

Sarawak Gazette

PRICE

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The Sarawak Gazette.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 1st, 1947.

Birth:

BEWSHER—On August 8th in Kuching, to Mary, wife of Roland A. Bewsher—a son (Gregory Ross).

Sickbed Sonnet.

Oh, my *Gazette!* September flies away
And thou, unshaped, unmoulded, scarce, hath life;
Struggle thou must amidst a sterner strife,
As hastens on my litigation day :
That was a dragon nobody could slay :
But treacherous Nature took a hand besides.
And Sundays, Holidays and Eventides
Vanish, unused, while Fever calls the play.
There lies fell Sickness pressing on my chest.
And there my law-suit lies in paper piles,
There thou, *Gazette*, unnurtured and unblest.
While in my office basket spawn the files.
Go, slink thou forth, with meek and modest tread.
And cry for mercy on thy silly head.

His Excellency and the "Black Swan."

On Saturday, August 16th a ceremonial parade was held on St. Thomas' School Ground in the presence of a large crowd for the presentation of insignia of honours by His Excellency the Governor.

On His Excellency's arrival at the Ground the Royal salute was given by guards of honour from H.M.S. *Black Swan*, which had arrived at Kuching the previous day, and the Sarawak Constabulary. After His Excellency had inspected the guards and detachments of Scouts and Guides, the presentation of insignia took place, each recipient coming forward with two supporters, and standing before His Excellency while the Royal Warrant was read by the Honourable the Chief Justice. The recipients were Mr. J. B. Archer, C.M.G., Abang Haji Mustapha, Datu Bandar, O.B.E., and Mr. Ong Tiang Swee, O.B.E.

His Excellency then handed to Mr. Khan Kam Chee the insignia of the Honorary M.B.E. awarded to his father, the late Mr. Khan Ah Chong, whose death had occurred the previous day. The ceremony concluded with the beating of retreat by the Constabulary Band, followed by a march past of detachments of Royal Navy, Constabulary, Scouts and Guides.

On Monday, August 18th, His Excellency, accompanied by the Chief Secretary and the Private Secretary, left for Sibu in H.M.S. *Black Swan*. En route a night was spent at Sarieki, where His Excellency received a warm welcome from large crowds, and attended a tea party at the Chinese Chamber of Commerce.

H.M.S. *Black Swan* responded to a large banner reading "Welcome to Royal Navy to the Third Division," with a firework display. The District Officer, Mr. I. A. MacDonald, entertained His Excellency and party and the officers of the *Black Swan*, whilst the ship's company were guests of the Chinese Chamber of Commerce.

All the way up river from Sarieki to Sibu the *Black Swan* was greeted with cheers from kampongs and Dayak houses, to which she replied with blasts on the siren. On arrival at Sibu a salute of 17 guns was fired by saluting cannon ashore, to which the *Black Swan* replied. She then anchored off the Kubu Wharf and dressed ship.

His Excellency was welcomed ashore by very large crowds. Arches of welcome had been erected and all vessels had dressed ship. In the evening His Excellency paid Hari Raya calls and was later

entertained to dinner by the Chinese Chamber of Commerce. H.M.S. *Black Swan* gave a magnificent display of fireworks, which was watched by large and appreciative crowds.

On Thursday morning a ceremonial presentation of insignia was held in the Old Residency grounds, where stands had been erected, guards of honour again being provided by H.M.S. *Black Swan* and the Constabulary. In a short speech, which was repeated in Dayak for the benefit of the many Dayaks present, His Excellency pointed out that, although only those whose gallantry and leadership were conspicuous in helping to drive out the Japanese could be rewarded, nevertheless the awards formed a recognition of the good work done by all. After the Royal Warrant had been impressively read by the Chief Secretary, Mr. R. G. Aikman, His Excellency presented Temonggong Koh with the insignia of the M.B.E., followed by B.E. Medals to Penghulu Oyong Puso, Penghulu Belaja, Penghulu Bilong, Penghulu Sandai, Lan-iyeng Punan Tepileng, Saleng anak Oyong Abun, Lassah anak Abun, Tuai Rmnah Saba, and to Mr. Dominic Sidek, who won his B.E.M. at Kuala Baram.

After taking the salute at a march past, His Excellency was photographed with the recipients and then drove through the bazaar in an open car, accompanied by the Resident and Temonggong Koh, receiving a most enthusiastic reception. The recipients were then invited to the Island Club, where their healths were drunk.

The next day His Excellency, accompanied by the Resident, District Officer, Kapit and Kanowit, Mr. Drake, Dr. E. R. Leach, Mr. Paul Arden Clarke, on leave from H.M.S. *Black Swan*, and the Private Secretary, left for Temonggong Koh's house in the Ulu Baleh, spending nights en route at Kapit and Rumah Ribai.

Captain Durnford-Slater of the *Black Swan* and two of his officers visited the Pelagus rapids and spent a night in a long house, prior to sailing on Monday, August 25th. During the stay at Sibu more than three thousand visitors were shown over H.M.S. *Black Swan*. Numerous social engagements were arranged for the officers and ship's company. The Constabulary Band, apart from its excellent performance of ceremonial duties, played indefatigably on many social occasions.

His Excellency and party reached Temonggong Koh's house shortly before noon on Sunday, August 24th. As His Excellency approached salutes were fired both on shore and by Penghulus travelling in the *perahu*s. On landing His Excellency threw away to the spirits a plate of food and a glass of *tuak*, then mounted the long ladder to the house, shaking hands with men dressed in their finery all the way up. At the top 6 women were waiting wearing large and elaborate head-dresses of coloured beads and completely clothed in similar beads. After them the remaining beauties of the house were lined up. His Excellency and the Resident then performed a ceremonial "bedarah" outside Temonggong Koh's *bilek*, followed by *pantuns* and *tuak*.

As the main ceremonies were not due to start till next day, the party had a rest during the afternoon, but in the evening, by request, His Excellency gave a short talk, many visiting Penghulus being present, following which the party split up and a "bedarah" was performed at each of the 32 *bileks* of the house, the proceedings becoming more and more convivial as the night wore on.

The main ceremonies of the visit consisted of the celebration of the rarely performed festival of Ijok Pumpong, held in honour of His Excellency's visit and celebrating the award of the M.B.E. to Temonggong Koh. It is not possible here to give a full account of the ceremonies of the next 24 hours, but fortunately Dr. E. R. Leach was present to record them in detail.

His Excellency was allocated the chief part in the ceremonies, such as performing "bedarabs," constructing the "ranyai" for the spirits, etc., in the course of some of his duties being arrayed in Dayak war kit. The Resident also had a prominent part to play, which included spearing a pig at dawn the following morning, whilst all members of the party were called upon to participate in various roles.

After an almost sleepless night for members of His Excellency's staff and the consumption of a reasonable amount of *tuak* (a not uncongenial duty as the brew was good), the ceremonies concluded with the destruction of the "ranyai" cylinder by His Excellency.

The party then left for Kapit, en route to Sibu, thus concluding a most enjoyable and memorable visit. Apart from his magnificent hospitality, Temonggong Koh is to be congratulated on the excellence of his arrangements. Every member of the party and visiting Penghulus were given a part in the celebrations and everything worked to time; no mean feat under the circumstances.

After spending a day in Sibu, His Excellency returned to Kuching by M.L. *Karina*. It can be predicted that the ceremonies connected with the visit of His Excellency and H.M.S. *Black Swan* will not soon be forgotten at Sibu and in the Ulu Balahe.—(Contributed.)

HIS EXCELLENCY AT LUNDU.

His Excellency the Governor, accompanied by the Resident, First Division, the Private Secretary and Datu Tuanku Tabu arrived at Lundu by launch from Kuching on the afternoon of Monday, 15th September. A large crowd was waiting to greet His Excellency, to whom the Native Officer-in-Charge, Abang Suahaimi, introduced representatives of the Malay, Land Dayak and Chinese communities and members of the Government Staff.

The route to the Kubu was lined with children of the Malay, Chinese and S.P.G. Mission schools and the attractive and well kept station was tastefully decorated with flags and arches of welcome. After tea His Excellency attended a sports meeting held on the *padang* in which children of both sexes and all ages of the Malay and Chinese schools participated with gusto. An event that provided much amusement was an "eating the bun" race. The buns, which were strung on strings, were of solid composition and considerably larger than the mouths of the enthusiastic competitors.

After His Excellency had presented the prizes at the conclusion of the sports, an impromptu "ngajat" was organised by certain Ibans who reside in Lundu as the result of past misdeeds. The night's entertainment took the form of a visit to the house of Orang Kaya Jumat where His Excellency was most hospitably received, all Dayak Tua Kampong being present and the remaining space being crammed with ladies. The Orang Kaya's eldest daughter acted as hostess and dispensed refreshments.

His Excellency returned to the Kubu to watch a *bangsawan* performed by the Malay community to a large and appreciative audience. At the conclusion of this, and after His Excellency had retired, dancing organised by the Orang Kaya continued far into the night. On Tuesday morning His Excellency sat in court, and after a comprehensive talk to all the Tua-Tua Kampung, to which all listened with the greatest interest and attention, heard requests.

His Excellency next proceeded to inspect the Chung Hua School, being given en route an enthusiastic reception with many fire crackers in the bazaar, followed by a visit to the Malay school, which is by force of circumstances temporarily housed in part of the kitchen quarters of the Kubu. Despite this *dapor* coming into use, the school still functioned. A visit was then paid to the S.P.G. Mission and School at Setunggang, where the Christian community had assembled to welcome His Excellency.

On return to Lundu, and after an excellent curry provided by Native Officer Abang Suhai mi, there was a welcome pause until 4 p.m., when His Excellency watched a football match between a Government team versus The Rest, and then was entertained to a tea party by the Chinese community at the Chung Hua School. After dark a large audience assembled for a second instalment of the *bangsawan*, again followed by dancing.

It was with regret that His Excellency and party left Lundu to return to Kuching at dawn on Wednesday, after a most enjoyable visit.—(Contributed.)

Notes and Comments.

The Sarawak Gazette congratulates the following recipients of the King's Medal for Courage in the Cause of Freedom :—

THOMAS NYANDAU of Kanowit District.

TEO AH CHONG of Belaga.

LASSAH of Belaga.

HELBOURNE SIMIGAAT, Wireless Operator, formerly at Belaga.

AWANG PIUT, Up-river Agent.

MOHAMED ZEN GALAU of Baram.

MASIR, Sea Dayak of Rumah BUDA, Labang, Bintulu.

BUJANG bin MAMAT, Guide of Bintulu.

AGONG SINGA, Murut of Pa Briong, Lower Trusan River.

BAGAL bin LUPONG, Malay Murut of Long Pukan.

TARIP BINTU, Murut of Glasi, near Trusan.

LEE KONG of Lawas.

ANTHONY WONG of Luwas.

AGAL SEBAL, Murut of Lawas.

DAWAT SIGAR, Murut, Long Loping, Middle Trusan River.

AGONG LEBUT, Murut, Pa Brayong, Middle Trusan.

LIWAN ARAN of Pa Mein. Kelabit Plateau.

PENGHULU BAKU AGONG, Chief of the Lower Trusan Mounts, Pa Brayong, above Patengoa.

PUGUG BOYA, Murut, Lawas.

Drow Str GONG of Merapok near Lawas.

SARAW KERL'S, Murut, son of PENGHULU KERUL, Lawas.

Muli, Police Constable of Lawas.

PETER LEONG of Miri.

PENGHULU JUGAH, Native Chief, Merirai, Kapit.

PENGHULU SIBAT, Native Chief, Melinau, Kapit.

TAUH TUVA ADANG, Kayan of Tubau, Bintulu.

ANDREW BLASSAN, Iban Dayak, Customs Clerk, Lawas.

ARAN TUAN, Headman of Pa Trap, Northern Kelabit Plateau.

PENGHULU TAMA RANI, Chief of the Madalam River.

TABIRAN RIBU, Chief of Southern Kelabit.

TANGANG ARANG, Pa Mein, PENGHULU, Chief of the Northern Kelabit Plateau.

JOHN C. LIU of Sibu.

MOHAMED LIMBANG, Wireless Operator at Baram Point.

DR. MURUGASU SOCKALTNGAM of Kuching Hospital.

The Sarawak Gazette congratulates the following recipients of the King's Commendation for Brave Conduct :—

BADAL, Sea Dayak of Rumah JEPAI, Labung, Bintulu.

