

***KYK-OVER-AL***

**Volume 2**

**Issues 6-7**

**June - December 1948**

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June - December 1948.

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**THE GUYANA CLASSICS LIBRARY**

**Series Preface by the President of Guyana,  
H. E. Bharrat Jagdeo**

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## SERIES PREFACE

Modern Guyana came into being, in the Western imagination, through the travelogue of Sir Walter Raleigh, *The Discoverie of Guiana* (1595). Raleigh was as beguiled by Guiana's landscape ("I never saw a more beautiful country...") as he was by the prospect of plunder ("every stone we stooped to take up promised either gold or silver by his complexion"). Raleigh's contemporaries, too, were doubly inspired, writing, as Thoreau says, of Guiana's "majestic forests", but also of its earth, "resplendent with gold." By the eighteenth century, when the trade in Africans was in full swing, writers cared less for Guiana's beauty than for its mineral wealth. Sugar was the poet's muse, hence the epic work by James Grainger *The Sugar Cane* (1764), a poem which deals with subjects such as how best to manure the sugar cane plant, the most effective diet for the African slaves, worming techniques, etc. As John Singleton confessed (in his *General Description of the West Indies*, 1776), there was no contradiction between the manufacture of odes and that of sugar: "...a fine exuberant plant, which clothes the fields with the richest verdure. There is, I believe, scarcely any cultivation which yields so lucrative a return per acre as under favourable circumstances, than that of the sugar cane. So bountiful a gift of Providence seems not only calculated to call forth the activity and enterprise of the agriculturalist and merchant, but to awaken also feelings of a higher and more refined enthusiasm." The refinement of art and that of sugar were one and the same process.

The nineteenth century saw the introduction of Indian indentureship, but as the sugar industry expanded, literary works contracted. Edward Jenkins' novel *Lutchmee and Dilloo* (1877) was the only substantial fiction on Guiana, and whilst it was broadly sympathetic to the plight of Indian labourers, it was certain of Britain's imperial destiny, and rights over mineral resources. It was not until the period leading up to

Guiana's Independence from Britain (1966) and the subsequent years, that our own writers of Amerindian, African, Asian and European ancestry (A. J. Seymour, Wilson Harris, Jan Carew, Edgar Mittelholzer, Martin Carter, Rajkumari Singh et al.) attempted to purify literature of its commercial taint, restoring to readers a vision of the complexity of the Guyanese character and the beauty of the Guyanese landscape.

The Guyana Classics Library will republish out-of-print poetry, novels and travelogues so as to remind us of our literary heritage, and it will also remind us of our reputation for scholarship in the fields of history, anthropology, sociology and politics, through the reprinting of seminal works in these subjects. The Series builds upon previous Guyanese endeavours, like the institution of CARIFESTA and the Guyana Prize. I am delighted that my government has originated the project and has pledged that every library in the land will be furnished with titles from the Series, so that all Guyanese can appreciate our monumental achievement in moving from Exploitation to Expression. If the Series becomes the foundation and inspiration for future literary and scholarly works, then my government will have moved towards fulfilling one of its primary tasks, which is the educational development of our people.

**President Bharrat Jagdeo**

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***KYK-OVER-AL***  
**Volume 2**  
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The Caribbean Press



## DEDICATION

This Volume is dedicated to the memory of A.J. Seymour, poet; editor; scholar and pioneer of Caribbean cultural production. He gave a lifetime of service to the literary arts of the region.



## INTRODUCTION

First published in Guyana in December 1945, *Kyk-Over-Al* was to become one of the most significant and long-running literary magazines in the Caribbean. Over the course of some 50 issues it has featured work by many of the leading writers from Guyana and the wider Caribbean, publishing the early poetry and fiction of such groundbreaking authors as Wilson Harris and Martin Carter, as well as important critical essays, histories, and reviews. Between 1945 and 1961, the journal was edited by the poet A. J. Seymour, a “committed literary figure and cultural architect” whose editorial notes and frequent essays for *Kyk-Over-Al* represent landmark contributions to the forging of a Guyanese literary culture.<sup>1</sup> Following Seymour’s departure from Guyana in 1962, the journal went into abeyance until a revival in 1984 under the editorship of Seymour and the poet and novelist Ian McDonald. With the death of Seymour in 1989, McDonald became sole editor. The magazine has continued to appear intermittently into the 2000s, with activist and writer Vanda Radzik joining McDonald on editorial duties.

*Kyk-Over-Al* was founded by the British Guiana Writers’ Association and the British Guiana Union of Cultural Clubs, of which Seymour was Honorary Secretary. Costing a shilling and with a cover design by Cecil E. Barker, the first edition of the journal declared its intention to “...cultivate among British Guiana’s writers the art of setting out a point of view persuasively even when wholly uncompromising; always giving short shrift to the brow-beating and the intolerant; that it will assist our readers with the enquiring and challenging mind; and that, in pointing the way to a clear appreciation of British Guiana’s problems, it will contribute towards the efforts of all our people to achieve full responsibility in personal and community decisions.”<sup>2</sup> The name *Kyk-Over-Al* (“see over all”), taken from the ruined Dutch fort at the confluence of the Essequibo, Mazaruni, and Cuyuni rivers, was meant to signify the need “for quick and wide vigilance and the expression of an alert people.”<sup>3</sup> As Seymour

made clear in his editorial notes, the magazine was to be actively engaged in the project of building the Guyanese nation and of shaping a unique culture. *Kyk-Over-Al*, he wrote, will be “an instrument to help forge a Guianese people, to make them conscious of their intellectual and spiritual possibilities.”<sup>4</sup>

Seymour’s ambitions for the magazine chime with the upsurge in nationalist sentiment and the increasing agitation for political sovereignty that spread like wildfire across the Caribbean in the middle decades of the twentieth century. Against this backdrop, as Nelini Persram has observed, what “raged in the debates and expositions of *Kyk-Over-Al* assisted in the conscious articulation and awareness of an emerging Guyanese culture, something unprecedented in the country’s history. For Seymour the central interest was how, with the historical influence and domination of the language of English, the Guyanese could take the old colonial world and remake it into their own nation.”<sup>5</sup> Indeed, Seymour stressed the need for Guyanese, and Caribbean peoples more generally, to “make an act of possession somehow of our environment and the faster the better.”<sup>6</sup> Many of the stories and poems that appeared in the early issues of the magazine can be read as a direct response to Seymour’s enjoinder. The first issue, for instance, carries a fascinating piece of short fiction by Wilson Harris, ‘**Tomorrow**’, which provides an early glimpse of some of the themes (if not yet the unique prose style) that he would explore over the course his long career. Intriguingly, the story gestures to what would become a central concern in Harris’s work – the necessity of developing an original aesthetic appropriate to the remarkable landscapes of Guyana:

*“There was only one picture in the room. A picture of the Kaieteur Fall. When he saw me looking at it, the old man said –*

*‘I like that.’ He seemed to be seeking words to express his thoughts. ‘It has power. Beauty. Mystery. It is a symbol for this land. The symbol of power waiting to be harnessed. Of beauty that goes hand in hand with terror and majesty. Of the mystery that lies in men’s hearts, waiting to be explored, given form and direction and purpose.’”<sup>7</sup>*



In a later piece of short fiction, **'Fences Upon the Earth'** (published in issue four of *Kyk-Over-Al*), Harris can be seen still struggling to find a form of narrative expression adequate to the environmental experience of Guyana. At the end of the story, the narrator declares: *"Yes. I know what you will say. The words I have used are inadequate. Forgive me. I know it was inevitable that it should be so. The whole thing had been secret and wordless."*<sup>8</sup> As Reinhard Sander has observed, this *"'secret and wordless' thing is an encounter with the Amerindian presence in the Guyanese interior, an encounter that provides some insight into the profound and disturbing impression that the Guyanese landscape and its ancestral inhabitants were to leave on the mind of the future novelist."*<sup>9</sup> Indeed, the description of this encounter seems to move us a step closer to a prose more familiarly 'Harrisian' in style and tone:

*"For the first time that I could remember I looked upon a human being standing upon the earth, not falsely, by force or subterfuge, or bravado, or by any sort of empty pretension, but very simply, as though to own the earth were to carry the most natural and easeful burden in the world . . . His limbs were powerful. They had the perfection of the young trees that stand rooted in the forests, breathing forth an ageless symmetry in their being".*<sup>10</sup>

That Harris, one of the Caribbean's most acclaimed and original authors, should first publish in *Kyk-Over-Al* is testament to the journal's significance. There is a real frisson to be had in browsing through the yellowing pages of early issues and seeing formative works by poets and novelists who would go on to play a defining role in the development of Caribbean letters. Fifteen years after **'Tomorrow'**, for example, Harris would publish his first novel, *Palace of the Peacock* (1960), a visionary re-telling of the quest for El Dorado that sought not only to reanimate eclipsed historical perspectives, but also to imaginatively redeem a past that had never existed. In this novel, as he would do in the twenty-two that followed (the last being *The Ghost of Memory* in 2006, over 60 years since his first appearance in *Kyk-Over-Al*), Harris sifts through the ruins of history, searching for signs of its Utopian negation in the form of the unborn potential of cross-cultural community.

Harris's longstanding emphasis on the redemptive force of cross-cultural community can be seen in embryo in a number of the poems he published in *Kyk-Over-Al*. Many of these were later included in his collection *Eternity to Season* (1954), which seeks to weave together Homeric myth with the landscapes of Guyana and the lives of its people in a manner that foreshadows Derek Walcott's epic reworking of Greek legend in a Caribbean context in *Omeros* (1990).

Alongside Harris, Martin Carter was another consistent contributor to *Kyk-Over-Al*. Indeed, his first published piece of work – a 'fragment' from '**An Ode to Midnight**' – appeared in issue six of the journal. This poem, with its "*deliberate archaism*" which "*does little to distinguish it from the many pastiches in Kyk-Over-Al that cast back to classical and romantic structures of poetic expression*", represents, as Gemma Robinson puts it, something of a "*deceptive entrance*" by Carter into Guyanese literature.<sup>11</sup> It would not be long, however, before Carter's more familiar poetic voice – passionate, committed, protesting the squalor of colonialism in a language of lyrical beauty – would resound in the pages of the periodical. Here he is in '**Death of a Slave**', for example, excoriating the brutality of plantation labour in stanzas at once both savagely forthright and dense with the gravity of history:

"cane field is green dark green  
green with life of its own  
heart of slave is red deep red  
red with life of its own.

day passes like long whip  
over the back of slave  
day is burning whip  
biting the neck of slave".<sup>12</sup>

It is worth comparing this poem as it appeared in *Kyk-Over-Al* in 1952 with the version published two years later as part of the collection *Poems of Resistance from British Guiana*. In the latter, the same stanzas are rendered as follows:

“The cane field is green dark green  
green with a life of its own  
The heart of a slave is red deep red  
red with a life of its own.

Day passes like a long whip  
over the back of a slave  
Day is a burning whip  
Biting the neck of a slave”.<sup>13</sup>

The addition of a series of definite and indefinite articles (“The cane field”, “a slave”) to the 1954 version subtly alters the rhythm of the poem: the *Kyk-Over-Al* piece has a punchy ferocity, a clipped cadence that is softened in the later rendering. While the tone and metre of the latter is perhaps more successful at engaging the reader in the subject of the poem (Carter’s aim in his lyrics, observes Robinson, was always to “pursue the goal of collective feeling” and to challenge his readers to join him in making sense of the world<sup>14</sup>), there is something about the brute simplicity of the earlier construction – especially its undifferentiated evocation of the slave as simply “slave” (“neck of slave” / “back of slave”) – that speaks to the terrifying, dehumanizing violence of slavery.

Comparisons such as this highlight how immensely interesting are the contributions to *Kyk-Over-Al* for those looking to track not only the contours of Guyanese literary history, but also the fascinating genealogies of individual poems and prose pieces. The republication of the journal in the *Guyana Classics* series will make easier the task of throwing light on the literary development of Guyana’s most significant authors. In addition to Harris and Carter, *Kyk-Over-Al* included work by a range of other significant writers in the early stages of their careers. Edgar Mittelholzer, for instance, contributed a number of intriguing poems to the journal (see issues three and nineteen). The “first of his generation to emigrate to the UK to make a serious career of writing novels”, Mittelholzer was a pioneer, penning such important works as *Corentyne Thunder* (1941), *Shadows Move Among Them* (1951), and the *Kaywana*

trilogy of historical novels (1952-58), which cover over 300 years of Guyanese history.<sup>15</sup> The work of Jan Carew, whose novels *The Wild Coast* (1958) and *Black Midas* (1958) are compelling re-workings of the *Bildungsroman* in a Guyanese context, also features in the journal, as does that of Roy Heath, who contributed some rare early poetry to issues seventeen (1953) and nineteen (1954), some twenty years before his first novel, *A Man Come Home* (1974), was published.

Of equal interest when reading through early issues of *Kyk-Over-Al* is the vast array of literary pieces by contributors whose career did not subsequently flourish, or whose work has never received the same kind of attention as that of writers like Harris or Mittelholzer. The journal enables us to reconstruct an often overlooked portion of the literary field in which those more celebrated authors were working. The dynamics of literary consecration and canonization tend to produce relatively attenuated literary histories, marginalizing certain writers and obscuring the diverse range of work with which more well-known texts may well have been in dialogue; *Kyk-Over-Al* allows us to recover some of that rich tradition and to develop a more fine-grained understanding of the evolution of Guyanese literature.

This is especially so since in addition to fostering new literary talents, *Kyk-Over-Al* sought to preserve and bring to attention the work of earlier Guyanese writers, thereby not only “moulding a Guianese consciousness”, but also “recording its tradition”, as Seymour put it.<sup>16</sup> In illustration of Seymour’s point, the second issue selected the poet Walter MacArthur Lawrence (1896-1942) for “honour and commemoration”, republishing a selection of stanzas from his poem ‘**Ode to Kaieteur**’ and featuring a number of essays on his work.<sup>17</sup> This issue of the journal was notable, too, for what, as Petamber Persaud has observed, may be “the first recorded call for a local literary prize”, with James W. Smith, the Honorary Secretary of the British Guiana Writers’ Association, arguing for the establishment of a literary award in the form of the Leo Medal for poetry, The Webber Medal for fiction and The Clementi Medal for non-fiction and drama.<sup>18</sup>

In preserving the Guyanese literary heritage while also supporting and even launching the careers of some of Guyana's most well-known and critically lauded writers, *Kyk-Over-Al* not only helped to shape the contours of Guyanese literary culture, but also contributed more generally to the 'boom' in Caribbean writing in the 1950s. Indeed, the journal was one of a number of literary magazines that flourished across the region in the middle decades of the twentieth century. These included such periodicals as *The Beacon* in Trinidad (first published in 1931), *Tropiques* in Martinique (1941), *Bim* in Barbados (1942), *Focus* in Jamaica (1943), *Origenes* in Cuba (1944), *Asomante* in Puerto Rico (1945), and *Caribbean Quarterly*, which was launched by the University of the West Indies' Department of Extra Mural Studies in 1949. Alongside such outlets as the BBC's *Caribbean Voices* radio programme (which ran from 1943 to 1958 and featured readings of work by writers such as George Lamming, Una Marson, V. S. Naipaul, and Sam Selvon), these magazines provided a new forum for the circulation and discussion of Caribbean literature, encouraging into print a whole host of emerging literary talents.

In comparison with many of these other journals, *Kyk-Over-Al* was, as Laurence Breiner has observed, "*remarkable for the high quality of its poetry from the very beginning.*"<sup>19</sup> This was down in large part to the frequent contributions made by Harris, Carter, and Seymour himself (Harris contributed some 37 poems between 1945 and 1961, Carter some 24, and Seymour over 40). The journal also "*made pioneering efforts in literary criticism, and opened its pages to writers of the whole region, even publishing translations of works from the French Antilles.*"<sup>20</sup> Indeed, Breiner suggests that *Kyk-Over-Al*'s outlook was "*closely tied to the dream of the West Indian Federation.*"<sup>21</sup> In a similar vein, L. E. Braithwaite has argued that the magazine moved from a purely Guyanese to a West Indian position with the establishment of the University College of the West Indies in 1948.<sup>22</sup>

The pause in the journal's publication in 1961, occasioned by Seymour's departure from Guyana, occurred just as the country was entering into a period of intense ethno-political hostilities that rent the fabric of society. That *Kyk-Over-Al*

should fall silent at this time seems poignantly apt given its stated aim to help build the nation and its commitment to fostering a collective Guyanese consciousness. Against the backdrop of race riots that pitched communities against one another, the journal's *raison d'être* perhaps appeared hopelessly Utopian. And yet such Utopianism was, and remains, fundamental to thinking beyond the apparent impasses and entrenched divisions that mark the present; and to imagining the possibility of a radically different future. As Martin Carter put it in 'Looking at Your Hands', published in *Kyk-Over-Al* in 1952, "I do not sleep to dream, but dream to change the world".<sup>23</sup> The last word, however, should perhaps belong to Seymour, who expressed similar sentiments to Carter in a poem published in the third issue, and which in many ways encapsulates the ideals behind the founding of the journal:

"To-day they hope  
But to-morrow belongs to the people.  
To-morrow they will put power behind their brow  
And get the skill in their hands.

To-morrow  
They will make a hammer to smash the slums  
And build the schools.

Like a River, the people hold history in their hands  
And To-morrow belongs to them".<sup>24</sup>

**Michael Niblett**  
**University of Warwick**

### Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Nalini Persam, 'The Importance of Being Cultural: Nationalist Thought and Jagan's Colonial World', in *Small Axe*, 15 (March 2004): 86.

<sup>2</sup> H. R. Harewood, 'A Message', in *Kyk-Over-Al*, 1.1 (1945): 26.

<sup>3</sup> A. J. Seymour, 'Editorial Notes', in *Kyk-Over-Al*, 1.1 (1945): 7

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Persam, 'The Importance of Being Cultural', 86-87.

<sup>6</sup> A. J. Seymour, 'Editor's Note', in *Kyk-Over-Al*, 2.7 (1948): 2.

<sup>7</sup> Wilson Harris, 'Tomorrow', in *Kyk-Over-Al*, 1.1 (1945): 30.

- <sup>8</sup> Wilson Harris, 'Fences Upon the Earth', in *Kyk-Over-Al*, 1.4 (1947): 21.
- <sup>9</sup> Reinhard W. Sander, 'The Quest for Form: Wilson Harris' Contributions to *Kyk-Over-Al*', in *World Literature Written in English*, 22.1 (1983): 20.
- <sup>10</sup> Harris, 'Fences Upon the Earth', 21.
- <sup>11</sup> Gemma Robinson, 'Introduction', in *University of Hunger: Collected Poems and Selected Prose*, by Martin Carter and ed. Gemma Robinson (Tarsset, Northumberland: Bloodaxe Books, 2006), 17.
- <sup>12</sup> Martin Carter, 'Death of a Slave', in *Kyk-Over-Al*, 4.14 (1952): 53.
- <sup>13</sup> Martin Carter, 'Death of a Slave', in *University of Hunger*, 88.
- <sup>14</sup> Robinson, 'Introduction', in *University of Hunger*, 31.
- <sup>15</sup> Michael Gilkes, 'Edgar Mittelholzer', in *West Indian Literature*, 2nd edition, ed. Bruce King (London and Basingstoke: Macmillan Education, 1995), 127.
- <sup>16</sup> A. J. Seymour, 'Editorial Notes', in *Kyk-Over-Al*, 1.2 (1946): 3-4.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>18</sup> Petamber Persaud, 'Preserving Our Literary Heritage: *Kyk-Over-Al*, Part 1 – 1945-1961', in *Guyana Chronicle* 30th July (2006). Web. 1 March. <http://www.landofsixpeoples.com/gytodaysixevenjs.htm>
- <sup>19</sup> Laurence A. Breiner, *An Introduction to West Indian Poetry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). 78.
- <sup>20</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>21</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>22</sup> See A. J. Seymour, 'Kyk at 50', in *Kyk-Over-Al*, 46/47 (1995): 19.
- <sup>23</sup> Martin Carter, 'Looking at Your Hands', in *Kyk-Over-Al*, 4.14 (1952): 52.
- <sup>24</sup> A. J. Seymour, 'To-Morrow Belongs to the People', in *Kyk-Over-Al*, 1.3 (1946): 11.





# ISSUE 6



## EDITORIAL NOTES

In one sense, the Memorial to Harold Stannard is a report on the work of an expert in human relations and community growth. He was not an adviser to the Comptroller for Development and Welfare, but the problem he studied on behalf of the British Council in 1943, that of creating self-respect and social responsibility in unorganized peoples, permeates the problems of Social Welfare, education, labour relations, economics, and in diminishing degree perhaps all other problems of the West Indies.

As much as Wakefield or Hammond, he was an expert worker in his own field. This is principally a people's posthumous report on his work, and perhaps the "spiritual dynamic" that Simey considers necessary for our Caribbean nationhood stems from him.

This Memorial has its own architecture of gratitude mingled with grief and certainly it is the visible sign of a grace of spirit that continues in the West Indies today.

Especially is *Kyk-Over-Al* grateful for the intimate memoir that J. F. has forwarded to us, because its story gives an insight into the man whom later we knew, but all the other writers have laid us under a special debt for their contributions.

For the remainder of this issue, an editor glances through the pages, only to greet new names and to bid welcome to old ones, to record that the craftsmanship pieces were specifically solicited and warmly to appreciate the generous gesture of the Combined Cultural Committee which donated \$50 towards the cost of this issue of *Kyk-Over-Al*.

A.J.S.



## ELISE

by John Grimes

Go song and greet her, my lady!  
Coax kisses and smiles to her lips—  
Sing, warble and croon to my lady  
A love song, and whisper this.

That I worship, adore her my lady  
As a votary kneels at his shrine  
Oh! my Goddess my Casseopeia  
Take my song and my heart, they are thine.

The orchids that bloom in the moonlight  
In their pageant of glory rejoice  
And call to the rose and the lily,  
“She outshines us in beauty and poise.”

Had I that ambrosial apple  
I'd have ruthlessly scorned all the pleas  
Of Pallas and proud Aphrodite  
And elected my soul mate—Elise.

# SOMEWHERE

by Helen Taitt

Somewhere I see the earth rise up,  
And take its green,  
Beyond the skyline to the clouds.  
And people pass before me in the day,  
My people with their thoughts.

Somewhere I know contentment while I sit,  
And feel the sun about me in the shade,  
And watch my people's shadows on the rocks  
As they parade.

Somewhere the wind is strong upon the grass,  
And calling from the restless faraway,  
And there I let the quiet hours pass,  
And take the anguish of my yesterday.

# ON THE SANDS OF LEGUAN

by Quentin Richmond

The sun sets on Leguan  
As I lie listening to the clear brown waves  
Washing-swishing-breaking in creamy foam  
    On the sands of Leguan!

An undulating foamy line  
Creeps slowly up the shelving bank,  
Curving around with grace to where  
The thin long-limbed courida trees  
Sway backward from the water's edge,  
Waving gently, firmly rooted  
    On the sands of Leguan!

A cooling breeze blows on the river—  
Sends water to meet sand.  
The rippling river's coldly watching sentinels—  
Tall courida trees—stand firm  
As watery tentacles fan out to close them round:  
For Essequibo's charging  
    On the sands of Leguan!

A mist beyond the trees dimly reveals distant islands.  
Did not the sand before me show light brown?  
Light brown one moment—darkened in the next—  
Then silvered—dampened—overcome outright.  
But sun set slowly  
    On the sands of Leguan!

The courida trees have joined the sea.  
A little dark brown breadth is now  
What was a light brown broad expanse.  
The foamy line breaks not, but presses on— and conquers  
As the sun sinks in the West.  
Now, Essequibo reigns supreme  
    O'er the sands of Leguan!

## TELEPHONE

by J. Alwyn Rodway

Ring your insistent summonses to men!  
Stare with black mouth and white eyes from the wall!  
Gather live words in your brown box and then  
Transmute them into waves electrical—  
You have heard all, heard all, the light, the serious:  
Shop lists and invitations to the dance,  
Lovers' sweet nothings, parents' words imperious  
Quarrels, brief triumphs over circumstance;  
Have heard death-messages from tear washed faces  
Have reproduced them all, each sigh, each snigger—  
Annihilator of slow time and spaces—  
Each voice's modulations warmth or vigour  
Yours neither sense nor soul, mere stuff and yet  
This much your masters lack—you can forget.



## STAR OF EVE

by Stanley Hamilcar White

Star of Eve, wandering companionless  
Amidst the naked skiey blue, with pale  
Regards you view the mountains, hills and vales  
And fields at dusk. Deserted by the rest  
Of Heaven's meteors, from out the west  
You rise, while later on, by two's or three's  
Or as the clustered milky way, all these  
Will traverse o'er the heavens azure breast.  
All these-and you your twilight course must steer.

Star of Eve, sallow in your pensive brow,  
And lonely in high Heaven's crowded heart,  
You are like the soul of man, divinely fair,  
That wanders o'er this sombre earth e'en now,  
And yet of it does share no earthly part.

## TWILIGHT

by James W. Smith

I dance upon the brink of day  
And try to keep the night away.  
I stand between the dark and light,  
And ere the sun dives out of sight  
I borrow from his flaming rays  
The splendour of a million days,  
The rainbow in my hand I hold —  
Vermilion, russet, orange, gold!  
I strive to light the darkening sky;  
The day, I say, it shall not die!  
For who has seen the night so gay  
He would not change it for the day?  
And though I lose th' uneven fight  
I fill the inky sky with light.

But countless eyes at night must play  
Where only one had ruled the day!

## *From:* AN ODE TO MIDNIGHT

by Martin Carter

O, midnight hour, why must thy time be sad?  
Art thou not like the other hours of night?  
E'en though the day and all its hours had  
The smile of sunbeams, thou too has thy light.  
For every even when the sun declines  
And takes its couch beyond the western world  
The stars awake and Venus first doth glow  
Why, darkened hour, must all joy be furled  
Or sorrow show?

Hark! now I hear a wind's quick tongue outpour  
A tale of grief into the listening leaves  
No! 'tis not like a saddened lover's poor  
And stammering voice while as he grieves  
He speaks, and burdens every ear and heart,  
No, it is like defiance 'gainst black fate  
And it is like the spirit's mighty quest  
Of Truth and Life which never shall abate  
Or seek for rest.

Indeed, indeed I gave ear to the winds  
And listened with the leaves unto the voice  
But vain alas were all the stolen gains  
And nought the sweet for though it spoke of joys  
Its grief, my fears, its lament and my thoughts  
Did both complain that joy flies with the life  
When Death the fiend comes with cruel wrath.  
Ah, midnight voice, thou tellest this earth's strife  
The weary path!

# WATER-WETNESS

by Horace L. Mitchell

Wetness and water,  
    Water and water running.  
Dampness in the air  
    And everywhere the raindrops dropping.  
Dropping gems of liquid sunshine,  
    Crystal-clear and constant,  
Dreamily, lazily dropping, letting themselves  
    Down upon the surfaces of earth.  
Then hurrying on, running on,  
    Uniting to the perfect sameness  
Of a muddy, little sea.

Wetness,  
    And the grasses greening  
Greening greener than their pristine green,  
    Greening into greenest emerald,  
Freshening into a fragrance  
    As coming from the breeze that Zephyr breathed  
And wreathed into herbal happiness.

Wetness.  
    And the silence of the trees  
Speaking soundfully in the patter of rain-drops  
    On the tree-tops and leaves' tops and house-tops,  
And the silence of the birds sounding  
    In the sounds of water kissing water  
And fusing at the contact,

Wetness still,  
    And the world is wailing,  
Wailing in the sounds of dropping rain.  
    Draining its harrowed heart of pain  
And punishment,  
    By swift emission of its watery tears.

# GUYANESE COASTLAND

by Frank E. Dalzell

Ageless it is in time; clothed in immortality;  
for it has seen the conqueror with all his power bereft of fear  
come in his sailing boat and step upon the land.  
The chanties of its slaves have hovered on its edge  
ere they have taken wings and flown the broad Atlantic to the  
Motherland.

Unmarked graves have oft revealed the shameful story  
of inhuman deeds performed by man upon his brother man.  
Yes; ageless it is in time; packed to its boundary's edge with  
history.

But time moves on...

And cooling rhythmic winds which make the palm fronds  
dance against the sky  
will urge the tumbling waters further in to dash upon the shore.  
But we shall not be here to revel in this ostentatious spread of  
passion.

For we to-day who walk upon the dust of yesterday  
to-morrow will no better be than those mute stones;  
commingled with the dust from which we came  
will true become the sons and daughters of Guiana's land;  
be clothed in ageless immortality when we are gone.

# GREEN IS THE COLOUR OF THE WORLD

in face of Present Being-Buber

by Wilson Harris

## I

Green is the colour of the world  
like grass growing in a clean river  
seen so that the clean river  
becomes dark-green and beautiful  
like a hidden capacity beneath what is tangible

Changeable is the mirrored unseen world  
in the dark beautiful water

Each possibility lingers hopefully until a cloud  
condemns the impossible surmise  
and the misery of worms and flies  
eating holes into human flesh  
is brushed aside  
by blurred ripples and all things  
lose identity. The waters  
are colourless with this unusual pain  
but they melt and mirror  
the immaterial world again  
in a new access of existentiality,  
in God's concern to laugh or weep!

## II

Rain spattered and immense is the world  
conjured out of many-sided visions  
dripping like tears from the roof of a house  
for a debt unpaid in imagination  
The owner torments himself  
unnecessarily  
but bucks up to smile with a sneaking conviction and yet is  
not fully redeemed from mockery!

Rejection and glory conspire  
when he resolves to be free

### III

A line is drawn  
on the fringe of dense shadow that is fallen upon glass.  
Colours are mute. The inverted  
gaiety of a church window  
beguiles the uneasy bastard  
whose roots uptorn  
seek a sombre and pathetic expiation of guilt in deciding the  
future!

Luminous brow of man becomes  
statue's subjection to traffic of wares in the market-place.

So we must gloom  
like forms of doom  
where the gloom of church windows  
becomes a gaudy smile on a strumpet's face!  
Here is no room to speculate  
behind closed windows of doom.

But outside on the fringe of uncertainty we turn gropingly  
to embrace.

And this is not a poem of borrowed glory.  
It is only the isolated continuity deeply present,  
the parting gesture of cruel rebuff, dispensed with.

We walked with memorable companions in the street  
but the last barrier of the empty individual was tragically  
erected  
and in anguish we are constrained  
to greet.

## BEYOND

by A.J. Seymour

Never the permanent sky  
Spoke with so loud a tongue,  
Never the angry sea  
Struck at the dark sky's cheek,  
But the marble blue's beyond  
The curve of heaven's frown  
And the little fish ride unshaken  
Below where the sea is deep.

### II

"Come unto Me", He said  
"Why are you so cast down?  
Why so depressed?  
Your hope lies in my crown", He said,  
"And your peace is my breast.  
In my breast sleeps your peace".

Quiet in their ranks stood my peopled town  
And all my restlessnesses ceased.



## HAROLD STANNARD: THE COMPLETE HUMANIST

by J. F.



Photo by kind permission of  
the *Daily Chronicle*, Ltd.

Born as he was in the heyday of Victorian prosperity, Harold Stannard looked back on the last two decades of the nineteenth century in which he passed his formative years, as upon a golden age. This was not because his parents were in easy circumstances — they were not, though both his mother and his father had rich relatives.

His father, descended from a Jewish family whose roots went far back among the old communities of Metz and Frankfurt, was in business in Paris when the Franco-Prussian war and its aftermath of disorder in France compelled him to seek his livelihood in England. He set up in Birmingham as an export agent. His principle was to establish personal contact by frequent visits to the Continent with one retailer in each of the principal towns of Europe — if possible with the best shop in town — and supply that shop, and that shop only, with the best that Birmingham could make in the way of table ware and other plated goods. Harold's mother came from an old Anglo-Jewish family and, as was customary in those days, received her education not only in England but in France

and Germany as well. One of her sisters married a rich diamond merchant and that section of the genealogical tree wanders into a family associated with the British Consular service for centuries — one of these. W. A. Churchill, was British Consular General in the key city of Stockholm throughout the 1914-1918 war.

Of this branch of the family, three sons fought in the 1939-45 war. All were awarded D.S.O., and one, killed in 1941, defending Malta with the R.A.F., after earning D.F.C. The other two served in the army and won their M.C.'s. and their exploits in France and Italy respectively, read like passages from a romantic novel.

Harold was thus born into a family more than usually cosmopolitan in outlook and with that quick perception that was his all his life responded vigorously to the many stimuli that came his way. Early visits with his parents to Paris, Leipzig, Berlin, and above all to the old bank house of Offenbach, near Frankfurt-on-Main — the bank had a romantic history, having been founded by an ancestor in the eighteenth century who had started life as the coachman of the founder of the House of Rothschild — gave him an insight into European affairs which then compensated for his lack of book knowledge, and illuminated that knowledge when in due course he acquired it. His precocity somewhat alarmed his parents and they tried their best to “keep him back”. The intended kindness turned out to be unintentional cruelty and the sensitive child fretted himself into a fever. The wise old family doctor put his finger at once on the cause of the trouble and from the day he said, with calculated indiscretion in the presence of the patient, “*That child must go to school.*” Harold began to mend.

In those days all English towns had numbers of small schools usually conducted with great efficiency by elderly widows or maiden ladies in reduced circumstances. Very small children were taken and at first taught good manners and respect for their elders until they were old enough to absorb spelling and an English vocabulary, by learning long lists of words, and to absorb arithmetic by reciting multiplication tables. It all sounds very old-fashioned now, and no doubt there were some children who failed to respond

to that treatment. Harold was not one of them or perhaps he was fortunate in the school in which his mother chose for him. At any rate, he was thoroughly happy under the tutelage of Mrs. Fleetwood and she seems to have had the gift of bringing out the best in her young charges. One of Harold's exact contemporaries at the school who impressed him then because of his early gift for mathematics, retired only last year from the professorship of astro-physics at Cambridge. Harold declared that he never displayed a pronounced gift in that direction and Mrs. Fleetwood, good teacher and admirable psychologist (almost before the word had been coined) that she was, divined the bent of his mind and concentrated on language, spoken and written. Harold's response was immediate. He welcomed the discipline of verse and much of his childish writing is not without merit. At this time he began to celebrate the anniversary of his mother's birthday in verse and kept up the custom for many years.

