dried and cleaned.

On January 14th, the Lucile, while attempting to cross the bar off the mouth of the Bintulu river, got stuck and had to stay there for the night.

The General Manager of Sarawak Oilfields Limited has approached the Honourable the Resident regarding a site for a Senior Asiatic Staff holiday camp where members could take short leave for health reasons. The Resident suggested Kedurong and the General Manager is keen to open up a Rest-house there with a launch to run between Kedurong and Bintulu.

A successful regatta was held in Bintulu on January 1st. The Honourable the Resident thinks that this is a sign of the prosperity of the District, and he doubts if such a regatta could possibly be staged in any other District in the Division at present. The District Officer, Bintulu, says that it was alleged to be the biggest crowd since the Rajah's visit in 1927.

FIFTH DIVISION.

An inquest was held at Limbang in February on a young boy who died suddenly after dropping a parang on his foot in a buffalo swamp at Kampong Aur. Only a small wound was made and there was no question of foul play. Tetanus was suspected by the dresser to have been the cause of death.

The attention of the public in the Limbang District has been drawn to the fact that permits are required for exports with particular reference to the export of buffaloes.

The Honourable the Resident says that everyone reports that they have so much padi that it is a question of time as to whether it can all be collected, let alone any efforts being diverted to engkabang. the price of which is not unreasonable.

CORRESPONDENCE.

[The Editor is not responsible for the opinions of correspondents.]

Kuching,

18th March, 1947. To

The Editor,

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Sir,

Will some of the influential users of Pengkallan Batu please draw the attention of the proper authorities to the very slippery condition of the steps on low-tide mornings ?

The writer did a funny "skating" there this morning and kept his balance only by the aid of his umbrella which he was lucky to have with him. Nevertheless the incident provided such merriment to the tambang-men as would be embarrassing to any lady or more respectable man than he.

Is it too much to require the ferry service crew (and possibly tambang-men who stop at the pengkallan for passengers) to dash some water on these steps to remove the responsible muddy element on the few low-tide mornings?

Yours, etc.,

I. Y.

[Those who are top-heavy, and possess no umbrella, cordially agree.?ED.]

From "Adversity": Internment Quarterly.

(The following article was published in "Adversity" on January 1st, 1944).

EINSTEIN.

He has never sought publicity, but the universal recognition accorded to him by others eminent in the scientific world awakened the general public to the fact that a star of the first magnitude was shining in their midst. They could not appreciate the startling originality of his mind nor the profound consequences of his new approach to the basic structure of the world of perception. But the unqualified tributes of all the lesser stars, combined with the striking experimental verification in 1919 of a phenomenon forecast by relativity theory though denied by the Newtonian laws of mass and gravitation, roused the interest and the admiration of men and women to whom mathematical

physics was as vague as the other side of the moon.

The publication in the first decade of this century of his first work, the Special, or Restricted, Theory of Relativity, aroused profound interest and convinced his learned colleagues. But it was shortly after the Great War of 1914-18 that he came into the full glare of the spotlight of publicity. Experiment had decided for Einstein and against Newton, and the modest professor, who for a quarter of a century had been striving to express his conceptions in the language of mathematics, suddenly found himself the idol of millions. President Wilson and the new League of Nations, Ivor Novello in another screen "sensation," Irving Berlin and the latest dance "hit" all paled under the brilliant light that the press focussed on this quiet and unassuming German Jew.

Thereafter, his new works, his movements, and his personal life have been pursued by news reporters unremittingly. The London "Times," with charming humility, published three and a half columns on the 1924 "Unified Field Theory" in language which few of its readers can have understood. Other papers for the most part contented themselves with photographs and vague references to theories which they could not even name correctly.

In 1932, a victim of anti-Jewish propaganda, Einstein left Germany. The press of all the world outside the country where he had lived and worked condemned with horror and disgust the persecution of a man whose fame rested on achievements far beyond the pettiness of inter-racial hatred. The universities and learned societies of many countries offered him sanctuaries in which to continue his work unharassed by political machinations.

He accepted a Fellowship at the University of Oxford and was given rooms in Christchurch College. His wife came to Oxford with him.

He had never commercialised his fame. He did not speak on the radio or accept offers from cinema news companies. He had written only one "popular" work on his famous theory, "The ABC of Relativity," but even this book, which was translated into English, demanded a knowledge of mathematics that made it incomprehensible to anyone unfamiliar with the principles of four-dimensional geometry and advanced calculus. It was not, therefore, a best seller which brought big royalties to the author. With his funds frozen in Germany, the University offered him a salary in

return for which he insisted on giving a series of lectures and tuition to pupils far beneath his calibre?for, after all, his pupils in one sense included the most distinguished physicists and mathematicians of the time.