BUNDAL, Sea Dayak of Rumah JEPAI, Labang, Bintulu.

JENGGENG, (deceased), Sea Dayak of Rumah JEPAI, Labang, Bintulu.

ANCHI, (deceased), Sea Dayak of Rumah BUDIT, Labang, Bintulu.

AJIS bin TAKIP, of Marudi.

ALI bin SEMAN, of Marudi.

AMIT bin TATU, of Marudi.

Tua Kampong MOHAMED of Kampong Telahak.

Tua Kampong LATH* of Kampong Lubok Pisang.

PUSA bin JUMIT of Kampong Telahak.

NYAN anak MUMIN of Kampong Pundut.

Tua Kampong AMPAR of Kampong Batu Riyan.

Tua Kampong GRINA of Pandaruan, Limbang District.

WILLIAM CHUA TAMBY of Oya.

HUDAN RANGGAT, late of Pa Brayong.

PHANG CHUNG, Farmer, Semera.

Lo Hoi Hu, (Wife of TEO TOW KIA, Fisherman) of Padungan, Kuching.

The Sarawak Gazette congratulates Mr. Leonard Song Thian Eng, Junior Health Inspector, who has been awarded a scholarship by the Trustees of the Nuffield Foundation in order to enable him to attend the medical course, leading to the L.M.S., at King Edward VII College of Medicine, Singapore.

The Postmaster-General informs us that there are a considerable number of Savings Bank accounts, the owners of which have not submitted their books for "writing-up" since 1941. Apparently the names of the depositors cannot be published as most of the accounts have not remained undisturbed for the period of ten years which is necessary before they can be classified as "dormant". Pre-war depositors are urged to send their books in if this has not already been done.

The meeting of the Sarawak Association in London, which was advertised in our last issue, has been postponed till October 15th. We are very pleased to be able to publish the following extract from the latest circular on the subject :

"Of the replies received in answer to the Committee's circular dated 7th May, 1947, a majority are in favour of the Committee's proposal that the present Association should be liquidated and a new one formed, but there is a large consensus of

opinion, especially from those in Sarawak, that anyone connected with Sarawak by official, residence or business relations, should be eligible for membership and that membership should not be limited to those connected with Sarawak before the Cession. The Committee, therefore, have revised their previous proposal and leave the question of eligibility for membership for discussion at the General Meeting."

"News from Far and Near," as originally compiled for this issue, contained four editorial references pointing out the close connection between certain paragraphs and the recent series of articles on "Land and Custom." These were deleted as being tiresome and repetitious, but passage after passage in the monthly reports reveals the extreme confusion that persists with regard to the nature of the rights possessed by groups and individuals over untitled land, and enforces the argument that a thorough investigation would be by no means premature although in present circumstances it may be impracticable.

The Trusted Salaries Commission completed its work in Sarawak early in the month. Small blame could be attached to any member of such a body who emerged from its deliberations an inveterate cynic. The only voice which is inevitably silent is that of John Public. We therefore regard as complimentary the much-repeated remark of a certain Head of Department, who, having tendered his evidence, was besieged with inquiries as to his experiences. "Just like the *Kempetai*, except they don't clock you."

On September 22nd intimation was received that Mr. Anthony Brooke had withdrawn his libel action against the Sarawak Press Company and Mr. K. H. Digby, which had been set down for hearing in the Resident's Court, Kuching, on September 24th. We should like to take this opportunity of shying that we are sure that nothing that has been written of Mr. Brooke, either in the *Sarawak Gazette* or the *Sarawak Tribune*, was ever intended to reflect on his private character.

The following quotations are illuminating.

Mr. Mohammed Noor bin Haji Hassan, a prominent member of the Committee of the Malay National Union of Sarawak," as reported in an alleged interview published in the Malayan *Indian Daily Mail* of September 15th. (A similar report was published in the *Straits Times* of September 17th). "To-day, believe me, whatever other people might say, 99.9 per cent of our people—in fact, the entire population of Sarawak, are opposed to the Cession, and ardently hope for the revocation of the Cession and the restoration of the status quo."

Our readers can take their choice without paying their money. In the same interview (this did not appear in the *Straits Times*), referring to the ban on Mr. Anthony Brooke from entering Sarawak. Mr. Mohammed Noor is alleged to have said : "He is as much a Malay as any of us, and we want him back to rule over us." Of course he was bearing in mind that on May 16th Mr. Anthony Brooke had written in the *Singapore Free Press* : "The Colonial Office are on surer ground when

Mr. Anthony Brooke in an article in the *Straits Times* of September 12th.

"I venture to make the grave assertion that the broad mass of the people in Sarawak do not understand the implications of their fundamentally changed status, and that some parts of the country are being administered with intent to leave the indigenous people with the impression that their position is virtually unchanged."

they say that the other races in Sarawak, particularly the Sea-Dayaks, by far outnumber the Malays..... Incidentally, if Mr. Mohammed Noor did in fact give this interview, he is to be congratulated on the remarkable and rapid improvement in his English, since he recently unsuccessfully appealed in the Resident's Court, Kuching, against a conviction for distributing a leaflet not hearing a printer's name. It must be something in the Singapore air. Some Sarawak Malays, who, in Sarawak, speak Malay well, Dayak haltingly, and English not at all (for there is no reason why they should), seem to become extraordinarily proficient in the last tongue once they have crossed the waters. This is clear because, if the "interviews" are given in Malay and then translated, no doubt the newspaper would say so, and, if the "interviews" are merely written statements handed in, no doubt the newspaper would say so too.

The *Sarawak Gazette* warmly congratulates its Acting Printer, Mr. C. E. Sandbach, on his engagement to Miss Grant of the General Hospital.

The verse, which is printed in the place of the "leader" in this number, was composed in a moment of pessimism in the middle of the month. As always we are immensely grateful to our contributors for helping us out of a sticky corner.

Java in Ferment.

The following contribution has been sent to us by a District Officer as compiled by Ahmad Zaidi, who has recently returned to Sarawak. We publish it as an interesting account of his personal experiences. Needless to say the *Sarawak Gazette* is not concerned with the rival merits or demerits of the Dutch and the Indonesians.

Dates of incidents or events occurring in one's life are easily forgotten, but not the incidents, which may be culled back to memory with some effort when necessary. This fact is equally true in my case. I will however endeavour to narrate only those which I was destined to see. Suspense, excitement, hope, fear, anger and discomforts incited by those train of incidents during the beginning of the Indonesian revolution left a permanent mark in my memory.

Oh, how terrible is man's anger! I saw and heard people being looted, robbed and killed. That was how the Indonesian revolution commenced. Shortly after the declaration of the Japanese surrender to the Allies Dr. Sukarno proclaimed the independence of Indonesia. That was on the 17th August, 1945. A story had been told to me by a friend, that a few hours previous to the startling proclamation, Dr. Sokarno, Dr. Mohd. Hatta and some others were being kidnapped by the "Pemuda" (youth) known as A.P.I. (Angkatan Pemuda Indonesia) and they vehemently urged their leaders to proclaim independence. In answer to Dr. Sokarno's question as to who were going to maintain the independence should it come to bloodshed, the "Pemuda" said, "We will take care of it, that's our duty." Following Dr. Amir Sharifudin's (the present premier of Indonesia) release from the Malang prison, (he was sentenced to life imprisonment by the Japanese) the "Pemuda" with

swords, knives, spears, sharpened bamboo sticks known as "Bambu runcing" and every other possible weapon they could get hold of, attacked the Japanese and forced them to surrender with their weapons. Some surrendered, but some held ground and faced the mob. Bloodshed inevitably occurred. The Indonesians attacked with anger. Never had I seen such a chaos before and sensed such a feeling of insecurity. "Merdeka! merdeka! merdeka!". they shouted, a word for independence. Indonesian republic was thus born.

I remember distinctly, during my sojourn at Bogor (Buitenzorg), almost every night I heard the piercing call of "Siap" which meant—"Be ready." Such call was made when some danger was apprehended. I could see, then, movements behind trees, behind barricades, in drains or men lying face downwards on the roadsides and knives or swords glittering in their hands. They were waiting silently, ready to attack whenever a word of command was given. The people seemed to be excited. A minor provocation would have caused great disturbance. Sometimes they killed innocent people, merely because they were suspected of being the agents of the Dutch.

Bands of robbers also became unusually active, the most notorious band was the "Chibarusa." They plundered, burned houses, tortured their captives and worst of all they sometimes killed them. The Indonesian Government was in its infancy and could hardly exercise control over the people in chaos.

Sabotage was another maleficence. Once, when I was in bed in the College lodging, I was startled by the sound of running feet and somebody shouted, "House on fire." I then rushed to the direction of the burning house to help the police and the Indonesian regulars, known as B.K.R. (Badan Keamanan Rakyat), to extinguish the fire. We managed to save the whole area from being burnt to the ground.

Such was the beginning of the Indonesian revolution. Plunder, sabotage and bloodshed. A detailed description would make a tedious reading. Now I will begin with the second phase of the Indonesian revolution and the coming of British troops to Java.

News of the coming of the British Expeditionary Force circulated with unexpected speed throughout the country. Views, comments and hopes of the people were broadcasted daily. I was naturally glad at heart to hear the coming of the people whose language and ways were known to me. I felt certain that the victor's coming was to restore peace and order. The waiting was full of suspense and excitement. Some people were wrongly informed that the coming troops were not British but Dutch. That sort of provocation made the people over-excited and for nights and days they were ready with their weapons. At last they came. They first landed at Batavia. The troops were under the command of General Christison or Christianson (I am sorry I do not quite remember the name). Then RAPWI (Rehabilitation of Allied Prisoners of War and Internees), Red Cross and demobilisation works began.

Sometime in October of the same year (1945), Indian troops known as Gurkha Regiment came to Bogor. The officer in command was Lieutenant-Colonel Greenway. He was a man of middle-age and stout physique. They encamped at Purbat

area opposite to Kedong Alang, where our Veterinary College is situated. A joint effort to restore peace and order was started by Indonesians and the British. The Bogor police was by that time weak but with the arrival of the Indian troops much improvement in restoring peace and order was achieved. The Indonesians undoubtedly owe a great deal to the British troops at Bogor for the progress made.

The Gurkhas met with some opposition at first, because some people wrongly took them for Ambonese (Ambonese formed the bulk of Dutch troops) soldiers. I remember an incident at a place called Depok, a few miles to the east of Bogor (on the road between Batavia and Bogor). The suspicious Indonesians attacked the Gurkhas, while they were on patrol duty. Then the Indonesian B.K.R. together with some Indian soldiers came to the spot and settled the matter. The people thought that they were attacking Ambonese soldiers. Gurkhas resemble Ambonese physically. Hence the unfortunate happening.

Landings were also made at Surabaya in East Java and Semarang in Mid-Java. At Surabaya the British troops met with resistance. Brigadier-General Mallaby was killed in his car. Then there was a fight. I cannot describe this in detail as I was not there. I only saw troops and troops of Indonesian irregulars march east to Surabaya to reinforce the "Pemuda" there. Through the radio I used to hear Bung Tomo shouting orders and encouragement. Bung Tomo is the head of the Indonesian revolutionary irregulars known as "Barisan Pemberontakan Rakyat Indonesia." He is a young man of 27 and of slight build. I understand that he is much liked by his followers. When they could not hold the town any longer they burnt it. Surabaya was in flames. This event occurred in November, 1945. The Indonesians finally left Surabaya and retreated to Mojokerto. Thus Surabaya came under British troops. The occupation of Bandung in West Java also met with some difficulties.

Sometime in the middle of the year 1946 demobilisation of Japanese soldiers was carried out by the Indonesians smoothly. Japanese soldiers offered no resistance. Indonesian regulars known as T.K.R. (Tentara Keamanan Rakyat) offered great assistance to the British in this direction. I saw thousands and thousands of Japanese soldiers being carried in trains to Batavia under the charge of the T.K.R., from there to be embarked for Japan.

When British troops left Java, disputes between the Dutch and the Indonesians became critical. Here Lord Killearn, the British diplomat and representative, successfully made them agree to discuss Linggarjati or Cheribon Treaty. The historical session of the Indonesian National Committee was held at Malang (East Java) in the "Hotel Republik" to decide whether or not to adopt the treaty. As a result the Linggarjati Treaty was signed by the Indonesian delegates, led by Sutan Shahirir, and the Dutch Commission General, headed by Professor Schermerhorn. The interpretation of the articles in the treaty later became the subject of disputes, which resulted in this present war in Java.