In due course, Latin and Greek were added to the curriculum and in his eighth year, Mrs. Fleetwood decided that the time had come to coach him for one of the coveted foundation scholarships at the great school of the city, King Edward's High School, Birmingham.

Of course he was successful and from the time he entered King Edward's in 1891 to the end of his last term at Oxford in 1907 the cost of his education was entirely lifted from the shoulders of his parents. With characteristic modesty he maintained that this amazing succession of scholarships, prizes and exhibitions came to him merely because he was a good examinee. He was; but this was the outward and visible symbol of a well stored and orderly mind. From the very earliest years he showed, as can be seen from his childish essays, piously preserved by his mother, a quite exceptional capacity for bringing together all the relevant factors of a complicated problem, discarding irrelevant details but seizing firmly those that were relevant, and presenting a clear and coherent argument, deceptively smooth in texture but adamant as a piece of logical thought.

When Harold arrived at King Edward's School, Vardy, the headmaster was nearing the end of his time. One of the great teachers of the Victorian era, the reputation of the school had

risen under his direction to unprecedented heights, and he impressed the sensitive child by his splendid and dignified bearing as he read the school prayers in a beautifully modulated voice, full of reverence and awe-inspiring in its majesty. In his day the curriculum of the school was heavily biassed in the direction of classical learning and the humanities upon which Vardy's own scholarly reputation rested. This was an atmosphere in which Harold's mind could flourish and flourish it did — hero-worship of his headmaster playing no small part. Early in his time at King Edward's School he formed a deep and lasting friendship with David Arnott, of French descent though his parents had long been domiciled in Birmingham. Arnott had already laid the foundations of a brilliant career in the Indian Civil Service when he was killed serving with the Royal Warwickshire Regiment in France in 1916. Harold kept his memory green to the end of his life and with that kindness which is so often the accompaniment of intellectual distinction, lavished affection and respect upon David's parents until both died, in an effort, noble alike in its intensity and long continuance, to assuage their grievous loss of an only son.

Vardy retired before Harold left King Edwards and for him something was henceforth lacking in the school. By that time, however, the foundations of his scholarship had been laid and, though the emotional stimulus of Vardy's presence was removed the momentum generated by it carried Harold on to the end of his school career. He literally encumbered himself with prizes, so that in his last year at school, his name appears in the school calendar as captain of the school with no less than four lines beneath it of closely-printed symbols each one of which denotes the winning of a scholarship, a prize or an exhibition. It was thus not surprising that he entered Oxford with an open scholarship at Christ Church at Michaelmas, 1902.

Oxford in those days was entirely dominated by the University. It was a leisurely, sleepy little town clustered round the dreaming spires of the colleges and a young man Morris kept the bicycles of the members of the University in order in a workshop which nestled against the medieval town wall. University Commissions had reported and reforms had been

inaugurated, but substantially the colleges rested proudly on their ancient traditions and of these Christ Church was perhaps the oldest and proudest of all — its foundress a Saxon Saint, its chapel the Cathedral of the diocese, its Dean no mere tutor as in lesser colleges but one of the foremost dignitaries of the Anglican Church. Few could then foresee that this settled society, wherein if the Fellows "*dull and deep potations*" no longer "*excused the brisk intemperance of youth*" was in many respects not very different from Magdalen in Gibbon's day, would be disrupted by two world wars and the development of the internal combustion engine, which brought new elements into university and town, and made the ancient city into something resembling a suburb of the industrial undertaking which the genius of Morris, now Lord Nuffield, built up.

By reason of his solid grounding in history and the classics and his cosmopolitan background. Harold went to Christ Church more than usually well equipped to receive the best that the Oxford of his time could give. He continued the academic distinction that had been his at school and after passing with first class honours in Classical Moderations read for an honours degree in Oxford's greatest school (known colloquially as "*Greats*"), *Literae Humaniores*. He was one of the four members of his college who passed in the first class in 1906. Staying up a fifth year to read for an honours degree in history, he again passed in the first class. That Oxford chose to withhold her greatest prize from him when it was almost within his grasp, a Fellowship of All Souls, was her loss rather than his, though he was bitterly disappointed at the time. Had he been elected, there is little doubt that he would have stayed at Oxford and added to her lustre as well as his own in the sheltered academic life for which he was so supremely fitted by nature and training. It was not to be; and he sought his fortune in a larger and rougher world.

The Oxford of the schools is but half the tale. The other, perhaps more important half resides in the common rooms, the clubs and above all, in the Union Society. In these Harold was well equipped to play a prominent part. The great speed with which he could absorb knowledge allowed him plenty of spare time to cultivate the rich society of his fellows. His

eminent conversational gifts made him invariably the centre of any group he chose to join in Common Room or Hall, he entertained largely in his rooms and was ever a welcome guest in the rooms of others. Politics, which he saw as history in the making, was, because of his lively interest in history, absorbingly interesting to him. The dominant figure of his Birmingham boyhood had been Joseph Chamberlain — after Vardy, Harold's greatest hero. Thus he had already learned to "*think imperially*" long before he arrived in Oxford and he gravitated naturally to the ardent band of young Conservatives who supported the programme of tariff reform. He was elected to the Canning Club, wrote the history of the Club which is still current, and was the Club's honoured guest at its annual dinner up to the year before he died. Few West Indian readers need to be reminded of his urbane and persuasive manner on the rostrum. The hesitant beginning, the subtle feeling for the mood of audience, the certain grasp with which he caught it and then the clear exposition of his ease delivered in the terms his hearers found most sympathetic to their ears was a manifestation of the great sympathy with his fellow men which was his all his life. His quickness of wit and his telling phrase made him a formidable debater and many were the evenings when the mere rumour that he was to speak was sufficient to fill to overflowing the hall of the Union Society. Small wonder that the late Lord Birkenhead, no mean judge of forensic ability, pressed him to read for the Bar. He took the suggestion seriously enough to enrol himself as a student of the Inner Temple but that was as far as he ever went, for his ambition lay elsewhere.

As a schoolboy his ambition to write for the newspapers had been fired by his winning the first prize in one of the literary competitions set by the *Westminster Gazette*, then a London evening paper of very high literary standards. Thus when his time at Oxford was over, he applied to *The Times* and was accepted for training in the autumn of 1907. The paper was then still functioning with an 19th century constitution laid down in the Will of the founder, the terms of which were largely dictated by his dislike of his son and successor. Litigation was rampant, changes were in the air, and almost the whole burden of these worries was borne on

the shoulders of the manager, C. F. Moberly Bell, who was temperamentally incapable of delegating authority. The possibility of any satisfactory permanent engagement at that time seemed to Harold remote and when Sir George Armstrong invited him to join the brilliant staff he had collected in the office of the *Globe*, a Conservative evening paper of high standards that did not survive the 1914-18 war, Harold jumped at the chance. The easy hours of an evening paper of those days allowed him plenty of spare time to write for periodicals and even to help his friends by speaking in their election campaigns and he was already making considerable reputation in both fields when war broke out in 1914.

Nobody then realised the disaster that had overtaken the world and for some months Harold felt that he could best serve his country in the Foreign Office. As the struggle deepened, he came to the conclusion that, however unmilitary his background and temperament, his place was in the Army but herein he ran into a serious difficulty. English by birth, he was the son of a naturalized Englishman with a German name and for long he was refused a commission. Friends made representations in the highest quarters and eventually the queer decision was reached, whereby a commission would be offered him if he changed his name. Reluctantly he did so and was duly gazetted in the Hampshire Regiment. The Army wasted a few months and considerable effort in a fruitless attempt to turn him into a soldier, and then acted with more than customary sense by posting him to the counter espionage Department of Military Intelligence. There his long and intimate acquaintance with European affairs and his linguistic ability were of the greatest use. Yet he chafed at what he considered his uselessness and tried several times to get himself posted to an active service unit. Wisely he was retained by MI5 against his wishes and in face of a series of anonymous attacks in a weekly paper, then controlled by a certain Horatio Bottomley, who was later sentenced to a term of penal servitude for fraud.

That war came to its inglorious end. Within a few months of its ending Harold had published a monograph '**The Fabric of Europe**' which sought to correlate the new Europe with

that, the creation of the Congress of Vienna, which after a hundred years then lay shattered. His own world, too, was shattered by David Arnott's death. He never really recovered from it and said pathetically but a few weeks before he died: "David and I spent his last leave together. I never saw the last of him because as the ship left the shore I was blinded by tears for I knew then that I should never see him again." Deeply wounded, he refused all proffered awards and retired to Rome to bury himself in historical studies. His life of Gambetta was published in 1921. Designed as the first of a trilogy (the other two studies were to be Napoleon III and Thiers) to interpret the Third French Republic, it is a fine example of his gift for bringing a great mass of material into manageable size and form. Unfortunately, a hostile review led him to abandon the other two volumes. Thereupon he submitted himself to the spell of Rome and published in 1923 *Rome and Her Monuments*, an attempt to communicate that spell, remarkable for its scholarly approach to the artistic problems raised by Graeco-Roman architecture and sculpture, and instinct with the very essence of historical thought. He collected material for a second volume but before he had reduced it to a publishable form he re-entered London journalism and thereafter never found time to complete the work.

He began to write regularly for *The Times* and *The Times Literary Supplement* in 1925 and from that year until the outbreak of war in 1939 reviewed every important book that appeared on history, politics and classics. His reviews, exact, scholarly and urbane, inspired a series of letters from grateful authors to the editor which must be unique in journalism. While engaged in this work he re-entered politics as a member of a small economic research department set up within the organization of the Conservative Party and began seriously to consider the possibility of standing for Parliament. Unfortunately the one chance he could have seized, the crisis of 1931, came just after he had been nearly killed in a motor accident and at the critical time he was lying on his back in hospital. It was almost twelve months before he recovered. Meanwhile, however, his presence in the little market town where he lay in hospital began to be felt and long before he was able to walk without assistance he had



organized a debating society whose meetings each week achieved a high standard. He returned to his work in London still with one leg in irons and helped to organize the little group of politicians who had followed Mr. Ramsay MacDonald in 1931. Eventually he left them and joined the editorial staff of the *Daily Telegraph* where he worked for some years when a change in the ownership of *Truth* gave him the opportunity of joining that paper.

Since 1933 he had been watching the European situation with growing concern — a concern which found ever more serious expression in his periodical reports to the Carnegie Foundation for International Peace. The crisis of 1938 did not therefore find him unprepared even though he had spent the winter of 1937-38 remote from Europe and engaged in studying a set of problems new to him, the condition of the British West Indies. The enthusiastic reception given to the Munich Agreement in England disgusted him and he broke off his connection with *Truth*. Turning away from Europe and its problems gave him the opportunity to concentrate on the enormous mass of work which the publication earlier in the year of three articles on the West Indies in *The Times* — the only time his name ever appeared in this paper as the author of an article — brought his way. Until the beginning of the war in 1939 he was therefore extremely busy, serving on the Advisory Committee on Education at the Colonial Office, at Chatham House, at the Fabian Research Bureau and broadcasting mostly to the Empire. West Indian readers will not need to be told of the great work he then did in bringing West Indian problems to the notice of a large and influential public in Great Britain, and it was not surprising that in the end he should be invited to go out to prepare the ground for the permanent missions that the British Council has now set up.

The outbreak of war delayed matters. Harold's knowledge of Europe and European affairs was again placed at the disposal of the government and he served successively in the Foreign Relations Press Service and in the Reconstruction Department of the War Cabinet Secretariat before he was released to go on his long and arduous mission to the West Indies. On his return he joined the editorial staff of *The Times*

and jokingly remarked that he had had to wait nearly forty years before Moberley Bell's polite letter offering him "*the first vacancy*" was implemented. Concurrently with his work on *The Times* he was general editor of the series of Chatham House pamphlets entitled '**The World Today**' and wrote some of them himself. In addition, he completed a comparative study of the British and American Constitutions which will shortly be published simultaneously in England and America.

He died in harness. His heart had been giving trouble for some years but he was temperamentally incapable of taking things easily and finally he wore himself out before his time to the great grief of all his friends.

# MEMORIAL FOR HAROLD STANNARD

A. J. SEYMOUR

Rome is the city that Harold Stannard loved, even more perhaps than his beloved London, and all his earlier life, whenever he could, he went back under the Italian skies to walk her ways and dream upon her monuments.

Of his feeling for London I know because I remember him halting our taxi on Westminster Bridge, and I recall the zest in his voice as he pointed out to me the historic buildings in the sweep of our view. But he has written down his dreams of Rome in a book, *Rome and her Monuments*, and in the opening pages he plays the lover with the view of the Eternal City from the Pincio that Napoleon planned and did not find time to execute. And there is great feeling in his account of the dreamy timeless quality that Rome wears on a late spring morning and the limits of the wandering of the setting sun as the months of the year swing it out on a curve behind St. Peters.

Nor did that act of homage quite measure his feeling for Rome. If he could have chosen his best century and his station in life from among all the exciting possibilities of the history of the past, he would have liked, he said, to have been a Greek slave in the Roman Empire of the second century A.D. and in Rome itself, because of the opportunities of leisure and culture that that period afforded.

So it is with a certain aesthetic satisfaction that I realise how fittingly traditional it is that an Englishman, nurtured in the classical Mediterranean tradition should transmit an impulse towards the refinement of the spirit to the people living in the scattered group of islands in the Caribbean and on its borders. It was the love of Rome and her tradition that helped him to quicken the intellectual and spiritual development of a culture that is now coining to birth and Victorian England links Rome and the West Indies. The wheel comes full circle when events like that occur and one age fertilizes another.

Once in a letter it was suggested to Mr. Stannard that whether he knew it or not, all his life had been a preparation for the year he spent in the West Indies in 1943 as Cultural Adviser to the British Council. He replied: *"For many years everything I did was a conscious preparation for my entry into the House of Commons and I know that I shall never go there now. Perhaps it was a preparation for my year's work in the British West Indies:...no preparation can be completely wasted. It can always be put to some sort of account"*

It was put to account. In his recent book *Welfare and Planning in the West Indies*, Professor T. S. Simey has referred to Stannard's article on the British West Indies (in the book *Fabian Essays*) as being the best general introduction to the problems of the area.

I have my own idea on the topic of what fitted Stannard so well to know the West Indies, and I shall tell you a story. I remember on his last Sunday in British Guiana in 1943 walking across from the broadcasting station to Park Hotel and a young man in the group remarked that he must be a distinguished person in London.

He stopped and exclaimed: *"But I'm not. I'm merely a well-read man with a wide variety of interests."* There are dozens of persons here who still believe that Stannard was one of the finest orators who ever came to British Guiana, there are many more who were amazed at his ability to speak to diverse groups such as gardening clubs, science clubs, art clubs, literary and debating societies, varied racial and religious organizations, and tell each assembly something valuable about their speciality, but there are crowds and crowds of Guianese who were most impressed by his intellectual honesty and the continuous outflow of feeling for individuals and groups that he considered underprivileged. It was this broad basis of sympathy combined with a first-class mind and a gift of phrase that energised everything Harold Stannard said and wrote.

Once in London, walking through Russell Square and pointing out to me the 18th century architecture, he happened to say that he thought himself a failure and that for his

quality of mind, he should have been at the top of the tree. Thinking that remark over, it has since occurred to me that perhaps the most important event in his life took place the day that fine intellectual equipment he possessed attached itself to the idea of the West Indies. Because here was a vision that in one way or another demanded from him everything he had to give, here was a conception that subsumed the history he had learnt and taught at Oxford, that took with flame the fine imagination he had disciplined over years and that unified a host of abilities and talents that had grown piecemeal.

### 3

Preparation can always be put to some sort of account he said, That is classic understatement. From what one knows and hears, Stannard has made a great contribution to intellectual life in the West Indies. His mission was to get in contact with the intellectually awake elements in the colonies he visited and to give them encouragement. He carried his own wit and wide scholarly interests as a torch and people would come afire in his company when they caught a glimpse of his richly stored mind and felt the breadth of his innate sympathy. Not only did he encourage individuals to have faith in themselves and their goals but he put in touch with one another persons in the Caribbean who shared similar interests.

So after his visit, and with his continuous interest stimulating it, there sprang up a network of correspondence where a young writer in Jamaica would be speaking to other young writers in Barbados or painters in Trinidad would reach hands to painters in Guiana. Visitors from one colony would find that they shared with many residents in another a common admiration for a man named Stannard and very often would be asked to contact the very people they should meet. So one may think of a genial elderly man in London writing, writing letter after letter that cemented friendships among strangers in the Caribbean and made them aware of similar problems in their communities. His knowledge of history must have told him that the West Indies were at an exciting period in their development when young minds were growing

in intellectual isolation and needed bringing together. So he helped to thicken the strands of friendships. If in his phrase, the tides of history are once again swirling around the West Indies, he has been part of the gravitational pulls.

There is another side to the story. He took care that visitors to England from the West Indies were put in touch with those influences and individuals that would not help them to build their society at home. It would mean personal notes to such and such a person to see young so and so before he returns home, or young so and so would be told *"to telephone Mr. X. I've told him about you."*

But he knew that timely though the personal contacts had been, and though like the god-in-the-machine, he was helping to bring a people to birth, for the long plan ahead, there must be in the West Indies itself a well-head of learning and intellectual integration, to do on a large and permanent scale among the young, what he himself was doing fitfully among the not so young who were intellectually awake. So he pinned his faith on the W.I. University. In a broadcast in 1947, he described his feeling when (I shall use his words) *"...in Jamaica, five years ago. I was invited to attend a meeting of a little group of people who were fostering the University idea. It was a very moving experience, their plans were so humble, their initial aspirations so limited. Yet I felt as I listened that this was how Oxford had begun some nine hundred years before, that this was the real thing, that the men I was meeting had realised the great truth that the pursuit of wisdom was not to be undertaken in solitude, but was a social activity"*

This was the real thing! The words kept echoing in the winds of so many of us listening in August 1947 in the West Indies to Stannard broadcasting over the BBC. We heard the fine voice with its careful articulations go on strongly through its message and come to the words,

*"It is easy for us in England which is full of old buildings ranging from Cathedrals to cottages to realise that the men of the past built for posterity and that it is for our generation to hand on the torch.*

*But in the West Indies it falls to your generation to be the first consciously to build for posterity, politically, educationally, socially. Yours is a hard task, but it is also a great privilege. Build zealously,*

*build with both heart and mind: build with courage and faith in the future, and you may be sure that you will build enduringly."*

We and he did not know it, that it was the last time Stannard would send a message to the West Indies but many of us sat very still under the inspiration and responsibility he was placing upon us.

But he assisted us to translate that inspiration into action. It was at his direct suggestion that the B.G. Union of Cultural Clubs came into being. He thought there should be some coordinating agency to bring together the intellectual curiosity that was expressing itself in so many clubs in British Guiana. And every year, at the Union's request, he sent an inspiring message to the Convention of clubs.

When this magazine, *Kyk-Over-Al*, was born, he sent us an article for the first issue on the rebuilding of Georgetown after the 1945 fire, and the second issue carried a most delightful fragment of his autobiography which I commend to all makers of anthologies.

Of his personal kindness and generous references to me and my work, I have very many memories, and richest among them are those that belong to a weekend spent in Stannard's company at his home, Frith End, Hampshire, in November, 1946.

In this feature we in the West Indies want to lay our gratitude and thanks before his memory. In one of his last letters he affirmed his faith in Britain's ability to win through her difficulties and he wrote "*...this little country with the big name isn't finished yet and you will feel the strength of the new impulses even in your remote colony*". So long as the little country produces men of the Stannard breed, so long will that saying be true.

But here are some other friends in the West Indies and out, who have written about the man they knew, whose friendship they valued and whose inspiration they own.

Extract from *The Times* December 8, 1947.

Having visited the West Indies in 1938 and published three articles in these columns calling attention to the state of affairs there, he was sent in 1941 by the British Council to the West Indies to prepare the ground for that body's permanent mission there. In the 12 months he was there he visited every colony and worked up an enthusiasm for the British way of life—especially among the coloured population— which has certainly outlived him and has smoothed the path of more than one of the numerous staff now maintained there by the British Council. On his return to England he joined the staff of *The Times* and at the same time resumed an old connection with the Royal Institute of International Affairs.

Though by no means devoid of achievement his life did not come up to its early promise. His small stature and extreme modesty were certainly handicaps, but the chief explanation lay in the strict morality which controlled his every thought and action. He could never bear to think that any other human being, however humble, should suffer by any act of his, and he never accepted any promotion without first searching his conscience and satisfying himself that he was not thereby keeping out one more deserving and better qualified than himself.

Alwyn Parker — From *The Times* December 10, 1947.

Those who knew Harold Stannard's liberal outlook, his wide humanity and fairness, power of epigram and irony, will share to the full your luminous estimate of his character and his remarkable abilities. His prose style was terse, masculine, nervous, articulate, and clear, as his judgment was broad, generous, humane and scrupulously candid. I first met him in 1911 at the Chatham Dining Club, when he gave a fascinating address on the worldwide influence of the Jews as disseminators of philosophical thought, and I well remember Eyre Crowe, who was also present, saying with enthusiasm that we might have been listening to Averrhoes or Maimonides. Later, in 1920, we had to appear jointly before an arbitral tribunal in Paris, and between the sittings he was ever eager to spend his



leisure at the Louvre. In my diary I recorded a remark he made: "In art the French never worship an idol uncritically. Their respect for form and order has prevented them from ever being carried away by a servile admiration of their borrowings." It has been written: "Many will subscribe to a religious test, few lead a virtuous life." If ever an upright man led a virtuous life it was Harold Stannard.

E.R.P. — From *The Times* December 12, 1947.

Harold Stannard has a particular claim on the memory of all old members of the Oxford Canning Club, to which he showed a constant devotion. From the time he first came up to Oxford his remarkable epigrammatic and discursive powers of conversation found a responsive audience in the leisurely but critical atmosphere of their evening discussions, and he always retained a particular fascination over the minds of young men on whom his depth of knowledge and polished phraseology had a remarkably stimulating effect. While he was still an undergraduate he proved his attachment to the Canning Club by writing its history: from 50 years of minute-books he deduced the character, trends and eccentricities of this feature of Victorian Oxford. After leaving Oxford he followed the chequered fortunes of the club with unusual interest, showing his confidence in each rising generation by attending on every possible occasion, and his geniality made him always welcome until he was missed at the annual dinner last summer through his ill-health. Who among those privileged to hear the paper read recently at the thirteenth hundredth meeting will ever forget his "polysyllabic omniscience"?

H. C. Beere — From *The Times* December 24, 1947.

I well remember the day in the autumn of 1915 when it was my duty as the then senior subaltern in the mess to welcome Harold Stannard's rather unmilitary looking figure the day he joined the regiment. Almost anyone else who looked so unsoldierly would have been the butt for subaltern rags, but very quickly his frank acceptance of his parade ground limitations and our speedy recognition of his amazing brain

caused him to be on good terms with us all. The day when he and I were packing to go on a course, marked a literary milestone in my life. He read to me a poem by Browning, and then presented to me the volume which ever since has been a cherished possession. In his personal relations he was a generous friend, a gracious host, and a considerate and thoughtful employer. Nearly 20 years ago he became interested in a village society which was formed to study and discuss the problems of the day. Because it was run by a friend of his, he gave generously of time and trouble to make it the success it became; each winter he would come and lecture without any thought of fee and feel himself well rewarded by the affection and respect with which he was regarded by the members who flocked to hear him. His introduction to a lecture he gave on Fascist Italy was the best thing of its kind I have ever heard.

Christopher Cox, Educational Advisor to the Secretary of  
State for the Colonies.

Harold Stannard, when I first met him at the Colonial Office early in 1940, was a member of the Advisory Committee on Education in the Colonies, to which he had been appointed the previous year shortly after the publication in *The Times* of three memorable articles on the West Indies as he had seen them on his visit in 1938.

The Advisory Committee at full strength is large, and Stannard's modesty prevented him from intervening often in its general discussions unless these had a direct bearing on territories that he had himself visited, that is to say with the West Indies. But when the West Indian education policy was under discussion, his contributions were invaluable not only in the main Committee but in the many meetings of its West Indies Sub-Committee which took place in the early years of the war, when report after report from Sir Frank Stockdale and Mr. Hammond on educational policy in the West Indian Islands, British Guiana and British Honduras made their way to London. To the Sub-Committee, on which he served with unflinching distinction and devotion. Stannard brought not perhaps the equipment of the professional educator, but the

richly stored mind of the cultured scholar, the wide approach and the vivid articulation of the observant journalist, the sympathy and insight of a sensitive student of humanity. One of his colleagues on the Sub-Committee, now its Chairman, Mr. Edward Burney, has written of him then in these words. *"Critical, alert, brimming over with invaluable local knowledge and with highly relevant and often awkward facts, he was precisely the sort of man that all such sub-committees need. He had much to say and it was all worth listening to, and was in fact listened to all the more willingly because there was nothing acid in his manner to sour the matter. On the contrary, when he disagreed he did so with a winning smile, as much as to say 'I think you're quite wrong, but I do not think you are either a scoundrel or a fool: we both want to reach the best conclusion we can, and if you will listen to me we will reach it'."* Always on the Sub-Committee he sought both to strengthen true values in the formal educational system and to promote and foster all the elements of cultural growth in the West Indian peoples.

It was little wonder that in spite of his fragile health, he should have eagerly accepted the invitation that came his way in 1942 to return to the West Indies for 12 months to help to chart the field in which the British Council might play its part in the new chapter of West Indian history that was then beginning to unfold. To him it was, as he said to me at the time, *"a great opportunity"*; he felt, I think, that it would give him the chance not only to renew and deepen old friendships and to form new ones, but to play a direct part in the building of the West Indies by assisting, to the best of his power, in the realisation of West Indian cultural aspirations and by interpreting the thought and cultural life of the United Kingdom.

Of Stannard's work during the next two years others will have written who saw it at first hand. He did not spare himself, but I know he believed it all to be infinitely worth while, and he returned to responsible work on *The Times* in England with a rich score of live West Indian friendships and a deep continuing interest in West Indian social, cultural and political progress which, as occasion offered, found distinctive expression in *The Times'* editorial columns. When we met from time to time his talk was always of West Indians and of the West Indies. He followed with keen appreciation the

successive stages in the birth of the West Indies University College to which he had always pinned his faith. In one of his last talks with me he spoke warmly of the abundance of literary abilities and liveliness that he found in British Guiana.

When I last saw Stannard last summer, just before I left England for a visit to America, he spoke gravely of a serious illness which had left him weak and shaky. But the sudden news of his death a few months later came as a shock. I am glad to think that I was in Jamaica then, and could see for myself what he had meant to people there, and hear, from one who had been in Georgetown when the news came, of the deep and widespread grief which it caused in British Guiana. To be so mourned by those for whom he cared so deeply would have been for Stannard sufficient reward.

Philip Sherlock, Director of Extra Mural Studies to the W.I. University College.

Early in 1938, year of riots and violence throughout the West Indies, I met Harold Stannard.

Looking back, it seems a long time ago. I seem to have known him for much longer. He was so active in mind, so stimulating, that I cannot think of him as dead.

A small group of us put on a programme of Jamaican folk song and dances in one of the halls in Kingston. The Cudjoe Minstrels sang "*Carry me ackee go a Linstead market*" and "*Hill and gully rider*": Sam and Slim sang their ballads of today and led the John Canoe dance; Willy Ashman told his Anansi stories with power and fine dramatic effect. Harold Stannard was in the audience. He had arrived in Jamaica a day or two before, on his first visit to the West Indies. It was characteristic of the man that he should take an interest in our folklore and it was even more characteristic of him that he should have to see me the following day. Our friendship begun with that first meeting.

That first visit to the West Indies was a comparatively short one, but Harold Stannard was a journalist, who saw much and perceived more. When he left Jamaica he was deeply concerned with what he had seen, and even more, with what he had felt. I told him that his fears were groundless, but I

was wrong. On the boat back to England he wrote three articles on the West Indies which his paper refused to print unless they were toned down. Stannard said *"Keep them for three months. If there is no trouble in the West Indies within three months tear up the articles. If there is trouble then print them as they are."* Six weeks later the articles appeared in one of the greatest of English newspapers. The riots had broken out in Barbados and Trinidad and in Jamaica.

There followed years of severe strain and trouble in Europe and in the West Indies. Flame and fire encircled the earth. Hitler bestrode Europe like Colossus. But the West Indies were not forgotten. The British Council turned its attention to these lands, and the Imperial Government passed its Colonial Development and Welfare Act. Harold Stannard was one of the two men sent out by the British Council to make a survey of conditions in the West Indies and to suggest the lines along which the Council should work.

During the year in which he was doing his work Stannard paid his second visit to the West Indies: his last visit too. He spent some months in Jamaica. He worked hard, getting to know our problems at first hand, talking with people of every rank in life, getting to grips with the country. He was never satisfied with second hand knowledge. Once, for instance, he was asked to speak to the Citizens Association in one of the poorer suburbs of Kingston. He spent the two hours before the lecture walking through some of the city streets, getting to know the place and keeping his eye open for significant things, however small. No trouble was too much for him to take. He never did a job without putting his heart into it.

Whenever I visited England I went to see Stannard because we were friends and because he loved the West Indies. He had a charming home at Frith End, some seventy miles or so from London, down in Hampshire. In July, 1944, I spent a weekend there. We sat on the lawn in the late summer afternoon and talked of the West Indies while overhead the great bombers in their hundreds thundered across to Normandy. Earlier in the afternoon the shining two-engine Lockheeds had passed over; now the giant Lancasters filled the heavens with their voice. That was four years ago. In some ways that summer seems to belong to another age. Yet it is as if we talked yesterday.

The talk was most of it about the West Indies: the literature and painting that was being done; the plans for the University College, and the growing demand for knowledge. There were enquiries for friends in many parts of the West Indies; in British Guiana and in the islands. For Stannard had many friends in these lands. Few visitors have made contact so quickly with the people. He was interested and sympathetic. We did not ask for more. But he had more to give for he was a scholar and an idealist.

Last year I talked with Stannard for the last time. His doctors had forbidden him to work in the afternoons. He was allowed to go to the office in the mornings and compelled to rest in the afternoons. He looked very small, and all at once, old. He was tired. He felt things intensely and the events of the war had taken his life from him. I did not know that the end was so near. Perhaps, if I had, I would have stayed longer that afternoon, but it was not easy to see one's active friend lying so inactive.

We who knew him will not forget Harold Stannard. He did not really belong to our age. There was something of Gibbon about this little man, something of another and an earlier century; its scholarship, its enthusiasms, its courtesy. But the things for which he stood are permanent. And he was willing to pay the cost of his convictions, too. After Munich, he threw up a connection worth some £700 a year because he could no longer support the party concerned. I found that out much later. Convictions were more than phrases with Harold Stannard.

### LLOYD SEARWAR

1943

Freedom was coming to birth among the people held in bondage for centuries. Several tendencies, some worldwide to their operation, some peculiar to the West Indies, were welding the peoples of the Caribbean into a nation. But there was something wanting. Ideas needed the driving force of emotion, the energy from the depths of the race. A people were waiting for a revelation, a prophet... Spirit sought an incarnation and found it. His name, — Harold Stannard.

With true poetic justice he came from the “*master-people*”. The mark of the spirit was upon him. Its burden had driven him half way around the world. He had seen much and suffered much. And now in his sixtieth year his wisdom had found its final deliverance. The strands of his experience were woven into a pattern of meaning. The years of preparation were fulfilled. West Indians knew that but he did not. To the end the shadow of failure clouded his days.

Nurtured among a high but decadent civilisation he had taken his vision to a new people. The blood of Moses ran in his veins...The word possessed him...“*The prophet that hath a dream; and he that hath my word let him speak my word faithfully.*” The dream was of “*a lofty Caribbean destiny.*” The words were unforgettable.

He came among the people, unheralded, unknown. He went among the people. He spoke to them. Not only the great people, not only the artists but the forgotten nameless people. And the people cherished his message for it was the age-old message of brotherhood ...The people understand these things better than statesmen or artists.

There was the legend of the brilliant career at Oxford, the years in Italy and in Fleet Street. But these things did not matter. What mattered was the unfailing wisdom, the laughter and the kindness.

When he had spoken to you, you felt strengthened in purpose. The years of painful striving had a meaning after all. You went forward a stronger man. You understood the power of Jesus and Socrates. He had that power in a lesser degree. His words could shake you to the roots, then lift you up and point you to the distant goal and suddenly the road was less painful.

He went about, among the people for seven weeks. And then he left. And a legend grew about his name. His words were spoken from many mouths. Stories, some true, some apocryphal were told and retold and grew in significance with the telling.

Across the intervening years he sent us messages of courage, consolation and hope although the fabric of civilisation was crumbling about him.

1947

Came the news of his death, and the feeling of desolation. The light had left the day. The people who had known him found it difficult to go on living without him.

Several weeks ago I stood in the rose garden of a hotel in the fading light of a Saturday afternoon. I had gone there to meet a friend. But now, I stood in the garden remembering another Saturday afternoon, years ago ...I had met the old man there for the first time — And now he was dead. I had kept the thought from me for a long time. The naked fact of his death confronted me, now. The wintry discipline of my life, the consolations I had found in religion and philosophy were torn from me. I was not reconciled to it.

There was the old watchman beside me: *"What do you want?"*

*"Do you remember Harold Stannard",* I said simply. *"He is dead, you know."*

The old man remembered and was moved, remembered one man among several hundred who passed through the gates of the hotel.

And there in the dusk I understood. Harold Stannard was not dead. Wherever his memory is cherished, there he lives. Faith had found its consolation in a new Pentecost.