In this way, three undergraduates, of whom I was one, were privileged to meet the greatest genius since Newton, and perhaps since Euclid, in the best possible way?as pupils of a master. Professor Einstein remained in Oxford for only a few months and in this period delivered four public lectures. Later he went to the United States of America where he was the honoured guest of Harvard University and where, so far as I know, he still is.

In 1932 he was a picturesque figure in the streets and quadrangles of Oxford. He usually wore a large black hat with a very broad brim, a black sombrero. His clothes were always what at the University was officially termed "sub-fuss." His long wavy hair, silver white, gave him the venerable appearance of an ancient patriarch. He was no poser nor did he resort to eccentricities in dress or conduct to obtain cheap notoriety. In fact, he shunned the limelight as he always had done. It is said that, while in Oxford, a tourist office stopped him on the footpath and politely inquired whether he was having the honour of addressing Professor Albert Einstein. Einstein replied: "No. I'm very sorry. Many people make that mistake." I doubt if the story is more than legendary, for Einstein's English was so deplorable that any stranger who spoke to him would know at once that he was not English. But the tale reflects his nature.

At his lectures he wore the usual gown of a University graduate. I remember the first lecture well. The room was crowded with undergraduates, graduates and fellows, not five per cent of whom were reading mathematics. Einstein made an attempt to speak in English, an attempt which added further obscurities to an already obscure subject. Fortunately, he was so completely incomprehensible to most that the remainder of his lectures were attended only by those who were seriously studying his subject.

On that first day he stepped right into his subject, with a few preliminaries apart from apologies for his poor English. Within ten minutes one large blackboard was a maze of mathematical symbols, very neatly and precisely written, but meaningless to nearly all his audience. His voice was very soft

and musical, almost, as it were, pleading with his audience to follow the logic of the symbols that he wrote on the board. He used no notes. He had a curious habit of opening his eyes wide like a wondering child when reaching the conclusion of a sequence of reasoning. When not looking at the board he addressed himself with occasional nervous smiles to the front row of his listeners or to a point on the ceiling at the back of the hall.

At the end of the lecture, a friend of mine who was reading "Greats," and who had attended only out of curiosity to see the celebrated figure, remarked laconically : "It's probably just as well we can't sit at the feet of Socrates. These people think too fast. But, thank God, you can read them at your own pace."

The remark had much truth in it. Later, I realised how much painstaking study and thorough application had preceded the finished product of genius. In the course of his reasoning he applied little-known results of mathematicians such as Riemann, Minkowski, Planck, Poincaré (the French politician, also a great mathematician) and others without realising that his retentive memory was taking him strides ahead of his breathless pupils. He used a remote theorem of Leibniz, Descartes or Galois with the same readiness and ease as we would use the theorem of Pythagoras. The result was?he thought too fast for us.

At his subsequent lectures he spoke in German and his voice was silkier than ever. It was his voice and his eyes that were remarkable, for his eyes had always that distant, faraway look that is associated with great mental concentration.

He is reputed to be an accomplished violinist. I have not heard him play, but I can well believe it. Mathematics and appreciation of music are often found together.

On a few occasions we visited him in his rooms at "The House." He was a delightful host?but almost embarrassing in his insistence on waiting on his immature pupils, seeing that teacups were full, vacating his own chair by the fireside and apologetically reminding us that we were speaking English too fast for him to understand. We might have retorted, equally apologetically, that the boot was on the other leg when he spoke mathematics. His wife was sometimes present but she quite frankly made no attempt whatever at English conversation.

His humility was, I think, the secret of his charm, for he was an utterly charming old man. I believe he was a supporter of the Zionist Movement, but certainly he did not use his eminence in the field of mathematical physics to lay down the law on matters on which he was not specially qualified to speak. I cannot imagine him laying down the law on anything, yet he has expounded new laws which are likely to be accepted for many generations and developed into hitherto unimaginable results before another genius of the same calibre is born and sheds more light on the nature of the physical world.