Before I conclude this narration, I would like to give some descriptions of the things I saw in the republican area. I had been to Jogjakarta, the seat of the Indonesian Republican Government.

The Indonesian Government consists of a national committee and a cabinet. The Cabinet comprises all the ministers. The Cabinet carries out the executive duties of the Government. The present head of the Cabinet is Dr. Sharifudin, the prime minister (a Catholic by religion). The religion causes no friction in Java. The National Committee is the counterpart of the British Parliament. The representatives of the people are members of the National Committee.

Political parties in Indonesia are many, but the prominent ones are—Indonesian National Party, Socialist Party, Communist Party, Labour Party known as "Sobsi" and Masjoeemi (Muslim political Party). The present Premier is the leader of the Socialist Party. The Cabinet has members of other parties as well. In fact the present is the Coalition Government.

The Indonesian regulars are now known as "T.N.I." (Tentara Nasional Indonesia), meaning Indonesian National Army. The Commander-in-Chief is General Sudinanan. There is the Indonesian marine corps known as "Tentara Laut Republik Indonesia." They have some planes, for I saw several of them fly over Jogjakarta.

Inflation of currency was inevitable. This was due to scarcity of imported consumer goods. Clothes were very expensive. An ordinary cotton shirt cost from eighty to a hundred guilders. This was the price as I knew in the month of May, 1947. Foodstuff's were plenty. Hospitals were full to capacity but medicines were scarce.

Could the Indonesians maintain peace and order? This I do not know, but I believe with the assistance of U.N.O. peace could be restored. Java, the known garden of the East, has been for a period of two years or more the seat of political intrigues, discomforts and worst of all bloodshed. May Java regain her old glory is the cherished aim of all Indonesians.

A Correction.

In the November issue of the *Sarawak Gazette* we published an account of the installation ceremony of His Excellency the Governor. We obtained copies of the addresses which were read in Malay and Chinese and other papers which we understood to be translations of those addresses. Our surmise was correct with regard to the paper in Malay, but it has now come to light that the paragraphs in English appearing under the name of Mr. Lim Chong Chiew, and immediately preceding the Chinese script, were in fact not a translation of the latter at all, but were intended to be a separate address in English from the Chinese community and to be read by Mr. C. P. Law, who however did not find a suitable opportunity. In view of this serious error, which we much regret, but for which we do not accept responsibility, we now print below the correct English translation of the address read in Chinese by Mr. Lim Chong Chiew.

"On the 29th day of October, 1946, the first Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Sarawak arrived at Kuching to take up his new post. We

with the most sincere devotion, on behalf of the Overseas Chinese of Sarawak, beg to convey to His Excellency the following address :

We are confident that Your Excellency, who is capable and enterprising, will introduce the principles of good order to the people. With honour and merit (of past services) Your Excellency came from a distant land to institute a new Kuching. To-day all the various races throughout the whole country of Sarawak are gathered together and look to Your Excellency for guidance. Uniform equality is the cry of the people with one heart, abolish race distinction, destroy invidious distinction and create harmonious relations, cultivate and nourish men of talent, give relief and extend charity, apply benevolent administration to prosper the people, expand communications, increase production, assist the people extensively and generously, open the door of commerce, unlock the gate of freedom and prosperity to the people, pave the way to peace and happiness for the country of Sarawak, let co-operation between British and Chinese enlarge the spirit of the two mighty races, give mutual assistance, manifest the phenomenon of the spirit of harmony. We beg to offer Your Excellency our congratulations, sincere devotion, and staunch loyalty and support. We are hoping anxiously for the day when we will hear the good tidings of peace and prosperity. In conclusion, we wish the Government health and prosperity, that our expectation may be fulfilled. May luck and fortune be with all the governmental departments, that the prayer of the people may be answered.

Representatives of Kuching Overseas Chinese.

TAN BAK LIM	LAI CHING PUN
LIM KONG NGAN	LIM CHONG CHIEW."
LEE YUN THONG	

Officers' Wives.

The following poem was published in the *Sarawak Gazette* of April 1st, 1925, over the initials of Mr. G. Beresford Stooke, now the Governor-Designate of Sierra Leone. That number was the last published under Mr. Stooke's editorship as he left Sarawak in the same month, not to return again. The poem made a great impression twenty-two and a half years ago and perhaps its savour is not wholly lost to-day.

THE OFFICERS' WIVES.

(WITH APOLOGIES TO THE ROYAL NAVY.)

Now first there came the Resident's wife
And she was dressed like a vision,
And in one corner of her hat
She carried the whole Division,
She carried the whole Division, my lads,
The Dayaks and the Chinks,
And in the other corner
Were the Resident's gold cuff links.

And she was dressed in the fashion,
With hair right down to her neck,
And she was one of the fair ones
'Mid a ranting, rollicking crew.

And then there came the D.O.'s wife
And she was dressed in slate,
And in one corner of her hat
She carried the Magistrate,
She carried the Magistrate, my lads,
The Policemen and the Gaol,
And in the other corner
She carried the monthly mail.

And she was dressed, etc.

And then there came the Cadet's wife
And she was dressed in grey
And in one corner of her hat
She carried a hook on Malay,
She carried a book on Malay, my lads,
Not to mention the P.W.D.,
And in the other corner
Was his early morning tea.

And she was dressed, etc.

And then there came the Treasurer's wife
And she was dressed in pink,
And in one corner of her hat
She carried the office ink,
She carried the office ink, my lads,
The penknife and the nibs,
And in the other corner
Were the Officers' monthly dibs.

And she was dressed, etc.

And then there came the Commissioner's wife
Dressed in the latest mode,
And in one corner of her hat
She carried the tenth-mile road,
She carried the tenth-mile road, my lads,
And the Tamil coolies' pay,
And in the other corner
Was the end of a perfect day.

And she was dressed, etc.

And then there came the Commandant's wife
And she was dressed in puce,
And in one corner of her hat
Was a Ranger on the loose,
A Ranger on the loose, my lads,
And a prisoner on the run,
And in the other corner
Was the early morning gun.

And she was dressed, etc.

And then there came the P.M.O.'s wife
And she was dressed in red,
And in one corner of her hat
She carried a hospital bed,
She carried a hospital bed, my lads,
Some bandages and lint,
And in the other corner
Was a bottle of soda-mint.

And she was dressed, etc.

And then there came the Conservator's wife
And she was dressed in green,
And in one corner of her hat
She carried a botanical bean,
She carried a theodolite, my lads,
And some seedlings in a box,
And in the other corner
Were the Conservator's worn-out socks.

And she was dressed, etc.

And then there came the Survey wife
And she was dressed in white,
And in one corner of her hat
She carried a theodolite,
She carried a theodolite, my lads,
A compass and a chain,
And in the other corner
Was a plan of Ban Hock Lane.

And she was dressed, etc.

And then there came the Wireless wife
And she was dressed in sparks,
And in one corner of her hat
She carried some pert remarks,
She carried some pert remarks, my lads,
And an aerial as well,
And in the other corner
Was a large size telephone bell.

And she was dressed, etc.

And then there came the B.C.L. wife
And she was dressed in silk,
And in one corner of her hat
Was a case of condensed milk,
A case of condensed milk, my lads,
And a rubber estate as well,
And in the other corner
Was the *Patricia* going like—(Nothing on earth
to Busau).

And she was dressed, etc.

And then there came the Banker's wife
And she was dressed in gold,
And in one corner of her hat
She carried wealth untold,
She carried wealth untold, my lads,
And an overdraft or two.,
And in the other corner
Was a counterfeit I.O.U.

And she was dressed, etc.

And then there came the Registrar's wife
And she was dressed in seals,
And in one corner of her hat
She carried her husband's meals,
She carried her husband's meals, my lads,
His office and his clerks,
And in the other corner
Were some deeds and a few trade marks.

And she was dressed, etc.

And then there came the Customs wife
And she was dressed in pink,
And in one corner of her hat
Was the *Adeh* about to sink,
The *Adeh* about to sink, my lads,
And some pepper in a bin,
And in the other corner
Was the Commissioner's morning gin.

And she was dressed, etc.

And then there came the Policeman's wife
And she was dressed in lace,
And in one corner of her hat
She carried a criminal's face,
She carried a criminal's face, my lads,
His thumb prints and his tools,
And in the other corner
Was a heap of stolen jewels.

And she was dressed, etc.

Anti then there came the Postman's wife
And she was dressed in a veil,
And in one corner of her hat
She carried the Singapore mail.
She carried the Singapore mail, my lads,
Not forgetting the C.O.D.,
And in the other corner
Was the window delivery fee.
And she was dressed, etc.

And then there came the Storekeeper's wife
And site was dressed in tan,
And in one corner of her hat
She carried a frying pan,
She carried a frying pan, my lads,
A wardrobe and a chair.
And in the other corner
Was a set of toilet ware.

And she was dressed, etc.

And then there came the Municipal wife
And she was dressed oh so smart,
And in one corner of her hat
She carried the dog catcher's cart,
She carried the dog catcher's cart, my lads.
And a broken down rickshaw.
And in the other corner
Was the draft of a new By-law.

And she was dressed, etc.

G.B.S.

Sarawak Agricultural Development Board.

The second meeting of the Kuching Section of the Board was held in the Department of Agriculture office at 2 p.m. on August 29th.

The Acting Director of Agriculture (Mr. R. W. R. Miller) was in the chair and there were also present the Honourable the Resident, First Division (Mr. L. K. Morse), the Agricultural Officer First Division (Mr. K. E. H. Kay) who acted as Secretary, the Agricultural Assistant First Division (Mr. Ong Kee Chong) who acted as interpreter, Mr. T. C. Martine (Borneo Co. Ltd.), Mr. A. D. Dani (Sime Darby & Co. Ltd.), Mr. Ong Kee Hui (Kuching). Mr. Tan Bak Lim (Kuching), Pengarah James (15th mile Serian Road), Mr. Ali bin Dollah (Kuching). Mr. Bong Ah Choon (Serian). Haji Halidak bin Haji Pabilak of Sungai Pelandok was unfortunately unable to be present due to transport difficulties.

The minutes of the last meeting were taken as read and were accepted by the meeting. The chairman then informed the meeting of the progress that had been made in the formation of sections of the board in other Divisions and stated that it was hoped to hold a conference with delegates from all Divisions later in the year.

The meeting was then informed that it was proposed that the Board issue a series of technical leaflets dealing with matters of direct and indirect interest to those concerned with agricultural development in Sarawak. Copies of the first three leaflets which had been prepared with the assistance of members of the section, were then distributed to members. The leaflets dealt with small scale soap

manufacture, small seale vegetable oil relining and the cultivation of cocoa. The meeting approved of the proposal and asked that the leaflets be translated into Malay, Dayak and Chinese. Further titles were suggested by members.

Various matters arising from the last meeting were then discussed and the section were informed as to the success being obtained in small scale experimental cultivation of cocoa and manila hemp and in the experimental reclamation of old pepper. They were also informed that a small quantity of pepper shoots had recently been obtained for the Tarat Agricultural Station from Dutch Borneo. Progress with regard to a proposed grading inspection scheme for sago flour and with regard to the encouragement of cotton cultivation were reported.

Discussion then followed on possible methods of increasing production of padi, soya beans and groundnuts in the First Division and on possible methods for controlling soil erosion. Many valuable and constructive suggestions were made by members of the section.

Several miscellaneous queries relating to the cultivation of patchouli, citronella and pineapples were then dealt with—the prospects for the increased cultivation of these crops in Sarawak appeared to be promising as a result of these discussions.

A member stated that the Sarawak agricultural industry is at present finding it difficult to cope with the present export duty on rubber and that high handling charges in Singapore are making it difficult for the Sarawak rubber producer to compete with the Malayan producer. The chairman stated that he would put the members' views before the authority concerned.

The meeting was declared closed at 4 p.m.
(Contributed.)

The Two Way Job Of Our Museum.

BY

TOM HARRISON.

(Curator, Sarawak Museum and Government, Ethnologist.)

I have already described the two sides of our Kuching Museum collections—the display exhibition and the scientific "reference collection." The display in the public galleries should give sufficient information for most everyday purposes. But, if anyone cannot find what he or she wants there, the reference collection "behind the scenes" is freely available to help.