### JAMES W. SMITH

There are many people who will remember Harold Stannard the lecturer. They will remember him as an orator of distinction: one who could speak untiringly for hours, and delight his audience with a flow of language and a store of knowledge priceless in their excellence. To those people, Harold Stannard's death coming so soon after they had heard him broadcast over the BBC. His message to the 4th Annual Convention of the B.G. Union of Cultural Clubs, was indeed a regrettable affair. The lecturer whose orations had delighted them was no more, his vast store of knowledge was no longer at their disposal.

To a few more fortunate people however, Harold Stannard's death was a personal loss, for they mourned the passing of a friend — Harold Stannard the man was dead! It is to the latter



Stannard I wish to pay tribute. To the little grey old man with the queer looking straw hat.

After having read so much about Harold Stannard the Oxford graduate, *Times* leader-writer and lecturer, I must confess I was rather disappointed at the sight of the little old man in whom all these qualities were personified. When once I had heard him speak however, I realised that his personality was so immense as to dwarf even further his physical stature. But when I met him personally, I knew that his greatness lay in his sincerity and personal charm. I knew then that I stood on the threshold of a friendship that could end only at death. And even now that he is no more, I cherish the memory of our first meeting.

During one of our talks, I discussed with him what was then but the conception of a plan with which I had been toying. I was at that time President of the Harjon\* Literary and Social Club which I had founded about two years previously. Harold Stannard had addressed members of Harjon on the previous Sunday, and he was telling me of the pleasant surprise he had experienced at finding so many literary and cultural clubs, so many people interested in things artistic in Georgetown and its suburbs. It was then that I told him of the idea I had in mind — that all such Clubs in the Colony should band themselves together into a Union for cultural upliftment in British Guiana. Stannard approved of the idea with enthusiasm. *“By all means go ahead and form the Union”*, he said. *“Such a Union will not be difficult to form, for you will find that its members are ready and waiting for the call. Such an organisation will be a great asset to the Colony.”*

What prophetic words those were! I am glad that Harold Stannard lived to know that the Union was formed, and that every year its members looked forward to his sending a message to the Convention. This year there will be no such message. But when the Union of Cultural Clubs Convention opens in August this year, all the members will feel the presence of a great spirit moving in their midst — the spirit of Harold Stannard.

At his death the arts in British Guiana and the West Indies lost their greatest patron: the artists lost a friend, but his memory, and the impetus he gave to art here can never die.

**\*The Harjon movement amalgamated with a similar movement initiated by Club 25, and the B.G. Union of Cultural Clubs was born.— Editor.**

EVAN S. DRAYTON

I once read a biography of a famous personage, and at the end of it, the real man was just as much an enigma as before.

It was the same elusiveness that struck me most about Harold Stannard. I was at the B.P.I when he came to British Guiana, and was assigned the delightful task of helping him arrange his interviews with the various groups who wished to see him. There were over seventy of these, and during Stannard's visit much of my time was necessarily spent in his company, by day and far into the night, in his periods of activity and moments of relaxation; and after he returned home we wrote one another now and then. Yet, I cannot say I ever got to know the real Harold Stannard much better than the day he first ambled into the B.P.I., looking the storybook picture of a Professor of Ancient History.

When I thought I had come to grips with the real man he would reveal a new facet of his character that completely upset my calculations. For instance, early in the tour I got the impression that he felt that greater efforts should be made to interpret us Colonials to the people of Britain, than in the reverse process. But then there is that somewhat cynical remark he made after an interview with a local organisation. He had sent me downstairs to mingle with the deputation and assess their impression of the interview. Because Stannard had said a few words in an ancient and rare language the deputation were high in their praise of him. When I told him this, an amused gleam lit up his eyes, and he said: "*You know, Drayton, I couldn't make head or tail of what they were saying, but I quoted the only bit of so-and-so I know, and it worked.*"

Stannard's sharp wit and alert fertile mind belied his appearance. Time and again he showed himself master of repartee, satire, the *bon mot*. Many of his quips have been long since faded from memory, but I shall never forget an occasion at a public lecture when an insufferable bore plied the Old Man with the most preposterous questions. Stannard

maintained his good humour and urbanity long after the rest of the audience had lost their tempers. For the nth time, the irrepressible questioner rose, and asked: "*Mr. Stannard, why is it that two children born and reared in the same environment turn out differently?*" Quick as lightning, Stannard retorted: "*Wouldn't it be a dull world if we were all alike!*" The audience roared, and there was no further trouble from the bore.

That was by no means the only occasion on which Stannard was taken advantage of by well-meaning parasites. Later in his tour, at a social function, he was pestered by another portentous bore who struck at his side all evening. Stannard never showed the slightest sign of annoyance but afterwards, when he was among friends, he exploded: "*Who was that damned fool who kept badgering me all night?*"

His sense of humour deserted him also at a farewell broadcast which almost ended disastrously. But that was not funny. I am afraid I was the culprit, for in collating the typescript one page of Stannard's got misplaced. We were so rushed that day there was no time to double-check before the actual broadcast. Before the microphone next day, A. J. Seymour and I were questioning Stannard, and surprise and then consternation came upon me when Stannard went off at a tangent and I realised what had happened.

We floundered desperately for a minute that seemed like eternity until Arthur came to the rescue by poking his own script under Stannard's nose, and we got through somehow. I was wet through at the end, and my discomfiture was no bit eased by the sight of Stannard sitting weakly in a chair mopping his brow agitatedly.

Afterwards, we learnt the flaw had not been very noticeable on the air, but Stannard had already autographed my broadcast script thus: "*In memory of a disastrous broadcast we made together.*"

That broadcast script, and two other presents he gave me—copies of *Gibbon* by G. M. Young, and *Barchester Towers* by Trollope are treasured possessions. I take them off the shelf every once in a while, dust them carefully, stare affectionately at the illegible signature, and return them to the shelf. I chose them myself, yet I have never felt inclined to read them, and I sometimes wonder whether there is any connection between

this strange disinclination, and the fact that I was never able to read the man who gave them to me...

### CELESTE DOLPHIN

I was one of the 200 persons who went to the Carnegie Free Library to hear Harold Stannard talk on '**The Clash of Cultures**'. Before that, there had been many stories circulating about him. After all, he was the first man the British Council had sent out to the West Indies to find out their needs and interests, culturally, and like any other Commission, Royal or otherwise, was viewed not only with a great deal of interest but, rightly or wrongly, with more than a little suspicion. So everyone was curious to hear the little man who wore the Jamaican panama hat and brown sandals like the Christ's. Especially passed from mouth to mouth, had been Harold Stannard's dour comment when the drunken American soldier nearly upset his table where he was entertaining friends at the Park Hotel: "*There's only one country in the world that has passed from barbarism to decadence without once experiencing civilisation*". But then I don't think Harold Stannard ever felt at home with the skyscrapers in America.

He began the lecture simply: 'Culture is a way of life'. He had a trick —quite intriguing it was—of opening his mouth slightly for fully two seconds before he said anything and closing it suddenly when he had finished. Culture. That word that is used pretentiously in some quarters and self-consciously in others, so much so that one doesn't know what or all that it means. "*The clash of cultures occurs when the people who wear their shirts inside their pants come in contact with the people who wear their shirts outside their pants*". The city was then in the midst of the American "invasion" and respectability had been frowning at the jitterbug dress of many of the Americans. So at the outset he scored full marks. He continued. "*Those were the non-essentials and were subject to the individual's convenience and personal taste,—that did not constitute culture.*" It was a way of life and a way of thought not to be defined by convention, nor by fine manners and Emily Post, nor by fashion.

He stressed how Great Britain was truly great because in her language, and in her culture, she was always borrowing from other countries, as could be seen from History. She had borrowed from Rome, from France, from the East and from America, and continues to borrow and so enriches her own culture: so we in the West Indies should look at it in the same light, we should have no complex about being copyists nor be ashamed of borrowing and borrowing anything that was worthwhile from any country that would so help in the building of something new and peculiar our own.

Before he had spoken for half an hour it was impossible not to realise that here was a man whose like had never before been sent out to the Colonies — perhaps we had not been ready to receive him. Those in the audience who felt they were capable of assessing values spoke later of the great scholar he was. They spoke of his intellectual background, his erudition, how widely travelled he seemed to have been. But it was his deep understanding of human values, his sympathetic approach towards West Indian problems that won him the affection of the West Indian people. He spoke of the grave responsibilities of people in the United Kingdom towards people in these parts and of our own responsibility towards themselves. Whereas one could never minimise the greatness of tradition, there was nothing to be ashamed of because one had come late in History. And we were the people of tomorrow. We had Youth.

One evening I was asked to meet Harold Stannard at a friend's home. While greeting the family on his arrival, he stopped near the baby's crib and took up the child only to be greeted with piercing shrieks and vigorous kicks. Quickly putting him down, Harold Stannard remarked: *"Take me away. I'm afraid he has no use for British culture."* Later that same evening, one of the other children, aged 5, got out of bed and insisted on detailing to Mr. Stannard the items of refreshment that had been prepared for him. Then quite suddenly she added: *"We picked some sapodillas today. Mr. Stannard; do you have sapodillas in England Mr. Stannard? Have you ever eaten a sapodilla Mr. Stannard? I would like you to try one of our sapodillas Mr. Stannard, they're very sweet."* She ran off and was back in an instant with a plate on which was a large sapodilla cut in

half, looking very succulent, perhaps even too succulent. After a while he enquired if all sapodillas were acid. We said no, not suspecting anything. Then again he asked — did all sapodillas have that astringent quality. Still no one suspected anything. He finished it all making some general remark on British Guianese fruit. That night after Harold Stannard left we discovered from the softness of the skin beneath, that the sapodilla had been not only over-ripe but quite rotten. He had eaten it to the bitter end in front of the child. He was that kind of man.

He had untiring energy, and though deluged with invitations to address numerous small groups and meetings, he never refused an opportunity to speak to people. He always stressed however, the great advantage to be gained if the various small groups and societies of similar interests and aims would unite into one big union of cultural clubs to pool their resources and plan profitable programmes of group activity.

A very important thing about Harold Stannard. His learning was not obvious. It was so completely assimilated into his bloodstream, that not only could he talk to people, but anyone could talk with him and feel as if they too had something to contribute; but in the presence of anything phony or counterfeit, he could be bluntly frank — in the polished phrase, of course—and then there was no mistake what he wanted to convey. But anyone could talk with him.

One of the things he said I shall always remember was that if one couldn't grow to like one's job very much, one should work hard at it and at the same time live deeply and fully in one's interests and hobbies.

Apart from his specific mission of a cultural survey, Harold Stannard was genuinely interested, personally, in helping the people of the West Indies and giving them back a pride in themselves. With his death, the West Indies lost a real friend.

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To close the feature I include extracts from two of Harold Stannard's letters. The first replies to a question asked in January, 1948.

*"How I spent Christmas? In days gone by I used always to fill the house and plan for the proper entertainment of my guests. There were also important preliminaries. My Christmas card list was a long one, each card was carefully chosen and I staggered the posting according to distance so that Santa Claus might deliver them on the right day. Also there were presents for children.*

*Once when I had some children here. I even put on a white beard, and a red dressing gown and was Father Christmas himself (No, I did not come down the chimney)...Christmas day itself was an anti-climax...I settled down in front of the fire and addressed myself to an important scientific experiment. I made every effort to induce hibernation. At first all went well but apparently will power flagged after half an hour or so...*

*I thought as I have so often thought, of the contrast between the comfortable settled Victorian world in which I was brought up and fitted to live and the world of bloodshed and revolution in which I have actually lived and it occurred to me that after all my experience was not unique and that other civilised persons before me had had to watch the dissolution of their society. So I got my Gibbon out of the chilly study and read the close of his second volume and so attained a measure of serenity."*

What did Stannard think about death? After V.E. Day in 1945, he wrote:

*"The relief from strain is very great. I used to go to bed wondering whether I should wake up an angel and if so, whether I should be glad or sorry. There is, I think a touch — it only a superficial touch — of flippancy in my thought about death. That is because I consider it a bit morbid to think about it at all and as the thought can hardly be kept at bay as my infirmities (all of them only physical, thank goodness) become more insistent, I escape in a joke.*

*Actually I haven't much to say on this topic. If British Guiana holds a copy of Lecky's Map of Life, have a look at the last chapter. It is a piece of sturdy Victorian teaching which impressed me strongly when I read it in my teens and has served me justly well since. The*

*agnostic cast of my mind excludes all ideas of preparing to meet my Maker and all speculation about what will happen afterwards — if there is an afterwards. A little vague mysticism is enough for me to work by.*

*I do try to lead my life by the light of values independent of time and circumstance so I suppose there must be some reality in which those values exist. But I, hounded as I am by spatio-temporal limitations, cannot possibly apprehend them. So why worry! Whether I too must eternally exist is, I think, a relatively unimportant question. I can't exist without my eternal values but they can very well exist without me.*

*But it takes all sorts to make a world and perhaps a touch of scepticism about the world to come makes for zealous social service in the world here and now."*



R.I.P. Does Not Apply...  
**THE BUCCANEER GOVERNOR**  
by Irma Pilgrim

There is a quotation which heads a chapter of a book on West Indian history, 'Romance is crime in the past tense.' I do not know its source, but I know it made me read that chapter and several other chapters of quite a few books about the West Indies. Eventually I came across a very old book, just a collection of dead, yellow leaves, or so it seemed until I looked into it. But in this book were set down some of the most hair-raising stories of all time, and I think it was the thought behind that quotation that made me read them.

The frontispiece was an engraving of a nobleman of Charles II's time. There he was, with a thick, black wavy wig, with what the modern girl would call kiss-curls. Naturally, he was endowed with curling moustachios and one of those little beards that looked like an exclamation mark. Being a dandy, even for that period, he wore a flowered brocade coat with fashionable slit sleeves revealing his satin shirt. Here was a gentleman of leisure, but what about the background of the portrait? The engraver had depicted a choppy sea bearing a fleet of contented ships with billowy sails, while the opposite corner showed flaming vessels and drowning men. But the ships in the former scene were either consciously ignoring or unconsciously unaware of the disaster so near at hand. The title page gave me the clue, "*The Buccaneers of America; a true account of the most remarkable assaults committed of late years upon the coasts of the West Indies by the Buccaneers of Jamaica and Tortuga (both English and French): wherein are contained more especially the unparalleled exploits of Sir Henry Morgan our English Jamaican hero, who sacked Porto Bello, burnt Panama, etc.*" All this from the pen of John Esquemeling, "*one of the buccaneers who was present at those tragedies.*" That portrait was of Sir Henry Morgan, one of the only buccaneers, if not the only one, who ended up with a knighthood and was able to die in a very luxurious bed instead of going out with a rope around his neck.

Up to the time he joined the buccaneers, Henry Morgan's life was not an unusual one for the 17th century. It was the story of a strong-willed lad who ran away from his comfortable Welsh home on a farm. He was determined to go to sea and visit the fabulous Indies where prosperity was sudden, unlike the slow security that might be had from an agricultural life. Many authors have hinted that he left behind him, a broken heart, that he never forgot the one love of his life. But I don't think that Henry Morgan would have been afflicted with an unselfish thing like love. He always thought of himself first and anyone or anything else ran a poor second. Morgan was just too "smart" for life on a Welsh mountain farm.

Morgan sailed on a ship to Barbados all right, but he arrived a slave. For the first and last time in his life, a crew tricked Morgan, and on his arrival he found that he had been sold as a bond slave for five years. But he made good use of that time. He soon made friends with his owner and, being a model slave was able to go down to the port and pick up news about ways and means of acquiring wealth in the West Indies. It is said that he had an uncle who held a high position in Jamaica, and this may have influenced Morgan's plans for the future, for he made his way to that island as soon as he was free. Morgan must have found his uncle an unlikely source of livelihood, for he soon contacted the buccaneers of the North Coast of Jamaica who were then becoming powerful enough to consider forming their own pirate state.

At this time, Spain was the greatest power in the New World. The Indians of Central and South America had been subdued, and Spain was carrying away her loot of gold and silver by the shipload. Most of the ports along the Caribbean and Atlantic had been converted into vast storehouses: and to stock them even faster, the Spanish ships emptied their holds in Europe only to refill them with slaves from Africa.

Naturally, this prosperity caused jealousy among the other European powers, and although England and France were not officially at war with Spain, they saw no reason why the Spanish galleons should not meet with a few "accidents." This policy allowed the buccaneers to come into power. These men consisted of those outlaws of mainly English, French or Dutch

descent who were willing to gain a fortune the hard way. In small fleets they attacked the Spanish vessels and ports and often sold the stolen provisions and slaves to the colonists of North America, while keeping the precious cargoes. Their headquarters were at Tortuga (Turtle Island) and Jamaica. Here they lived a sort of Robinson Crusoe existence, living on various forms of wild life. Their meals seemed to have ranged from scarcely edible wild meat to the highly palatable turtle. Even the manatee did not escape their notice, for Esquemeling describes this as quite an attractive dish, tasting somewhat like pork.

When Morgan arrived in Jamaica, Captain Mansfield was in command of the buccaneers and was one of the best leaders they had up to that time. Under Mansfield, Morgan eventually became vice-admiral of a fleet and on the death of his commander was able to start his own company. After Morgan assumed command, he began to prove his power of leadership. Buccaneers of all nations were anxious to sail with him, for it was said that his luck came from some occult power. But Morgan's secrets were his careful attention to the details of a raid and his endless stratagems. He also knew his men, whom to pick to sail his ships, and whom to send ashore in commando attacks.

When Morgan was ready to plan his first raid, things in the Caribbean were very much on the minds of those abroad. It is true that in England, Charles II might have been playing with his pet spaniels in the newly-laid out St. James Park and Pepys and Evelyn recording the times in their diaries. And over in France, the ambitious Louis XIV was surrounding himself with men of ideas and consequently with glory. Nevertheless, both England and France were very interested in their Caribbean possessions and realised their value. Spain's hated papal bull, which had once given her entire domination of that area, had been gradually pushed aside by the other European powers. Both English and French had settled in the lesser Antilles, while the astute Dutch had set up as traders for the entire area. Spain had conquered the Main, Mexico and the Greater Antilles, excepting Jamaica. The great struggle for supremacy between these powers was being carried on in Europe and the repercussions were being felt in the Caribbean. The

conflicts in the West Indies were guided by the home governments and treaties made abroad complicated matters still more. It was not uncommon for colonists to find that they had been fighting their allies, news of a treaty with their "enemy" having being delayed. A historian points out that on one occasion in the West Indies, the French were fighting the Spanish only to unite with them later in a struggle against the English. There is no doubt that this turmoil helped Morgan considerably, when the governor of Jamaica was only too ready to legalize a raid by granting the buccaneers a commission, for he could never be sure which power was on his side.

For his first big attack. Morgan collected his men in South Cuba, 700 French and English. After many councils with his captains, Morgan decided to attack Puerto Principe, one of Spain's stopping points in Cuba on the long journey to Europe. Morgan sailed to a small nearby inlet and proceeded to raid a few villages, but when he had progressed a little way inland, he turned back to assault Puerto Principe. Even though the inhabitants had received news of this attack, they were disbelieving, but Morgan and his men marched across the intervening plain to the port, and when they were in sight, they advanced in semi-circular fashion with bared knives (and I am sure, terrible oaths). The half-hearted army which had been sent to stop the enemy succumbed to this planned warfare, and the buccaneers were soon in possession. Morgan sent a typical message to the governor, *"If you surrender not voluntarily, you shall soon see the town in a flame, and your wives and children torn in pieces before your faces."* And that was exactly what he was capable of doing. He collected his prisoners and ordered them to pay a heavy ransom to save the port. But in the meantime. Morgan heard that the governor of Santiago was planning a relief assault, so he sailed without his ransom, but not before the prisoners had loaded the ships with all the booty and a few well roasted oxen.

Somehow the pirates realized that the profits from this last raid were smaller than they should be. Doubtless Morgan had pocketed most of the loot, but he must have had very convincing arguments, for we find the same men following him, again and again. His persuasive powers were strong, and he seemed to be able to make men long to join his ranks and

perform almost impossible feats of bravery. In sober moods, the buccaneers must have realised that Morgan always came off extremely well, but some peculiar fascination kept them from murdering him as was customary in those days when there were disputes of that kind.

Morgan was now ready to make plans for his next assault, which would make the last one look trifling. He spent a long time working up his men to assault Porto Bello, one of the largest Spanish treasure houses on the Caribbean side of Panama, well guarded by two forts. First, the buccaneers captured the first fort by night, and then sent one of their terrible demands to the second, which seemed to have paralysed the Spaniards. Those in the city, including the governor, barricaded themselves in the castle. Morgan marched in and captured nearly 300 slaves and numbers of women and children, but still he was unable to take the castle. Then Morgan evolved one of his cruellest ideas. He collected all the nuns, priests and monks and made them scale ladders against the castle walls. But he did not reckon with the character of the governor, who let the Spanish soldiers go on firing at the religious men and women, knowing that the buccaneers who were following, would soon get the worst of it. But eventually, even this governor had to give in, although Morgan lost many men.

The buccaneers then proceeded to turn themselves into "tigers and lions", for they were certainly capable of behaving like beasts, while they debauched in the best 17th century fashion. In the midst of his success, Morgan received word from the President of Panama who had heard of the raid, through one of the prisoners who had been sent to collect a ransom for the people of Porto Bello. He congratulated Morgan and requested that he send him "*that slender pattern of arms wherewith he had taken Porto Bello.*" Morgan straightaway sent him a useless pistol, saying that he would collect it himself in the near future.

On arrival in Jamaica, Morgan found the governor, Sir Thomas Modyford, a little cold although he had been "given a cut" from every raid. Sir Thomas was scared of what England was saying about these attacks on Spain, for they were still not at war. But Morgan spun a yarn about

preparations by the Spanish for an attack on Jamaica, evidence of this being found in both Puerto Principe and Porto Bello. Naturally, such foresight did not go unrewarded and Morgan was made admiral of a fleet to defend Jamaica from the Spanish.

The next attack was directed against Maracaibo. To reach the town, the buccaneers had to pass through a narrow entrance and cross the lake on which Maracaibo was situated. They passed the forts successfully, for they were deserted, but the Spaniards had intended them to be a trap, for gunpowder complete with lighted fuse was found in the first fort. Morgan ravaged Maracaibo and the nearby Gibraltar. But the return trip was dangerous. The Spaniards had gathered in three warships at the entrance to the lake, and the forts were armed. But Morgan was too good for them. He constructed a fire ship, even to the extent of dressing logs like men, and sent this among the Spanish ships. As soon as it touched the first man-o-war, it burst into flame, quickly setting fire to the remaining ships. By nightfall, Morgan and his men fooled those in the fort that they were landing nearby, but in reality, they all returned hiding in the bottoms of the boats when they saw that the Spanish had trained their guns for a land attack. Dawn saw Morgan streaking through the narrow entrance, while the Spanish tried to bring back their guns seawards.

In 1670, Morgan made his famous trek to Panama. They started by capturing the Isle of Providence, where Morgan and some of his men stayed with provisions for the return journey. Four hundred buccaneers were sent by Morgan to capture Fort San Lorenzo at the mouth of Chagres River and succeeded. Morgan then joined his men at the Fort with more provisions from Providence, leaving some at the fort. 1,200 strong, the buccaneers planned to march to Panama, carrying a little food, hoping to take provisions from any Spanish they might meet. But for once Morgan nearly failed, for he did not realise that they were passing through thick jungle, with no likelihood of meeting villages. This trek took them nine days and they nearly all died from terrible fever and from attacks from unseen Indians. Everywhere the clearings were free from Spaniards who had fled, leaving no food. Eventually, the remnants of the 1,200 arrived outside Panama to battle with

the Spaniards. The Spanish soldiers thought they would stem the attack by letting loose a hoard of wild bulls to charge the buccaneers, But they forgot that these men were used to cattle, for they quickly rounded the bulls so that they charged back against the Spanish. And Esquemeling tells us that those animals which did not turn back, were caught and eaten raw by Morgan and his men, their hunger being so great.

Panama was soon entered by the buccaneers, but Morgan forbade them to drink the wine, saying that it was poisoned. This was to prevent his men from becoming so drunk that the remaining Spaniards would finish up this small army. Now Morgan set to work to torture his prisoners, especially the women and children, on whom he inflicted the punishments himself. Here is where Morgan showed his true colours, for by night he crept away from Panama with the best of the loot, leaving his men to find their way back to Jamaica.

In Jamaica, the governor was anxiously awaiting Morgan, for Spain and England had signed a peace treaty recently, and the king had requested that the buccaneer be sent to England for trial. Before this, Modyford had been able to use his discretion about granting commissions to the buccaneers, but now the home government had withdrawn its backing. Morgan realised that he would have to dispel the idea that he was a common pirate. He set about buying land and consolidated his position with those who mattered in Jamaica. Charles II must have been quite interested in meeting Henry Morgan, the buccaneer who had done the impossible so many times. He would not have been fooled by Morgan's appearance, that of a well-dressed landowner, so interested in Jamaica's welfare. What passed between Morgan and Charles II must he left to our imagination, but he certainly succeeded in charming the king, while tactfully presenting him with some Spanish gold. In 1675, Morgan returned to Jamaica as Sir Henry Morgan, having promised to wipe out the buccaneer element. And who was more qualified to carry out this order? He was quick to hang his former pirate friends. Poor Sir Thomas Modyford was recalled, and was it not natural that Sir Henry should govern Jamaica for his unceasing service to the Crown? To add to his prestige. Sir Henry married a virtuous "high-brow" lady and received as a wedding present Cat Cay, an

island in the Bahamas off the coast of Florida. Lady Morgan did not fit in with the Port Royal life, so Sir Henry installed her on Cat Cay and proceeded to surpass himself in Jamaica. No woman could resist his charm, and it is said that up to today, there are many Jamaicans with Morgan's features.

In 1688, Sir Henry Morgan died, wealthy and powerful, and was buried at Port Royal. It would be fitting to add that his last nights were filled with nightmares, and that he was maddened with remorse. Unfortunately, no such record exists. There is only the fact that he had no friends, that he was always on the look-out for plots to overthrow him. I wonder if it is significant that Port Royal was destroyed by earthquake and fire, as Kingston was to be, centuries after. Maybe R.I.P. does not apply to Sir Henry Morgan.



## Parrot Business...

### PRETTY POLL

by Eugene Bartrum

"*Going for Five Dollars*" said the bailiff nonchalantly as he raised his hammer, "*Any Offers?*" A gaunt but well dressed old man pushed himself through the gathering. "*Ten Dollars*" he shouted, "*Eleven Dollars*" said a contralto voice near to his elbow. The old man did not look around to see who his competitor was, "*Twenty-two Dollars*" he shouted. At this stage the bailiff's indifference changed into enthusiasm. He no longer felt himself a mere bailiff, but assumed the air of a professional auctioneer.

"*Twenty-two Dollars*" he hummed, "*Going for only Twenty-two Dollars. This beautiful parrot. It talks like a schoolmaster, argues like a politician, sings like Dick Haynes and curses like the blazes. Any offers?*" "*Twenty-two fifty*" said the contralto voice. "*Forty-five Dollars*" said the old man. "*Going for Forty-five Dollars. And still dirt cheap*" said the bailiff. "*Forty-five fifty*" said the old man, "*Ninety-one fifty*" echoed the contralto voice. "*One hundred and eighty-three dollars*" said the old man fiercely.

The bailiff was nonplussed as his hammer went down on one hundred and eighty-three dollars. He was not so sure of the other bidder but he knew the gaunt old man well. Although the old man was a miser and not much loved in the community, yet one hundred and eighty-three dollars would make an infinitesimal change in that hoarders heavy bank balance. Old Tom Andrews took out his purse, counted the money carefully and handed it to the bailiff. He then proceeded to collect his parrot. There was one person, however, who knew the parrot's real worth and why it carried such a high price. That was Mrs. Baker, a trim little widow of middle age who stood at a respectable distance off watching the proceedings.

Before the sale the parrot belonged to Mrs. Baker, but being unable to meet a month's rent it was levied on along with her little bits of furniture. Mrs. Barker called the parrot 'Pretty Poll' and brought it up as she did her children. She was a poor woman whose husband had died two years before

and left her with two children and Pretty Poll. Pretty Poll was left to watch the house when her mistress went out to work and the children to school. She knew partly by instinct and partly by overhearing her mistress's conversation, who were to be regarded as friends and who as enemies. If friendly neighbours knocked on the door when Mrs. Baker was out, they were always pleasantly greeted by Pretty Poll's "*Good Day. Mrs. Baker is out. Call again if you please.*" If an unfriendly visitor turned up, Pretty Poll handled the situation in an entirely different manner, Mrs. Baker was a friendly soul and had only one type of unfriendly visitor, actuated more so by her circumstances than by herself. Those persons were her creditors.

The most consistent actor in this rule was her landlord who served as his own rent collector. "*Go to hell! you damned old miser*" was Pretty Poll's stock greeting to him. If he considered going to hell not such a pleasant recourse and remained any longer in the yard, Pretty Poll's blasphemous denunciation expanded volubly. That worthy gentleman had the unenviable lot of being the owner of all the tenements in Mrs. Baker's neighbourhood. Naturally, Pretty Poll's behaviour annoyed him considerably. It was two years since Mrs. Baker lived in the front cottage and each month he braced himself up to endure Pretty Poll's abuse of his dignity. Gradually his dislike for Pretty Poll grew into a bitter hatred. He told Mrs. Baker nothing, but nursed his hatred in his mind, biding the time when he could give that 'damned' parrot its desert.

The day came when Mrs. Baker lost her work and could not meet a month's rent. Tom Andrews had no mercy on her. The levy cart went in and Pretty Poll was taken down to the bailiff's office. Tom Andrews had sworn that he would bid twice as any one for that parrot. Mrs. Baker's month's rent amounted to twelve Dollars.

He gave that anomaly no thought but collected his parrot with a satisfied feeling of revenge. A peaceful smile played on his wizened countenance as his thoughts dwelt on the punishment he had in store for his feathered tormentor. Pretty Poll was humming sweetly all through the sale. Now she was singing her favourite tune '**Home Sweet Home**'. As

soon as Tom Andrew's placed his hand on her cage she changed her tempo. In a flash her stock greeting for him was out "*Go to hell! You damned old miser!...*" Tom Andrews ignored Pretty Poll's abuse and lifted the cage with a smug smile on his face. Then the tornado started. Pretty Poll's language grew so foul that the Police had to intervene. As soon as Tom Andrews put down the cage Pretty Poll resumed singing '**Home Sweet Home**'. Every one was amused but Andrews was determined. He lifted the cage again and once more Pretty Poll polluted the atmosphere. The Police warned Andrews that if the parrot was his he would be charged. One Officer had already taken out his notebook. Tom Andrews was beaten. He raised his head and looked around in dismay. Standing near to him was Mrs. Baker "*I will give you a dollar for Polly*", the widow said pleasantly. "*Give me*" Tom Andrews grunted, extending a shaking hand.

Mrs. Baker paid the miser his dollar and collected her beloved parrot. As she left the courtyard proudly Pretty Poll's voice was heard singing sweetly and softly '**Home Sweet Home**'.

## PLANTATION NAMES IN BRITISH GUIANA

Many of these names anticipate or commemorate struggles and triumphs of the early settlers, thus they give a peep into the life of our pioneer ancestors.

Until 1740 only a Dutch subject could obtain land but after 1740, Essequibo was thrown open to all nations. As a consequence there was an influx of English and French settlers.

With the British conquest and the cotton boom, the coasts from Mahaica to the Corentyne saw an inflow of planters who gave British names to their plantations, e.g.. Airy Hall, Albion, Auchlyne, Brighton, Carnarvon, Liverpool, Planter's Hall, Tarlogie and Tranquility Hall.

Some were named after —

Ladies of the family:	Cornelia Ida, Eve Leary, Kitty, Sophia.
Love of family:	De Kinderen (children). La Bonne Mere, Sisters.
Partnership or Friendship:	Fellowship, Friendship, Le Ressouvenir, Friendship, Two or Three Friends.
Loyalty or love of Country:	Haag Bosche (Palace at the Hague), La Belle, Alliance (Peace of Europe), Waterloo, Wellington.
Strong religious feeling:	Joppa, Land of Canaan. La Penitence, La Repentir, Paradise, Providence.
Descriptive names:	Belfield (a wide or fair field), Bush Lot, Bushy Park, Hyde Park, Ruinveld (a beautiful view). Zandvoort (sand front).

The Fortune Seeker or Pioneer:	Adventure, Aurora, Better Hope, Enterprise, Good Fortuin, Hope, La Bagatelle, La Bonne Intention. Onderneeming, Sheet Anchor, Prospect.
Refuge in Guiana:	La Retraite, Mon Repos, Toevlugt, Vreed-en-Hoop, Vryheid's Lust.
A grant of land might have been a Treasure. Or it required tune, courage, diligence, hard-work:	Diamond, Golden Fleece, Golden Grove, Non Pareil, (unrivalled), Potosi, Beterverwagting, Endeavour, Expectation, Goedverwagting, Perseverance, Reliance, Schepmoed (courage), Werk-en-Rust.
Downfall but try again:	Nog-Ens.
Care and sorrow:	Mara, Met-en-Meerzorg.
Never mind:	Noitgedacht( Dutch), Nabaclis (Irish).
The Pleasure Lover:	Free-and-Easy, Hog Stye, Success rewarded Industry, even Good and Better Success, and benefit (Weldaad), Profit, Triumph and Felicitie in the end.

After all, the outcome (Uitkomst) was of the greatest importance.

J. RODWAY, F.L.S.

**Editor's Note—This delightful note was used at the recent exhibition in Georgetown of Teaching Aids.**

Ideals and Reality-1  
**THE WEST INDIAN FAMILY**

by Clement H. Jarvis

All thinkers on the subject of Society agree that the family is the most fundamental element in social structure, and this is true of all epochs in the history of mankind. Society and the State are born in homes of its citizens, and the future of Society is determined to a large extent by the success and stability of the institution of marriage. If the social life of any nation is to progress, the dynamic for such advancement must lie in the standards which prevail in family life. Recent investigations carried out in certain European countries on the social life of the people, have disclosed that where undesirable relationships existed and other facilities for evading the responsibility of family life were greatest, several evils, some necessitating enormous expenditure from the public purse for services of the delinquency type, were most prevalent among the people.