Such men are, to some extent, the crystallized spirit of their age. The last seventy-five years will surely vie with Greece at its zenith and with the Elizabethan age. In those times, too, the spirit of inquiry and discovery was abroad. New domains were opened to human achievement and it took the world in each case some centuries to digest the results. The period from 1875 onwards saw the change from the mechanical age, based on Newton, to an age of wave-motion. With Einstein as the lodestone, our sons and grandsons will have fascinating fields to explore and the universe will yield still more fruits for the satisfaction of man's needs and for the delight and inspiration of his soul.

JUBILEE RECREATION GROUND FUND.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT.

For the Year ending 31st December, 1946.

BALANCE SHEET.

As at 31st December, 1946.

JUBILEE RECREATION GROUND FUND.

I have examined the above Balance Sheet with the, books and vouchers of the Fund and am of the opinion that the same is properly drawn up so as to exhibit a true and correct view of the state of the Fund's affairs.

THOMAS TAI,

Honorary Auditor. Kuching, 10th March, 1947.

TAN CHENG PUN. Chairman.

E. M. MARJORIBANKS.

Honorary Secretary.

C. S. WERE, Honorary Treasurer.

The Sarawak Agricultural Development Board.

The first meeting of the Kuching Section of the newly formed Sarawak Agricultural Development Board was held in Kuching on March 4th.

The purpose of the board is to promote liaison between the Department of Agriculture, leaders of the local rural communities, and influential local business men interested in the processing and export of rural products. At present it is proposed to limit the operations of the board to quarterly meetings of Divisional Sections, though it is hoped that later it may be possible to arrange an annual meeting of delegates from all Divisions. Similar bodies have been formed in Sarawak in the past but it is hoped that the present board will differ from its predecessors in that it will be permanent and consequently achieve results of lasting value.

The Acting Director of Agriculture (Mr. R. W. R. Miller) was in the chair. The Hon'ble the Resident, First Division (Mr. L. K. Morse), and the Agricultural Officer First Division (Mr. K. E. H. Kay) attended as official members and Mr. A. D. Dant of Sime, Darby & Co., Ltd., was present as non-official European member nominated by the Kuching European business community. Mr. Tan Bak Lim, Mr. Ong Kee Hui and Mr. Ali bin Dollah, all of Kuching, Pengarah James of 15th mile, Kuching-Simunggang Road, and Hj. Halidak bin Hj. Pabilak of Sungei Plandok, Simunjan, also attended as non-official members by invitation. Mr. K. E. H. Kay acted as Secretary and Mr. Ong Kee Hui as interpreter.

The Chairman in his opening remarks welcomed the members, stressed the importance of agriculture in the future economy of the state and outlined the purpose of the board.

The business of the meeting was conducted in a most friendly and co-operative atmosphere. In accordance with the agenda discussions took place on the possibility of extending soap manufacture, refined coconut oil manufacture and rope manufacture in the state; on the possibilities of extending cocoa cultivation, and on present difficulties in the pepper and sago industries. The soil erosion problem was mentioned but a full discussion was postponed to a later

meeting. Most valuable information was put before the chairman and resolutions were passed calling for action by members on particular points.

An incident in the meeting stressed the need for the board. The chairman, in the discussion on rope manufacture, mentioned that he had recently introduced into Sarawak a limited number of plants of manila hemp, a crop which should do well in Sarawak; he stated that the fibre was a first class rope fibre and an excellent demand for it seemed assured for years to come. To the amusement of the meeting a member stated that many years ago, acting on the recommendation of the officer of Government responsible for agriculture (he could not remember what particular title was in use at that time), he planted a patch of manila hemp. The crop did extremely well but nobody ever showed him how to extract the fibre commercially and in fact no merchant showed the slightest interest in his product. The chairman outlined the procedure he proposed to adopt in future and mentioned the value of official co-operative societies in each matters.

The chairman in his closing remarks asked the members to give the widest publicity possible to the proceedings of the section and stated that he would supply typed copies of the provisional minutes of the meeting to assist them. He asked for suggestions for subjects to be discussed at future meetings, but stressed that, as there was a vast field to cover, it was essential for success to keep the meetings of the section brief and to limit the number of subjects discussed at each meeting.

News has recently been received that the Hon'ble the Resident. Fifth Division, has arranged for the first meeting of a Limbang Section in the near future. Formation of the Sibu Section is also in hand.

The Acting Director of Agriculture will welcome correspondence on matters affecting the work of the Sarawak Agricultural Development Board whether from officers of Government or from members of the public.?(Contributed.)

Kuching Market Price List.

Average monthly Market List (February 20th to March 20th, 1947).