For instance recently the Kuching Girl Guides wanted to devise a Nature Badge test on wild birds. Only some of the more than 600 sorts of Borneo bird can be displayed, but from the reference collection we made up a box with examples of each sort commonly seen around Kuching, and information on habits, songs, nests and eggs. Incidentally, in checking up on which birds to select, we learned a lot ourselves—identifying the 25 species commonest in and around the town; an idea for a special display case of Kuching Natural History?

Thus it should always be with a living Museum : one thing leads to another, and there is always something fresh to teach and to learn. We exist to help everyone—and not only inside the country. This is the only Museum in Borneo, anyway. But requests come to us from all over the world; a planter in Papua asking about flowers; a linguist in London wanting local vocabularies; an archaeologist about stone-age finds and an ethnologist seeking data on Aeolian Instruments; enquiries about specimens from the British Museum, the Raffles, the Peabody Museum (U.S.A.) and the University of Western Australia; communications from other museums and institutions, including Russian and Polish. Inside Sarawak during a typical recent period we answered queries about guano in bird caves; the maias (orang-utan) population; the long-term effects of tuba fishing; animals suitable for designs on stamps; how long it takes a termite to travel a foot; padi rats; flying and spitting snakes; construction pattern of a Murut long-house; difference between a Penan and a Punan (Answer: Nil?); does a crocodile have a tongue (Answer: Yes, always, or it couldn't be); how many eggs a turtle lays (average, Sarawak, about 109); the Latin name of the common "munsang" (*Paradoxurus hermaproditus*); the identification of a stone for a Chinese trader (antimony); and how to feed a wah-wah in six easy lessons! All part of the Museum's job—and a pleasure.

From a wide variety of outside and inside queries and ideas, a museum lives. It must be a two-way, in and out breathing affair—not just a dump of dead corpses, dusty china and sleepy attendants. That is why this Museum is in a special way our's, Sarawak's, and even (in a tiny way) the world's; for science and the thirst of men and women everywhere for knowledge, beauty and interest, links museums and other such places in a worldwide pattern, too. All Government departments belong, in a sense, to the people. But only in Museum and Library can you enter and wander freely, anyday and all day. In the process each section of the community should find out more about others and about Sarawak as a whole.

This has been in the minds of those in charge since the Museum's inception. And the place has been fortunate (up to now !) in its Curators. The first was Dr. G. D. Haviland, who gave up the post of Principal Medical Officer to take up this new appointment in 1891. Like the fifth curator, he later became head of the Raffles Museum, Singapore. He was followed by a well-known naturalist, Edward Bartlett, and then by R. W. Shelford, author of "A Naturalist in Borneo" and world expert on *Blattidae* (cockroaches). Shelford was Secretary of the Sarawak Club and moving spirit of the Golf Club; and when he left to take an Oxford appointment the *Gazette* remarked : "No more popular man have we ever had among us." After a short spell by John Hewitt, Dr. J. C. Moulton took over in 1909. He raised the Museum standard all round, until in 1915 he went to the war, became a Major and O.B.E. He was a great traveller, an excellent administrator, a naturalist and ethnologist; he later returned to become Chief Secretary. His successor, Dr. Eric Mjoberg, only stayed 2 years, but they were active ones, described in his book "Forest Life and Adventures." Then came Edward Banks, whose energy, wide knowledge and understanding are famed throughout the land. Banks continued for 16 years, until interned by the Japs—a record term

of office during which he greatly improved both the public display and reference collections, and by his numerous writings raised the status of the Museum throughout the scientific world.

Since 1911 the Museum's standing has been maintained and strengthened by the *Sarawak Museum Journal* (some back copies of which are still available at \$1.50 a copy from the Curator's Office). This publication is being revived, and contributions are solicited. All aspects of ethnology and sociology, botany and zoology, geography, climate, etc., are within the Journal's scope. Already in hand or promised are Mr. J. B. Archer, C.M.G., on Melanau dialects and Father Epping on Melanau groups; Mr. J. L. Noakes on Celadon porcelain collected in the Third Division; Mr. Donald Owen's 1912 diary of the first expedition over the Sarawak border into the Dutch uplands; Mr. E. Banks comparing Assam Nagas and Sarawak Ibans; bird and orchid notes, and a description of the first ascent of Mt. Batu Lawi, Borneo's strangest mountain. It is also hoped to publish, perhaps separately, important translations by Haji Usoff of the valuable old Brunei M.S.s. now in our possession. We should welcome other contributions from Brunei, British North Borneo and Dutch Borneo, etc. And we hope to have outside expert articles on Sarawak subjects from authorities like Dr. W. B. Honey of the Victoria and Albert Museum (on old jars and vases), and Dr. Edmund Leach on Socio-economic survey.

The Japs temporarily extinguished the Museum Journal, just as they brought the Museum's own progress to a standstill—and at a time when important new developments were in hand. They have left a heritage of neglect and confusion. They mixed up specimens or lost the labels; they let things get filthy, cracked, rusty, mouldy. Some of the worst chaos was sorted by Mr. Archer after his liberation from internment, assisted by Mr. Albert de Rozario, the only surviving member of the pre-war staff. But it will take many months, even years, of patient work to repair the damage and to replace the spoiled specimens, particularly in the insect and plant collections, and in sections of the ethnological material. But a Curator has other duties in a live Museum. Not least of these are travel and scientific exploration, making new studies and collecting new specimens. He must often be away. This makes active local assistance in Museum sorting, checking and arranging all the more welcome. Very welcome, too, is advice from visiting experts.

After all, we must be everlastinglly thankful that the Japs did not *positively* damage our Museum, as they did many others. At one time they had much of it packed up ready to take away. They eventually removed very little. More was probably taken after the liberation, and it was at this time that risiting troops permanently borrowed the whole of the indispensable reference library of books on Borneo. This is almost impossible to replace now, but a good deal has come in, including generous gifts from Miss J. Taylor, Rev. W. Linton and Mr. F. M. Kemp through the Borneo Mission Association, and from the Council of the Royal Asiatic Society (Malayan Branch).

Of course, nothing was added to the collections during six years. Therefore other gifts will be especially acceptable. Recent acquisitions of interest include Japanese occupation stamps given

by Mr. Alan Dant, a Murut cookpot from Mr. R. A. Bowshot Chinese gangster's knuckleduster from Mr. W. P. Sochon, specimens of Kuching pottery from Mr. Ng Khoon Huat, strange remains (including a dental plate) from the stomach of a 17 ft. Samarahan crocodile sent in by D.O., Kuching, an Iban alphabet from Resident, 2nd Division, and a Scops Owl given by Mr. J. Proud. We also have a live "maias" confiscated from a person in illegal possession. It is hoped in the future to have a variety of live animals.

Special mention should be made of ethnological specimens at the present time, because many native peoples are now changing their ways of life. Old customs, crafts and arts, are dying out rapidly in some areas. Thus the upper Trusun Muruts have all "gone Christian." So has Penghulu Tama Weng Ajang, M.B.E., Kenya chief of the upper Baram. He thereupon presented his fine dancing cloak and other taboo insignia to the District Officer, Baram, who is very properly Forwarding these things to the Museum. It is only right that beautiful, rare or unique Sarawak objects should be placed where all can see and learn, now and in the future—when these things will not be found elsewhere. In my view, no private person should selfishly traffic in or personally profit from antiques or native arts. The Museum was built up largely by outstation support, and the notable enthusiasm of men like Hose, Bampfylde, Swayne, Douglas and the Owens. This interest seems to have somewhat declined in the pre-war decade. Now is the time to revive it.

For the same reasons the Museum urgently needs photographs from all who take them. Our collection is not up-to-date and has suffered in Jap hands. Photos are, of course, an important part of any Museum's records and display.

The house on top of the hill,—copied oddly enough from the design of a French town-hall—has played an honourable and interesting part in the life of Sarawak, as well as in the give and take of world science and research, since it started in the Clock Tower, nearly 70 years ago. To-day it seeks to serve the community, regardless of race or creed or politics. In return it asks only for the interest of the community, residents, travellers, distant friends. This explanation is intended to assist in that unassuming ambition.

Cocoa and Chocolate in Sarawak.

There are indications that the increasing world demand for chocolate will shortly far exceed production.

Chocolate is made from the fruit of the cocoa tree (*Theobroma spp.*). The tree is widely grown as a plantation crop in several regions within the tropics but the possibilities of extension of existing areas seem limited and it is possible that disease may prove to be a limiting factor.

Conditions in many parts of Sarawak suggest that the chances may be in favour of successful cultivation of cacao; actually there are a few mature trees in the First Division apparently healthy and producing some pods in spite of the fact that they are growing on poorish soil and are not receiving a great deal of attention.

There is little information available about the crop with particular reference to Sarawak but it is suggested that cacao might well receive some attention on an experimental scale both by cultivators and by business men interested in the possible export of the beans or even in the local production of chocolate. The crop appears to be suitable for inclusion in the small farmer's mixed system of farming in Sarawak.

The tree is usually propagated by seed; the seed being planted in a nursery under shade and transplanted into the field at five yards square when one year old. It is possible that basket seedlings will do best in this country. There are indications that the crop will do best in this country under a leguminous shade tree such as *Gliricidia maculata* or even *Albizia moluccana*. Cacao has been grown successfully between *Hevea* (rubber) trees. This fact is of considerable interest in Sarawak but trial would be necessary before the practice could be widely adopted. Mulching at all stages of growth is advisable and it is necessary to drastically prune suckers and diseased wood, the prunings of course being burnt.

The trees begin to bear pods at 3 or 4 years old and usually reach their maximum production at about 10 years old. Fifty pods per tree per annum is an average yield.

The pods are cut from the tree when ripe and then opened as soon as possible. The beans when removed from the pod are white or light violet in colour and about three quarters of an inch long. The beans are packed in boxes and covered by banana leaves. Fermentation occurs and the slimy pulp round the seeds becomes a vinegar-like fluid which is allowed to drain away. The characteristic colour and flavour are developed during the fermentation process which takes about a week to complete. To secure uniformity of fermentation the beans are turned daily. After fermentation the beans are sundried and are then ready for marketing. Some producers have found it possible to omit the fermentation process altogether but their conditions are probably exceptional.

When the beans are to be made into chocolate they are first roasted for a short time in a rotary drum just above boiling point of water. They are cracked, skins removed by an air blast and ground into a powder. The powder can be pressed directly into bitter "ration" chocolate, or, after addition of sugar, milk, flavourings and various other materials, becomes the chocolate of the confectioner's shop. Cocoa is made from the powder after pressing out some of the natural fat (the cocoa butter of commerce).

Some seedlings are being obtained from the few existing trees in Sarawak. A small supply of seed was recently imported from Ceylon and it is hoped that further supplies may become available in the near future.—(Contributed).

The Bedil Experimental Garden.

The urgent need for the development of Sarawak's agriculture is generally admitted but unfortunately there is a deplorable lack of technical information having special reference to Sarawak on which such development can be based. Considerable information does of course exist with regard to neighbouring countries but it would be unwise to assume that this information is necessarily applicable to Sarawak's special conditions.

Several years' experimental work in the field, using a modern technique, would, in normal circumstances, be essential before even preliminary information of the type required could be regarded as established. Further observations over a period of years would be necessary to ascertain how far the results obtained were applicable to different areas in Sarawak.

Sometimes, though, it is possible for an agriculturist to obtain useful preliminary information for his own guidance by close continuous observation of a small number of plants under various treatments. Unfortunately existing agricultural stations in the First Division are some distance from Kuching and it is not possible for an officer stationed in Kuching to make daily observations at those stations. For this reason and in view of the urgency of the situation a request was made to the authorities concerned for an area of land in Kuching on which preliminary experimental work could be started. The extensive grounds of Bedil House in Kuching were made available for the purpose and are now known as the Bedil Experimental Garden. The site is not perfect for an experimental garden but possesses the advantage that many trees (including fruit trees) are already established and give a varying intensity of shade, that a stream for water supply in dry periods exists and that the land is typical in many ways of large areas of the undulating land of Sarawak.

Although work has only been in progress for a short time marked indications have been obtained that certain disabilities with regard to the soils and climate of Sarawak can be overcome, partly at least, by a modified form of terracing coupled with heavy mulching and the proper use of shade. Making of compost from all types of slashings and rubbish has been found to be comparatively simple under local conditions and the product is proving invaluable as a mulch.