Professor T. S. Simey of the School of Social Science at Liverpool University, at the end of four years' stay in the West Indies, has produced his book, *Welfare and Planning in the West Indies*. The conclusions arrived at in this volume are based upon the author's personal experience of social problems and administration acquired during his years of work. His observations on living conditions and family standards among West Indian peoples, though not new to many should be challenging to most.

Our Guianese public should lean away from the rather narrow view of recognizing social problems only in so far as they affect British Guiana, to a broader view of the West Indies as a whole, and moreso since the thought of federation has recently been so much in the air. Despite the claims and hopes of a large number of people, British Caribbean territories may yet have a common destiny even as they had common circumstances of origin and a common social background. Investigation of these problems should be done with the emphasis on fact-finding and dispassionate thinking: and

before there can be any real desire and urge to redress social evils, people must be willing to admit that things are what they are.

Much of what is said below will perhaps apply with greater force to other areas of the West Indies where the population is predominantly of African descent. In British Guiana nearly half the population harks back to Indian ancestors, and no study, to my knowledge, has been of the East Indian family. Wherever the phrase "the family" is used therefore, it applies primarily to the African families of the lower income group which are in the great majority.

It is held that the West Indian family structure cannot be compared with the type of family common in say, Great Britain, mainly because of economic reasons. Wages are low and the struggle on the part of each member of the family to gain enough to help balance the budget, deprives the people of certain customs, apparently small, but really important in fostering the family feeling. The family meal around a common table is scarcely ever possible; members of the household eat at various times in various places — in the kitchen, which is sometimes a good distance from the house, or in the yard. The family itself is a rather incoherent affair. In many cases it is not founded on the ceremony of marriage, and its relationships are made very transient and unstable. When these temporary arrangements come to naught, the residue, usually three or four children, are promptly taken in by other family groups. In cases where the children remain with their mothers, they very often become the charge of the poor-law department. If not, owing to lack of proper control due to the absence of a father and also a mother who may be out all day at work, the children are left to themselves to roam great distances from their homesteads, without any training for the building of individual character. Much is not to be expected from the father who may be far away in quest of a job, and whose position is usually so insecure as to render him oblivious of the fact that he is a father. The Grenada Commission of 1943 appointed to inquire into the welfare of children, reported that fully two-thirds of the children of these unions receive no support whatever, or very meagre support from their fathers. A similar committee in Jamaica reported

in 1943, *"the general lowering of moral and ethical standards among the younger population due to the fact that moral standards are poorly evaluated in the general life of the community."*

The reasons adduced for this are obvious. Where the education of the child is concerned, it has been stated that only half of the children between six and fourteen years of age attend school regularly. Overcrowding in schools is frequent, and in some places if the whole school-going population should decide in favour of school, this would occasion considerable embarrassment to the Governments concerned.

Housing is a very sore point, and the position may well be summarised by the general remark that housing standards in the West Indies are very much below such as would be expected of the 20th century. This feature has probably done most to accentuate other difficulties in family organisation.

How do all these depressing facts sound when related to the views of say the Christian Social Council of British Guiana, which has published statements on family life and housing? Its statements, couched in very uncompromising language can be regarded as the same type of comment which any similar body throughout the West Indies would pronounce. Any attempt at comparison between the actual and the conditions demanded, which can scarcely be called Utopian or ideal, would reveal how much short of the mark fall social conditions in the West Indies and let us not forget that our yardstick is the 20th century. The aims of social policy, in the words of the Comptroller for West Indian Development and Welfare in his 1940-42 report should be to establish *"a life and a livelihood which will bear comparison with the moral and material standards of the 20th century."*

Whereas the Christian Social Council would stress the deep significance of marriage for the community at large, and pins the future of Society on the success of individual marriages, the facts as described by Professor Simey are that illegitimacy is more prevalent than not. It is a known fact that in Jamaica attempts have been made to improve the general position by arrangement of mass marriages, but here again the standard considered by the Council, by which the success of each marriage becomes the responsibility of each party to the contract, is not likely to be attained very easily.



For those who may be unaware, mass marriages have been arranged in Jamaica in recent years and are the result of the persuasion by social workers upon numbers of men and women, that the wedded state is preferable to that of the common law arrangement. Dozens of couples are simultaneously taken to this altar and wedded in one ceremony.

The urge to improve overall social conditions in Jamaica is the driving force behind these social workers, although many of these unions have been stable, and in the best sense of the word, faithful relationships.

Whereas the Council feels that *"children are meant to be brought up and cared for until they can assume responsibility for themselves physically, mentally and morally,"* the fact is that tens of thousands of West Indian boys and girls go uncared for.

Whereas the Council would demand such housing conditions *"as will make possible good physical health and the development of faculties spiritual, mental and moral,"* the general conditions are deplorable, and in one colony investigation showed that *"10,177 persons lived in houses with a superficial area of less than 100 square feet at a density of more than six persons in each house."*

Whereas the Christian Social Council feels it necessary that each man should earn a decent living wage to ensure a certain minimum for his family, Simey's book lays bare the fact that *"in many places the weekly wages of parents are insufficient to feed the whole family for a week, and that many children have no regular meals after Wednesday in each week, and go to school hungry on Thursdays and Fridays."* In addition, whatever diet is available is seriously deficient and results in a general low resistance to infectious diseases.

These short contrasts describe the great disparity between the ethical and the real.

How can we lessen this wide gulf between what should be and what actually is? The answer rests with the social worker, the economist and the people themselves, whose responsibility it is to work harder so as to produce more real wealth which alone can bring improvement. Much can be achieved from the building up of the constructive type of social services as opposed to relief measures directed to increasing the desires

of the West Indian for a better life, and pointing out the ways in which this can be secured. It is of little value to attempt to redress social evils when their roots lie in the economic. The faster this can be settled and the economy of the countries adjusted to suit the present needs of the people, the sooner would we ensure the social advancement of these territories. Let the Church also make what contribution it can to the fulfilment of the ideas it has so nobly championed.

Amerindian Village  
**WARAMURIE**  
by Celeste Dolphin

Unlike Kwe'banna, a little Amerindian Mission at the top of its fifty climbing steps notched out of a red-brick hill which rises suddenly and almost straight up out of the Waini, one comes very quietly and gradually upon Waramurie.

One crosses the Atlantic from the Pomeroon into the Moruca mouth, and after the first three hundred yards where fallen trees impede rapid progress, the river makes a series of hairpin turns and twists now to the right, now to the left, so that sometimes after one has travelled for an hour in the small mail-boat one is almost back or at some point parallel to where one started.

On either side of the river, huge giant forest trees overhang, casting their reflection into the clear, black water in a quivering cross-stitch pattern. Sometimes they bend over and clasp hands and shut out the sky, and then for a period they would toss their heads back and so let in the sun. But one usually comes upon Waramurie in the quiet of the afternoon, Waramurie or Warrau worry with its white sand rising gradually from the banks of the river.

At the sound of the mail-boat horn dozens of little children can be seen running quickly down the white sandhill to collect their letters. As they reach the water's edge they leap into their corials, some just large enough to hold one small brown body. Dipping paddles skilfully into the water they soon surround the mail-boat shouting "*Letter for me? Anything for me?*" Then one gets a clear idea how very significant these fortnightly mail days are to people in remote areas. It is a lovely sight to see the gleaming brown naked bodies of the small boys as they swim up to the sides of the mail-boat and hold out a wet hand for their mothers' letters.

Getting out of the boat with our precious food-box we made our way slowly up to the top of the mission. The ascent though gradual was long and the white sand soft and loose, so every three steps we made we slipped back two. The children

followed us curiously, offering to help with the bags — visitors are always welcome at Waramurie. As we reached the top of the hill, the Catechist met us — he was half Indian, a Cubukru, — and an Indian guide. This Warrau Indian spoke English with exaggerated correctness and precision, but the clipped staccato intonation of his own native Warrau made him very pleasing to hear.

As we looked around, over there to the right of the troolie rest house was a large mound almost a hillock crowned with a large cross. The Amerindian stretched out his right arm pointing to the cross "*Waramurie*" he said. It seemed a little dramatic then. But the story goes that years and years ago the Caribs and Arawaks were continuously fighting each other on this mission. Periodically the Caribs would come stealthily down through the forest and seek out the Arawaks with bow and poisoned arrow, and a bloody battle would ensue, after which the victors would bury the bones of the dead on that special spot over which the cross stood. Later the Arawaks who had been able to escape would pay a return call and come down upon the Caribs crying vengeance and they too would pile up Carib bones on that very spot. This feud between the two tribes lasted for several years until they became extinct in that area, but years and years of piling bones on bones had grown the mound into a hill. Very much later, the Warrau Indians came and settled on that spot. But the legend goes, the spirits of the dead periodically troubled these new settlers and caused much Warrau worry, until 1928 when a cross was set upon this mound of bones and a priest blessed the spot and so forever quieted the evil spirits that troubled Waramurie.

It seemed a fantastic story but it is not a mound of sand and is really composed of bricks and shells and parts of bone. When it rains heavily, some of it is broken away and one can pick up bits of bone skull that are said to be human. But no one is indiscreet enough to attempt to seek these bones in the presence of a Warrau, as they believe that would disturb the sleeping spirits and start Warrau worry all over again.

Warrau worry troubled me.

It was a beautiful mission on a white sandy clearing with the dense forest behind. There were many houses of the usual

type seen in the interior — four bamboo uprights covered with troolie with two or three family hammocks slung at one end. The family hammock was an ingenious contraption. Imagine the ordinary hammock but with three or four storeys — mother and father would occupy the top flat, boys in the second and the girls at the bottom. And this is all held together between the same two pieces of rope as the usual one. Walking around, the Indian guide introduced us to everyone and we were shown over the whole mission. We saw a woman making cassava bread circles two feet in diameter, that would last the family a week. One broke off what one needed for one meal and then the rest was hung upon a hook inside the house until needed again.

We met an old man who was exceedingly friendly to us. He walked with the spring of a boy of nineteen and yet he had the face of Old Kate. I couldn't resist asking him his age. He answered: *"It was in 1886, I think, when my mother, who was wedded to my father, gave birth to a son, which is I"*. We learnt that a man of 40 would give his age as anything from seventeen to ninety-five.

He told us how they made Cassirie and how they made Paiwarrie, the more intoxicating of the two forest drinks. They chewed the sugar cane with certain other herbs and fruit and berries and spat it out into a large bin and trampled on it in a ceremonial dance of shuffling steps for hours on end and then left it to ferment. After a period so many days, the Paiwarrie was ready, a thick dark liquid tasting like stout. If one partook of this drink at certain periods one wanted to remain quite happily in the bush forever. But more than that at times of feasting and dancing, in the midst of the Culebra and the Tengereh, as excitement grows and bodies move in frenzied patterns, a too liberal drink of Paiwarrie causes feasting to end in fighting and then Waramurie was in danger of Warrau worry.

He talked late into the forest night, and it seemed that we had hardly got into our hammocks when the bell ringer came up to our hut calling us to church. The Catechist walked over for us and stated that it was necessary to hold services twice weekly as "these people" believed in "iniquity".

I wondered what sort of iniquity was peculiar only to Waramurie. He explained the tribal belief in the Piaiman. Whatever happened was because of the good will or bad will of the Piaiman. If the dogs did not scent danger in time to give a warning and a tiger sneaked out of the forest and carried off a child, they swore that the Piaiman was at work. Whatever happened — if sickness came — if death came suddenly — if too much rain, if not enough rain it was the Piaiman man. Oh yes, these people believed in iniquity indeed. He didn't intend this to be funny.

It was time for the service, the men, women and children tramped in and sat and talked to each other, quite informally. One lady had fixed her hair in four plaits and on each was a different coloured ribbon. It was unfortunate that the Catechist had some difficulty with his "r's" and ended all the twelve responses in a loud voice so that everyone was sure to hear "*And twust in the Lawd fow he is gwasus*". It was a little impossible to be wholly reverent.

Immediately after Church followed vigorous games of rounders, leaping and swimming. Then a large meal of fruit. But we had to leave rather hurriedly to catch the tide.

Over the height of Waramurie, the breeze comes in from the river, cool and fresh smelling, and Warrau worry seemed suddenly all blown away as the mail-boat took us back to the mouth of the Moruca.

For a Balanced Community...  
**TOWARDS CRAFTSMANSHIP - 1**

by H. Risely Tucker

B.G. can compare well with many other countries in serious reading. In the poorest homes volumes of the classics may be found on a shelf and in the most unlikely circles will be men and women ready to discuss serious literature. This is admirable, yet one wonders at times, here as elsewhere, whether too literary a basis in education may not hinder the development of a fully integrated man or society. There may indeed be a risk that study reflection and discussion may become an escape or a compensation rather than an integral part of the all-round man. In other words, we may keep our intellectual life and the earning of a living in water-tight compartments, to the detriment of both.

Not so some of the thinkers of the past to whom we owe most. The attraction of Montaigne is largely due to the fact that in his most abstract thinking he keeps one foot on solid earth while his treatment of mundane subjects is that of the scholar and thinker who is also a practical man. Leonardo da Vinci was a jack-of-all-trades but by no means a master of none. Pascal's abstruse theology may make some of us impatient, but it was his brain that fathered the calculating machine. Shakespeare and Molière were efficient but struggling actors before they were playwrights. The Emile is still required for budding teachers because, one may fairly suppose, Rousseau so stressed the need for education to be an explanation and enrichment of, rather than an escape from, the everyday life.

One may well wonder whether the greatest contributions to our cultural stack have come from the ivory tower or from the workshop and warehouse and which is most likely to produce that humanity without which 'culture' is an arid thing.

Equally well may one wonder whether much of the present-day instability and hysteria is not due to a basic error in our concept of education. Where once the ability to do, and pride in doing well, was one of the chief aims of popular

education—taking the word in its broadest sense—that has now given way to facility in writing and, still more, reading. With what happy-go-lucky irresponsibility we insist that all our children must be able to read.—that their minds shall be tilled soil for the seeds sown by anyone who can get an article or a story published. Yet how little do we do to train their judgment so that they may weigh what they read and distinguish between the useful and the false. Certainly one seldom hears of a teacher encouraging his pupils to criticise his ideas or their text-books. Yet how else can he protect them from blind uncritical acceptance of the printed and spoken word? No wonder, then, that we have electorates everywhere so much at the mercy of any unscrupulous politician or superficial 'economist'. In most countries primary education is compulsory — we compel our children to be ready receptacles for any words that may find their way into print, whether helpful or pernicious. Yet, not only do we not compel them to learn a trade but in fact we give them very slight facilities, if any, for doing so if they wish. We teach words and inculcate a respect for words at the expense of physical skill and craftsmanship. The victims of our error drift into the towns where many who might have been happy craftsmen become inferior white-collar workers with no skill to protect them from unemployment and little opportunity for pride in their work.

That free education is desirable no one can deny. Some may doubt the value of compulsory education but the dangers of compulsory and almost exclusively literary education are beyond question. If, on the other hand, every child were compelled to acquire skill in some practical and constructive activity, he would be endowed for life with, in extremity, a means of earning a livelihood, and in any case with all the indirect benefits of craftsmanship. It might even be found that literacy education could be made voluntary — to the immense benefit of those who had the desire for, or felt the need for it. Significantly enough, while in the least developed countries manual skill is often rated low and manual labour looked at askance, they come into their own in those where urbanisation and industrialisation are most advanced. Hard pressed business and professional men are more likely to boast of their



cabinet-making or tomato-growing than of their other successes, psychiatrists urge their patients to take on a hobby and there is a noticeable drift back to the land. The London dustman was paid more between the wars than many a qualified teacher.

The need for manual achievement is rooted deep in man, giving a satisfaction and stability that no sophisticated amusement can. It keeps him with one foot on solid earth. For happiness all-round, not lopsided, growth is needed and while reading enriches the mind, craftsmanship develops honesty of character. Dishonesty and superficiality simply do not go with good craftsmanship nor could the real craftsman be so lacking in pride as to be content with merely talking one into accepting botched and inferior work.

One can think of a number of sturdy nations whose prosperity was built on proud craftsmanship and few that have been great without it. May not a re-orientation of educational policy bring back to our civilisation a wholesomeness of character without which there is no stability? British Guiana might profit by the change as much as any country. There are good craftsmen — one has only to watch skilled men fell a tree, measure and saw it into planks to know that, — but there could be a greater public appreciation of good workmanship and condemnation of the bad. A farmer who robs his land of its fertility may himself be robbed of his crops and his son may decide to wear a white collar as a city clerk, but all this might be prevented by a community in sympathy with good farming because composed of men trained from childhood to honour manual skill and craftsmanship. Such a community will attract outside capital which is always seeking the partnership of good labour and fleeing the bad. Such a community, too, will avoid the curious anomaly of simultaneous press appeals for immigration and for measures to alleviate unemployment. It will recognise the wisdom of more balanced distribution between town and country of the rewards of labour and the amenities of life.

We may even be happier growing groundnuts than writing articles so, with Candide, "*Cultivons notre jardin*".

## TOWARDS CRAFTSMANSHIP - 2

by F. Seal Coon

The English word “craft” is of Germanic origin. The modern German equivalent is “kraft”, meaning strength, and no doubt when the word was taken into the English of the time, it had the same connotation. But by that curious alchemy which, when words denoting an attribute deemed desirable by one race or nation are absorbed into the language of another, invests them with a derogatory or disreputable significance, “craft” in modern English means, in one of its senses, guile and cunning.

In another, and older sense, however, a “craft” is a trade or “mystery”. This meaning dates, no doubt, from the days of the Guilds, those ancient and honourable trade unions of the skilled manual worker. A boy entered a guild at an early age after a process of selection, and had to serve many years as an unpaid — or premium-paying — apprentice before he was deemed a master of his trade and permitted to practice it for gain. Men in those days took pride in their work and ability, and a craftsman’s hand needed both strength and cunning, so that perhaps the modern divergence of meaning is not so great after all.

The Guilds surrounded their training and practice with considerable mystery in order to exclude outsiders and maintain their standards of workmanship. From the Middle Ages on, however, changing techniques, the advances of science and the consequent upsurge of new trades gradually ate away the exclusivity of the original trade guilds, whilst the advent of the Industrial Age, with its appalling impact on the labour market, finished them off with a brutal finality.

Nevertheless, in many manual, as well as the so-called “technical” trades, traditions of trained skill remain. In some new ones, such as engineering, which grew up with a degree of early organisation, old traditions were taken over and carefully fostered. The trade unions, also, have done much to maintain levels of skill among their members and in some

organised trades the apprenticeship system is still a recognised introduction, Unhappily, Labour's main struggle since the commencement of its organisation has been in the field of wages and conditions, so that a standard of skill, though recognised as desirable, has been looked on more as a means of safeguarding the employment of union members than as an essential end in itself.

Two wars, too, with their gigantic calls on the nations' industrial capacities, have given rise to varying degrees of dilution even among those trades requiring the most knowledge and technique: and this has gone side by side with a rationalisation of manufacturing processes whereby the greatest possible proportion of the work is being done by unskilled or semi-skilled workmen with the aid of machines, leaving only the supervision and certain vital processes to the truly practised craftsman.

It will be seen, therefore, that the original conception of craftsmanship has passed away mainly because it has lost its universality and become limited to a few among many trades; it may not even be universal within a single trade, so complex have manufacture and production processes become in modern times. Today, we can say that craftsmanship in its true and full meaning is to be found only within a few of the original trades that still survive, often as mere adjuncts of more complex processes. This is an undeniable pity, since with the loss of specialised, personal skill depart pride in workmanship and the self-respect and dignity of the man who knows himself to be an esteemed and necessary member of his community. The unskilled, drifting from trade to trade and job to job, with no security of tenure or certainty of a livelihood, cannot enjoy this satisfaction and become disgruntled units of society — the raw material of crime and revolt.

It is now being realised that the chronically unskilled man is useless, and useless to the uttermost, since not only is he incapable of any work requiring a degree of practice, but he tends to lose those elements of character which make for honesty, loyalty and reliability. There is coming about in industry a revulsion against the idea of setting a foolproof machine to do a job, with a mere mindless body to carry

out the minimum operations the machine requires to keep it running. It is found that under these conditions workmen become, not only bored, disgusted and ambitionless, but actively mischievous; therefore, the tendency is towards cultivating the minds and intelligence of the workers, varying their tasks as much as possible and putting those who show keenness into positions where ability and acquired skill are called for.

It is, however, still only a tendency and such measures, even where they are adopted, are but substitutes for the ultimate satisfaction of craftsmanship. It is the writer's opinion that, until a far more universal practice of it is restored, one side of the nature of most men will remain unsatisfied. Unless a man (or a woman, for that matter, who is not fully occupied with the care of a home and family) has some trained and developed skill which he actually uses day by day in a main and practical sense, not merely as a pastime or hobby, he is an incomplete personality. Excepted, of course, are those whose craftsmanship is in the field of the intellect, though for the most part they, too, feel the need for a manual outlet.

I have, I trust, established the desirability and the theoretical necessity, from the personal point of view, of the possession and practice of craftsmanship. What of the necessity from the standpoint of the community? I submit that they are equally vital, not only because out of them are born useful and contented citizens, but because if personal skill dies out, then no amount of machinery and mere labour can fill the void. However brilliant the scientists and planners, their inventions and schemes are as naught unless there are enough men with skilled hands to put them into practice and keep them functioning.

The degree of necessity varies, of course, with the type of society. In a highly developed, industrialised community the spiritual need for craftsmanship persists, but the opportunities for its practice are likely to be relatively restricted, whilst the chances of individual survival without it are greater owing to the present wide, if unsound, market for unskilled labour. In a more primitive, or even a fairly civilised but non-industrial community such as is British Guiana, practically universal

craftsmanship is essential. There is almost no phase of its life in which skill is not a continual necessity, and in its absence standards of living, efficiency and morality deteriorate. All aspects of community life are affected and no work of any kind is carried out with the optimum pride and care.

It is not clearly enough recognised that craftsmanship is as much an attitude of mind as it is manual dexterity and trained intelligence. As with all mental disciplines, this attitude is not innate (though a predisposition may exist), neither can it be acquired in a day. It is compounded of absolute confidence in the actual manual skill (itself no flower of a single day), pride in good workmanship for its own sake, and — perhaps most important — a resolute refusal to accept, either from oneself or another, sub-standard work. He who can say of a poor job: *"It will do"* or *"No one will notice"* or — worst of all — *"It doesn't matter so long as I get paid for it"* is no craftsman, and never will be until his mental standpoint is utterly changed.

Where the traditions of craftsmanship have decayed, as they have in this Colony, the road back is hard and long. The individual can hardly create the conditions and atmosphere in which craftsmanship will burgeon. The innate desire for its possession may be there in both community and individual, but it is latent and needs to be activated and fostered. For this, the corporate expression of a society's will to organise known as Government is usually the most appropriate means. In the case of British Guiana there is literally no other body sufficiently well placed to initiate and carry on the heavy task, which must consist, in the early stages, of establishing schools for the different trades, or for several allied trades under the same roof.

These technical schools, as they may be termed, would have to take apt pupils after they had been grounded in the three R's and whose background was such that they would be unlikely to be able to compete successfully in the "white collar" world of the Civil Service, commerce and the professions. The age of entry would probably thus be about twelve and pupils would have to undertake a full-time course of at least five years before they could be certificated. This would take the place, to a considerable extent, of the apprenticeship system obtaining elsewhere, which is hardly

practical here because of (1) the necessity of earning at a comparatively early age, and (2) the lack of sufficient established craftsmen to whom pupils could be apprenticed on leaving the schools. Indeed, in the first respect it would probably be necessary to put the pupils in the way of earning something from the age of say fifteen on. Part of these earnings might be taken back as fees in order to inculcate a sense of responsibility and appreciation of their training (which young people of all grades are ordinarily very much apt to take for granted, thus failing to extract the greatest value from it).

In these schools would be taught a basic knowledge of the materials, their behaviour and reactions, as well as of the techniques applicable to their use. One of the principal difficulties in starting technical or trade schools of this type is likely to be the scarcity of qualified craftsman-tutors and most of these would undoubtedly have to be brought from away at the beginning. This would probably raise peculiar social and financial problems among the individuals, whilst, since the bulk of the training would have to be provided free, the Colony itself would have to face heavy initial expenditure. Later on, much of the cost could be nullified by a re-orientation of the present primary school system to include the trade schools — or, at any rate, their earlier grades, since the more advanced ones might perhaps be better related to the secondary school system.

The whole burden need not, of course, fall on Government, as town and village councils might be able to add their quota to the work, as could the denominations which at present share the responsibility for secondary education. It is impossible, however, to visualise any other channel than Government for building, equipping and staffing the schools in the first place and, with a change impending in the directorship of the Education Department and an obvious educational crossroads immediately ahead, the moment seems to call for an urgent study of such a project.

Introduction to...  
**THE POETRY OF WALTER MAC A.  
LAWRENCE**

by A. J. Seymour

One morning in 1936, I took my courage in my hands and a little sheaf of poems I had written, and paid a visit to Walter MacArthur Lawrence. Would he be so good as to look at some verse I had written and tell me what he thought about it? I knew that he really was the only person who had been writing poetry continuously for very many years and writing it seriously, because he loved to.

It was early in the morning and he was still in his pyjamas, and in the small gallery he took the sheets of paper I had brought and read them steadily through. Looking back and remembering some of what he said to me, in his over-generous manner, and how he encouraged me and spoke about his own work, it struck me that there was a certain heroism in the way he had written poetry in a discouraging atmosphere.

The times are much more favourable now and we are upon the verge of a flowering of literature, art and drama, but for years and years little encouragement was given to literature in British Guiana, and against this gloomy background must be estimated the positive achievement of Lawrence's work. Beginning in the early 1920's, producing poem after poem until his death in 1942, Lawrence experimented unceasingly with every type of verse — the long narrative, the sonnet, the ode, the rondeau, the triolet — and with technical mastery. He wrote himself into the title Grand Old Man of Guianese poetry.

Lawrence is essentially the poet of Guiana. There is something in him which responds instantly to her sights and sounds. He sings her woodlands and waterfalls, of Kaieteur and her forest cathedrals, of the sunset at Malalli: Here are some of the words he wrote that must come at the beginning of any anthology of Guianese poetry:—

“O beautiful Guiana  
O my lovely native land  
More dear to me than all the World’s  
Thy sea-washed, sun-kissed strand  
Or down upon the borders  
Looking out upon the Deep—  
The great Atlantic blown  
Into a fury or asleep  
At morn, at noon — or better,  
In the crimson sunset’s glow  
I love thee, O I love thee —”

In his work there are odes to Guiana, an allegory of Guiana; he sings even of her political and economic labour. Lawrence had the courage to sing what he calls the Rape of the Constitution and Guiana at the Crossroads: verse worthy for their political, if not poetical, content, and he sang of her in her dimmest days — the depression era of the thirties. As courageously too he sings of the greenheart and the mora and the massive timbers of Guiana.

It is as a poet of nature that Lawrence was best. His feeling for nature gives him moving description, as the Guiana forest at moonlight:—

“The same old moon was shining as of yore ‘twas wont to  
shine  
O’er the vast primeval forest, treasuring the secret mine  
Ever wrapt in brooding shadows and in calm solemnity  
Like some great unlit Cathedral draped in twilight mystery.”

or from his lyric: the ‘**Moonlight Fantasy**’. Here he writes about—

“The silent ghostly glade  
Checkered by the filtered moonshine  
Half in silver — half in shade.  
Every clump conceals its terror  
Every crack an impish ghoul  
Limping stealthily behind you”



In the famous long poem '**Meromi**', he has written his tribute to the Echo:

“Still Echo sang and sang them o’er in wildest roundelay  
And flung them hither thro’ the woodlands — thither, far  
away  
Then silence in the gloaming held profound and solemn reign  
As if all nature paused to hear Meromi sing again.  
But twilight like a rushlight only flared to fade and die  
To lose its faintest crimson in the depths of crimson sky.”

Morning held a fascination for him as the two next extracts tell. What I am very fond of in Lawrence’s work is the singing quality he creates.

“Sometimes again  
The reluctant rain  
Would pile the clouds where the day must break  
Shut out the blue  
And the sun from view  
The silver lining whose bright beams make.  
Then fall for hours  
In driven showers  
And if the morning must weep to wake.

The morning’s in the heavens and the morning’s in my soul.  
I woke and found it burning there to-day  
A new world’s in the making right before my very eyes  
And light and colour riot all around.  
From yonder blazing sundown painting pictures in the skies  
To this bejewelled carpet on the ground,”

Lawrence’s touch is individual. One can almost hear him reciting the lines as one reads them. And over and over he catches the incommunicable magic of phrase as when he writes of the stars as “*The numberless eyes of heaven*” or of the high endeavour “*holding the volatile mind firm to the forge.*”

Especially do I like a poem, '**Futility**', that Lawrence said he was partly ashamed of as it was an attempt in what he called the new manner of writing. To him it seemed like his art

prostituted, he said. These are the 1st and 3rd stanzas:—

“The flowers are dead on the grave and a sad sight lay;  
My token of love, you had thought and your heart had bled  
As you laid them so tenderly there and behold in a day  
The flowers are dead.  
And as vain your love too long in the heart hid away.  
Then, some of it shown in a smile or kind word said  
Much more would have meant than tributes you now  
    would pay—  
The flowers are dead.”

Lawrence regretted the passing of the Victorian age of poetry, the age of settled convictions and polished unimpeachable form in which he took root. But as evidence of his poetic integrity, as a sign that he was always contemporary, however troubled he was by the modern tradition. I quote one of his last poems—

#### ‘ANTICIPATORY’

Not if I knew it  
I would not budge  
I would not lift my hand  
Or suffer that my lips  
One whispered word should breathe  
Repining or in protest  
Or lamenting o’er my lot  
If one by one  
The ones I loved and valued  
Much more perhaps than life itself  
The ones I thought most sacred held  
Human reciprocity —  
Forsook me and forgot.

Lawrence’s poems describe a static outlook. One does not see a searching after himself begin in the early poems, shape slowly and come to anchor inevitably on some basic principle that is either peculiar to himself or shared with others. The Greek goddess, Pallas Athene sprang full-panoplied from the brain

of Jove: well, Lawrence wrote from first to last with an apparatus of mind that was fully made up. He was conscious of the blind destiny that shapes our ends rough, no matter how we hew them, but he was certain that at the end a Higher Grace will set them right again. He began to write with adult certainty of a religious kind.

Time and again this religious certainty obtrudes into his work when, after long questioning on doubts, he has reasoned his Muse into what one may call a philosophical blind-alley, and he is staring against the wall. Then the style rises, not only because the verse is now free from these wrestlings of the spirit but because he sings from an inner faith: —

“And know that without thee the years would  
bring an end to a lifelong lament  
For thee, only when the glad soul set free from  
a life of discontent  
Find all the joys it had lost in Time, perhaps  
in Eternity.”

His poems are long poems, a drawback to reading in these days of radio, tabloids, short stories and very short lyrics: and they are long for two reasons. First he emphasises the moral underlying his verse and he continues his emphasis almost to the extent of what we call preaching. I believe with Flecker that the object of poetry is not to save a man's soul, but to make it worth saving.

Then he writes in the style of his favourite poet, Swinburne, that musician of English poetry. In following the musical arrangement of polysyllabic words, he twists and rather ekes out the matter, sometimes at the sacrifice of the meaning, and so he breaks the principle of balance and proportion. In his long narrative poem, ‘**Meromi**’, there are long interpolations of protest against the “ultra-modern age”; and trite effects swell the chorus: lines like this creep into the poem. “*Twas only simple Nature but it meant the world to him.*”

However, put all that aside: I must confess my admiration at his mastery of the long Swinburnian metres, the unflinching manipulation that almost borders on the mechanic. One would almost welcome a variation at times.

In my readings of Lawrence my best true memory of Swinburne was in the line—

“Then mingle no tears of To-morrow  
With sunshine and laughter to-day”.

because despite his acclaim of the master Lawrence confessed he had not the inner gift, the subtlety of Swinburne that moulds temples out of music, that builds by harp, not by axe, nor hand nor anvil but with smitten strings.

Yet there are times when he emerges crystal clear from his philosophic verse and sings. as here:—

“Had I the tears of a woman, and years without number to weep  
Time would grow weary of watching mine anguish for thee,  
and sleep.”

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From this short introduction I was omitting the closing stanzas of Lawrence’s ‘**Ode to Kaieteur**’ where he has lines that come upon the reader with the power of a wall of water falling from incredible heights, because those stanzas have already appeared in an issue of *Kyk-Over-Al*.

But I looked at the poem and realised again how much majesty Lawrence has put into the words and how much he uses the varying aspects of the waterfall as a stimulus to something greater than itself. the human spirit, and I could not but use them again.

The last line is perhaps Lawrence’s legacy to the tradition of Guianese poetry that he adorns.

## 'ODE TO KAIETEUR'

And falling in splendour sheer down from the height  
that should gladden the heart of an eagle to scan, —  
That lend to the towering forest beside thee  
the semblance of shrubs trimmed and tended by man,  
That viewed from the brink where the vast amber volume  
that once was a stream cataracts into thee,  
Impart to the foothills surrounding the maelstrom  
beneath thee that rage as the troublous sea,  
The aspect of boulders that border a pool  
in the scheme of a rare ornamentalist's plan,  
Where, where is the man that before thee is thrilled not  
that scorneth the impulse to humble the knee,  
With the sense of thy majesty resting upon him.  
and conscious of flouting some terrible ban?

Who, who can behold thee, O glorious Kaieteur,  
let down as it were from the fathomless blue.  
A shimmering veil on the face of the mountain  
obscuring its flaws from inquisitive view,  
Retouched with the soft, rosy glow of the morning  
and freaking the flow of desultory light,  
Or bathed in the brilliant translucence of noontide  
a mystical mirror resplendently bright.  
Or else in the warm, sanguine glory of sunset,  
a curtain of gold with the crimsoning hue  
Of the twilight upon it or drenched in the silvery  
flood of the moonlight subliming the night,  
And feel not the slumbering spirit awaking  
to joy in the infinite greatly anew?