Good results have already been obtained by the use of certain fertilisers on exhausted *lalang* infested land after terracing and mulching. Very small but flourishing plots of young cocoa, tea, coffee, pepper and citronella, amongst other crops, have already been established. Short term crops have not been neglected and, besides the usual vegetables, soya beans, dry padi and groundnuts appear to be doing well on some of the reclaimed land.

A flower garden has been re-established round the house and considerable success obtained in spite of the complete neglect of the time honoured "batas bunga."

For obvious administrative reasons work at the garden is at present on a very small scale indeed but it is hoped that it will be possible to open up and utilise most of the area next year.

R. W. R. MILLER,
Acting Director of Agriculture.

Taste.

A letter published in the last number of the *Sarawak Gazette* accused the editor of "very bad taste." If that epistle had no other merit it at least made us sit up, sit back, and take stock. There are few charges more irritating to the accused and yet more difficult to controvert, and many a man who throws the taunt in his neighbour's face might, if challenged on the subject, find it difficult to propound the qualifications which entitle him to act as arbiter.

At first sight taste appears to be a mere matter of fashion—the odd man out is the man with bad taste. Thus it is bad taste to crack nuts in the theatre, sing comic songs at a funeral, write a derogatory book about your old public-school, or attack the religious beliefs of a staunch Churchman. On the other hand it is not bad taste to crack feeble jokes from a stage, sing "Abide With Me" at a Cup Final, write a mendacious panegyric about your old public-school, or explain to a Communist that Marxism was exploded long ago. A survey of the sartorial world in particular seems to lend point to the identification of taste and fashion. It would be as bad taste to wear a tiara in a Bermondsey cinema as to sport a cloth cap at a Royal Garden Party. If you cannot afford to hire a topper you should not go to the garden party and if your tiara won't come off you should not go to the cinema. On the other hand where two schools of sartorial thought clash in approximately equal numbers it is sometimes difficult to say on which side virtue lies. We remember travelling from London to Liverpool in a "sleeper," The only other occupant of our carriage was a commercial traveller who took his trousers off below but kept his bowler hat on above. We kept our trousers on but were unfortunately hatless. He would be a bold man who could say with certainty which of the two displayed better taste.

Yet a closer inspection reveals that taste is something more than a mere matter of fashion. The ability to recognise good taste is commoner than the capacity to exhibit it. Taste is fluid and not static; it is moulded with the changing times and manners, but it does not necessarily follow their pattern. There can, for instance, be no doubt that a liking for "swing music" or "jazz" reveals the most execrable taste but there can equally be no doubt that it is at present fashionable, though it is to be hoped that the craze has not many more years before it. Yet canons of taste which lose all touch with popular standards are somewhat unreal. Noise and garishness and blare are only bad taste when they appear in the wrong place. Even "swing" might be permissible if it did not call itself music and was locked away in the ugliest corner of the ugliest town to which its devotees could creep by unlighted streets and where they could wash and change their clothes before coming away.

Many a man eats peas from his knife because he considers they taste better that way. The confusion of convention and taste is indeed a vulgar error. The one is horizontal and the other vertical. Conventions are merely the rails on which society finds it necessary to run; taste elevates society's head a little above that of the beast. Conventions are useful things because they give the otherwise undistinguished man a chance of displaying his *ego* by breaking them. If he cannot write a play or get elected to Parliament or invent a bomb, he can at least walk across Hyde Park in pink trousers, feed his guests on fried grass or rear silkworms in his beard. Such a man lapses into bad taste only if he suddenly begins behaving like other people, thus not only causing his friends considerable and unnecessary shock but at the same time drying up the stream to which they have habitually resorted for the anecdotes with which to flavour their after-dinner speeches.

The conventions, nevertheless, must not be regarded as being wholly divorced from taste. Often the two standards synchronise. It is unconventional to pull your wife's nose in public because gentlemen do it in private, and it is also bad taste because artificial elongation of the feminine inqui-

sitorial organ amounts to the creation of a public nuisance.

The natural conclusion of this stimulating, penetrating, and closely-reasoned article is that the man who is guilty of bad taste is the man who strikes the jarring note to the discomfiture of his fellows. It is not merely a failure to follow the prevailing fashion or an inability to stick to the current convention. Such errors may involve their perpetrator in public contempt but seldom will they cause pain to the finer feelings of those around him. The man who offends against the canons of taste is the man who, in a tribute to the memory of the dear departed, dwells in detail on the dissolute pranks they played together in youth, who carves his initials on an ancient monument, or advertises his revolting remedy for indigestion in the middle of a beauty spot. To be classified with such miscreants is insult indeed. Merely because one may forget to offer an arah to the duchess on going into dinner it is not safe to conclude that one would deliberately place in her chair a cushion possessing qualities of reverberation.

This Sarawak.

(WITH APOLOGIES TO THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.)

Prisoner Tedong anak Untam escaped from the gaol on the 9th at 7.30 a.m. and returned on the 11th at 6 a.m. On enquiry he stated that he went to Ampa's house to attend the gawai (ceremony) and did not wish to escape.—A monthly report.

The ----- comments upon the work of the----- and says that he is informed that among the ridiculous tenets of this faith is one that "thou shalt not drink coffee, sireh and certain fish."—A monthly report.

As for the water supply it is generally only in the morning that faeces can be seen floating in the river, and it is simple to draw drinking water in the afternoon.—A monthly report.

I beg to inform you that----- hotel in Sibu bazaar has been used for gambling den, day and night, hiding harlots and bad heads for which a private door as an entrance is specially made.—A letter.

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.)

Stories of Old Sarawak: 4.

Many years ago, when gin was Square-Face and sago was a remunerative occupation, a certain Resident of the Third Division had occasion to visit the Coast District. His District Officer laid on a Member of the Local House of Correction (they were not referred to as Prisoners then) to assist in the hundred yards sprint from Dapor to Dining Room. There were other visitors to the Station in

addition to the Resident and the party was larger than usual. After the party was over instructions were given by the District Officer that the Extra Help was to return to the House of Correction. The Resident, the District Officer and the other guests had much to discuss and as was not unusual in those days they eventually dined very late. When all had been tidied up, the Extra Help returned under his own steam to the House of Correction which he found locked, dark and silent with only an occasional noise off from some slumbering inmate. This did not suit the Extra Help at all, so he went to the Fort and reported to the sentry on duty. The sentry was very annoyed at being woken up and told the Extra Help that he could do nothing about it and that he had better go and see the Sergeant who had gone home to bed, taking the keys of the House of Correction with him. By this time the Extra Help was getting just about as peeved as the sentry. The Sergeant lived in the Kampong a good mile away and by the time the Extra Help got there he roused the Sergeant with little ceremony, and told him exactly what he thought of him for keeping honest men from their beds and demanded to be put in his as soon as possible. Further, he was going to report the Sergeant to the Tuan in the morning. And this he duly did.—(Contributed.)

[When this series was first announced we received many assurances from "old hands" that they would assist it out of the richness of their experiences. The above is the first promise to come home.—ED.]

Fifty Years Ago.

THE SARAWAK GAZETTE, OCTOBER 1ST, 1897.

Leading Article :

The Principal Medical Officer's report for the first six months of the present year appears in another column, and he is to be congratulated upon the possession of the faculty of making even an official report on a Government department interesting to the lay mind.

There are two items in the report which are interesting from a general point of view as well as from that of residents in Sarawak, namely the paragraphs bearing upon the health of the Sarawak Rangers and Police and upon vaccination.

The report states that "it speaks markedly for the health of the lower classes of the community of Kuching" that a certain class of diseases is so very little prevalent amongst the Rangers and the Police. Without for one moment venturing to deny that the health of the lower classes in respect of these diseases is as good as the report insinuates, we would point out that the reason for this state of healthiness is entirely due to the excellent provisions made by the Government for the punishment of those spreading these diseases; provisions which might well be brought into force elsewhere, and could be, without offending even the most morbid of Exeter Hall susceptibilities.

With regard to vaccination it will be observed that the Hon'ble the Resident complained of the difficulty of carrying out vaccination, not because of the crass stupidity of the persons to be vaccinated, but on account of the inertness of the lymph.

The native is exceedingly anxious to undergo the operation and so preserve himself from a horrible and possibly fatal disease. The untutored Dayak can apparently teach some of his superiors in civilization something, if it is only that vaccination is preferable to small-pox.

His Highness the Rajah has been pleased to direct that in future the title and appointment of Government chaplain will be abolished, there being no further necessity for a chaplain specially appointed by the Government. A monthly grant will be made to His Lordship the Bishop or the head of the S.P.G. Mission in Sarawak in aid of the Mission and education in and around Kuching, exclusive of the usual donation to S.P.G. schools at out-stations, and the yearly prizes to the boys and girls of the Mission school in Kuching.

Our Notes :

As will be seen in another column, an inquest was held on the 21st September at which an interesting question arose. The medical evidence showed that the wound in the neck of the deceased was self-inflicted and was done by a left-handed man. Two or three leading Towkays, who were present, at once said that a Chinaman, when attempting suicide in this manner, always made use of his left hand as, by doing so, he was more certain of attaining the object in view. If the right hand were used, the wound produced would not necessarily be fatal. This is of course quite erroneous both from a practical and anatomical point of view, but we should like to know if this superstition is general among the Chinese.

News from Far and Near.

FIRST DIVISION.

The Honourable the Resident reports that the crime of receiving stolen property is the most popular form of law breaking in Kuching. He says that the public generally regard it as a legitimate way of obtaining goods needed for the house, or for sale in their shops and stalls. During the month under review the Police appealed to the Resident's Court against two sentences consisting of ridiculously low fines. In both cases the sentence of the Lower Court was quashed and sentences of imprisonment imposed instead. The Resident adds that the Court left the public in no doubt as to the seriousness of the offence, but nevertheless there was considerable public indignation.

The Honourable the Resident reports that, in the absence of His Excellency the Governor and the Honourable the Chief Secretary, he received the Hari Raya callers at the Astana on behalf of His Excellency. Over one hundred and thirty guests arrived and after the reception prayers were said in the Malay cemetery behind the Astana.

The Divisional Agricultural Officer has informed the Honourable the Resident that he discovered on a recent tour in the Serian District that a Dayak had been fined by the Tua Kampong for breaking a *pantang* and the fine had been upheld by the Native Officer. The Agricultural Officer went on to say that this was an extraordinary state of affairs, since the Government finds itself in the

position of supporting a custom which causes much waste of food. The Resident comments that the only solution appears to be in trying to convince the old men that the *adat* is a foolish one.

The Honourable the Resident says that pigs in Dayak Kampongs appear to be engaging the attention of the Seventh Day Adventist missionaries, and remarks that if pigs are moved from these villages before the people have been taught simple rules of health dysentery might easily run riot.

The District Officer, Kuching, while commenting on the general heaviness of court work, remarks that August was a quiet month as far as food and price control cases were concerned. He says that probably the black-marketeers are at last convinced that the game does not pay them in the long run. Only three such cases were heard.

The following is an extract from the August report of the District Officer, Kuching: "The Sebuyaus of Entingan, having proved somewhat recalcitrant in their reception of the Census House Numberer, the District Officer spent a night there to investigate the trouble. The local Persutuan agent was found to have been entirely responsible for the attitude of the kampong people; the correct aspect of the situation was fully explained to a large gathering, the gentleman responsible was soundly admonished in the presence of all and was dismissed from his position as a member of the Kampong Committee. The Serin Dayaks were also found to have misguided ideas regarding the payment of Head Tax : during a night spent at Tebut the District Officer explained the importance of paying tax, and gave the people one week to pay. Tax was paid accordingly. The Malays of Bako and Buntal accorded the District Officer a somewhat frigid reception when he visited there recently. Nevertheless a fair-sized gathering was addressed at each place and a number of misconceptions explained. Census numbering was successfully completed there and most of the Exemption Tax has now been paid."

The District Officer, Kuching, reports that the need for a Juvenile Delinquents' Institution is increasing.

The District Officer, Bau, reports that in August "several gongs and a small child disappeared from Singgi and none has yet been recovered."

A provisional offer of two local rubber gardens for the purpose of planting cocoa and padi thereon as an experiment has been made by a local land-owner, says the District Officer, Bau. The matter is being taken up with the Agricultural Department.

The District Officer, Bau, reports that the Chinese who had failed to remove from Dayak land at Skunyt again managed to induce the Orang Kaya and people of Kampong Dinding to allow them to farm the Kampong's best land. Arrangements are being made for a limit to be set to their occupation of this land and for delineation of its boundaries.

In the Tua Kampong's house at Kampong Duyoh the District Officer, Bau, found a photograph of Anthony Brooke, which, the Tua Kampong explained, had been sold to him by a Kuching

Malay and which he said he thought was a picture of His Majesty the King. The District Officer says that a comparison with the picture on a Malayan \$1 note soon showed him his error—if indeed it was one. The District Officer adds that other kampongs claimed that they had not been visited by this commercial traveller from Kuching or others of his ilk.

The District Officer, Serian, reports that early in August several Chinese at Tebedu fought over payment for *obat*. The patient had died and the relatives claimed that the supplier, of the *obat* should not be paid. The supplier argued that it was the patient's own fault if he died, the *obat* was good, and he demanded payment. The supplier was severely beaten with sticks, but the offence was eventually compounded.

Another case in Serian in August was started by two dogs having a fight at Ampungan. This combat led to a fight between their respective owners, one of whom was armed with an axe and seriously wounded the other on the face, head, and back. He then disappeared but it is hoped to catch him soon.

SECOND DIVISION.

The District Officer, Simanggang, says that reports from census workers in the Ulu Ai area indicate that Dayaks in many long-houses have no padi and are living on tapioca.

Work has commenced on the re-building of Lubok Antu station.

The District Officer, Saribas, reports that sago working is attracting more and more people owing to the fall in the price of rubber.

The District Officer, Saribas, reports that on August 18th further erosion of the river bank at Pusa occurred and a sago godown and part of the Chinese temple were destroyed.

Two bulldozers were transhipped at Betong to Debak on August 8th and 25th respectively, and work began on clearing and levelling the site for the new bazaar on the 26th. The work was under the supervision of P.W.D. Assistant Kassim Agas. Large crowds gathered to watch the bulldozers at work.

The District Officer, Saribas, says that it is very satisfactory to be able to notice the improvement in the standard of living this year compared with last. No one seems to lack clothes and there is no shortage of food or cigarettes.

The District Officer, Kalaka, says that the widespread Dayak belief that Great Britain contains inexhaustible wealth, soon to be poured into the *ulu*, is disquieting.

In August Mr. Edward Jerah of Saratok brought back sago samples from Singapore. The District Officer, Kalaka, says that local mill-owners have shown interest in the high quality of the samples and have produced some greatly improved sago flour of their own. Whether they will try to market an improved product, adds the District Officer, is uncertain.

THIRD DIVISION.

The Honourable the Resident reports that at Dalat, on July 18th, a Melanau Christian, named Mary Galow, was acquitted on a charge of murdering her infant baby with a hypodermic syringe.

The District Officer, Sibu, says that in July reports of measles continued to come in from all parts of the District. Eighteen deaths were reported from Igan. The District Officer adds that the measles brought on a fever, and, in order to cool down, the sufferers took a plunge in cold water. Naturally pneumonia followed. Propaganda against this habit is being put out, but it is very difficult to convince the local people that bathing when they have fever is the cause of death.

The following is an extract from the July report of the District Officer, Sibu : "A number of padi land disputes have been opened in the Igan area. The main trouble appears to be that Dayaks have been renting out land to Chinese. Owing to the slump in rubber padi land is in fair demand, and Chinese are prepared to pay fairly good rents. One party of Chinese approaches one lot of Dayaks and offers them, say, \$5 an acre for the use of their land, and this is accepted. Another party of Chinése then try to lend from other Dayaks, who have a remote claim to the land, at \$10 an acre, and the fight is on."

The District Officer, Sibu, reports that the Prison Visiting Board has made recommendations that the prison padi farm, which was in existence before the war, should be revived and also that various handicrafts should be started for prisoners. Both schemes, says the District Officer, would require a certain amount of initial outlay. For the first it would probably be necessary to buy some land, but the cost of this should be saved by the prison becoming self-supporting in so far as rice is concerned. As regards handicrafts the District Officer thinks that a sum of \$200 would be sufficient to buy a stock of materials. As goods are turned out and sold a portion of the profits would go to paying off this sum, a portion to the cost of further materials, and the remainder to the prisoner's account. This, says the District Officer, would enable prisoners to learn a useful trade for their release, and also provide them with some money with which to start again.

The District Officer, Sibu, regrets to report the death of Mr. Law Jee Thai.

A whale, weighing approximately twenty piculs, was found in a fish-trap at Pasir Dua-belas, Matu, in July.

The District Officer, Lower Rejang, reports that Dingun of Sungai Petan ceased to be a Tuai Rumah in July as his *anak biak* complained of his unfairness. Dingun proposes to collect new *anak biak* from other houses to join him and erect a new long-house in the area known as "T.R. Dingun and Nyuk Communal Farming Land." He intends to drive away his old *anak biak* from the area. Dingun claims that, although he is no longer a Tuai Rumah, he is still the owner of the communal farming land.

Apparently the District Officer, Kanowit, has advised the Dayaks at Sebubong "to take a rent" from Chinese squatting on "their" land. Titles have been refused to these Chinese.

The District Officer, Mukah, reports, that Penghulu Umpoh has requested the establishment of a permanent bazaar at Kuala Selengau.

The preliminary inquiry at Mukah in which eleven Dayaks were accused of murdering two Chinese at Jebungan in 1945 was concluded in July, the accused being discharged.

In July the total number of cases in Kapit was one criminal case in the District Court and one civil case in the Petty Court. The Honourable the Resident makes the cryptic comment: "The Kapit District is certainly a Magistrate's dream when it comes to litigation."

The following is an extract from the July report of the Senior Native Officer, Kapit: "T.R. Tama Semunau reported that 11 Dayaks were working in Sungai Bah and were asked to return. At first they would not return and gave a very bad insult, and on the 15th two policemen were sent to do patrol duty and the Dayaks were sent back in polite ways."

The following extract from the July report of the Senior Native Officer, Kapit, might be compared with the remarks of the District Officer, Sibu, on the same theme: "According to Dresser-in-Charge report about 50% of Ulu Sungai Kapit Rumah Nyipa Dayaks were suffering from Malaria, the cause of death is mostly ignorances, because when they feel hot they just jump into the river and on their return they get cough and short of breath and chest complaint then death follows."

FOURTH DIVISION.

The Honourable the Resident reports that the issue of the drug Paludrine to combat malaria is reaping spectacular results in Miri District. Although "the height of the malaria season" was being approached in July the number of cases was actually on the decrease. In May there were 335 cases, in June 393 cases, and in July 238 cases. These figures may be compared with that of 892 cases for October, 1946. The District Officer, Miri, says that headmen report that they are experiencing no difficulty in getting people to take their pills regularly. Kampong Kuala Baram at first suffered from a rumour that the pills were poisonous and many persons refused to take them. A visit from the Datu soon cleared the air. It has been impossible to trace the originator of the rumour, but, the District Officer says, apparently it emanated from a Chinese who related that the Japanese had employed poison pills in the guise of obat as a means of reducing the Chinese population in China.

The District Officer, Miri, says that "some more prison uniforms having arrived, it is now possible to recognise who are prisoners and who are not, when meeting members of the prison gang outside the gaol."

The District Officer, Miri, says that the quantity of articles of American origin which now appear in the bazaar is remarkable.

On July 12th the S.O. L. new well in course of drilling ran into oil sand, which, says the District Officer, Miri, is most encouraging after the past unproductive weeks. The depth of this oil sand later turned out to be in the region of fifty feet, and by the end of the month the well had been brought into production at about 75 metric tons per day. More wells are to be drilled, but there is apparently a shortage of equipment, and it is not expected to commence deep drilling until the new year.

The District Officer, Miri, reports that Mr. Padgett, of an Australian timber firm, arrived on July 30th in his own King-fish seaplane, landing on the calm seas off the Peninsula and wading ashore. After discussions with the Director of Forestry he flew back to Kuala Belait. He hopes very shortly to commence logging operations in the Baram District, towing the logs in rafts to Labuan for loading.

The Native Officer, Sebahu, reports that during July three Malay women gave birth to twins.

The District Officer, Bintulu, reports that during His Excellency's visit to that District in July the Malays requested that an English teacher be added to the staff of the Government vernacular school. Government servants also requested the appointment of an English teacher and His Excellency suggested that for the time being they should try to arrange night classes. At every up-river station visited by His Excellency requests were made for schools by Ibans, Kayans, and Punans. The District Officer says that it is hoped to build a school at Sebahu this year and also to persuade the son of the Punan Tuai Rumah, Keseng, to join the long-house school at Kanowit next year.

The District Officer, Baram, says that reports have been coming in of the outbreak of a severe epidemic of measles in the Baram and Akah rivers near Long Akah. Deaths appear to have occurred from an undiagnosed lung complaint following on measles. This report may be profitably compared with similar reports from the Third Division.

Missionary influence is on the increase in the Ulu Baram, chiefly owing to a recent visit of Mr. Southwell from Lawas, who entered the District about May via the Kelabit country, spreading the gospel and "Christianising" several long-houses as he went. The District Officer, Baram, says that a very sudden and pronounced movement towards Christianity manifested itself during and after his recent Kelabit tour. This movement, some signs of which appeared last year, was brought to a head by the arrival of Mr. Southwell and whole long-houses have thrown away their old *adat* and become "Christians" in the course of a few days. The District Officer comments: "A great deal of good will no doubt arise from the disappearance of the pernicious practice of pantang," but together with this

it is feared that the old tribal law and customs, which bound the people together and decided their everyday problems for the most part fairly, and, what, is more important, in accordance with the local conditions prevailing, will also disappear, and, unless the business of Christianity is gone about gradually and quietly so as to take the place of *adat* without friction, it is feared that the good old customs will be thrown away with no more than a few phrases learned parrot-like in the vernacular (and let us hope accurately translated) from the Bible and a hymn or two to replace, the whole complicated structure of laws and custom built up over generations to serve the needs of a primitive and uneducated people to whom "Tuan Yesus" can, at the moment at any rate, be little more than a rather superior "Orang Puteh." (This indeed has been asserted several times to the District Officer for, say the people, "We have seen his picture in which he is holding a young goat in one arm and a long curved stick in the other. He has a beard and is just like a European.")"

FIFTH DIVISION.

The Honourable the Resident reports that a site has been selected for the projected Iban centre at Nanga Medamit. It is intended to build a *kubu* here in 1948, and later it is hoped to proceed with an agricultural station, boarding school, meeting-house, shops, and so on.

The following is an extract from the August report of the Honourable the Resident : "Agreement with the hulling contractors has at last been reached and a contract will be signed to enable hulling of 200 tons (half) of the Government padi stocks to be hulled within 3 months, i.e. by the end of November. A further contract will be signed for the remainder if and when a market for the bran can be found. Approval has been given for the resultant rice to be sold (under the rationing scheme) at \$2.04 per *gantang* wholesale and \$2.16 retail (or 34 and 36 cents a kati). This price covers costs to date (including 10% for contingencies) with a margin for unpredictable future expenditure. Thus it should be possible (if all goes well) not only for this Division to be self-supporting in rice, but to stabilise all local rice prices at not more than this figure, as local (not government) rice prices would almost certainly exceed the above figure, towards the year's end."

The District Officer, Limbang, reports that many up-river people are suffering from conjunctivitis. In one month two Ibans lost the sight of one eye owing to their failing to come for treatment until it was too late for them to be cured.

The Native Officer, Lawas, reports that the school at Long Semadah was closed from August 1st to September 9th for "Chuti Menugal." The Malay School at Lawas, on the other hand, was re-opened on August 30th after "Chuti Bulan Puasa." There is probably a moral somewhere but it is difficult to say what it is. No doubt if the European missionary influence expands we will be hearing one day of "Chuti Spring-cleaning."

CORRESPONDENCE.

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

HARI RAYA.

Miri,

29th August, 1947.

*The Editor,
Sarawak Gazette.
Kuching.*

SIR,

The last Hari Raya here occurred on the 18th this month instead of 19th as scheduled in your almanac, because the moon was visible in the dusk of the 17th. This manifestly shows that the Mohamedan Date in your almanac does not coincide with our counting.