# THE BRITISH GUIANA DRAMATIC SOCIETY

by Rajkumari

The British Guiana Dramatic Society was formed by a group of young Indian men and women under the parental guidance of Hon. Dr. and Mrs. J. B. Singh.

The Society was inaugurated on 10th March, 1937, at "Ayodhya", the home of Dr. and Mrs. Singh, just after the second staging of 'Savitri' — a profound Hindu love-drama from the epics of India. The chief aim and objects are to bring to its members the glorious culture of India, and to interpret to the West the drama, music and art of the East. All persons of Indian descent and the wife or husband of a member are eligible for membership.

During the twelve years of existence, this Society has endeavoured to adhere to its aims and objects by staging plays, sponsoring musical and dramatic and social evenings, lectures and debates. The year's main feature is the Annual Play.

## PATRON-DRAMATIST, RABINDRANATH TAGORE

Year by year the Society presents Indian plays written by Indian dramatists. Our patron-dramatist is Sri Rabindranath Tagore, a noble son of India from whose pen the sublimest love-dramas have flowed. Tagore is well-known, not only in the East, but also in the West where his works are appreciated and gained for him the coveted Nobel Prize. Many of our play-patrons and lovers of drama are well acquainted with Tagore's 'Chitra', 'Malini', 'Gora', adapted from Tagore's novel of the same name by Dr. Hardutt Singh, 'Red Oleanders', and 'The King and Queen'.

## SOCIETY'S TOP FEMALE STARS

Today we have members who have acquitted themselves very favourably on the stage. Rating at the top are Chandrawati

Singh who portrayed Malini and vied with Compton Pooran for top honours in '**Gora**'. Thelma Mahadeo (Kawall) heroine of '**The Little Clay Cart**', and supporting actress of other plays. Nellie Singh who has always excelled in supporting roles and Sheila Mohamed. Miss Mohamed, regardless of her youth, can safely be hailed "*the veteran actress*" of our Society. At a very tender age she portrayed the Chieftain's daughter, Ila, in the Society's first play '**The King and Queen**', and since then she has danced in our plays, was the heroine Sucharita of '**Gora**', and played supporting roles in '**Asra**', '**Maharani of Arakhan**'. For the Society's contribution to the Union of Cultural Clubs' Second Annual Convention, she filled Ena Gariba's role of Savitri. Mention must also be made of our actresses Leela Doobay (Chitra), Savitri Kawall (Maharani of Arakan).

## AND OUR ACTORS

Now for our actors — it is a problem to pick out the best for they have all been good, but undoubtedly special mention must be made of Akbar Khan, a founder member of the Society, who shared starring honours with Thelma Kawall in '**The Little Clay Cart**'. He is a good character actor and his versatility has earned him the position of being one of the Society's best. He also took part in '**Malini**'. Harry Kawall made his name in the pre-B.G.D.S. days in the second staging of '**Savitri**'. He played the coveted role of Yama — King of Death. In '**The King and Queen**' and '**Malini**', he was the hero and filled a supporting role in '**Red Oleanders**'. Guya Persaud, Hari Singh and Hardutt Singh, are in a special category. They filled their roles with ease and dignity. Guya Persaud, in the Society's staging of '**Savitri**', portrayed the dynamic role of Yama — King of Death. He excelled in his portrayal and the thunderous applause which followed his exit was justly evident that he had stolen the show. Hari Singh starred in our Dominion Status Day Play — '**Chitra**' by Rabindranath Tagore. In the role of the Prince Arjuna, brave and beloved hero of India's '**Mahabharata**', he showed his latent talent and displayed a Mason-like conception of acting. Hardutt Singh was Neila's father in '**Asra**', written by Basil Balgobin, a

Guianese aspirant, and as the tyrannical Shah of Arakan, in the '**Maharani of Arakan**'. To say that he was superb would be ironical, for what would you expect of the "Society's Director"? Others very worthy of mention are Joel Pollard, Hewly Kailen, Compton Pooran, N.C. Janki and Aditya Singh.

## **OUR MUSICIANS**

In the line of Indian music there is somewhat of a lag among our members to learn the instruments of our Motherland. We have Maselall Pollard, a member, and Mr. Omar and Paltoo Das, friends of the Society, who always respond to our call for music. But that is not enough. We want members to play the instruments, the Sitar, Esraj, Mhirdhang (drum), Tabla, so that we could have our own orchestra. There is no dearth of singers and there is a scheme ahead to revive this music, in the Society.

## **FOR BETTER UNDERSTANDING**

The Society's policy has never been a selfish one for we have shared proceeds of our entertainments with war charities and other charitable cases, generously subscribed to the East Indian Association's Building Fund and given a helping hand wherever our eleven years' experience would prove helpful. Our members firmly believe that peace and goodwill can only be realised when the nations of the earth understand the other's outlook and viewpoint of life. Therefore members are striving, in their little way, to acquaint their sister communities in British Guiana with the customs, traditions and beliefs of the Indian community. Why should there be a hotch-potch of the cultures of the Guianese communities to form a Guianese Culture? Let us strive to uphold the cultures of our own races — interpret them to the other races and we shall live in peace and harmony — mutually respecting each other's ways and means of life.



## OUR PLEASANT COUNTRYSIDE

by Eric Roberts

Unlike the towns, the raw backlands do not boast of modern amenities on a very large scale; no electricity, sewerage, up-to-date cinemas, no continuous and various form of entertainment. To them, cosmetics are negligible concerns, and however crude their appearance may at times, they at all times possess one characteristic in common — the love of the soil.

Let us at this moment take some time off, and get away from the hustle and bustle of City life, and take a brief trip to the Countryside, taking as our object of interest, one of those villages on the Coast which seems remote and sparsely populated, boasting of a mere handful of people, the remnants of what we may call — a once thriving community.

Having in our possession the light little craft otherwise known as a “ballahoo”, and equipped with a paddle or two, we shall now proceed up the canal or trench, for a little bit of adventure up to its source. It is now a few hours past noon, and the weather has the indication of holding out, there are patches of dull black clouds, but with the breeze continuing to blow as it does now, we shall not welcome any further fears.

There are humble dwellings on either side of us, a good many of them with thatched roofs, and walls painted with mud while others have boards, old and decaying, which have withstood the elements for as much as two or more generations. From outside they appear crude and inhospitable, but once inside, we seem to forget the incompleteness of their surroundings. Here we meet the villagers in their own natural way, generous, helpful, and simple in their tastes. For the moment we forget about modern furniture and conveniences, being so enrapt with the sympathetic considerations of our humble hosts. Here with a dignity all their own, they would tell us about the traditions of the family life, and lay bare to us the circumstances which surrounded the family. They would tell their bitter experiences, — flood, drought, pestilence, three things about which only they throughout

their lives would be able to speak on the havoc wrought, and the disasters which they have suffered from time immemorial.

Yet it is wonderful how they remain unmoved with the passing of one dreadful year after another. They pin their whole outlook upon the thought, that all these disruptions and vicissitudes are the work of the Creator, and mankind is not righteous enough to deserve better. They accept the disastrous years with faith and fortitude, and rejoice in the brief period of good and plenty, whenever it arises. Their tastes are by no means simple, and their wants are at all times peace and contentment.

As we take our departure from amongst these wonderful people, we cannot help wondering at the contrast between their homes, and those who occupy them. They deserve no pity — rather they pity us.

We continue on our way, and holding the straight course of the canal, we pass the last human habitation of the village. In front of us is the stretch of uncultivated land which serves as pasturage for the herd of cattle, and the small flocks of sheep, which have survived the rains and the floods, and the lurking crows, which, whenever, unmolested, swoop down upon them, and devour the new-born progeny. Their numbers are not so considerable, yet they seem to scatter all over it, some grazing, while others are taking shelter from the rays of the sun, under the trees, which limit the boundaries of the pasture. They are not alone: for among them are the black birds, and here and there the red breast of the Robin would attract our attention. We have now reached the end of this verdant patch of land, where sheep lie at peace and bleat within the afternoon air, and the cows chew their cuds, while the sun creeps slowly towards the horizon. Beyond here there is nothing more of importance to win our fancy, save the bush and the foliage, which have become almost impenetrable, and which form an arch over this silent waterway that nears its end. Here in this part of the Country, man has been prone to neglect, having satisfied himself with a sufficient portion, which had well served his needs. Here in the days of former ancestors, great and populous communities had sprung up and those seeds, which today have merged as giant trees, were swiftly brushed aside, in order to cultivate food for their

livelihood. Here were orchards, which have borne fruit in their time, and in which children have spent the greater part of the day collecting, during the harvest seasons. Yet all these have been obscured by the passing of Time, and those who were children then, are today sleeping within the bosom of the soil, having grown to maturity, as men and women.

Now we must make our journey homewards, for we have touched the source of this historic waterway, and have seen the shovel's last imprint on the fertile soil. In a few moments the sun will be lost in the horizon, while the noisy chattering of the parrots, serve to remind us that the time is up for us to make our departure from the tranquil and peaceful atmosphere of the back-lands. Here we pass, first the overhanging foliage and then come again on the wide stretch of pasture-land, on which sheep, cows and birds, thrive in harmony. It is now around dusk, and those humble dwellings have all been lit by the lamps on the walls, and their bright beams are making their penetration though the open crevices.

At last we are at our landing, and returning the worthy little craft to the owner with thanks, we tidy ourselves for a good dinner. We have decided to spend the night here, and from the buzzing of the mosquitoes, they seem to appreciate the idea feasibly. The journey has made us somewhat sleepy, and we have to retire to bed in order to be up early in the morning.

In a few hours once more the day bears the hustle and stirring of the Countryside. The singing of the birds and the crowing of the cocks, are indeed an inspiration for starting off the day in the best of spirits. Those fishermen from the sea have just brought in their catch, and are parcelling them out at the market-place. The milkman comes round to give his customers their supply of milk, and the little boys and girls, are either attending the fowls, or feeding the pigs. Yes, another day has begun, and the familiar sight of traversing over mud and quagmire continues again. Those for the farm, are making live preparation, and are baling out the boats, and putting in whatever they would need for the trip: while those who must make their sojourn into the City are busy making up their loads, and listing all the items which they must purchase in it.

The time has now come for us to make our departure from this small portion of our pleasant Countryside, leaving its peace and quietness and return again to the hustle and bustle and chaos of the town. Here I must once more gaze upon all that I have already reviewed— the pasture land with its short blades of green grass, and the animals and birds, which solicit its hospitality, The almost impenetrable foliage, which once had given food and plenty, and happiness to those past generations, which have tilled its soil, and those humble dwellings, weather-beaten and aged beyond repair, and which give shelter to the remnants of a once populous village.

Here is part of our pleasant Countryside, and which like all others has its history written in floods, rains, and pestilence. They have that characteristic in common—the love for the Soil—the soil which gave them birth—and to which they must all return. There are not many young ones left in this village, and soon, perhaps, these humble dwellings that I now fix in my gaze, would become foliage like the rest of it, and what is the pasture-land of today, may be the dense jungles of tomorrow. No longer would there be cattle and sheep, but wild animals, enjoying the repose of what is now, man's proud domain.

In the meantime this village, like all the rest of our pleasant Countryside, will continue in its own traditional way of life—to plant its crops, to reap them, and to attend its stock amidst the erosion of Time and Nature.

To make what feeble attempts within their inconsiderate means, to resist the rains the floods and the pestilence, which throughout the past years of its existence, have been its most formidable adversaries. Yet amidst these recurring vicissitudes, it will not forsake the Church, which has ever been the centre of its communal life: and which has been that fountain of Courage and Fortitude, at all times visible in its Character. Yes, our pleasant Countryside will exist alongside that of a fast and deteriorating material world—planting, and reaping the returns of the good Soil, and cheerfully thanking the Giver, with the song of Harvest.

West Indian Mosaic  
**AS OTHERS SEE US**

Not since the days of the Greek city states have there been communities in which the fundamental problems of human society present themselves so clearly, so intensely and in so personal a form as in the West Indies. The parallel is not fortuitous. The Caribbean is the only region in which Europe, Africa and Asia meet. In the ancient world they met in the Aegean and there issued from their meeting the superb civilisation of Greece. Who can say what lofty Caribbean destiny is now beginning to weave itself on the loom of time?

**HAROLD STANNARD**

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One of the strongest and most discouraging impressions carried away by the investigator in the West Indies is that of a prevailing absence of a spirit of independence and self-help, the lack of a tradition of craftsmanship and pride in good work, and a tendency on all matters to appeal to Government for assistance with little or no attempt to explore what can be done by individual self-help. Isolated individuals may rise above this—many do—but the spirit is lacking except in some of the very small island communities. Without some such tradition no amount of external and governmental help will create a sound and self-perpetuating social tradition. It is true that the history of the West Indies explains and accounts for this pauperisation; and we feel that it is incumbent upon the people of Britain to do what they can to help. But in the last resort the success or failure of any programme of social reform and betterment will depend on a definite and prolonged effort on the part of West Indians to help themselves even while accepting help. The material betterment of the West Indies must be accompanied by, and is to a large extent conditional on a moral resurgence among the people themselves.

**WEST INDIA ROYAL COMMISSION**

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The saddling of the West Indian Colonies with medical, educational, housing and other social services whose development may be brought to a halt by their own financial weight or involve the necessity for permanent external aid — would be dis-service to the people. Caution has, therefore, had to be exercised in making recommendations for expenditure under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act, in spite of the danger that such caution may be misunderstood or misrepresented as meanness unless the public are aware, if not of all the details, at least of the main features of its situation.

The object of the work so far performed has been to assist West Indian peoples towards a better understanding of their problems and towards better standards of life and improved social services which are based on an economic structure which can support them

**SIR FRANK STOCKDALE, 1944.**

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Public discussion does not take the place of hard thinking by trained minds, and it is the trained West Indian that the West Indies need first of all. But he in his turn will be powerless in reform and development, particularly on unorthodox lines, unless he can obtain public consent. The two poles of West Indian progress are the training of West Indians and the organized education of public opinion.

A new spirit has manifested itself in recent years among many of the younger West Indians. They are anxious to develop forms of self-expression that are not merely imitative. The welfare movement, with its handicrafts and community organization, provides the vehicle for a widespread popular impulse by offering possibilities for personal and communal fulfilment that are both new and wholesome.

**SIR JOHN MACPHERSON, 1946.**

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The peoples of the West Indies are not mere "grievance-mongers". They have managed to arrive at as least as good a day-to-day solution of the problem of race as any other people in the world, and a much better one than most, particularly their neighbours in North America. They have managed to build for themselves a social life of much charm and uniqueness in surroundings of un-speakable squalor and want. Their social life exhibits a remarkable degree of vitality at a time when there are far too many signs of decadence visible in the modern world.

To anyone who feels despondent about the destiny of man in the twentieth century, collaboration with the upsurging youth of the West Indies will come as a refreshing tonic. If West Indians demand much from the world, they have much to contribute. They must learn to understand their obligations in this regard, and to occupy with destiny and responsibility the position they have won for themselves in the international comity of peoples.

The proportion of the West Indian peoples who have managed to achieve a middle-class status for themselves has necessarily been small, since an agricultural as distinct from an industrial economy has only a small need for, and cannot support large numbers of, the professional people and persons engaged in business and public administration who form the bulk of the middle classes elsewhere. That so many succeeded in doing so, despite the overwhelming odds, is a great tribute to the vitality of the peoples who have emerged from the racial melting-pot of the West Indies during the last two centuries. The West Indian middle classes have shown that they can hold their own with the middle classes anywhere.

Perhaps the most urgent of the social problems of the West Indies is, indeed, the winning of the confidence of young, intelligent and well-educated people by the leaders of West Indian communities, and the enlisting of their energies in the task of rebuilding the societies in which they live.

If that prevailing tendency is still to attempt to imitate a foreign way of life, encouraging signs of a departure in

another direction were plainly visible in 1945. Remarkable developments had taken place in local schools of painting in Trinidad and in Jamaica, and it was obvious from the works which formed part of local exhibitions that artists found inspiration in the local scene, did not shrink from portraying Negroid characteristics, and even took pleasure in evolving their own technique for the purpose of attaching a special significance to them. This was also true in more limited degree of West Indian poetry and literature. A West Indian culture was in process of formation, and a certain pride in the fact of being a West Indian was evident.

The most pressing task of the immediate future is to assist West Indian communities to build for themselves a culture in which they can 'rest', and of which they can be justifiably proud. The chief barrier to stability in the social structure has come from the imposing of standards from the outside world, which are a crushing burden for West Indian peoples to bear.

There can be no doubt whatever that slow advances are surest in 'nation building'; it is the rapid advance achieved by the plausible enthusiast which is most to be suspected and feared.

The key to the whole problem probably lies, on the one hand, in the generation of a sufficiently powerful dynamic force within the West Indian communities to carry them forward in the task of rebuilding society, and, on the other, in the making of an approach to the West Indian people on behalf of Great Britain which will restore the sadly depleted fund of confidence in British administration.

It is now becoming clear that one of the primary social problems of the twentieth century is that of race, and it is hoped that the discussions of the social problems of the West Indies have a particularly important part to play in the future development of social relationships, for the peculiar history and physical characteristics of the West Indies have brought together peoples from every continent in such a way as to lead to the gradual growth of sound race relations.

**T. S. SIMEY**



Sketch for a History...  
**GLIMPSES OF KINGSTON**

by Joy W. Small

### THE BEGINNINGS OF KINGSTON

One of the earliest records we have of Kingston which is now Ward No. 1 in Georgetown, appears in Dr. Pinkard's *Letters*, where he describes — "*An English village contiguous to fort and camp with neat good houses, painted white, on brick foundations and covered with wallaba shingles.*" This letter was dated April, 1798. It is generally agreed that the village was named after the capital of Jamaica.

Kingston was the military centre of the Colony, so probably the first people to build houses there were officers from the garrison. Here, also, lived the Garrison Chaplain, for many years the only English clergyman in the Colony. But men who had their business houses in the other township of Stabroek soon found it a good idea to make their homes in this pretty little village where they could enjoy the refreshing sea breezes, new houses, and interesting neighbours. Dr. Pinkard states that the rents paid for a house in Kingston at that time varied from £5 to £20 per month.

A visitor to the Colony during the late 18th century, driving up what is now High Street, which in his day Dr. Pinkard describes as a good carriage road, would probably ask about a rambling building with broad galleries, built almost on the beach, on the site of the present Round House. This was Camp House, at one time the residence of the Governor.

North of Eve Leary, we read of two plantations, Kierfield and Sandy Point, but by 1904 these had been entirely washed away.

The foreshore was covered with courida swamp, with the exception of the strip extending from Fort William Frederick to Camp Street. This Sandy stretch was the scene of many a duel fought by the gentlemen of the time, and later of band concerts by the band of the West India Regiment. Horse racing could also be seen on that beach prior to the use of D'Urban Race Course in 1829.

An interesting little building stood half a mile east of Fort William Frederick. This was the Block House, which, besides serving as a signal station for vessels arriving, was a base for sending semaphore messages by relays along the East Coast to Berbice.

## ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

By 1848, the little village of Kingston had grown considerably. In 1830, the temporary wooden structure which had served as lighthouse from 1817 was replaced by the present lighthouse. Richard Schomburg, writing of his travels between 1840 and 1844, says—

*“After climbing the 140 steps leading to the gallery, a wonderful panorama unexpectedly came into view. Dumb with surprise and delight, the eye swept over the heaving and billowy seas as far as the distant horizon where Earth and Heaven met; light fishing-boats pitched and tossed upon the ruffled waves, to disappear a moment later, while a ponderous coaster would skim its way through them. Below, there glared at me the thick forest of masts and flying flags. Spreading itself before my delighted gaze was the city with its nice wooden gaudily-painted houses, its overtopping churches and Public Buildings, its thousands upon thousands of slender palms, its broad busy streets, and its many canals that ran through it like so many veins.”*

The same writer continues—

*“Near the Fort rises the Lighthouse tower, east of which the beautiful but unoccupied Camp House, the residence of former Governors, who in those days were also the Troop-commanders, peeps clandestinely through the thick foliage of giant trees, the lovely, large and roomy Eve Leary Barracks are attached to it, and the two Military Hospitals border the immense parade ground...A shady alley-way of thickly-leaved trees and slender palms leads to the blessed God’s acre for the officers, the soldiers’ cemetery being on the farther side of the Barracks.”*

The barracks described here were erected in 1837. Rodway, in his *Story of Georgetown*, says that these fine spacious barracks for the troops had replaced the poor confined ones formerly in use, where soldiers were crowded to an unmerciful degree in hammocks.

The first, and still the only church in Kingston, is the Methodist Church, which was opened in 1831. The first chapel was a much smaller building than the present church, but on the same site. The soldiers at the Barracks often held church parade there, and sailors and fishermen also helped to make up the congregation.

The first Bishop of Guiana, appointed in 1842, lived in "Kingston House" — on the same site as the present "Austin House", but built nearer the road. "Austin House" itself was not erected until 1894.

In 1848, great excitement was caused by the opening of the Railway Line from Georgetown to Plaisance.

A few years later there was excitement of another kind when the population of Kingston began to be much concerned over the encroachment of the sea, and an earth dam was commenced along the shore. This, however, proved no barrier to the waters which, in 1855, flooded the whole of Kingston, in places to a depth of four feet. The higher land at the railway line marked the boundary of the flood. Rodway states—"*Camp House was abandoned, its stables and cowsheds swept away, the Lighthouse liable to be undermined.*" A local rhymer of the time produced the following—

"Be sober, my muse, and with gravity tell  
What sad havoc and ruin all Kingston befell,  
How the sea swept away all the dam and its smouses,  
Made canals of the streets, Noah's arks of the houses:  
How some bridges blew up, how some houses came down,  
And together went wandering over the town."

That year, the building of the Sea Wall commenced in earnest, as can be seen from the tablet west of the Round House on the Sea Wall, on which is the following inscription:—

This  
Sea Wall  
was commenced at the Battery  
A.D. 1855  
and was completed to this point  
A.D. 1860

The work continued for many years, and in 1882, was completed as far as Kitty. A second tablet east of the Round House records this.

In 1860, the Town Council erected two large tanks next the Church to provide water for schools and poor people in times of drought.

The Governor's Pond near the Sea Wall is probably a result of the practice of digging clay for sea defence dams. A suggestion that it should be filled in was altered, and in 1940, the sides were concreted instead. This pond has proved a great attraction for boys with model sailing boats, and is a beauty spot on a moonlight night when the stately palm trees on the east side arc reflected in the rippling water.

## KINGSTON IN 1948

During the last twenty-five years, much of the old Kingston has disappeared, and many changes have been caused by the Second World War.

In 1924, what was left of Fort William Frederick was dismantled in order that the Petroleum Bond could be erected on the same site. Up to 1940, an imposing line of twenty-two cannons still provided an excuse for the name of "Fort", and at the same time were used as playthings by children. But the war came along, and twenty-one of them were sold to a Canadian munition firm.

One gun remains pointing out to the river. This is the "8 o'clock gun" which Schomburg mentions in his writing of more than one hundred years ago—

*"Just as the firing of cannon had signalled the onset of night, a similar one notified the breaking of day: the Reveille sounded through the yet silent city streets and recalled to life fresh energies and renewed activities."*

This firing of a gun at 5 a.m. and 8 p.m. — a reminder of slave days — was discontinued in 1939 through the shortage of gunpowder. (The firing of the gun at 5 a.m. had stopped before that time.)

Formerly the offices of the Howard Humphreys Corporation, the bath hut east of the Bond was taken over by the Town Council for this purpose in the nineteen twenties or thirties.

The former Immigration Depot near the Sea Wall was built in 1881, and the passer-by could always see in the compound, crowds of East Indians who were staying there prior to their return to India. During the war, the building was taken over for military purposes. The bottom flat is at present used as the office of the District Commissioner, Georgetown.

Other points of interest on the Sea Wall are the Bandstand, elected by public subscription in 1903 as a memorial of Her late Majesty Queen Victoria, and the Koh-i-noor Shelter nearby, which is the outcome of a memorial paper of the Diamond Jubilee edited by Miss Webber.

An imposing memorial of the last war is a concrete pillar near the Round House on which used to be a small look-out shelter, complete with anti-aircraft gun. After the war, the pillar was left standing and the following inscriptions put on it.

The Royal Regiment Artillery  
B.G. Coast Battery  
World War 1939-1945

Fifty years ago, it was not possible to get into Cowan Street from Fort Street. The road was blocked by an old Dutch well, which has since been filled in, and the road built over. Perhaps it was this well which gave the name of Spring Alley to our Fort Street.

A building which has changed hands many times is the present Education Department, which formerly housed the Public Works Department Head Office. The building has been used as military barracks, and as a dwelling house.

The north east corner of this same site, now a promising kitchen garden, was formerly the site of Kingston Anglican School — dismantled many years ago.

During the war, the vacant piece of land near the Lighthouse was cleared of its large trees for the erection of the United States Organisation Headquarters, which caused an unusual amount of traffic in the district, especially on party nights. The building has since been taken over by the Government for use as the Public Works Department Head Office.

A landmark in Kingston is the huge molasses tank in Water Street which was erected by the Pure Cane Molasses Company in 1931. Next door is the Electric Company Power House, erected in 1937.

Another interesting building is St. Joseph's Mercy Hospital formerly the private nursing home known as "Colonno House", and before that a dwelling house famous for its 99 windows.

Kingston, the "*pretty little village*" of 1796, is now a compact, built-in residential ward of the city of Georgetown. It has shared the improvements enjoyed by the rest of the city — better roads, tramcars while they lasted, first gas, and now electricity. But a view of the city from the lighthouse today would not be very different from that described by Schomburg in 1840: and the houses in Kingston are still "*neat good houses, painted white*" as described by Dr. Pinkard.

Farewell Snapshot...

**LAST DAY**

by J. A. V. Bourne

The shutters rattled and awoke me from a pleasant dream. Outside, blackbirds were chirping and the wind souged breezily in the casuarina trees. Light began to stream in though the jalousies.

I got up and pushed open the window. Our bungalow was situated on a hilly crest overlooking the Atlantic Ocean, and the loveliness of the scene spread out below always thrilled me.

Far away the rising sun made a golden path across the pale sea and breakers rolled majestically towards the beach. The roar of the sea never ceased and the cool wind blew freshly sweeping the misty salt air across the rocks.

So Tuesday had come at last. A feeling of sadness disturbed me as I remembered.

Morning after morning the sun had risen over that rocky promontory tinting the cloud pattern with silver-gold. This last morning the beauty of the sunrise was more entrancing than ever.

It seemed only yesterday we had come to this delightful seaside village, Bathsheba. But two months had gone by. Time had a way of passing swiftly here, as it the days, too, were being blown past like clouds on the wings of the wandering breeze.

And now, our last day had come!

I peeped into the other bedroom.

Johnnie was still asleep, curled up happily on his pillow. His tanned skin and apple cheeks showed how he had enjoyed his holiday. Six years old last October, what did the future hold for him?

Clever at school, a good memory, very observant too and soft-spoken, his natural manners should help him along the hard pathway of life.

He stirred in his sleep and muttered something. Dreaming? What was the little fellow thinking of? His

sailing boat? Or the marmalade he liked with his tea, or his sums?

All day long he would be talking about figures, even when he played soldiers with the shells he picked up on the beach. I was glad he liked figures. It showed an orderly mind.

The boy turned over and stretched himself and then suddenly he was up and standing by the side of his cot, rubbing his eyes.

Did he remember today was Tuesday, I wondered?

He went to the window and pushed it open, gazing out to sea for a moment, then came back to the bedside and knelt down.

It was inquisitive of me to watch him unawares, but the little fellow was so interesting. Now, he would be saying the prayers his mother taught him. Soon, he stood up and began to fumble with the pyjama buttons, humming a calypso song he had heard some nights before.

There was a brightening in the sky and a shaft of glorious sunlight streamed into the bedroom. Time to get moving. I said to myself or we'll be late for the bus.

Johnnie opened wide the bedroom door and called out: *"Morning, daddy! Taking a last bath?"*

He loved the sea and the beach and the wind's song. To search for rare shells in the early morning was a great enjoyment to him.

And now, it was finished!

A last bath!

Back to school. Back to the monotonous routine of work. No more building castles on the sand, or dreaming lazily on the couch in the verandah watching the clouds weave fantastic shapes over the blue ocean.

The joys of unpacking that first day we came here. The choosing of rooms and stocking up of the larder! The happy chattering of his mother and sister as they arranged things. Then, the hurried afternoon tea, afterwards the eager stroll on the beach.

Followed a round of daily pleasures, early baths in the shadowed water of the pool, long tramps along the rocky coast, or fishing in a quiet pond, or just basking in the sunshine.



And day-dreaming in sleepy grass  
Hear the cool lapse of hours pass...

One glorious morning a beautiful sunrise gave promise of a fine day. Away in the distance fishing boats ploughed through the opening in the reef and sailed out to sea. A gentle breeze was blowing. On the hills goats nibbled grass and white fleecy clouds speckled the blue sky.

It was a perfect day for a ramble and after an hour's walk we had reached the beach at Dog Rock.

Johnnie was thrilled as for the first time he watched the breakers, crowned with white foam, dash wildly over the great Rock, flinging spray high into the air.

Fascinated, we had both sat on the mossy bank, watching for hours the sportiveness of the ocean waves. Time had passed swiftly. . .and the sun was nearly overhead when we reluctantly started back for home and lunch.

What happy memories! And now, it was all over!

*"Yes, Johnnie, a last dip in the pool,"* I answered.

His love of water was a passion. Let him but catch sight of a puddle or of rain gushing from a water-spout and he would shout with ecstasy. But his greatest joy was to splash about in the "bishops" pool under the overhanging rock.

John not only thought of it all day, he dreamed of it by night, and would tell many a tale of mermaids coming up and blowing in their shells and of great dolphins swimming and diving in the depths, exaggerated a hundred times in the lively imagination of his thoughts.

Would he remember these halcyon days when he grew up to manhood?

Later on, when we returned from the pool greatly refreshed seven o'clock was striking.

The bus would soon be here now. In a few minutes time we would be over the hills...the sound of the waves breaking on the beach would slowly die away — like music that fades...to silence! and Bathsheba would become just a memory! Tuesday was on its way.

## NOTES AND JOTTINGS

To those in Georgetown with intellectual curiosity, the first quarter of 1943 brought an unusual succession of influences from various parts of the world.

The most important of the visiting lecturers was a little brown man from India, Pandit Rishi Ram, who delivered in the Town Hall and elsewhere, a series of striking and thoughtful public lectures on philosophy and religion. His audiences which crowded the Town Hall to capacity, sometimes thrice to the week, consisted of men and women of all ages and of all walks of life. Obviously speaking English as a secondary language and in a thin typically Eastern voice, this little self-composed man threw a spell over the people who listened to him. He was telling them always of the hunger of their souls, of goodness and love as the ideas upon which this Universe is founded, of the world as a joy creation, of the spiritual basis of international relationships, of the incessant striving of the human soul to attain the Infinite and its refusal to be satisfied with finite substitutes, of the need to purge ourselves of our desires, of the five aspects of Truth common to all great religions, of Knowledge, Beauty and Action as the great roads along which the human spirit could journey to God.

His audiences asked him questions on the fundamental ideas he had raised and he answered them unassumingly with the subtlety habitual to a one-time principal of a theological college. Patently the questions were nothing new to him for he had answered them or others of their type on his public lecture tours in London, South Africa and the West Indies.

The feeling of the complete absorption of a crowd in the words of the lecturer made one imagine that it must have been something like that when centuries ago a greater One spoke to crowds about their souls on the shores of the Galilean lake.

During the same period, March and April, a young English artist, John Harrison, was lecturing weekly to a small group of practising artists and other interested, on the origins of modern art, the work of Picasso and Gauguin, and the painting now being done in England.

Harrison had studied at Oxford and lived for years with the painters and critics of the Parisian schools, and he had come as Arts and Exhibitions Officer of the British Council to give expert information to the artists in British Guiana. Based in Jamaica, his services were available to all the British Council representatives in the Caribbean.

In April also, three professors on the staff of the West Indian University College spent a week in British Guiana for the purpose of interviews and goodwill lectures.

On Monday, April 5, Professor Millot of the Zoology department gave a fascinating talk to a selective audience in the Oswald Parry Hall, Bishops' High School on '**Animal Wonders of the Sea**': while on Thursday, April 8, in the same Hall. Mr. P. M. Sherlock, Director of Extra-Mural Studies, gave a lecture on the policy of the University College and showed lantern picture projections of plans of the University buildings.

Mr. Bernard Williams, Dean of the Medical School and Mr. Sherlock broadcast on April 11, a discussion between them on the first batch of medical students taking up residence in the University in October, 1948, and the arrangements that had been made for their training. Professor Millot was radio interviewed on the nature of his speciality, Zoology, and the value to the West Indies of training in that field of knowledge.

On Tuesday, April 8, all three professors met a specially summoned meeting of the B.G. Union of Cultural Clubs at the Georgetown Public Free Library, and representatives of the Union's clubs took the opportunity to discuss with them several aspects of the University's work, especially that connected with the Extra-Mural department.

The people of Georgetown also welcomed in April, for a few days, Baillie Robertson. Baillie Robertson. C.B.E., L.L.D., J.P, had previously flown to Australia and New Zealand on a tour of lectures on the Local Government system of Great Britain and at its conclusion the sponsoring body, the British Council, invited her to deliver three lectures in British Guiana

These were all delivered in the Town Hall, Georgetown; on April 10, the subject was '**Our responsibilities as Citizens**' with Mr. M. B. Laing, C.M.G., Commissioner of Local Government as Chairman. On April 11, Lady Woolley took the chair and Baillie Robertson spoke on the part women could

play in civic life, while on April 13, the subject was — ‘**The work of the Scottish Council for Health Education.**’

### **MINERALOGY CLASSES**

In collaboration with the Combined Cultural Committee of the Royal Agricultural and Commercial Society, the Union Clubs and the British Council, a course of 10 lectures and practical work of two hours duration was held at the Geological Survey Department, Georgetown. Classes were held on Monday and Thursday evenings, commencing on Monday, 15th December, 1947, but excluding Thursday, 25th December, 1947, and Thursday, 1st January, 1948.