The discrepancy of the above had given rise to a lot of debate as to the correct date and had caused inconvenience amongst us that some observed the Hari Raya on the 18th and others on the 19th. I guess it should be observed on the 17th because the phase of the new moon fell on the 16th.

It was extraordinary strange to have no Holiday after Hari Raya Service on the 18th and it ruined the glamour and splendour of our Festival Day. Worst of it was that we had only 29 days of Ramdan our Fasting Month.

Could you point out whether your almanac was misprinted or was it the fault of the Sarawak Mufti that affected this depreciated outcome.

Yours faithfully,

YAN A. KIPRAWI.

Miri,

3rd September, 1947.

*The Editor,
Sarawak Gazette,
Kuching.*

SIR,

Hari Raya this year was one of the most disappointed Hari Raya we ever experienced. Our Festival Day was scheduled in accordance with your Almanac to fall on Tuesday, August 19th but we in Miri observed it on Monday, August 18th as the moon was clearly visible at quarter to seven in the evening of August 17th.

You very well know that everyone of us, irrespective of the poor and the rich, was looking forward to this Grand Day to attend the Mosque Service, the visits to and by relatives and friends and dozen other funs or "main" to attend to after the last beating of the Mosque drum "Bedok" on the Hari Raya eve.

The sudden beating of the "Bedok" in the evening of the 17th caused panic in the *kampong*—Alas! The moon gave her appearance brightly in the clear sky and according to our reckoning she was two days old.

Disappointment and frustration could clearly be observed on everybody's countenance as they were not yet ready or prepared for the Raya on 18th.

They expected to celebrate the Raya on 19th as they rely so much on the Almanac—when they would be in readiness and when their fellow workers in the Government and Company employment would be given two days off.

Nevertheless the Mosque was fully congregated for the Hari Raya service but it was only a pitiful sight to see our manfolks hurried along the street—no longer in their colourful *sarongs and bajus* but in khaki to their respective departments for duty.

Well, what was done could not be undone but I do hope and pray that those who are responsible for the preparation of the Almanac should see this state of affairs would never occur again.

Last but not least all heads of Departments both in the Government and the Company are to be highly appreciated for their kind and generous consideration in allowing their Mohamedan employees to attend the Mosque Service.

I am, Sir,
Yours faithfully,

ABANG MARZUKI.

[August 19th was given as the date of Hari Raya in the almanac on the authority of the Honourable the Datu Hakim who is still prepared to defend his calculations. Leading Kuching Malays searched for the new moon with the aid of a telescope on the Sunday evening but were unable to discern it. The moon was first seen in Kuching between 6 and 7 o'clock on the Monday evening so that in the capital at any rate Hari Raya was rightly celebrated on the Tuesday.—ED.]

SARAWAK COCOA.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
SARAWAK.

KUCHING, 12th September, 1947.

*The Editor,
Sarawak Gazette,
Kuching.*

SIR,
I feel that it is necessary for me to comment on two statements which you have published on page 170 of your September issue and which you attribute to the District Officer, Bau.

The first statement to which I refer concerns cocoa cultivation. World demand for cocoa products at present far exceeds supply and the gap between supply and demand is not likely to be closed for many years owing to the limited possibilities for expansion in existing cocoa producing areas in the world and to the increasing incidence of disease in those areas. Market prospects therefore are good. On general principles one would expect cocoa to do well in Sarawak; there are in fact a certain number of trees planted some years ago in existence in Sarawak. My Department has already produced and distributed to cultivators a few seedlings obtained both from these trees and from seed imported from Ceylon. Arrangements are being made to produce larger quantities of seedlings. In more normal circumstances I should conduct field trials for several years before recommending widespread cocoa cultivation

in this country but in present circumstances I feel that I am justified in encouraging cultivators to plant up small areas for trial over as wide a range of conditions as possible. The crop is well adapted to small scale cultivation by a native cultivator, cultivation in small patches in fact has the advantage that disease control is facilitated. As a result of the policy that I propose to adopt we should obtain a great deal of general information with regard to the behaviour of cocoa in Sarawak over a wide variety of conditions and there is a good chance that a useful area will be in production in the minimum time possible. Two exporters in Kuching have agreed to handle even very small quantities of Sarawak cocoa as soon as it is obtainable. I attach a copy of a technical leaflet concerning cocoa cultivation; extracts from this leaflet may, I suggest, be of interest to some of your readers.

The second statement attributed to the District Officer, Bau, concerns padi planting dates. I too am doubtful as to the exact meaning of the statement but what I think the District Officer means to imply is that the Dayaks would be well advised to base their padi planting operations on our calendar rather than on their own. In view however of the paucity of scientific information with regard to padi cultivation in Sarawak I feel that it is better, at this stage, not to attempt to influence unduly the cultivators' decisions with regard to planting dates (unless of course they are obviously months at fault). The basis on which padi planters in the East fix their planting dates forms a fascinating study and a great deal has been written on the subject. Often of course their methods are based on mere superstition but frequently, however backward the cultivator may appear to be, the methods of fixing the dates are based on the shrewd interpretation of the results of many years observations of the vagaries of climate. Until further scientific information on the matter with particular reference to Sarawak is available I consider that it is better to let the cultivators fix the actual date themselves; then in the interests of pest control persuade them to adhere to that date (within reasonable limits) over as wide an area as practicable.

Yours faithfully,

R. W. R. MILLER,
Acting Director of Agriculture.

[The "technical leaflet" referred to by Mr. Miller is published elsewhere in this issue.—ED.]

From "Adversity": Internment Quarterly.

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

THE PARANG.

It was an island blade. Not of the style so well known on the peninsula, with that picturesque slight curve so resembling the scimitars of the ancient world, but a broad flat steel, like a gurkha's kukri. Nor was it fashioned as a weapon, and never was it intended as such; and we may be sure that when Sakhmat hammered it into shape he had no thought but for its utility, for in these

islands the Malays carry each a *parang* as in Europe one carries a watch, and they use them impartially for any duty which requires an edged tool, from the ceremonial beheading of a chicken to the chopping of wood for the *dapor* fire.

Sakhmat was sitting besides a pile of coconuts. The nuts had already been husked and Sakhmat was busy splitting them open, and arranging them on the long trays to dry in the sun. He held the nut in his left hand and, raising the *parang* in his right, he brought it down with a swift accurate blow, splitting the nut in two. At each stroke it seemed that he must cleave right through his hand, but long practice had accustomed his nerve and trained his eye. To astonish wondering visitors he sometimes laid a banana across his palm and treated it to the same nonchalant execution. He had never heard of Saladin or he would no doubt have tried to emulate that adventurous Kurd's gesture of cutting a silken veil laid across his blade against no resistance other than unsubstantial air. It is doubtful that he would have succeeded. His strength far outmatched his dexterity, and excepting the tricky handling of coconuts and bananas his native finesse would have baulked at anything more delicate than decapitating a chicken or splitting a bamboo.

And yet the man was not wholly unimaginative for, one day, he unaccountably disappeared. He said no word in explanation, but simply went. Maybe his soul rebelled at last against the unending monotony of making copra, fishing and working in the smithy. It is inconceivable that he could have become entangled in any kind of illicit amour—unless indeed he were setting a novel example of contrariness in leaving the girl behind, for none was missing, and as he had never before been away from the island it is not possible that he could have been pursuing a light o' love. No one ever knew why he left. His son Ahmat took over his work and sat moodily husking coconuts in weak imitation of his father's nimble ability, but he was a poor substitute, and it was very much remarked and very much regretted in the bazaar and in the compound that Sakhmat had gone, taking with him nothing but his *parang*.

It was one of those crazy, indeterminate craft, a cross between a Chinese junk and a Spanish galleon, that sail the seas from Sulu to the Celebes and maintain, in those sequestered latitudes, the faint suggestion of romance and adventure that are inevitably associated with the Eastern archipelago. We would be wrong to assume, however, that she was of piratical bent, or engaged on any other than her lawful occasions. All day she had rested lazily on that leaden, calm water under that quiet tropic sky, and now, in the late afternoon, the only sign of activity on board was the slowly rising smoke from the small fire where one of the crew was watching the rice cooking with that intent expression so often mistaken for profound thought. On the raised poop the lao-dah sat across-legged gazing at the horizon. He had sat thus since early morn as though awaiting some manifestation of a divine providence, and if it were so it is well that he was equipped with the inexhaustible patience of his race, for throughout the long day no cloud had come to vary the monotony of that melancholy sky. He sat still, watching; and from time to time the man below looked up at him with an apprehensive glance.

The man cooking, a Malay, was expecting a command, and would eagerly have anticipated it, for the lao-dah was short tempered and his behaviour when displeased was somewhat unorthodox. But he seemed content now to remain in that attitude of oriental ease until his thoughts should resolve themselves and prompt him to action, and that surely must be soon, thought the Malay, or were they going to remain forever suspended between sea and sky like a phantom ship incapable of movement. Why, the Malay asked himself, did they not hoist the sail and move again; but, as is often the case with wondering men, he could ask himself, but was totally unable satisfactorily to answer himself. Twice already that day the lao-dah had ordered the anchor to be raised and the combined efforts of the crew had been in vain. With stoic calm they had waited until the changing tide had drifted the vessel round and the anchor rope was tautened in the opposite direction and then they had tried again. But the recalcitrant hook held fast. It was caught, it seemed, in a very large rock indeed and much thought and much wailing were necessary to solve the problem of getting it to the surface without sacrificing the anchor rope. The loss of an anchor together with its length of rope would have been a major calamity for the poor craft. They could not afford such expensive liberties; but it had become obvious to the lao-dah that some action had to be taken if ever they were to get away from this involuntary captivity. At last, with characteristic ingenuity, he thought out a plan. A shout of command brought the crew on deck and with great volubility he instructed them in what was to be done. The four half-naked sailors listened and nodded wisely as they received their orders, while the Malay sat silently watching and fearfully wondering what was to be his part in subsequent developments. Not understanding a word of the language that was being spoken he knew from experience that he would have to obey signs and gestures and he knew also that any misinterpretation of such would be corrected in a sudden and painful manner.

As the ship was not equipped with any kind of derrick, and the mast would not permit of any hoisting gear being attached, a block and tackle arrangement was rigged athwart ship, the anchor rope was taken through the pulleys and all hands began to heave with the helmsman using a great sweep of an oar to keep the vessel from turning against the strain. There was a grunt of pleasure as the rope answered the haul and started to come inboard, after which they gave all their energies to the work until a yell from the poop told them that the anchor had broken the surface.

But with what dismay did they regard its appearance when they saw, hooked over the flukes as taut as a fiddle string, a long, an interminably long hawser all encrusted with the submarine growth of patient years. So that was the mystery! They had caught their anchor in the winding gear of some sunken vessel and had now raised to the surface a length of hawser, the unwelcome souvenir of an unknown treasure-trove! And now, to dissipate all thoughts of the hidden wealth below them came again the realisation that the work of the moment was to free the anchor of this undesirable encumbrance. But how to do it? There was only one way. They were unable to slip the unwanted line over the anchor flukes and, in addition, the headman was impatient of further

delay. There was a shout that reminded Sakhmat of an angry water buffalo as it brought him to his feet and away from the rice pot with an alacrity that had abandoned all claims to dignity. In a few moments he was hoisted in an improvised bosun's chair and lowered over the side: and although his instructions were to him an incomprehensible concatenation of sounds the lively gestures which accompanied them made their meaning very clear.

As soon as he found himself level with the offending line he raised his arm. The *parang* flashed in the sunlight and came with a disappointing metallic clank against the unyielding wire rope. "Chelaka!" said Sakhmat. He looked up to the deck hopefully, but from there he received no encouragement. The entire crew was leaning casually over the side and regarding him with the placid and interested expression of students watching a scientific experiment of whose results they were never in doubt. The headman looked particularly interested and in that inexorable regard Sakhmat read the rewards of failure. It took him half an hour to labour the wire rope into parting and when at last the severed ends fell back into the level green sea he was welcomed aboard in a profound and significant silence. The *parang* looked like a hockshaw blade.

In a few minutes they had hoisted the square mat sail, and the light breeze carried them away from that day's encounter. They soon forgot it entirely. Only Sakhmat remembered it a little longer than the others as he worked to put a new edge on his precious blade.

And in the meantime, the electricians of the two terminal stations of the communications company were frantically testing the cable that had so suddenly anti mysteriously become interrupted.

The District Officer was entertaining Miss Conigrave to tea in his bungalow, and this means that the D.O. was modestly endeavouring to keep the conversation away from his personal achievements but was finding it increasingly difficult as his guest plied him with leading questions which, however self-effacing, he was forced, in common decency, to answer more or less truthfully. Miss Conigrave was an Australian and possessed the sceptical temperament so typical of her race. They may be called a nation of sceptics. It has been said that even their racehorses await the judge's decision before neighing their congratulations to the winner. In addition to being naturally of a questioning and doubting nature the poor girl had to live down the antipathy that was immediately aroused by the unromantic syllables of her name, Conigrave. It always reminded people of a particularly unpopular auditor or visiting agent. The word, as though by some cursed magic of etymological origin, unfailingly prejudiced people against it, so that they welcomed its owner with all the ready enthusiasm that is usually reserved for tax collectors and the like.

Crookes, the D.O., as he sat struggling with his better self against letting Miss Conigrave know the truth of his redoubtable adventures and thus inspiring her with awful admiration, did not know that she had already labelled him with the sardonic appellation "Outpost of Empire." and that, whenever she recounted this story to her friends in the wilds of the outer Barcoo, she would refer to Crookes as "one of those Outpost of Empire men—you know!" and the admiring sheep-men would bleat their appreciation of the caustic wit of this pert miss.

She treated Crookes to a languishing gaze from beneath her colourless eyebrows and "Do tell me," she pleaded. He shook his handsome head and laughed. "No, really," he protested. "Really it was nothing at all. Honestly." What colossal modesty, thought Miss Conigrave. The man is as dull as a fence post. I'll shake him in a minute. "Do tell me," she repeated, "Just once!" as though telling just once barely qualified as telling at all; and indeed Crookes seemed to share this curious idea for he immediately capitulated and announced himself willing to take her into his confidence. "Mind you," he said, "it was really nothing at all." To which she replied : "I think it's perfectly thrilling."

"I'm afraid you're going to be disappointed," persisted the D.O. with gloomy foreboding. Not that he doubted that the events he had to relate would satisfy her girlish craving for vicarious thrills. It was only that, like so many of his type, he was practically inarticulate when it came to telling a story. Besides which, he could not do justice to the yarn without destroying his reputation as a strong silent man. However, he had promised and so he set about telling her, with much stammering and hesitating, the following short tale :

You know there are some islands not far from the coast here that I have to visit every now and then in order to see that everything's all right. Why? Well the people might be making trouble. Oh, yes, they're still quite wild and sometimes they go in for a bit of piracy when they think they can get away with it. Yes, it's a fact (and just at this point the D.O. laughed, as though getting away with a bit of piracy were an amusing diversion. Miss Conigrave laughed too—from sheer high spirits presumably). Well they'd been giving a bit of trouble, some of them, and I had to go over. It was about some woman. One of them had been—er—you know how it is. (Yes, she knew, from her youthful experience, how it was, and she simmered in delightful anticipation. "Aha! A leaper!" she said. For thus is described, in the intimacy of the girlish boudoirs she frequented, the objectionable but exciting young libertines who spice the lives, of Australian maidens). Leaper? I don't know about that but he'd been playing about and there'd been a fight. Somebody'd been killed, so of course I had to go and see about it. I took eight policemen with me. Eh? Well, yes, as a matter of fact I had only eight. Well, we got there about noon and started to hunt up the headman and get the facts. Well, somehow or other I got separated from the police in the *kampong*—that's the village you know—and the first thing I knew there was a damn' great savage coming at me with a *parang*. Like a fool I had come unarmed, relying on the police of course, so I had to act pretty quickly. As he made a swipe at me I dodged a bit—as well as I could, and aimed a terrific kick at his—his stomach and then gave him a pretty good welt on the jaw which laid him out. I got a bad cut across the shoulder though. Had to have six stitches. Luckily the muscle's still o.k. Well, that's all there was to it really. I told you you'd be disappointed.

The young woman's eyes glistened a reproachful denial. "Nothing of the kind. I think you were awfully brave to think of kicking him in the stomach. Why, you might have been killed!" Crookes' face fell as he pondered the truth of this perspicacious remark and the consequent loss to the service. "But I'm not dead yet, after all," he said brightly. "No," said Miss Conigrave with a curious intonation. "But what is a *parang*, Mr. Crookes?"

"Why, haven't you ever seen one? I've got the very one. I kept it as a sort of souvenir you know. Wait a minute and I'll get it." And he left the room, returning a few seconds later with the sort of souvenir. "Funny thing is, it's not the kind they usually use about these parts. They're usually narrower and lighter. Heavy, isn't it?"

"Yes, dreadfully heavy. But what a pity you've let it get so rusty. Look!"

"That," said the D.O., "is not rust. Miss Conigrave."

"Oh!" And her eyes grew wide as she thought of the sensation she would cause back home.

Douglas Merritt called to his wife: "Dulcie!"

"Yes, Sherry."

"Is Jack coming to-night?"

"Yes. I expect so."

"Oh!"

"Why? You're not jealous, are you?"

"Don't be silly. Of course not. I just wondered, that's all."

"I do believe you're just a bit jealous. Oh, what fun!"

"My dear girl, you know very well I'm not jealous. But if I ever do get that way I don't think you'll find it fun."

"You're a funny old thing, Sherry, really. But you know it's not very jolly for me all alone when you go to your old reunions. So I asked Jack if he'd like to come and keep me amused. Well probably go to the theatre or somewhere. That's o.k. with you, isn't it?"

"Of course, of course. I just wondered, that's all."

When Dulcie called her husband "Sherry" it was simply her way of pronouncing the word "Chéri," and when Douglas said that he "just wondered" it was simply a reiteration of his usual mental state with regard to his wife. He did not understand her. But, unlike most men who do not understand their wives, he did not regard this as in any way a misfortune. Quite the contrary, indeed. By some obscure process of reasoning he considered that it added to her charms. "Amazing woman! I shall never understand her!" He would announce this with a pleased smile, as though congratulating himself on some rare virtue.

He was a charming man, Douglas, charming. Having been a prisoner of war for three long years he had achieved a most Christian state of humility, and was prepared to listen respectfully to any opinion, however stupid, and to make allowances for any character, however objectionable. Not that his wife was either stupid or objectionable. Not at all! Possibly that was one of the things Douglas could not understand. It is quite conceivable. To meet at all times nothing more aggressive than a sceptical smooth smile, to hear nothing more fierce than a lightly sardonic word, was, to him, such a novelty that he found it excessively fascinating. Marvellous! Such a woman would remain for ever more inscrutable than the sphinx and even more totally impossible of comprehension. Douglas was proud of having arrived at such a gratifying condition of bewilderment. He was convinced that, in some way, his incarceration had done him no end of good. The ready disciple of any outworn

cliché, he firmly believed that the answer to Pontius Pilate's renowned question is to be found in such copy-book platitudes as : "Sweet are the uses of Adversity." Often, when talking to his friends at the club, he would suddenly come out with the phrase : "Well, one thing Adversity taught me-----," and so on. He spoke of adversity with a familiar respect, as if it were a learned sage, known only to a select few, and his friends would be solemnly advised from time to time that from this powerful influence he had learned tolerance. Many other things besides: many highly desirable things, but above all, and to an almost unlimited degree. Tolerance ! He could tolerate almost anything, which was just as well.

Just as well because shortly after his return from the wars he found that his wife had "made pals"—as she expressed it—with a gay and debonair young man from the Ministry of Information. Douglas tolerated this with admirable fortitude and when at times, seeing them together, an unfamiliar sensation made his eyes smart and his nerves twitch, he told himself that such feelings were unworthy of him—adversity should have knocked them out of him, and he would try hard to feel ashamed, but without success. He would only feel more bewildered than ever at this further evidence of his wife's virtuosity in making herself incomprehensible.

And so he went to his silly old reunion that evening knowing that Dulcie would be saved from boredom by the ubiquitous Jack, quite according to well-established precedent. But on this fateful evening he found it utterly impossible to enjoy himself. He was not overburdened with imagination, but he could not avoid the impression that his friends were all regarding him, from time to time, with knowing, sympathetic smiles. On his way home he decided that he would have to speak seriously to Dulcie about this, and the idea of speaking seriously distressed him abominably. He knew what would happen. She would treat him to a languishing gaze from beneath those colourless eyebrows and he would capitulate immediately. She had a positive genius for making him feel embarrassed. Nevertheless, he was determined to do his best. He was not going to be made to appear ridiculous, and with this highly masculine resolve he entered the house.

He found them in the study. Thinking of it afterwards he was pathetically unable to explain his reaction. There they were, sitting silently together, and upon his entrance neither spoke a word. Though he did not realise it, it was this unaccountable silence, more incriminating than any spate of words, more damning than any conceivable embrace, that spoke so eloquently of their miserable duplicitousness. He felt suddenly as though he could see clearly for the first time in his life and the memory of a thousand small, insignificant things came to set his mind in a tunnoil; the smiles of his friends at the club, the casual insolence of this man who treated him always in such cavalier manner, his wife's off-handed attitude towards him. Jealous? Would that futile word express what he felt now? He had a furious desire to blot out the entire scene; to eliminate even from memory the absurd and disgusting sight that overwhelmed him. Why did neither of them speak? But they only stared stupidly at him, and he had never seen an expression of guilt more utterly confessed than was in their frightened eyes.

He looked desperately from one to the other. About the room were some savage souvenirs that his wife had brought back from a trip to the East, before they were married. His searching glance caught sight of a broad, flat blade with a short stub of a handle. He stepped quickly across and snatched the *parang* from the wall

Kuching Market Price List.

Average monthly Market Prices (August 21st to September 20th).

RICE—(per gantang)

White milling	\$1.98
Local, polished Dayak	1.79
Local, cargo Dayak	1.70
Pulut, local	2.37

SUGAR—(per kati)

Nipah Sugar20
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EGGS—(each)

Duck, fresh13
,, salted16
Fowl12

EDIBLE FATS—(per kati)

Coconut Oil32
Pork Fat No. 1	1.18
.....298

PORK—(per kati)

Lean	No. 1	1.60
Lean with fat ,,	2	1.10

BEEF—(per kati)

Beef steak	2.40
Beef curry meat	1.20
Buffalo No. 1	2.00
,, curry meat	1.00
Kambing (daging)	1.73

POULTRY—(per kati)

Capon	1.45
Duck	1.24
Fowl, Chinese breed	1.32
Fowl, Dayak breed	1.05

FISH—(per kati)

Fresh fish No. 175
" " " 241
" " " 324
Prawns " 166
" " 235
Crab " 144
" " 232
Salted fish ,, 1 special cut96
" " " 254
" " " 330
" roe " "90

VEGETABLES—(per kati)

Bangkuang (Yam beans)	\$.10
Bayam17
Bean Sprouts20
Cabbage, imported	1.00
Changkok Manis20
Daun Bawang46
Ensahi Puteh21
,, Bunga15
French beans65
Garlic, fresh21
Kachang panjang18
Kangkong13
Keladi (Chinese)23
Ketola20
Kribang06
Kundor13
Labu05
Ladies Fingers28
Lettuce per tie05
Lobak (Chinese radish)21
Lobak, salted imported50
Onions, Bombay30
Onions, small66
Potatoes, Bengal35
Pria (Bitter Gourd)28
Bamboo shoots, salted10
Trong (Brinjals)16
Yams10
Cucumber (timun)12
Ginger43
Chillies (red)33
,, (green)14
Sauerkraut, imported80
,, local20
Tamarind20

FRUIT—

Pisang Umbun	...	per kati07
Pisang Tandok	...	each04 to .08
Pineapples	...	per kati10
Papayas	...	"10

SUNDRIES—

Bean Curd	...	per piece10
,, (white)	...	"10
,, (yellow)	...	"20
Kerosene Oil	...	per tin	...	4.20
"	...	per bottle20
Charcoal	...	per pkl.	...	4.50
,, semi-converted	...	"	...	2.50
Sauce (ketchup)	...	bottle (local)50
Blachan	...	per kati33
Dried prawn	...	"	...	1.80
Coconut, fresh	...	each07
Sago	...	per packet10
Bako Wood	...	per panchang	...	12.00