Seventeen persons enrolled for the classes and the average attendance at the classes numbered about 15. These included 5 gold and diamond prospectors and 7 officers of the Lands and Mines Department. The lectures and demonstrations were conducted by the Director, Senior Geologist, Geologist and Scientific Assistant of the Department assisted by four junior members of the staff, all of whom were in attendance almost throughout the course.

The equipment for the classes consisted of a simple “Blowpipe set” for each student made up from equipment purchased by the Combined Cultural Committee at a cost of about \$105 supplemented by Departmental equipment and mineral collections when necessary.

The lectures dealt with General Geology, the origin and uses of minerals and the methods used in the identification of rocks and minerals, and particular attention was paid to the geology and minerals of British Guiana.

The British Council Representative, the Commissioner of Lands and Mines, and Dr. F. Dixey, Director of Colonial Geological Surveys paid visits to the classes. The latter gave a brief address to the students.

Judging by the average attendance a high degree of interest was maintained throughout the course, absences being due mainly to illness or departure from Georgetown.

I desire to place on record my appreciation of the valuable and cordial assistance given by all members of the Department in the preparation and running of the classes, and, in

particular by Mr. Pollard and his laboratory attendant, who were mainly responsible for the preparation of equipment and chemicals, etc., and of the financial help and other assistance provided by the Combined Cultural Committee of the Royal Agricultural and Commercial Society, the Union of Cultural Clubs and the British Council.

The Blowpipe equipment provided by the Combined Cultural Committee is being retained in the Department for future use if it is decided to repeat the course of lectures and demonstrations.

**S. BRACEWELL**

## Review

### *The Co-operative Movement at Home and Abroad*- Spaul and Kay

After providing an opportunity for economic self-determination to the British working classes over the last hundred years, the Co-operative Movement has now taken West Indian Colonies by storm and may well assume a more important role in the destinies of the common man than even Trade Unionism. We have somewhat passed the first stage of introduction to the movement; people now need to be apprised of the possibilities of co-operation as a solution to their economic problems.

Invaluable assistance in this direction is given by Spaul and Kay in their book *The Co-operative Movement at Home and Abroad* which should find a place on the shelves of both students and general reader. It is a most comprehensive picture of the nature of co-operative effort the world over and the authors have been essentially practical in their approach to the task which they have undertaken and so ably executed. Many useful avenues of co-operative activities have been demonstrated and these have been carefully related to the circumstances and objects which inspired them.

The book is a wealth of experience and besides being an up-to-the-minute record of the achievements and progress of co-operation is a simplified aid to the understanding of the true significance of the Movement.

In most of the countries studied, the authors describe the background social and economic conditions from which co-operation emerged and the labours of the pioneers who called the system into existence. It implies investigation into the evils of local conditions and the administering of similar treatment towards their correction.

In their discussion on some sore points of the economic organisation in various countries of the Empire, the authors have shown a candour which many colonials would applaud. Attention has also been directed to the contribution of the co-operatives to Empire trade.

Every chapter of the work is attractively written and is intensely interesting. One cannot help feeling at some stages

that the Co-operative Commonwealth is not far distant.

Readers should not however be lured into believing that these remarkable results were achieved for Co-operation without repeated disappointment and even frustration in many places. No attempt has been made in the book to indicate pitfalls or difficulties of organisation and practice, or to be technical at all: but the history of the development of the Movement would suggest that this aspect cannot be too easily disregarded. Perhaps too much has been attempted to render any serious consideration of problems practicable without appreciably increasing the size of the work. What the book lacks in balance is compensated for by the wide range of its enquiry. An appeal is also made for the training of youth and an apprehension of their contribution to the future of the Movement.

I commend this work as a useful handbook for all persons and groups interested in the practice of Co-operation.

**CLEMENT R. JARVIS**

Review  
***BIM — A Boy in British Guiana***  
by Stella Mead

I met Stella Mead when she came to British Guiana in 1945 on behalf of the BELRA, and she had said then that she would write a book on her trip. She had a reputation as a writer of children's books and I was one of the studio audience when she talked over Station ZFY, telling children of her journey by plane from Florida into the Caribbean,

At Mahaica Hospital, I know she got the patients around a table and among them, they wrote a play with a little prompting from her.

So I was very much interested to pick up her book named *Bim - a Boy in British Guiana*, published by the Orion Press at 7/6.

Bim was an East Indian boy around the age of six or seven, and he lived on the bank of the Essequibo River. Stella Mead describes the animals he found in the forest near by and tells how Bim pays a visit to Kaieteur and then lives in the Rupununi for a while before going to school in Georgetown.

Then trouble comes to Bim and he has to go to Mahaica Hospital for treatment. The story tells us of life among children there; most attractively, I thought, and Bim gets better.

Stella Mead writes sensitively and she manages, by skilfully dwelling on the schools and teachers Bim had, to pack into the story much Guianese history and geography that children abroad may assimilate. Her scale is right so the reader should not close the book feeling we have a large leprous population here in B.G., but feeling that there is a sympathetic approach in the Colony to this disease. Actually this is borne out by the international acclaim recently given Dr. L. H. Wharton for his fine work in the institution.

Here and there Stella Mead suffers from insufficient knowledge of her subject — as where she infers that East Indians were 2/3 of the total population in 1945, or that we have bush negroes in the colony who become pork knockers or that mahogany trees are commonly found. I noticed twice



that misconception that British Guiana is three times the size of the British Isles — it is not, it is 83,000 sq. miles whereas England, Scotland and Wales, total 88,000.

But perhaps only a zealous Guianese would see those points and there is so much on the credit side like the fine references to Dr. F. G. Rose and the major fact that English-reading children have now a sensitive and sympathetic window on to life in our country.

**A.J.S.**

## **Fifth Annual Report of the British Guiana Union of Cultural Clubs, 1947-1948**

At the Annual General Meeting held at the Georgetown Public Free Library on Monday, February 24, 1947, the following were elected to the Committee of Management for the year ending February 29, 1948.

President:	E. A. Q. POTTER (Young Men's Guild).
Vice-Presidents:	E. O. PILGRIM (New Age Society); MILDRED MANSFIELD (Children's Dorcas Club).
Hony. Secretary:	A. J. SEYMOUR (B.G. Writers' Association).
Hony. Asst. Secretary:	BERYL TAYLOR (Central High School Old Students' Association).
Hony. Treasurer:	D. CAMACHO (Catholic Youth Organisation).
Members of Committee:	N. E. CAMERON (Coffee House Club), THEOPHILUS LEE (Coffee House Club); CELESTE DOLPHIN (B.G. Writers' Association).

In November the President sought leave from the Committee in order to proceed abroad in the interest of his health, and Mr. E. O. Pilgrim was elected to act as President for the remainder of the Union's year. The President, at the date of this Report, is still on vacation in the U.S.A., and this Committee desires to pay special tribute to his thorough and patient leadership in planning the activities of the year under review.

Two other members of Committee went on leave during the year — Miss C. Dolphin and Mr. N. E. Cameron. Their places were filled by Messrs. E. D. Ford and C. W. Jones respectively.

The Committee is grateful to all those co-opted representatives of organisations affiliated to the Committee's Union who gave ready and valuable service in the Committee's deliberations and the planning and arranging of Union activities.

## MEMBERSHIP

During the year, the following organisations became affiliated to the Union - the Sword of the Spirit, the African Welfare Convention, the Muslim Youth Organisation, the Literary Section of the Government Training College for Teachers and Club Promenade. The Excelsior Musical Club ceased to meet and its name has been removed from the list of member clubs now numbering 40.

In accordance with the Committee's desire to publicize the Union's aims and the activities of affiliated bodies, member clubs have been requested to forward to the Hon. Secretary short accounts of their history and achievements for release to the Press and for possible inclusion in *Kyk-Over-Al*. A number of clubs have taken advantage of this offer and the Committee hopes that in 1948 this work will be extended.

The 1947 Patrick Dargan Memorial Shield Competition, annually sponsored by the Union on Wednesday, April 23, 1947, and concluded on Wednesday, July 16 1947, after 7 fortnightly debating fixtures. The entrance fee for this competition was \$1.00 and each of the 7 clubs which entered debated in teams of three against each other competing club on the points—award system before three judges.

Subjects for debate were selected by the Committee and comprised such topics as "that a substantial extension of rail transport facilities will be of greater benefit to British Guiana than a similar extension of road facilities, that hospitals should be maintained and run by the State; that Trade Unions are on the whole mischievous in their effect; that the Cinema has a demoralising influence on the masses."

These debates were held on the same subject at the same time on debating nights at 3 principal centres, the B.G. Ex-Servicemen's Hall, C.Y.O. Building and the Central High School. One debate was held at the Y.W.C.A. Hall.

To defray expenses members of the public attending these

debates were asked to contribute by collection which amounted to \$6.06.

The Competition was won by the Guianese Academy Old Students' Association (1946 runner-up) with 11 points out of a possible 12 and the runners-up were Christ Church D.Y.M., and the Catholic Youth Organisation, 8 points each. Other clubs competing were Central High School Old Students' Association, B.G. Dramatic Society, Harjon Literary and Social Club and Comenius Youth Movement.

The trophy was presented by the President, Mr. E. A. Q. Potter, to the winners on Wednesday, August 6 at the Carnegie Free Library. An exhibition debate was held and the winners comprising Messrs. W. P. Smith, W. O. Garnett and E. N. Dublin (Proposing) defeated a team drawn from the Rest comprising Messrs. H. L. Duncan, J. O. Ramao and A. S. Burton-Haynes. The proposition was "That British Guiana's future mainly depends on its agricultural development."

The Union is much indebted to the members of the Community who acted as judges, and the Press for assisting in this competition which the Committee is sure was of great benefit in providing intellectual exercise for our youth.

## OTHER UNION ACTIVITIES

During 1947, the Committee planned a number of Union meetings to take place, as far as possible, on the last Monday of each month. Briefly enumerated these are as follows:—

On March 31, at the Georgetown Public Free Library, representatives from member clubs met to discuss what constructive suggestions on the University's work the Union might make to Dr. T. W. J. Taylor, Principal of the West Indian University College, when he should arrive in British Guiana. This meeting was sparsely attended but arrived at proposals on some of the important matters fees, quality of the degrees conferred, suggestions for Extra-Mural activity, ratio of women to men students, etc. These proposals were put to Dr. Taylor when in December, 1947, he met the Committee in the Georgetown Public Free Library in an informal discussion.

On April 28, the Committee arranged to have the Bishops'

High School Old Girls' Guild present under Union auspices a programme of speeches and discussion on the topic "The Guianese Woman". The panel of speakers comprised Mesdames Gaskin, Fowler and Morris, and Misses Adele Lewes and Hilda Devonish; speaking respectively on the Guianese woman as politician, domestic, mother, social worker and teacher. Mrs. Stafford then summed up. The meeting was presided over by the Vice-President, Miss Mildred Mansfield.

On May 16, in the B.G. Press Association rooms the Literacy Campaign Organiser, Mr. E. J. Farley, met the co-opted Committee and gave a talk on the aims of the Campaign; that of achieving functional literacy for the estimated 50,000 illiterates in the Colony and the need for voluntary help by groups such as those which composed the Union.

On June 2, in the Y.M.C.A. Hall, after the postponement of a week from the original date May 26, the Union presented the feature "An Evening with the 17th Century in Europe". The object was to present the intellectual life of an European century and to examine its legacy to modern times, both in one evening.

There was a historical summary of the century and lectures were given on musical trends (Mr. H. V. Taitt); the science of the age (Mr. J. H. Bevis); the century's art (Mr. E. R. Burrowes); the drama (Mr. D. A. Smith); the great books (Mr. A. J. Seymour). The Georgetown Dramatic Club sang two choruses Lully's '**Lonely Woods**' and Purcell's '**Nymphs and Shepherd**', Miss Joyce Fung played Scarlatti's '**Sonata in F. Major**', and there was incidental music provided by gramophone recordings lent by the British Council. The Council also lent its epidiascope to illustrate the talk on art and on the books. A short summary of the century by Miss Margaret Lee brought the meeting to a close.

On June 30, at the Free Library an "Impromptu Discussion" was held on the two topics "what advantages will accrue to British Guiana in a West Indian Federation of the British West Indies" and "That there is too much waste of time and money in so-called society life".

These topics were chosen by the meeting and then discussed impromptu by a group comprising the President, Mrs. D. J. Taitt, Miss Margaret Lee Mr. W. P. Smith and Mr. R. G. Sharples.

On August 11, at the Y.M.C.A., a packed audience of Union members and friends heard a specially arranged lecture by Rev. Dr. W. O. Carrington, a Guianese, returned home after 45 years abroad. Dr. Carrington spoke on *the "Aims and obligations of Culture"*, and stressed the value of the Union's work among culturally under-privileged sections of the community.

On August 26, 28 and 30, the Union held its Annual Convention at which every member of every member club had the right to be present. A full account of this Fourth Annual Convention is given later in the body of this report.

In September, the Committee took advantage of the short stay in British Guiana of Rev. Dr. J. M. Hohlfeld, member of the World Literacy Committee and on September 11 at the Y.M.C.A., Dr. Hohlfeld delivered an address to the Union on *"Sounds and Symbols"*, a topic dealing with recent linguistic trends and with the Literacy campaign work then being launched at Pl. Ogle.

On October 29, in the African Welfare Convention Hall, the Committee arranged for the Union meeting to be devoted to the aims and activities of three of the Union's clubs, the African Welfare Convention, the B. G. Photographic Society and the B. G. Lithographic Life Club. This was the first of the *"co-operation and better acquaintance"* programme of meetings which the Fourth Annual Convention had urged upon the Committee and the speakers spoke first on the aims of their respective groups and proceeded to outline what the clubs did in their normal meetings. The speakers were Mr. S. D. Morrison, President of the African Welfare Convention, Mr. C. P. de Freitas, President of the Photographic Society and Mr. I. C. Stewart, one of the founders of the Litho Life Club.

In the November feature, the following eight clubs co-operated — Government Training College Literary Section, the Christ Church Youth Movement, the Kitty Women's Institute, the Comenius Youth Movement, the African Welfare Convention, the Children's Dorcas Club, the Central High School Old Students' Association and the New Age Society.

Each of these organisations was asked to (1) give the name of one representative who would address another club at one

of its regular meetings for 15 minutes on the Union's aims and those of his or her own club and (2) permit a speaker from some other club to come and speak for 15 minutes at one of its regular club meetings during November.

The purpose of this feature was to arouse more interest in the Union by having Union addresses delivered to the clubs and by asking each club to share in that work.

The Committee hopes that another group of clubs would be willing to co-operate in a similar way in 1948.

On January 26, 1948 at the Y.M.C.A., the Union presented "The Eighteenth Century in Europe" to a very full audience.

The Committee sought the assistance of persons who might be considered experts in their particular fields. Mrs. Eleanor Kerry prepared the section on the music of the century and illustrated it on the piano with the assistance of Miss Lynette Dolphin. Mr. R. G. Sharples spoke on the century's paintings and painters, Miss Margaret Lee on literature. Archdeacon Pattison-Muir prepared the section on religion while Capt. Nobbs looked over the paper on the century's Science. Summaries were also prepared on the history of the period, the women of the century and on the great books published in Europe at that time.

The British Council was good enough as to loan the Union an epidiastroscope and 18th century musical recordings for use during the evening.

## THE FOURTH ANNUAL CONVENTION

The Fourth Annual Convention of the Union took place over three days — August 26 and 28 in the Town Hall, Georgetown and August 30 at the Bishops High School.

Convention week opened on August 24 with a 15-minute broadcast by the President over Station ZFY on the B.P.I. Sunday-at-noon programme (by kind courtesy of the Publicity Officer). Mr. Potter spoke on the aims of the Union and the very wide scope of its possible activities in the Colony.

That Sunday evening at 7.30 British Guiana time, the BBC broadcast to British Guiana and the Caribbean a message for the Convention from Harold Stannard of the *Times*. Mr. Stannard's broadcast dealt principally with the relation

between education in the area and the federal idea and stressed the importance of the proposed West Indian University to small groups of persons with intellectual curiosity scattered over the Caribbean

On Tuesday, August 26 at 8.30 p.m. the public session took place in the Town Hall, Georgetown. The President was in the chair and in addition to the Presidential address, there were talks by the President of the Royal Agricultural and Commercial Society, Captain G. H. Smellie, the British Council Representative, Mr. H. Risely Tucker, and Mr. Justice J. A. Luckhoo, British Guiana representative on the Provisional Council of the West Indian University College. Captain Smellie spoke on Economics and Culture, Mr. Tucker on the Union's relation to the British Council, and Mr. Luckhoo on the Extra-Mural work being planned by the West Indian University.

During the addresses, there was a break in the proceedings to allow the Town Hall audience to listen, by means of a community reception service, to messages being broadcast at that time over Station ZFY. These messages were recorded in Washington. D.C., and Trinidad, respectively by Dr. Eric Williams, distinguished West Indian economist and historian and by Mr. F. G. Maynard, President of the Trinidad and Tobago League of Literary and Cultural Clubs. At the same time, the opportunity was taken of re-broadcasting a recording taken in British Guiana of Harold Stannard's message.

During the session, Elmo Phillips played two pianoforte pieces and Charles Knights a clarinet solo.

On Thursday, August 28, also in the Town Hall, the Union presented to the public an Evening of Music and Drama. Items were rendered by the B.G. Philharmonic Orchestra, the Maranatha Quartette and the Dawson Music Lovers' Club Singers, and Miss Rajkumari Singh sang two Indian songs. The Georgetown Dramatic Club presented a scene from Molière's famous comedy '**The Tradesman turned Gentleman**' and the B.G. Dramatic Society performed three scenes from Tagore's '**Chitra**'.

The evening came to a close with the singing of Handel's '**Hallelujah Chorus**' by an ensemble selected from the B.G.



Philharmonic Choir, the Dawsons, the Maranatha and the B.G. Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Mr. Vincent de Abreu.

The final session of the Convention was held on Saturday, August 30, at the Bishop's High School ground. Tea was served at 4.30 p.m to groups seated on the school lawns and the groups then discussed and passed the following resolutions.

### **RESOLUTION 1**

That in each year the Committee of Management arrange for one or more functions with the assistance of all member clubs in order to provide funds for the general use of the Union,

### **RESOLUTION 2**

That this Convention urge upon the Committee of Management the need of making better known, one to the other, the activities of various clubs, by means of monthly meetings.

The Committee expresses itself as being considerably heartened by the full attendance at each session of the Convention and the ready support given by member clubs.

### **Co-operation with the Royal Agricultural and Commercial Society and the British Council**

The Committee desires to record that 1947 witnessed the continuance of cordial relationships with the British Council and the R.A. & C. Society. The Union was represented on the Combined Cultural Committee by Miss Mansfield, Mr. Cameron and the Secretary until August when on Mr. Cameron's going on leave, his place on the Committee was taken by Mr. E. O. Pilgrim.

### ***Kyk-Over-Al***

The December, 1947 issue of the magazine *Kyk-Over-Al* published notes on the Union's work in 1947 and also selections from the addresses delivered at the public session of the Fourth Annual Convention.

*Kyk-Over-Al* is dedicated to the building of a Guianese tradition and to lifting the intellectual life of the community to higher levels, and member organizations are reminded that it may provide an outlet and permanent record for many of the excellent addresses delivered on special occasions, and serve as a calendar of future club activities as well as a record of their achievements,

The Committee has set to work on the Resolutions passed at the Convention and in a previous section of this report, mention has been made of the better acquaintanceship programme initiated during the latter part of 1947. A sub-committee was appointed to deal with the finances of the Union and recommended to the Committee of Management that a Union fair should be arranged early with the aim of realising money for the Union's working. Planning had not yet been completed at the date of this meeting.

### **Thanks**

The outgoing Committee is grateful to all those bodies and individuals who assisted the Union during 1947, especially the Librarian of the Georgetown Public Free Library, the British Council Representative, the Public Information Officer, the Editors of the daily newspapers, the B.G. Press Association, the management of Station ZFY, the Directors of the Y.M.C.A. and the many well wishers of the Union who acted as judges at the Patrick Dargan Memorial Shield debates.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

At the present time particularly, it is most encouraging for us over here in the Old World to see the lightening of the West Indian sky in the New World through the articles and poems in your paper.

I am particularly interested in your statement at the bottom of the first page of your Editorial that "*our problem is at bottom one of spirit.*" It is precisely the same over here, and it is for that reason good to know that we are both working for the same cause — the spirit of man.

— London, March, 1948.

I have been through *Kyk-Over-Al*, and found it extremely interesting to dip into a cultural pattern so like yet so unlike my own. There is an earnestness about it, and a simplicity — and a faint aura of something else I can't quite define — a "*step-child in the chimney-corner*" feeling — as though some of the writings weren't quite sure of being read. I can't put it into words — maybe it's the habitual aura of a colony. I don't know.

'**Art in the West Indies**' was very interesting. The author emphasizes, as others have done before her, that "*all art is of the people*" — a lesson every true aspirant must learn. It is only through identification with every aspect of his surroundings that he can interpret life in art, and by a blending of both achieve perfection — or as close to it as any artist will admit himself to have come. To the genuine artist, perfection is always just beyond reach.

Why are there so many religious references in the magazine? Are the Guianese particularly religious? What religion predominates? Or is it that it is chiefly the clerically inclined who — a) — turn to writing; b) — get themselves printed?

— New York, March, 1948.

## TIT BITS

With restless living force Reverence for Life works upon the mind into which it has entered, and throws it into the unrest of a feeling of responsibility which at no place and at no time ceases to affect it.

— **ALBERT SCHWEITZER**, (*Civilisation and Ethics*, 1923).

The deepest definition of Youth is, life as yet untouched by tragedy. And the finest flower of youth is to know the lesson in advance of the experience undimmed.

— **A. N. WHITEHEAD**, (*Adventures of Ideas*, 1933).

Perhaps, even, human beauty in its effects upon the feelings, is nothing at all but the magic of sex, sex itself becomes visible.

— **THOMAS MANN**, (*Young Joseph*, 1935).

Let no act be done without a purpose, nor otherwise than according to the perfect principles of art.

— **MARCUS AURELIUS**, (*The Meditations*, 2nd Century, A.D.).

In order to arrive at what you do not know, You must go by a way which is the way of ignorance.

In order to possess what you do not possess, You must go by the way of dispossession.

— **T. S. ELIOT**, (*The Four Quartets*, 1945)

All our dignity consists, then, in thought. By it we must elevate ourselves, and not by space and time which we cannot fill. Let us endeavour then, to think well: this is the principle of morality

— **PASCAL**, (*Penseés*, 1870).

The order of the world is no accident. The Universe exhibits a creativity with infinite freedom, and a realm of forms with infinite possibilities.

— **A. N. WHITEHEAD**, (*Religion in the Making*, 1928).

Right, as the world goes, is only in question between equals in power, while the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must.

— **THUCYDIDES**, (*The Melian Debate*, 5th Century. B.C.).

This poetry is not to be taken seriously, as though it were a solemn performance which had to do with truth, but he who hears it is to keep watch on it, fearful for the city in his soul.

— **PLATO**, (*The Republic*, 4th Century. B.C.).

To find the right road out of this despair, civilized man must enlarge his heart as he has enlarged his mind. He must learn to transcend self and in so doing, to acquire the freedom of the Universe.

— **BERTRAND RUSSELL** (*The Conquest of Happiness*, 1930).

We must work on the environment, not merely on the hearts of men. To think otherwise is to suppose that flowers can be raised in a desert or motorcars run in a jungle.

— **JOHN DEWEY**, (*Human Nature and Conduct*, 1922).

Those who seek education in the paths of duty are always deceived by the illusion that power in the hands of friends is an advantage to them.

— **HENRY ADAMS**, (*The Education of Henry Adams*, 1907).



# ISSUE 7





Guest Editorial  
**OPEN LETTER**

Dear Mr. Editor,

Because of my many years of solitude in the great open spaces, I find the written easier than the spoken word. Thank you first of all for the privilege of being guest yesterday at the Union Discussion. I came away profoundly impressed and more than a little sad. Impressed by the evidences of the wonderful human machinery that evidently already exists for doing something really vital in British Guiana, and by the keenness and eagerness to do something. Sad, because of the unquestioned sureness that culture is something that can be communicated by us as a sort of high priesthood to a complacent and malleable populace.

It seemed to me that we were among the small proportion of those who pass through our traditional educational mill and manage to emerge with a love and not an aversion for the beauties of our Western culture. So many children leave school with a nausea and hatred for all that reminds them of the boredom and the thwarting of the years which should have been an exciting intellectual adventure.

The spirit bloweth where it listeth, and I gravely fear that our good intentions may be misplaced. I insist as an anthropologist that culture is not one, but legion, and it is only living when it is rooted in the soil, and when it embodies the soul of the people who empattern it. For us, effete representatives of a dying age, Western culture is all right, and there will always be a few sensitive people in any community who love and appreciate the world heritage of the ages. But we must not undervalue the wonderful vital force — a veritable Krakatit — which is there in the hearts and minds of common men. It is on the crest of this wave that we should try to build the vital and living culture of a new age.

I feel so strongly that we run the risk of driving our people back in a defensive reaction, to pleasure at the purely instinctive level, as the result of too intensive an effort to refine the sensibilities of those who are not temperamentally or

intellectually inclined that way. Perhaps that might not be altogether an evil. The star in the east probably rises over Sam Chase.

For God's sake don't let's frighten our people, and especially our children and don't let's bore them. Culture begins when they're doing something, anything, because with all their heart and soul they want to do just that and not something else.

— IRIS MYERS

### Editor's Note

...our people really have no "culture" (in the sense of a background of tradition and beliefs, a complex of centuries of gradual growth, out of which one's spiritual feeling springs spontaneously). Taking only one section, the African's tribal framework has gone, his self-confidence been shattered, his language and all that that means of expression betokens to the conscious and unconscious workings of his mind, (the terrible ravages Europe did to Africa, Hitler only repeated in part on the Czechs), and then his great-grandson comes to a consciousness of the great yawning gulf where should be tradition to strengthen his people, and he has to get his tradition through the English language.

We do so desperately want to be rooted in the European soil that is the only earth available. We must make an act of possession somehow of our environment and the faster the better. And so I borrow your sentence - there is a wonderful vital force in the hearts and minds of (our) common men. It is on the crest of this wave that we want to build the vital and living culture of a new age. We must transplant quickly and put roots in the soil.

We have an urge born of the sun and a faith that whether or not Western culture is dying, in some mysterious way, we of the African and other peoples, the hewers and drawers of Empires, still are waiting the cue to walk on the stage of history — if a stage still exists when it's our time to pass through the wings and say the opening lines of our part. These few of us believe that we can force our past history into becoming props for future purpose, and that the accident of forced immigration into the Caribbean has isolated us to the impact of a dying civilization so that we pass on some flaming torch higher up the line. The seeds of the new race are germinating in us.

We want the creative few somehow to plough in their talents and forget what their individual talents might do on their own. It's a case of the community first and in perhaps another century or two we can afford as a people to grow our poets.

## BOOK MARK

by Raymond Barrow

Deep in the heart, beyond all sight, there lies  
A volume of those long-remembered things  
Which, in the gloom of sorrows and of sighs  
Crept forth and sang of hope a stout faith brings.

And from these things has drawn, this heart of mine,  
Comfort and succour that will prove full mead  
When in the drought of aging years I pine  
For sustenance in some small hour of need.

Clear on each page they are: a touch of hand  
In sympathy: or laughter of surprise;  
Or morn of beauty; or some romping band  
Of children with adventure in their eyes.

And yet invisibly, a knife-like blade  
Marks where one beam brought sunlight to my shade.

## LOVE SONG

by A.J. Seymour

I lie like Egypt in the sun  
You are my Nile

Through the dry earth the living waters run  
Here, there, all eager, brimming every one  
The ravaged wrinkles of the sun  
Until my parched lands smile.

Over my heart the death of drought would reign  
Eternally, but blossoms spring and grain  
Because you came.

You breathe and Egypt comes to life again  
Nile is your name.

## DAYBREAK

by F.E. Brassington

The perils of the night turn to roses  
When the dawn comes up,  
And the green grass drinks deeply  
Of the Heavens' shining cup.  
And the cattle with their keepers  
Shake off the misty sleep.  
That night, with its stars, throws round them,  
The earth, and all the waters deep.

I awoke, and all the morning sky  
With wassail-clouds and bright vermillion dye  
Was filled, and filling to the brim  
The ocean rushed upon the sands and in the bay  
Full-tide, the emerald that in the waters swam  
Dazzled in the sun, and it was day.

## POEM

by Helen Taitt

He shall touch God who reaches out and weeps

The poet in the valley, writing his homage,  
With still small words upon a mountain side.

Dancers, taking the symphony's power,  
Sad bodies making beauty on a stage  
While lovers and dreamers and builders of words  
Water their hopes with their tears,

Without glory forever are you among men  
Who cannot weep —  
Unhappy are they among women who love you  
For you cannot love.

Oh boy with the soulless eyes  
In the sunset no ecstasy,  
Oh saint with the tearless soul  
How soon thy Gethsemane.

## POEM

by George Harris

I sat in the land of poets  
Somewhere beyond the skies,  
And beheld the roses blooming  
In splendour with the wise.  
And looked in the realm of wonders  
And saw great mysteries —  
Somehow with the mystics speaking,  
And fell upon my knees.

I roamed in the fields of beauty  
Somewhere within the sphere  
Of knowledge with greatness breathing  
In fulness on my ear.  
And turned to the heights of rapture  
Oft times of which I heard,  
And felt for a while the breathing  
Wrought by the Muse's word...



## NIGHT'S KISS

by Horace L. Mitchell

Night kissed earth's lips  
In the eastern lanes of light,  
Just where the sun's flight  
From heaven's air ends  
And lends its gaiety to day,  
Then she blushed into a russet sunset  
Of myriad modesties;  
Her dark hair of purple clouds,  
Shifting shrouds of ethered ecstasy,  
Falling across her face.  
Enthralling her blush into twilight loveliness.

The scouting stars, ever-senseful, sleeping  
The slumber of the day's obscurity  
Sensed the magic of the kiss,  
And waking in their silver bliss  
Peeped the twinkling peep of piety peering  
And saw the amorous earth  
Steeped in the nectar of her joy  
Dissolving in the delights of darkness  
And of night's dreams;  
The moon, another lover,  
Hurrying slowly, lovely, from the sea  
To whisper. "Good-night", in her ear, yearning,  
And watch her sleep till morning.

## POEM

by Arthur Goldwin Smith

My faith is stronger than circumstance,  
There's no condition to bind.  
I use my patience and work my hand,  
Behind it all is my mind.

My faith is stronger than four score men,  
My hopes are bright as the sun.  
I labour away at the task each day,  
And each job I have well done.

## IN MEMORIAM 1948

by Wilson Harris

### *Death of the hero*

Broad sunlight distinguishes the world  
in huge shafts  
that shatter the humble shadowy room  
painted in ambiguous colours.  
Sounds

multiply

to reverberate

Clock ticking on the shelf of the factory  
is each unreal presentation of time divided

*The stars will remember* is the song someone sings on the radio  
yet we commit acts of murder  
Who is the beautiful woman  
who passes  
groomed to perfection  
swaying languorously? When  
we seduce her — is it hate? is it love?  
Clock ticking on the shelf is time divided in the world  
How shall the murdered live and preserve  
the picturesque duel  
in grim relief  
like a dark statue that moves forever

### *Funeral Procession*

Borne aloft on waves of colour  
we assemble the worn limbs, patches in the seat,  
tatters and the worn bearded inner meditation  
who crumbles to a beseeching prayer, who sells the beautiful  
colours — the bottled drinks flashing faintly,  
who offers with grave and quiet courtesy  
gloomy shop, the quiet fury of fingers upon the spilt fruit  
of momentary departure into an unknown world  
where  
The green leaf is etched forever

on the pale grey steely glitter of heaven  
Lines and shapes are etched forever  
and now the calm rustle of shapeless  
    branches  
        move  
            faintly  
whom the lightless spear forsakes at last.

*Epitaph*

Commemorate dispersal of collective form.  
The centre shifts. The person moves.  
Each raindrop spatters  
    from heaven  
        to puncture  
the invisible balloon of the world  
livid like a mirror where steel is colour of the sky  
and delicate waters perform the ordeal  
of reflection.  
    shadows grope in symmetry  
too articulate for precision  
    like fluid and strange  
discovery where the dim roar persists  
and waters combine to glean  
a passing vision:  
    funereal majestic mien  
transforms this artifice of eternity.

Convention Clippings  
**GOOD WISHES**

A voluntary association of autonomous societies such as the Union may, perhaps, seem to move more slowly and to produce less spectacular results than a single organisation with centralised control. It may also give its executive committee more work and more headaches. On the other hand, it certainly produces better and more permanent results in the development of initiative and a sense of public service in members of its affiliated clubs and societies. Those contributing most to the Union's activities will get most from it; the passengers, if there are any, will get very little. That is life all over.

The economists tell us that British Guiana needs capital and no doubt they are right, for that is what most countries need nowadays. Yet probably that capital is most attracted to those countries whose people have developed the character, initiative and capacity for sustained effort on which prosperity ultimately depends. It is just these qualities that the organisations represented in the Union foster. They are contributing more than may always be recognised to the development and prosperity of British Guiana. In many directions the Colony has already gone an astonishingly long way in a comparatively short time. The men and women who will carry it much farther are now developing their powers and widening their outlook in the societies to which the Union offers easier contacts and closer co-operation. One may hope that in time the rural areas may be as strongly represented in the Union as are the cities. Their need is at least as great.

— **H. RISELY TUCKER,**  
**British Council Representative in British Guiana.**

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The Association of Cultural Societies of Barbados has been happy to learn of the success which the British Guiana Union has achieved and considers that similar efforts promoted by Caribbean colonies greatly assist the development of understanding and good-will among West Indian communities. The cultural societies of Barbados look forward to the time when it may be possible for their representatives to meet with those from similar groups from other West Indian organisations dedicated to the fostering of culture and benevolence.

**J. W B. CHENERY, President.**

**A. F CRICLOW MATTHEWS, Hon. Secretary, Assn.  
of Cultural Societies, Barbados.**

A Convention Address  
**THE ECONOMIC BASIS OF CULTURE**  
by C. Holman B. Williams

In this community, where Africa, Asia and Europe meet in an American environment, we are beginning to sense a national pride and to strive for development, for a local culture, for economic progress, for self-expression and for self-government. Progress will be strictly conditioned by the measure in which these yearnings motivate those whom, for want of a better term, we call the masses, and I submit that your role and mine, as a group, is not so much to increase our own culture as to pass on to others some of the ideas and ideals with which we are imbued, some of the knowledge and skills which we have acquired.

What do these so-called masses lack and what are the lines along which, as individuals or as clubs, we can assist? The list is long, very long, but let us consider the four cardinal needs, *viz*:

- i. Education in skills and trades and a complete reorientation of the common out-look on the relative standing of the clerk and the artisan;
- ii. Thrift, with which are associated regular work, budgeting and right-spending;
- iii. Improved health, which is largely a matter of sanitation and diet;
- iv. The focusing of attention on and emphasizing the importance to each and every person of matters of civic, colonial and regional interest.

Education in skills and trades comes first because, in my opinion, then, cannot be the slightest doubt of forthcoming advances in mechanisation and industrialisation and a great number of the things which the individual lacks will automatically follow an improvement in his earnings and a great many of the things the community lacks will result from the provision of an adequate supply of trained farmers, stockmen, tractor-operators, machinists, woodworkers,

metalworkers, electricians and the like. All of us can throw our weight into the campaign for more technical training, for agricultural education, for that reorientation of outlook which I mentioned a moment ago. Our allegedly better-educated are afraid of the soil and afraid to soil their hands or put on overalls. In our community, conditioned by generations of slavery and indenture, and by the class distinctions of Europe, the cloth salesman is Mr. Jones but the skilled blacksmith is Jones, and the sons of both hesitate to clean a stall or milk a cow. By precept and example we can do something about it.

Thrift is my second plank. Let us be frank. Times are hard, rents are high, food is costly, but the cinema population keeps rising, almost in geometric progression, sports events and tournaments come bigger and bigger and oftener and oftener, dances come by the dozen, we now need a cigarette factory with a capacity of 1,000,000 cigarettes a day. Do not misunderstand me. Recreation is essential to wholesome living but it is not our duty to put over the idea that too much of anything is bad, that some forms of recreation can be relatively inexpensive and more profitable to mind and body than others, that assurance of one's life, insurance of one's home and furniture, membership in a friendly society which will provide sick benefits, must come **before** costly recreation.

Sick people are a burden to themselves and to the community. Modern science has taught us that health is largely dependent on sanitation and correct dietary habits, and you and I know that most of the shortcomings in these respects are due to ignorance or indifference. Our masses cannot afford vitamin C capsules but they can purchase the type of inexpensive fruit in season; they cannot afford the B vitamins or phosphates, but they would hardly be deficient in these if their rice were so cooked that they benefited by its contents in these respects. DDT has put a new complexion on the malaria problem but it is surprising the number of persons who claim they cannot afford a net but who find the money to pay the doctor and buy drugs; it is even more surprising to see the number of nets so tucked in that the feet come in contact all night and are not protected from mosquitoes.



And my last plank is the awakening of interest in civic, colonial and regional matters. It is no use murmuring in homes and clubs that this is wrong or that is wrong. We must awaken the public mind to the fact; our criticisms must not only be destructive but constructive, we must suggest the remedy. I may be wrong, but visits to the neighbouring colonies leave me with the impression that the citizens of Trinidad, Jamaica and Barbados are better informed, on the average, on colonial and regional questions, and more determined to share in the shaping of things than is the case here. A Wakefield blueprints for Agriculture, a Hammond reports on Education, a Briercliffe on Medicine, a Benham contrives to report on the national income, on the sugar industry, etc., etc., after a visit of a few weeks, and so on and so on, and there is little discussion of the proposals in the Press, less in the homes and clubs and none in the street. No doubt, much of this frame of mind owes its foundation to the long period when the average Colonial knew he could exert little or no influence on the shape of things. This is no longer true. Two things should be obvious to all: firstly, the extension of the franchise places power in the hands of almost every adult and he or she must be informed and alert if he is to use it to the lasting good of the community. Secondly, no community of 400,000 or 600,000 people can form a separate and economic self-governing entity under today's conditions. In some matters, such a community must reach common ground and act in concert with one or more other communities.

Suffice it to say, however, that the World at large, and the American Republics in particular, have some ideas about the perpetuation of Crown Colony Government in the Americas, so much so that England, France and Holland all show a certain unanimity in trying to replace it in one way or another. We must face the situation as it is today and not blur the present picture either with dreams of what it may be in 100 or 150 years, when British Guiana may have a population more in keeping with its area, or with the mirage of "a South American destiny" in the lifetime of anyone already born.

And what is the bearing of all that I have been saying on this gathering? It is this. Among the members of your various organisations can be found persons with knowledge and

interest in all the multiplicity of activities of the mind and body that make up human life; I am suggesting that there is no better way of utilising the gift, inborn or acquired, which each possesses, than in sharing it with those who are less privileged. The detailed techniques and methods I leave with you to work out.

Report on the...  
**CULTURAL LIFE IN JAMAICA**

by Norman E. Cameron

These observations on cultural life in Jamaica are those of a gentleman at leisure made during my visit to that island on holiday with no intention of doing anything like serious research, and are not intended to be authoritative in any respect. I hope however to convey to you some of my experiences with the cultural activity of the country, which to say the least I found very interesting,

**LITERATURE**

I think that a fair picture of the state of literary activity can be gained by referring to the Christmas Competition organised by the *Gleaner* Newspaper.

The departments of competition were: — Short Story, Essays, Poems, and Humorous Verse. The judges remarked on the absence of most of the leading writers in all of the departments, but their comments are useful in showing not only the standard of the contributions, but also in reminding writers of the objects to be borne in mind in their literary efforts.

Thus the judges reminded the literary aspirants that the short story is "*the hardest of all prose forms; it needs a fine sense of characterisation, a vivid descriptive touch, above all originality and plot, all to be confined within a short space*". The judges remarked that most of the entries lacked all of these qualities, the contributions reading more like essays than short stories. The winning story entitled '**Mamma Sue's Box**' was judged to have "*good characterisation, a plot that holds you, and plenty of local colour*". This was a story of obeah and witchcraft.

The essay competition reveals a characteristic of what I think is a present phase of Jamaican development in which there is a combination of the artistic and the useful. Thus there were two subjects for the essay competition, the first 'Cottage Industries' and tie second 'Food Production'. It is interesting to note that the judges found that in the competition on 'Cottage Industries' there was only one excellent essay to

which they awarded both first and second prizes. This entry was found to show *"much thought and serious study of the question, regardless of whether the scheme propounded is in fact in that form workable or practicable"*. In the 'Food Production' competition *"none of the competitors was confident of any single method which could be relied upon for success, but the prize-winning essay shows a willingness to face the hard facts of the situation"*.

Of the poetry competition the judges reported that it attracted the largest number of entries, as it usually does. It is interesting to note that for the second year in succession the first prize was won by Mr. J. R. Bunting, Headmaster of Wolmers Boys' School. Commenting on the winning entry, 'City', the judges thought that *"it had not got the high poetic quality of his last year's winner, but was more ambitious in both workmanship and range of thought; and also had the additional recommendation (if one may term it so) of being written in what is now regarded as the modern style. The development of the theme shows power of imagination, and the handling of the free verse vehicle is at times rather appropriate"*. This poem was said to have been given a very close competition for first place by Lena Kent's 'Island Home', *"whose vivid imagery will bring up Jamaica more readily than any similar poem I have read. Actually in sheer poetic quality it would rank higher than 'City', but lacks the scope of the latter"*. It is characteristic of Jamaican poets to include patriotic poems among their writings.

Of the humorous contributions the judges found the entries very poor, both in number and standard, and remarked that it was with great difficulty that they were able to find two prize winners. It shows Lena Kent's versatility that she was the winner of the first prize in this class.

I find that the short story was a very popular form of Jamaica literature. There are a good number of short story writers who have published collections of their stories, and in my opinion, these stories show a high standard of skill or technique. The majority of the stories tend to compel attention to the end, and thus one of the main objects of the writer is achieved. Also, I find that the stories tend to cover a great number of phases of Jamaican life. Roger Mais' 'Face', for example, is a story of an incident in a packed tramcar. (I do not think that a Demerarian can have any conception of

what a packed Jamaican tramcar or bus is). The majority of the stories and writers seem to stop drawing attention to problems and not suggest solutions. The writers whose works I was able to secure were Roger Mais, Archie Lindo, and R.C. Aarons.

Of essays, apart from the newspaper contributions, I found Mr. J. E. Clare McFarlane's '**Challenge of our Time**' outstanding. The essays on poetry give one a very good idea of Jamaican poetry past and present, and his other essays give a fair idea of Jamaican thought on certain modern problems. I may here mention that Mr. McFarlane is the President of the Poetry League which does great work in encouraging Jamaican poetry, and in assisting poets to have their works published. I found that our newspaper Companies were doing more to assist local publications than in Jamaica.

With regard to the poetry, I have already mentioned one characteristic of the poets, namely, their patriotic fervour. They take a delight in singing of the beauty and attraction of their country for them. Mr. McFarlane himself is, I think, the present poet laureate. His romantic poem '**Daphne**' is very readable, and I think he attains a high poetic standard in some of his scenic descriptions. Vivian Virtue is regarded as the most promising of the younger brigade. His work *Wings of the Morning* contains some excellent poems, and '**Villanelle**', a poem which deals with Balkis' visit to King Solomon is regarded as a Jamaican classic.

I also noted a large number of women poets. In addition to Lena Kent, there was Constance Hollar, who was a very prolific poet, and there are others both among the indigenous population and among the English settlers or temporary residents. In passing, I may mention that this was a rather pleasing feature of the cultural life of the country, namely, that the English residents play a very important part in it, and tend to identify themselves with, or at least to sympathise with, Jamaican aspirations.

## DRAMA

A general idea of the condition of drama may be obtained from Archie Lindo's review of the stage in 1947, which appeared in the *Gleaner* of January 11, 1948.

"1947 was not a very fruitful year for the legitimate stage in Jamaica. There were few productions. These were:—The Little Theatre's productions of George Campbell's '**Play without scenery**', the Little Theatre's '**Othello**' at the Ward, directed by Vere Johns, who played the title role; the Junior Little Theatre's '**Wuthering Heights**' directed by Maurice Harty, the Little Theatre's '**Pantomime with Cinderella**', and the Jamaica Art Society's production of Archie Lindo's dramatisation of '**The Maroon**', directed by George Bowen".

The writer went on to mention the play '**The Doctor Fails**' produced by the Caribbean Thespians, and directed by Vere Johns, and mentioned also the *Gleaner's* competition for a story for a Jamaican opera which had been won by Miss Inez Sibley. The winning effort has been sent off to London for production. The writer also remarked on the success of mock trials.

It interested me very much to learn that the Ward Theatre had been given to the country by a Colonel Ward for theatrical and other purposes. It seemed as though during the year under review the theatre became a movie theatre, thus adding to the already difficult path of local stage productions. 21 days' notice now has to be given before a play can be put on at this theatre.

From that review one can form some idea of the various dramatic groups existing in the country, and I may mention that the schools and colleges put on very good plays from time to time. For instance, I have been informed in a letter recently that one college had shortly after I left, produced Gilbert & Sullivan's '**Iolanthe**'.

Another noticeable feature is the use of the open-air stage by schools for their speech days. I was privileged to be present at a performance with an audience of some 2,000, and the hearing was good throughout by virtue of the admirable loudspeaker system.

It will have been observed that their plays are mostly by English authors, and include plays which have been screened. This is a good idea, as the actors have an opportunity of seeing the professional actors present their versions of the parts. Jamaica is also a country of organised competitions.

There is a big annual dramatic festival at Port Antonio. I may also mention that elocution contests are held annually.

I witnessed a dramatic competition in connection with Jamaica Welfare Ltd., and the Lands Department in which country clubs had to write and produce their own plays, the idea being to combine dramatic activity with putting over the idea of the campaign 'Food for Family Fitness'. Eight plays of 15 minutes duration were presented, and some were very original and all interesting. The propaganda play seems to be very prevalent, and while the literary standard may not be high, the educational value is unquestionable.

The only outstanding playwright is Archie Lindo. His work is interesting in that it brings out a point which I have made from time to time, namely, that the story writer should precede the dramatist, as it may be difficult for the dramatist to produce his own story. Story writing and dramatic work do not involve the same type of talent. Anyway, it is interesting to notice that Archie Lindo, in addition to '**The Maroon**' already mentioned, which was written by Captain Reid, has dramatised four of DeLissers' novels, and in addition has written some four plays with his own plot. DeLisser was an outstanding novelist who enjoyed the advantage of being Editor of the *Gleaner*, so that publication presented no problem to him. *The White Witch of Rose Hall* — a story of Voodoo in the time of slavery — is one of DeLisser's most popular, and was very successfully dramatised by Lindo.

In closing the scene on drama, I should like to refer to the Mandeville Amateur Dramatic Society which was founded around 1902. This Society claims that since 1932 most of its subjects have been taken on tour. Another instance which shows its virility is its approach to the management of the Roof Garden Theatre on the subject of including a stage suitable for dramatic production, and its winning from the management the assurance that their submissions will get favourable consideration. These are some of the considerations with regard to the position of drama in Jamaica, which I hope will be found interesting, and also give food for thought.

## MUSIC

With its Celebrity Concerts, Musical Competition Festival, Symphony Orchestra, Combined Choirs and Military Band (in picturesque Zouave uniform), with its large number of highly qualified music teachers and the public performances of their students, with its luncheon concerts and the part played by the British Council, the music life of the country is very vigorous.

Jamaica has the advantage of having a large number of middle-class people of very fair means and considerable appreciation of things cultural to support the Celebrity Concerts. In spite of this attendance varies considerably depending largely on the popularity of the performer.

The Seventh Musical Festival extended over a fortnight. All branches of music were thrown open to competition, and were Instrumental (solos and ensemble); Vocal (solos and ensemble); Sight Reading and Singing; Accompanying at sight; Original Composition and Action Songs; Folk Dancing; Jamaican Folk Songs; Verse Speaking; Essay on (a) one of the Folklore, Folk stories, and Folk Songs of Jamaica (b) Descriptive Music.

The Festival was sponsored by the Musical Society of Jamaica. The Patrons were H. E. the Governor, Sir John Huggins and Lady Huggins. The chief Judge was Dr. Frederick Staton, successor to the late Sir Henry Wood. Other Judges included outstanding local musicians; the Honorary Secretary Mr. G. H. R. Clough, was given credit for his outstanding work in organising the Festival.

The prices of admission to the contests which were held in five different halls varied from 6d. to 2/-; and at the prize-giving concerts one saw a fair example of the behaviour of a democratic crowd seeking admission.

Jamaica took advantage of Dr. Staton's presence in Jamaica by having him conduct Handel's '**Messiah**'. After some postponements the audience was afforded the treat of having a "romantic" version of the celebrated Oratorio. Quite a few persons followed the performance from their own copies of the musical score. I also had the privilege of seeing Dr. Staton conduct a choir in Haydn's '**The Creation**' at the Scottish Kirk. At this Church also the Jamaican Association of Church Organists and Choirmasters presented their first Festival



Service of Combined Choirs on January 21, 1948. Four choirs from Kingston and two from Spanish Town some miles away took part. Again was Jamaican utilitarianism illustrated by a sermon being preached by a former Vicar of the University Church, Cambridge, England.

A very interesting feature is the introduction of Luncheon Concerts run by the Jamaica Institute and the British Council. These not only assist working people to while away the period between lunch and resuming their work but also assist in improving their musical appreciation and "concert decorum". This excellent idea is spreading. It has been adopted by the Y.W.C.A. and by at least one Secondary School.

One cannot help noticing the importance given to the folk songs. They enter largely in the social life of young people's groups, and are used to assist in fostering a Jamaican spirit and are being recognised as a feature of the new Jamaican culture. Incidentally I may mention that young West Indians or Guianese who will have an opportunity to travel in the West Indies will do well to have a stock of their indigenous folk-songs, folk-tales, proverbs, as well as historical or other interesting episodes for bartering at gatherings of representatives of various "Provinces".

### **PAINTING AND CARVING**

Painting is an art which is fairly widespread in the country, in various odd places I came across paintings which were done by one of the occupants of the home. The schools are very largely responsible for this, I presume, as a considerable amount of drawing is done in them and the scholars are encouraged to decorate themselves the walls of the classrooms. In addition, there is an annual competition in painting open to pupils of all schools, the entries being displayed in the Institute for public observation before the final judgment.

The Jamaica Institute provides an excellent "Gallery" for displaying pictures. I saw a very interesting exhibition of Chinese paintings. The Chinese seem to take more part in the cultural activities there than here. The Lady Huggins Rose Bowl for the best solo singing in any class at the Musical Festival was won by a Chinese male singer, Ho-Sang, who was awarded a British Council Scholarship, and the winner

of the Senior Elocution Contest for the last three years was also a Chinese.

In all their activity the Jamaicans pay a great deal of value to originality, and seem to like to venture in new things. Hence "futuristic" and imaginative work is well represented. I was very pleased to see that the widow of Dunkley was endeavouring to make her husband's work better known by bringing it to the public from time to time.

Shortly before I left Jamaica I had the privilege of seeing Edna Manley's Exhibition of Carvings and Drawings. Incidentally I may mention that Mrs. Manley plays a very large part in encouraging cultural activity among Jamaicans. Of special interest was the piece of sculpture '**The Land**' representing the artist's idea of the new Jamaica, which was bought for £100 and presented anonymously to the West Indian University College. The collection which extended over a period of ten years was very highly spoken of and some of the items fetched prices ranging from £50 to £75. I think that one can safely say that the inspiration for much of her work was her husband Mr. Norman Manley. K.C., brilliant Jamaican lawyer and politician.

## MISCELLANEOUS

The Jamaica Institute houses the best West Indian Reference Library in the Caribbean and includes a fairly complete collection of the works of Jamaican writers. The Institute is a focus of cultural activity as it has a fine lending library, a historical museum and picture gallery, an auditorium and a small zoo. I found the Secretary, and members of his staff very willing to show one around and to help. Indeed, this was my experience throughout Jamaica, whether in Schools or Colleges, or Social Welfare or Cultural Institutions, the people were only too glad to meet a stranger who showed a sympathetic interest in what they were doing and to discuss their affairs and problems.

The Historical Society which publishes an annual Review will be glad to get in touch with the B.G. Historical Society.

Shortly before I left Jamaica, a scheme for a cultural centre for Montego Bay was put forward by a young master of Cornwall College who takes a keen interest in social work. The scheme was accepted and I look forward to hearing more of it.

Kingston had no public Library up to the time of my leaving. I think this is a reflection of the social set-up of the country with its strong middle-class and large class of poor and illiterate. However such a library is soon to be established. I was pleased to see the number of bare-footed children from the country districts making use and apparently intelligent use of the Free Library at Mandeville. The British Council helps considerably with its regional library.

The British Council, which includes a Junior Centre, works in close co-operation with the Jamaica Institute and pursues a vigorous policy of promoting the musical and artistic life of the country, and also literary, debating and discussion groups.

History Dip...

## SIX MOST OUTSTANDING MEN IN BRITISH GUIANA'S HISTORY

by Vincent Roth

It must be very nice to tie the Editor of a magazine. When he wants an article on a particular subject he simply chooses someone who he imagines has the necessary qualifications and then, with smiling countenance and honeyed words, he approaches his victim and explains to him how happy his readers would be if he would oblige — by the end of September at latest. Just like approaching one of those ornate and noisy contraptions known as “juke boxes”, placing a coin in the slot, pushing a button and — presto — there’s the noise. Although I do not pretend to any of the physical, vocal or mental qualities of a juke-box, that was the impression I got when the Editor of *Kyk-Over-al* approached me some weeks ago—without the juke-box coin however — and suggested that I write an article on the Six Most Outstanding Men in the History of British Guiana.

There are in the pages of our history, both ancient and modern, many times six men of outstanding ability who, each in his own way, has left his mark on the history of the Colony. So whatever six I choose there will be readers who will not agree with my choice as a whole. Of this I am sure, for already I have tried my list out on some of my friends, not one of whom has seen eye to eye with me on my six. So, where angels fear to tread, I rush in. Here is my list:—

The first place I give to STORM VAN S’ GRAVESANDE, the doughty founder of the Colony of Demerary, the Dutch Commander-General of the Two Rivers who, with his headquarters at Fort Zeelandia (Fort Island), had the vision to see the possibilities of the smaller but deeper river to the east at the old Colony of Essequibo. There is not the slightest doubt that to his encouragement, both private and official, was due the start and rapid development of the youngest of the three Guiana colonies to the position of first importance in the subsequently combined British Guiana. But for him

Demerara might possibly today be but another Mahaica or Mahaicony, a small settlement acting as a province of the principal area of the territory, Essequibo.

Next in order of merit I place SIR ROBERT HERMAN SCHOMBURGK, this famous German traveller and scientist who, first on behalf of the Royal Geographical Society and subsequently on behalf of her Majesty's Government explored and mapped the furthest recesses of British Guiana between the years 1835 and 1844. It was mainly owing to Schomburgk's work that British Guiana came off as well as it did in the subsequent arbitration proceedings with Venezuela and Brazil. He it was who literally and figuratively put British Guiana "on the map".

Next I choose WILLIAM PIERCY AUSTIN the first Bishop of Guiana, described by Queen Victoria as her youngest and handsomest bishop and by others as the Nestor of the Anglican Church. From the ecclesiastical point of view he also put British Guiana on the map but his greatest claim to local fame was his exceptional humanness and spiritual qualities. It is recorded that at the consecration of St. George's Cathedral when, just before his death he made his last appearance before his flock the congregation wept unashamedly.

My fourth choice is WILLIAM RUSSELL for his driving energy in developing the East and founding the West Demerara Water Conservancies without which there could have been no prosperity in the greatest and at that time only major industry — sugar growing.

My fifth choice is GEORGE GIGLIOLI, M.D., because his work in this country as a malariologist is world-famous and for being the guiding hand behind the DDT campaign, the full effects of which are not yet felt but which it is easy to see will revolutionise general economic conditions in British Guiana.

My sixth and last choice is HUBERT NATHANIEL CRITCHLOW who has given the greater part of his life self-sacrificingly to introducing and encouraging Trade Unionism in this country, a task from which all classes of labour have benefited to a degree undreamt of fifty years ago.

These, then, are the six men I personally would choose as having rendered the most outstanding service to the country.

But, as I said in my opening remarks, I shall not be surprised to have my choice criticised. British Guiana has of course benefited greatly from the labours of other outstanding men such as FREDERICK GARDINER ROSE in leprosy, PATRICK DARGAN and A. R. F. WEBBER in political economy, WILLIAM BEEBE in zoology, WALTER E. ROTH in anthropology, JAMES RODWAY and GRAHAM CRUICKSHANK in history, BARON SICCAMA in hydraulic engineering, CESAR ROMITI and JOHN GRIERSON in surgery, FATHER SCOLES AND CASTELLANI in architecture, Sir JOHN HARRISON in industrial chemistry and agriculture, BISHOPS GALTON and EDWARD PARRY in the humanities, DE SAFFON and TROTMAN in charity, EDWIN McDAVID in finance and SIR GORDON LETHEM in red-tapeless administration. Those who do not agree with my choice will no doubt substitute some of these names as amongst the six most meritorious men who have served British Guiana.

A Union Talk  
**SIMEY ON EDUCATION**

by Lilian Dewar

I must remind those of us who are not teachers and who generally think of education as the business of the Education Department, Schools and teachers, that *“education is a function of the society it serves, unavoidably concerned with the environment in which young people grow up, that the community and its traditions (i.e. we as human beings) are stronger in their influence on personality than formal education.”* Therefore Simey’s most basic pronouncements for education are perhaps these:

*“In order to make their way upwards in the social scale, the middle classes have to adopt patterns of behaviour fundamentally different from those of the masses. They are driven to demonstrate their relative superiority by cutting themselves adrift from their own people, and identifying themselves with the white middle classes as far as possible. Middle class culture tends to be white culture. The use of the local dialects is frowned on; remarkable instances of the rejection of the local surroundings can be seen in the art classes in schools, where it is more usual to find paintings of European flowers, than of the West Indian countryside. All that is beautiful and attractive in West Indian life, social and other, is rejected in favour of a stilted imitation of a foreign way of life.”*

And again:

*“...the most pressing task of the immediate future is to assist West Indian communities to build for themselves a culture in which they can rest and of which they can be justifiably proud. The chief barrier to stability in the social structure has come from the imposing of standards from the outside world, which are a crushing burden for West Indian peoples to bear.”*

Now, however much we may quibble, none of us who participate in that supreme rejection of ourselves by ourselves, the bringing of ethical values to bear on hair formation: good

hair, bad hair, etc., can deny the fundamental truth of Simey's diagnosis, and movements back to Africa and India are not yet of mere historical interest. But once we admit this rejection of our environment, once we admit that it is complicated by racial issues, it is healthy to realise that the West Indies are not peculiar in this respect, to realise that all colonisation may be studied as a problem in adjustment to a new environment to realise that Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, on one side, Canada, the USA and Latin America on the other, have gone through and to some extent are still going through this phase of rejection of local surroundings, of looking to West European civilisation for standards. As R. Frost puts it: "...the land was ours before we were the land's."

And cultural dependence is to a high degree related to economic dependence. As long as a colonial territory exports only raw material and imports all its manufactured goods, standard and ideas tend to be imported too. That is because for the export of raw material there is needed only a large unskilled labour force; and because a single crop economy does not provide a wide enough range of activities for intellectual life, which must therefore seek its stimulus from without. A single crop economy means a restricted mental horizon. To quote: "...we must be clear that thought is not an independent self-contained and abstractedly intelligible fact, but is intimately bound up with action. In actual fact, the existing body of ideas (and the same applies to vocabulary) never exceeds the horizon and the radius of activity of the society in question." What is more, until there is diversification of economic activity, until there is a suitable framework provided in which it can operate, there can be no worthwhile re-organisation of the education system, e.g., until we commit ourselves to peasant farming, the Agricultural Bias Scheme is a mere tinkering with the problem.

What the educational system needs most of all is a sense of direction. Education can only be understood when we know for what society and for what social position the pupils are being educated. It is because we lack this sense of direction, as because of our predilection for English standards, that education has been out of touch with environment throughout the West Indies. Education, the content of which



is so entirely divorced from life as we live it, education which takes nothing from the West Indian environment can hardly be expected to give anything back to that environment and it doesn't. It does not become part of a man's personality, it has no influence on his actions, it leaves him at the mercy of his emotions, which are not at all engaged in the educational process, when he should think. That is at least a contributory factor to our emotional instability.

It is all the more disturbing, therefore, that a University College should have been set up which shows every sign of perpetuating the existing system of secondary education, and this before any social or economic policy has been mapped out. The lack of policy Simey makes abundantly clear: *"It is obviously desirable that the responsibility for producing a general plan for the social, political and economic development of the West Indies should be placed on the shoulders of a single officer or agency of government, for it has become so diffused that the task of planning may be said to have gone by default."*

I do not forget that Dr. Taylor promised us an intelligence trained in basic courses that is expected, I suppose, to adapt itself to any situation: but to this we may apply America's educational touchstone, often irritating, always provocative: trained for what? The great drawback about basic courses is that they are everywhere applicable: they constitute a body of learning which is not modified by the environment in which they are being taught: they offer ready-made problems, with ready-made solutions: they do not offer problematical situations: they therefore do not demand the use of the intelligence if we accept Dewey's definition of intelligence as *"operations actually performed in the modification of conditions."* And yet what we need most in the West Indies is the technical skill to modify our conditions.

I do not forget either that the Commission on Higher Education shook a warning finger at those who thought that all other stages of education should be perfected before the University is added as coping stone. *"Had this course been followed in the older countries, they said, their educational development would have been very different and very much slower."* I only wonder that the Commission should here looked to Mediaeval Europe with its strong social cohesion for

a precedent for what should be done in modern times, in colonial territories that have to build up a community life from scratch. Why don't we rather look to development in the new countries, to the States and Canada, where I think we should find that the standards of academic education are not as high as those in the older countries, but where the communities have taken root because they have used technical skill in modifying their environment. We must take root, we must make an act of possession of the West Indian environment, before we can talk of West Indian culture.

When I speak of technical skills and the modification of environment, I have no grandiose plans in mind for a vast development of our resources, because it is natural to me to agree with Simey's gloomy pronouncement that the West Indies have no resources to develop. But I agree with him also that whatever we do "*the work must begin with the masses, which lag so far behind.*" I believe "*...that the people are the most important fact in resource development. Not only is the welfare and happiness of individuals its true purpose, but they are the means by which that development is accomplished: their energies and spirit are the instruments; it is not only for the people, but by the people*". And yet we largely ignore the people. We know that workers on the job are most open to educational influences, yet there is no single agency (except perhaps the Agricultural Instructor) that tries to reach the worker on the job. We do not realize that education is essentially an instrument for transforming society; that is, a programme for education is necessary before every undertaking whether the undertaking be adult suffrage, a land settlement scheme, or co-operatives. We neglect even those opportunities that lie nearest to hand e.g. we prefer to use our staff of school inspectors as apostles of an administrative code rather than as an extension of the Training College for the training of teachers in service; in much the same way we use our police force to enforce traffic regulations rather than to direct traffic.

Simey's tones are least mournful when he is discussing the possibilities of integrating the educational and agricultural systems: "*Good fanning is the key to the economic and social problems of the West Indies. The development of family life, again, has been recognised as the crux of peasant farming and peasant farming, in*

turn, is seen as a means of establishing a secure economic status for the family." But the measures he approves of seem to me half-hearted if we really want to settle people on the land, people who have had no real tradition of farming, and whose education, if any, has left them functionally illiterate. These measures, the teaching of child care and an Agricultural Bias in Senior Schools, and Young Farmers' Clubs, are largely those in use in the stable rural communities of England. But I repeat we have to build up our communities from scratch and again the experience of the new countries, notably the experience of the Agricultural Extension Service of the T.V.A. in the States holds out most hope for us in our attempt to establish a sound rural economy. The work there is based on the demonstration of a better way of life and the demonstrations are carried out to the men and women of the community on a farmer's land and in his kitchen by 2 agents of the service, a Farm Demonstration and a Home Demonstration agent. The farmers learn terracing and other soil conservation practices, while their wives provide their lunch and at the same time learn how to prepare and serve a well-balanced meal. The District Nurse sometimes joins them, explaining how diseases are spread, insisting on cleanliness, giving advice on child care. Here is a method of attack against that apathy with which, says Simey, the average villager in the West Indies regards matters of hygiene and sanitation. The Agricultural Instructor, the Social Welfare worker, and the District nurse can form a similar team here, taking education into people's homes. For it is necessary to realise the creative significance of action: *"Only a new type of action can give birth to a new type of thought"*, Simey says, *"...the administrative problem has in fact resolved itself into one of generating a spiritual dynamic within the people, immolating it into action and so guiding this action that, when mistakes occur, they may not be so serious as to destroy the work as a whole rather than a part of it"*.

Above all we need a purpose, a common objective towards which to work. Simey tells us little about planning, except that there is none, but he does provide us with working hypotheses.

Chaucer had these problems...  
**ON WRITING CREOLESE**

by D.A. Westmaas

When it first occurred to me to write a regular newspaper column in the local variant of English, I found myself up against a problem of considerable difficulty. From time to time in the past I had come up against the efforts of previous writers to evolve a suitable orthography, but none of them satisfied me as being sufficiently near to the words represented for the uninitiated to be able to make even an approximate guess. Within recent years there had been few writers habitually using the vernacular, and I found that spellings which more or less adequately represented local speech around the turn of the century were no longer satisfactory, as since that time popular education, the radio and the cinema had affected considerable changes in the local working-man's vocabulary. Cruikshank's little book *Black Talk*, which was published in 1918 but had been in process of compilation for many years, is an example in point. The reader will quickly recognize that the Georgetown labouring-man's speech has made much progress in sophistication since the days when, for example, the verb "to nyam" was in general use in the City meaning "to eat": or the word "Massa" was the usual salutation accorded a superior.

Then again, I noticed that a mere matter of ten miles made a difference to the pronunciation of a word; the working-man of Buxton has a noticeably different accent from the townee labourer. Berbicians have another accent again. Generally speaking, there is a greater percentage of African words surviving in the country districts than in Georgetown which is what you would expect. And of course East Indian (estate) English is another matter again. Here also, Cruikshank's little brochure is defective, as it does not mention where his phrases come from or are in general use -whether and in which town or country district. The general impression I gained from it was that for the most part he has recorded the speech of country people.

For convenience therefore, out of all those dialects I was forced to pick the one which I heard around me in Georgetown, and which was always available for study when I was in doubt. I then found it necessary to evolve my own spelling. None at the previous writers had considered creolese sounds on their own merits; they were content to adapt the English by insertion of inverted commas and apostrophes, so that, for example, the sentence "What kind of thing is this?" became "Wha' kin' o' t'ing (is) dis?" I found several objections to this procedure. Firstly, the townee working-man does not say "Wha'," but "Wuh". Secondly, the reader seeing the word "kin", is tempted to give the short vowel-sound to the "i", and pronounce it as in the phrase "kith and kin". Again, whenever creolese drops the "f" of "of", the resulting sound is short flat "a" rather than "o". Yet another consideration was that most creolese sentences have a rhythm and swing about them which is very poorly conveyed in the example of spelling given above. I therefore felt that the sentence was far better rendered as "Whu kynna-ting dis?" And finally a not unimportant point was that the elimination of as many inverted commas and apostrophes as possible made the typesetter's job ten times easier. I made it a rule to represent the sound phonetically whenever I could do so without going too far out of my way. Local speech drops so many endings that to scrupulously put in every curlicue and seriph would have been to create a typesetter's nightmare.

Phrases that were in vogue thirty years ago are no longer so. Even in my own boyhood I remember quite well hearing the phrase "among-you" used to indicate reference to more than one person. The particular idiom was in use even among middle-class groups, but as a rule they preferred "you-all". Thus, a working-man of thirty years ago might say "Among-you din go to school," where the middle-class man would say "You-all didn't...". Nowadays "among-you" has all but vanished from the common speech, its place being taken, so far as I can discover, by the equally amazing "Alyou-dis" ("All-you-this"). "You-all" is still heard occasionally among middle-class youth. (I understand, by the way, that it is in common use in the Southern States of the USA). The use of "me" for "I" was quite common in the City when I was a boy; today, reflecting the

general educational advance, it is used only occasionally in Georgetown, but has a vogue in the country.

It is impossible to deal with the subject of creolese in a single article. Remembering all the phrases worth remark would alone take a month. To mention only those that come to my mind as I write, there is the **Elliptic Marvel** "Is *who..?: is you...?*" Translated into English, it goes something like this: "Who is it that.... ?; is it you that...?". There is the **Swinging Wonder**: "A-had-was-to... (do something or other to meet an emergency)"; I still have no idea how the word "was" got into the setup. Likewise with the **Trapeze Performer** "An-to-besides"; where the "to" picks you up up at the top of the swing from the "and", so to speak, and pitches you clean over the bar of the "besides" coming up to meet you. And what about the **Classic Response** to an enquiry after one's health: "Adeh-maan-Adeh!" ("I'm there, man, I'm there!", meaning "I'm still in existence")? Or its variant "waan-waan!" ("One-one," meaning the speaker is just about creeping along through this life step by step)?

This double word "Adeh" (pronounced swiftly, as one word), will also serve to make a most important point in another connection. There are two ways of pronouncing the First Personal Pronoun in creolese. You may say "Ah", or you may use the ordinary I-sound. But in some phrases one particular use seems to be obligatory. "Adeh" would lose all its peculiar **bouquet creole** if the ordinary I-sound were substituted. On the other hand, in the sentence "I en kay" ("I don't care"), use of the A-sound would be equally out of place, — and by the way, most writers when representing this A-sound spell it with an "h" thus: "Ah". I preferred to write the plain capital A, because I considered that the average person reading "Ah" aloud lends to aspirate the "h", and because the normal pronunciation of the capital letter alone exactly represents the required sound.

Then there is my friend **Elastic Egbert**, the double-word "eh-eh", which can mean "yes" or "no", or be a mere exclamation of wonder, surprise, contempt, anger, — in fact, nearly anything. In normal spelling of this word the "h" is only there to show that the "e" is short: it is not pronounced. The word means "yes" when an aspirate is sounded in front

of the second syllable, which receives the accent and is a semi-tone higher, thus: "eh-heh." It is that equivalent to the English affirmative "Aha". It means "no" when the accent is equal and the second syllable is a tone or two lower. It is an exclamation when the stresses are equal and the tone is the same, or the second syllable is drawn out.

Yet another fascination is the number of pronunciations of the simple word "Going." When making a special effort to be correct, as in reading the newspaper aloud, the average working-man will give you a full-blooded "going". Normally, pronunciation ranges from "goin'" through "gwine" and "gyne" to "gun." There is even a tendency to slur the ending of all these words, ending them up in the nose. In creolese "Are you going home?" may be "You goin'-home...gwine-home...gyne-home? (Note the hyphens; they indicate a very definite phrasing). But in this usage "gun" may not be used; thus you never hear "You-gun-home?". All forms of the word, including "gun," are used when intention in the immediate future is meant: but in this use "gun" is far the most popular form.

These are only some of the things I discovered as I began to write. Of course there was no conscious formulation of a set of rules before beginning to do so; I simply listened to the phrases and decided as they came along what was the best way of putting them on paper. Let me conclude with the anecdote about the planter who found creolese so expressive because every morning when he was still in bed there would come a knock on the door:

**Planter:** (rolling over sleepily) "Is Who?"

**Maid:** "Is me."

**Planter:** "Is wha'?"

**Maid:** "Is cawfee!"

Afro-American Poet  
**PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR**  
by Cleveland Wycliffe Hamilton

*"NATURE, who knows so much better than man about everything, cares nothing at all for the little distinctions, and when she elects one of her children for her most important work, bestows on him the rich gift of poesy, and assigns him a post in the greatest of the arts, she invariably seizes the opportunity to show her contempt of rank and title and race and land and creed."* In such a philosophical interpolation which was itself part of a magnanimous tribute did the late Hon. Brand Whitlock, former Mayor of Toledo, express his opinion of Paul Lawrence Dunbar, American patriot and the greatest African poet ever.

Paul Laurence Dunbar was born on June 27, 1872 approximately six years after the American Civil War, to parents of humble circumstances and showed at an early age an enormous literary capacity and potential. It is said of him that he wrote bits of verse when only seven. At the age of eighteen he graduated from High School with honours and the class song composed by him was sung at the commencement exercises.

At the time when it devolved upon Dunbar to strike out into the world and maintain his own (and incidentally the existence of his mother also) the USA was still writhing under the throes of an unconscionable race discrimination and prejudice. The theory of superior and inferior ethnic types loomed large in the immoral codes of a nation which was later to become a formidable bastion of the democratic cult. Negroes (or preferably, African progeny) were still in a measure "*goods and chattel*", "*incapable*" of the noble or highly intellectual. Paul Dunbar, as a few Negroes had already done, rose opportunely to confound the critics and bring a message of hope and inspiration to his African brethren. Poets are messengers: no poet better justifies this truth than Paul Laurence Dunbar. In his '**Ode to Ethiopia**' he says—



“Be proud my race, in mind and soul  
Thy name is writ on Glory’s scroll  
    In characters of fire.  
High ‘mid the clouds of Fame’s bright sky  
Thy banner’s blazoned folds now fly,  
    And truth shall lift them higher.”

And later on in the same poem -

“Thou hast the right to noble pride,  
Whose spotless robes were purified  
    By blood’s severe baptism:  
Upon thy brow the cross was laid,  
And labour’s painful sweat-beads made  
    A consecrating chrism.”

And in another poem—‘**Beyond the Years**’—perhaps one of the greatest in the language for pathos—facilely crafted pathos—and linguistic purity, the same notes of prophecy and admonition are struck. But though the feelings that are dormant in ‘**Beyond the Years**’ are the same as those dominant in the ‘**Ode to Ethiopia**’ there is a greater subtlety and restraint and a complete reaction from violence in the former poem. The images the poet conjures up are poignant and potent images—images of “*grieving skies*” and “*smiling Faith*.” Dunbar is in this poem weeping for the castigation of his race but there is optimism in his tears—the same optimism which is the poet’s song but the yearning is valorously attempered with faith. There are pathetic utterances of “*blood and tears*” but there is also sight of an endless peace for the pining soul. The first and last stanzas are characteristic and pregnant—

“Beyond the years the answer lies,  
Beyond where brood the grieving skies  
    And Night drops tears.  
Where Faith rod-chastened smiles to rise  
And carping sorrow pines and dies  
    Beyond the years.”

Beyond the years the soul shall find  
That endless peace for which it pined  
    For light appears.  
And to the eyes that still were blind  
    With blood and tears,  
Their sight shall come all unconfined  
    Beyond the years."

'**Beyond the Years**' must be one of the greatest pieces in cosmopolitan poetry.

But Paul Laurence Dunbar was no narrow-minded bigot who fed on supercharged draughts of racialistic poison: his magnanimity comprehended a virile patriotism. In his '**Ode for Memorial Day**' this patriotism is a seasoned delicacy served up in dishes of high poetic profundity. Consider the poetic imagery and tap your toes to the music of—

"Out of the blood of a conflict fraternal,  
Out of the dust and the dimness of death  
Burst into blossoms of glory eternal  
Flowers that sweeten the world with their breath.  
Flowers of charity, peace and devotion  
Bloom in the hearts that are empty of strife;  
Love that is boundless and broad as the ocean  
Leaps into beauty and fullness of life."

And we get a peep into his capricious mind in his eminently philosophical disquisition in verse — '**Not they who soar**':

"High up there are no thorns to prod,  
Nor boulders lurking 'neath the clod  
To turn the keenness of the share  
For flight is ever free and rare;  
But heroes they the soil who've trod,  
    Not they who soar !"

His religious views were practical and tintured with the highly rationalistic. His detestation of hypocrisy and cant is incisive and fundamentally the poet's : In his '**Religion**' he is only superficially heterodox when in one stanza he writes—

'Take up your arms, come out with me  
Let Heav'n alone, humanity  
Needs more and Heaven less from thee.  
With pity for mankind look 'round,  
Help them to rise and Heaven is found."

This is not cynicism; it is integral of something more munificent and ethical.

The Negro poet, Dunbar, was versatile. He treated the themes of love as facilely and with as much skill as he treated of themes of philosophy and religion or creed.

"Love me, and though the winter snow shall pile,  
And leave me chill,

Thy passion's warmth shall make for me, meanwhile,  
A sun-kissed hill."

His '**Dawn**' is evidence of what the craftsman poet can achieve with the single quatrain :

"An angel robed in spotless white  
Bent down and kissed the sleeping night;  
Night woke to blush, the sprite was gone,  
Men saw the blush and called it dawn."

It is among the mightiest quatrains in English Literature that I know. Search among the great poetic pieces of the language for a parallel and you peruse long. It is unostentatious and free, and probably the greatest tribute to the author's genius is that it was spontaneously written on the fly leaf of one of his books in a few minutes for the entertainment of some visiting friends.

I have culled from a pretentious Dunbar volume a few of his best poems. But I am sensible that the operation makes bad surgery from both the point of view of the surgeon and the victim which is Dunbar's impressive anthology. No short article can do appreciative justice to the work of one of the greatest poetic minds of all races of all times. It is for this reason that I have consciously omitted comment on his

dialect pieces which are so beautifully wrought in a fabric of sincerity and humour. It will be difficult to find in other places poetry so richly woven in a native home-spun.

Paul Lawrence Dunbar, Negro (or African) as he was, was (and still is) a strong argument in favour of the universality of intellectual and other endowments in so far as endowments are gifts of God and Nature. His achievement is the best refutation of the preposterous and fallacious argument of race superiority and the inherent universality of his poetry (he wrote for the race of mankind) is the most imposing testimony of African great-heartedness. Are there sceptics on the question of Dunbar's achievements? If there are, then their scepticism must be answered in terms that appropriately reprehend their unbelief... There is a kind of sacredness attached to the memory of the great and good, which seems to bid us repulse thee scepticism which would allegorize *"...their existence into a pleasing apologue and measure the giants of intellect by an homoeopathic dynameter."*

We may well say of this great poet

"Rapt tho' he be from us,  
Virgil salutes him, and Theocritus..."

Peace in...  
**THE CLOISTERS**  
by Celeste Dolphin

Now that I have spent a day in the Cloisters, I think I know what the Middle Ages had to offer to a Spirit needing Peace.

It was a place where one could think one's thoughts out aloud in one's mind, where one could overflow with peace so much that tears would have been a relief, where one could fill with quiet and a wistful happiness until one could take no more.

Outside Fort Tryon Park, New York roared and went about its business, but the Cloisters had something set apart about them. Here was a haunt of peace for the weary-hearted, some of the grave quiet of the cemetery of Cabacaburi, and all along the length of the slow stream of people one would come upon monks walking with their breviaries intoning Latin in low, meditated voices. Between the monks and the quiet-voiced assistants who knew the history of everything in the Cloisters, they set the Cloisters apart.

At the mediaeval concert in the Cloisters, all around me sat the women and men of the United Nations — Cingalese and eastern women with veils under their eyes as a child sees them in picture books. A woman beside me spoke and I wondered what language it was she was speaking. Even now, I remember the Gregorian chants — and my programme notes remind me the Kyrie from the mass '**Lux et Origo**' sung by the Monks of the Solesmes Abbey and the '**Ave Coelorum Domina**' sung by the Dijon Cathedral Choir. It was a mournful music moving around one or two notes and everything was in keeping — the haunting mediaeval spirit, the women in their national dress, the students so intense, and the solid marble columns through which one passed.

It seemed the marble columns would be there forever, to shelter for ever and ever the beauty that lay behind them. Yet, in a curious way, if the whole of New York should be destroyed, the columns affirmed that these treasures transplanted here would still show themselves and their beauty under another sky.

Beyond the solid marble columns there was green, plenty of it, the orchards and the groves that surround monasteries, and students walking along the paths much as monks walked past these stones centuries ago in another land, or they sat intent, near to the fountains playing. One cannot overstress the green, the fern and rocks, the trees lining walks, and the trees framing the view to the Hudson.

A branch of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Cloisters guard a collection of mediaeval treasures, part of the beauty of Europe. Themselves constructed from large sections of the cloisters of long-abandoned and ruined monasteries from France, they were peopled now with life-size statues, in all exquisite detail, of the Apostles and the Saints and replicas of extant mediaeval altars and cathedral doorways. Particularly the group of the Baptism of Christ carved in stone and marble stood out, for the faces had life and breathed out of the stone.

Two life-size statues of the Virgin and Child of the fourteenth century troubled me, one because the Blessed Virgin was smiling and the Baby Jesus had a large apple in his hand (for me, she should have had a face, lovely but sad, thoughtful perhaps, meditative, resigned, but not smiling). The eyes of the other Madonna were very large and fixed and staring and the longer one looked at them the more fey the eyes appeared. As if the sorrows she foresaw were proving too much for her, and at any minute she would leap down from her pedestal and go out running, demented. Her eyes looked mad.

There was a life-size Spanish crucifixion piece and the stone eyes of the Man of Sorrows were so real and alive that they followed me wherever I went in the room feeling eerily uncomfortable.

The Middle Ages believed that the unicorn could be caught only by a virgin. This wild and unconquerable animal became tame when confronted by a maiden: he would lay his head in her lap and thus be easily taken by the hunter. The unicorn is a symbol of Christ, the virgin is the Virgin Mary, the huntsman is the angel Gabriel, and the story an allegory of the Incarnation.

There is a special set of six French or Flemish tapestries with their colours as rich as they were four hundred years

ago and showing The Hunt of the Unicorn. A large white unicorn at the fountain, sighted by the hunters, tries to escape, but the hunters surround him. The Unicorn defends himself but is killed and brought as the prize of the hunt to the lord of the castle and his lady, and the sixth tapestry shows the resurrection of the Unicorn.

And the chairs, tall, straight-backed, hard, uncomfortable. But one sat in them, because Abbots and Popes and holy dignitaries had sat there. And little kneeling stools with their intricate detail reverently carved had worn to a cup in the middle with centuries of use until they were no longer praying stools but symbols of devotion.

The mediaeval concert ended with the playing of the Church Bells of Zurich. They were of all kinds and of all timbres, the high and the low, the solemn, the sonorous, the tinkle and the gong. Then the resonance hung in the atmosphere vibrating and leaving only the low hum behind them, the sounds stole away, back over in Europe where they belong.

Reading a poem  
**THROUGH OTHER PEOPLE'S EYES (2)**  
— Experiment in Criticism

Six years ago, I sent to my friends who I thought would be interested, a copy of a version of poem by Gerard Manley Hopkins but without his name attached. Would they please tell me what they thought about the poem, I asked, and at any length.

To the replies I received then, I have added one or two more solicited much later but they now cover a fair scope. Three of the commentators write poetry themselves, with more than average ability in that field, three others are very musically minded people, two are teachers of primary schools and one taught in a secondary school. The remaining two are well read people, one with a legal training and the other interested in many branches of the aesthetics.

Here is the poem :

Margaret, are you grieving  
Over Goldengrove unleaving?  
Ah! As the heart grows older  
It will come to such sights colder  
By and by, nor spare a sigh  
Tho' world of wanwood leafmeal lie.  
And yet you will weep and know why.  
Now no matter, child, the name  
Sorrow's springs are the same.  
Nor mouth had, no, nor mind expressed  
What heart heard of, ghost guessed.  
It is the blight man was born for,  
It is Margaret you mourn for.

....There is a village "Golden Grove" on the East Coast Demerara, and knowledge of this fact affected the writer of the first comment rather seriously. I. A. Richards (to whom our commentator refers) would call this difficulty to proper understanding a "*mnemonic irrelevance*".



1. One has to enunciate principles I daresay before criticising. As a matter of fact the mere citation of principles is implied criticism.

Now what is the function of a poet? What is poetry?

A poet is a man or woman with fine sensitivities or is it sensibilities? However he has keen and unusual insight into things, he can perceive similarities where the other person cannot, he can feel more deeply than the ordinary mortal. But this is not all. He has a corresponding feeling for words: he can weave word patterns to mirror the deep sensitivities: when he does this well enough, he what you call writes a poem. And a poem fulfils its real function (I deliberately avoid good and bad) the more accurately in so far as the reader is able to feel the feelings first born in the poet.

This is not an easy undertaking. Words have different contexts for different people and the poet must realise this and so limit words by other words that he succeeds in focusing the mind of the reader on that aspect of reality that had been his unique vision. (There is much more that can be said, say on use of language (*qua use*).)

Now to the poem under review.

I would say that it fulfils its function in one sense and it fails in another

If it were by a foreigner, I would say that there is merit in it, but if by a local poet then his use of "Golden Grove" well nigh ruins the piece.

It introduces a factor Richards calls "Stock Response" I think, which as it were throws a hammer into the machine of communication which is even more delicate to manage in poetry.

One thinks of the place "Golden Grove" and this colours his whole reading of the piece with, to my mind, fatal results

It is true that the poet attempts to limit this response by comparison — "*world of wanwood leafmeal lie*" and "*unleafing*" but I do not think them strong enough to remove that irrelevant entity introduced by "Golden Grove". I note even the spelling of Grove with common g but still I cannot acquit him or her.

Briefly I think of the theme as follows. The poet observes someone moved at the sight of the fall, person maybe a child,

who sees the favourite tree or grove unleafing. He opines that as she goes through life she would become inured to sorrow, would become either callous, sceptical or stoical.

He suggests that it is part of the human make up to mourn for these passing disappointments etc., but he goes on to say that in reality she mourns for her dead self — that self that she left behind her and that she continually leaves behind her in the dynamic of living.

This last line gave me the value that I look for in any poem I read.

...(We learn about Shakespeare and Milton. We see the way in which a man may make a successful after-dinner speech, but this writer has not said much about the poem we are examining. But this is characteristic of a type of criticism)...

2. To express in musical numbers and undivided breath, this, it is said, is the prime function of the Sonnet. "*It is a feegrief due to the poet's breast: it is an aspiration, born and dying in the same moment!*" And it is a good Poet who can make a philosophic ending, thus —

"It is the blight man was born for,  
It is Margaret you weep for."

It also makes you feel, that the author poet feels strongly and sincerely about his subject. In those two lines, he crowds all the tragedy of the theme.

It has been said, also, that to succeed, a poem must have originality either of theme or treatment. The theme of this poem is not new, and Milton has expressed a similar thought in his. '**Cyriack, these three years**'. But in the matter of technical detail, the contrast of youth and age made by the testing ground — the barometer — of a single individual, first filled with enthusiastic youth, and later crabbed with cold, old age, viewing one and the same thing at an interval of time —

"Ah! As the heart grows older,  
It will come to such sights colder  
By and by "

— this gives a vivid sense and reality to the individual who sees the tragedy of “*unleafing Golden grove*”—cold, dispassionate,—intense, human. And again, who can gainsay the potency of the lines —

“Nor mouth had, no, nor mind expressed,  
What heart heard of, ghost guessed.”

Sorrow, indeed, but of a dispassionate quality.

...(My friend who writes next was rather afraid that perhaps I had written the piece of verse—at least so it seems. However he says “Obscure”.)...

3. I have read and re-read the poem. Perhaps my work has dulled my Intellect and sense of appreciation, but I doubt if they would have so dulled them — One word describes the effort — “Obscure”. The “Mechanics” of poem seem all right, but I am afraid there has been no emotional reaction to the vehicle—a work of art or literature to be such **must** produce on its reader some emotional reaction. Upon me there has been none. There are two lines which discovered in other context would be powerful—even in their weak supporting structure I find potential greatness — “*Over Golden...*” (1), “*Tho’ ...leafmeal lie*” (2). There seems to be an over-striving for effect permeating the whole work, and a certain overtone of immaturity! Perhaps I am mistaken; or too carping, but my criticism is sincere.

...(On the other hand, this lady who writes next is most refreshingly herself. Perhaps, for the first time, we begin to see how the poem looks to a reader.)...

4.           Lady, are you grieving  
              Over Seymour unbelieving,  
              You say you cannot do it,  
              He ups and drives you to it.  
              And by 4 it must be through,  
              Nuts to Seymour, Marge and you.

That's just about how I felt, but the comment must go on. (Not really as reluctant as all that, I quite enjoy doing it).

I like it only 10% until the sixth reading—and then it is 50%; but if I didn't have to comment on it I wouldn't read it twice, so it's almost safe to leave the average public appreciation at 10%. Its 50% value as far as I am concerned is due to the wistful atmosphere that I find particularly appealing, and the fact that it makes me want to write a verse or story around it. (Inspirational worth—what). Here's what it means to me—Margaret is “growing up,” she begins to see the “underneath” of life, and find it rather jolting. As she gets older she will merely shrug her shoulder at the harsh realities, but sometimes then she'll be sad, no longer because of what happens, but because when she looks back she will realise how she must have changed to be able to take for granted what she formerly found so upsetting. We've all got to change with time, and it is the realization that she is slowly and imperceptibly doing so, that worried Margaret. (It seems to express the pessimistic view that age always means deterioration and not improvement).

There are two lines I can't tag with definite meanings :—

(i) “*Tho world of wanwood leafmeal lie*”

The only meaning I can give, in relation to its setting is — *“though you find life strewn with upsetting affairs.”* The underlined words are unfamiliar.

(ii) “*What heart heard of, ghost guessed*” .  
”

This just seems to be a very vague way of expressing vagueness. It seems to be describing a thought which is dismissed before it is well formed. But “*ghost guessed*” still beats me.

Other phrases that could stand discussion are “*Goldengrove unleafing*” (this may have an alternative meaning which would change the whole idea), “*sorrow's springs are the same*”, “*the blight man was born for.*”

I find the rhythm too irregular. As soon as I get into one “feel” of time, it changes. In my opinion a poem of this atmosphere

should be smooth. In the 9th line a beat seems definitely lacking. Of course if set to music jerks could be attractively rounded off. This types it with those Elizabethan ditties, e.g. "(Sigh no more ladies" (Shakespeare).) Lines 2,6, 10 and 11 smell Shakespearey. The form of the poem—question at beginning, confidential motherly chat in the middle, ending with a firm self made answer—seems to have been a favourite method of the times.

"*Ghost guessed*" I find jars. The gh and gu are too harsh to go together in such a vague atmosphere. It would fit well into a mystery with wind hissing through the shutters, but it seems wrong here.

(He raises the problem of the mass reaction to poetry, the writer of this comment. But then this is Walter MacA. Lawrence, himself a fine poet. I have lifted the corner of the veil of anonymity in honour of one of Guiana's worthy dead),

5. After reading it twice I captioned it, Psychoanalytical, and what a name for a poem; but it just goes to show my subconscious reaction though I do think a lot of the poem. When you see what is being done with words within such a small compass you must admire the work. You dare not throw it aside for suppose there was a whole volume of it, what a splendid collection of concentrated thought there would be; but is poetry really going to get there?

I have found pleasure in the reading Tennyson, Swinburne, Longfellow, and that great Canadian poet of the backlands and wild woods, whose name I cannot remember now; (Savage?—Ed.) and I have all that pile of music from them—all that wonderful descriptive music in words which has a way of so getting into the being that one lives with it and for it— That is why I ask if, truly, poetry is going to become pure art and so scientific, yet so good that one cannot despite it although one cannot write it.

Into how many hands can I put a poem such as the one before me and hope to have an appreciative smile? How many will be able to see what is being slowly done—look at that line where all the wood-world has shaken out into 'grandmother's sugar'—if that is really what the author would

express! Would it pay any collector to get up an anthology of such verse? But take the fine simple poetry of the past — take **'The Shooting of Dan McGree'** — any one of them at random, and give it to your cook and ask her to read it and see how glad she is you let her. Everybody could understand such poetry: but not so this streamlined literature meant only for the educated few who like poetry — with trained brains quick enough to grasp at a flash what is being done, and laugh. Look at that last line — *"It is Margaret you mourn for."* If you have not heard — not read, I grant — about the psychoanalyst you wouldn't understand what was being said. That is not poetry, truly, is it? — to teach? or to delight? Yet one who knows would be delighted with it as I have been, which brings me back to where I was, that such poems are good but can be appreciated only by the few.

(What Lawrence says is a real difficulty...the next comment is a personal paraphrase and writer likes the music).

6. I like it, especially *"It is the blight man was born for"*. Poets usually harp on the dark cloud with its silver lining, and darkest hour just before the dawn, but this man is honest and true to life.

I like what he says and how he says it. Another line — *"What heart...ghost guessed."* *"Ghost guessed"* is definitely good. There are so many things that one could never put into actual words.

There's music in the man's poem. What I mean is that I've read it about six times and unconsciously one's imagination seems to fill in the background music. Though that may mean that I am musical and not the poet. Still I think it is.

Anyway I like it.

(Too much contraction but yet grandeur of style — recognition of these two elements is the contribution of the next section).

7. My general impression is that the specimen is the work of a young writer, a member of the school of Modern Style.

There is too much contraction of expression. If, as I gather,

the writer is comparing someone's disappointment with the change in the seasons, then I'd suggest a slight alteration in the second line, which will result in a certain amount of expansion, and yet not change the metre. Here it is: —

*"O'er a golden grove unleafing?"*

Of course, this expansion of expression may be just a fad of mine.

On the other hand, there is a grandeur of style which cannot fail to penetrate even my dull sense of appreciation. For example, I consider the passage: —

*"Ah, as the heart...leafmeal lie."*

very good poetry indeed. I think it the highlight of the poem. The line *"Tho' world of wanwood leafmeal lie"* conjures up a picture of autumn that is perfect, if I may say so, and the style is indeed unique.

(In what follows, we have the story of the poem retold in simple language...And yet is the writer correct about self pity and the cold stare?)

8. The author seems to be thinking of a tender-hearted young girl who is grieving over the unleafing of Goldengrove. He tries (in this poem) to console her as she grows older such sights would pass unnoticed, so trivial they would be; nor would she spare a sigh *"tho' the world of wanwood leafmeal lie"*.

But as she grows older she would weep and know why.

Whatever it is, *"sorrow's springs are the same."* The heart will always ache over something or other. *"It is the blight man was born for"* — it is herself that she mourns for (self pity).

It is a beautiful poem. After reading it several times one is left with the music in one's mind. The opening and closing lines are very striking; they seem to be always turning up in your mind at some unbidden hour. The vowel sounds in *"Margaret"* and *"Golden Grove"* lend beauty to the first two lines. On the whole the poem is like a song that leaves a melody in your soul.

"Margaret, are you grieving over Golden Grove unleaving?"  
"Now no matter, child the name, Sorrow's springs are the same"  
"It is the blight man was born for, it is Margaret you mourn for."

These lines seem to me to be the best lines in the poem. They are very comforting lines; like some kind old man giving counsel to a young girl. That's the way with life. Things that seem to matter now, as we grow older, won't even give birth to a sigh.

"Nor mouth had, no, nor mind expressed  
What heart heard of, ghost guessed."

I haven't quite understood those two lines. I suppose they have their place in the poem, but I can't quite see their meaning.

"Tho' world of wanwood leafmeal lie"

This a very pretty line too. The w's and the i's make the music in the line And now we come to the philosophical part of the poem.

"Ah! as the heart grows older...leaf meal lie"

Why worry, why grieve over something that is an accident of nature. There are bigger things in life, harder hits that you'll have to grieve over, and then such sights as the falling of leaves will be viewed with a cold stare.

Nor would you spare a sigh even though the world be left bare of all its beauty — green trees, beautiful flowers

(This next comment touches off theology and the after life. Death is not all, is it? — so it seems to ask. But the whole comment is definite and well balanced).

9. There is something elusive about it, something beyond the sad acceptance of the brevity of life and the inevitableness of death and decay. I like the tender simplicity of the first few lines.



"Grieving over Goldengrove unleafing" is very pleasant. "Tho' world of wanwood leafmeal lie" is good alliteration, but seems to be a striving after originality. Perhaps it is meant to contrast with the simply clarity of the next line.

"Ghost guessed"! Alliteration, yes, but it conjures up pictures of restless spirits of the dead haunting the abodes of the living. I suppose "or spirit guessed" is too obvious and too similar in pattern to "nor mind expressed". Unfortunately, I have a perverse preference for parallel rhythms.

I like the last line, the effective and unexpected close of the poem. But I wish he had gone on to comfort Margaret with the hope of Life after, even out of death.

I forgot to mention my gratitude to the poet for his use of rhyming couplets.

(This comment is intellectualized and one wonders whether here too the poetry has not been missed. The wood for the trees?)

10. This little lyric of wan regrets strikes its note of yearning at once in the opening couplet where the rather long vowels and feminine rime produce an effect of wistful languor. A measure of consolation, albeit intellectual, is offered by the reminder that familiarity and age will assuage the present regret. But this consolation, presented in an ideal parallelism culminating in the subtle and felicitous line — "Tho'...lie", in which the consonants, w, l and f and the repeated vowel sounds, first o and later on a, are pleasantly intermingled, is deceptive, since there is no cessation of tears. There is weeping still for grief which, we feel sure, has a deeper cause than the unleafing of a bower.

The rime-pattern which is that of the riming couplet is saved from undue monotony by the interchanging of masculine and feminine rimes. While a unity and form is given to the whole by making the 13th verse a somewhat distant repetition of the 7th, which is itself a variation of the 1st.

The simple diction and sedate rhythm help to create an atmosphere of grey tonelessness appropriate to mourning. But that the writer could have allowed himself to produce

anything to toneless as the line — “*Sorrows...same*”, which comes near to blighting the whole poem is also a matter for regret on the part of the reader.

(I was glad to have this as the final comment, with its acute end remark. The weeping Margaret is a figure that stands over against the sorrow of the world).

11. The poet is philosophical, even slightly cynical—yet with a tender cynicism not intended to hurt. One can imagine him as a father writing to his beloved daughter, now in the impressionable spring of her life, seeing a time when moulded by convention and becoming accustomed to the inevitableness of life and death, she:

“...will come to such sights colder  
By and by, nor spare a sigh  
Tho’ world of wanwood leafmeal lie.”

and here the philosophy comes in —

“And yet you will weep and know why.”

A lovely alliteration in the sixth line — this line also creates a very realistic visual impression.

The obvious desire to create an unusual ending as expressed in the startling climax of the last line, stamps the poet modern. Yet the effect is not unpleasing — certainly it is thought-provoking.

The form of the poem is strange —one would expect it to be a sonnet.

It has the feel of Debussy.

\*\*\*

Margaret, are you grieving  
Over Goldengrove unleaving?  
Ah! As the heart grows older  
It will come to such sights colder  
By and by, nor spare a sigh  
Tho' world of wanwood leafmeal lie.  
And yet you will weep and know why.  
Now no matter, child, the name  
Sorrow's springs are the same.  
Nor mouth had, no, nor mind expressed  
What heart heard of, ghost guessed.  
It is the blight man was born for,  
It is Margaret you mourn for.

Memorables of B.G.

**WHEN I GO I SHALL REMEMBER**

by NEMO

I shall remember how trees soften the ugliness created by men to whom green grass and black earth are things to be covered with concrete and sawn timber and corrugated iron; and remembering I shall wonder why people in Georgetown do not plant more of them. For Georgetown's trees are half its beauty and the lack of them half its ugliness.

I arrived here my head stuffed with miscellaneous information about the Colony: I knew that the coastlands were flat, that the water was brown, that houses were built of wood and stood on pillars, and so on. I arrived here, too, looking for a tramway system that had been scrapped and almost forgotten years before, and, like better informed men since, for birds of gorgeous plumage flying over Georgetown and for numerous monkeys for sale on street corners. The consolation at the time was that I was "interviewed" by the Press. I can think of no easier and, to the interviewed, more gratifying way in which any country can make a good impression on the newcomer — particularly if he be one in whose existence journalists have previously shown a complete and distressing lack of interest.

People in cities tend to behave in similar ways, and cities tend to resemble one another. Georgetown, I will agree however, is different. I shall always remember Camp Street as I saw it from my window the first week after my arrival, in bright sunshine, with the flamboyants a long and brilliant splash of red and orange against a background of white houses. I shall remember Main Street on a Sunday morning, representing, I suppose, only one side of Georgetown, but giving the impression, with its trees and its white houses and tended gardens, of order and peace and gracious living.

I shall prefer, however, to remember Guiana by what I have seen of its Interior and its coastlands. Not so much the long ruffled ribbon of Kaieteur, impressive and lovely as that is even to one brought up in a land where natural loveliness is

within a half hour's drive of all, but the tree-colonnaded road from Tumatumari over which I walked at midnight, laden with five dozen eggs of varying degrees of freshness, in search of the six-wheeled truck soon to hurtle us through the forest night towards Garraway Stream. I shall remember, too, the skipper of the boat that brought us down the Essequibo, and the man from St. Vincent who built his home with his own hands and lived on a high point jutting out into the broadened Potaro a few hundred yards below Amatuk, with a view such as few views on earth can equal. Ten thousand such men as these and Guiana's troubles would exist no more. Leguan Island, and lying in the sun on its beaches; its leaning tower, and the schoolmaster who led us up it; its churchyard waiting, in the shade for the future to bring a Guianese Thomas Gray; the quiet courtesy and ready good humour of people whose troubles are more the age-old ones of wresting food from the earth than those of twentieth century rents and wages and cost of living. Suddie, too, on a bicycle and away from the dust of the main road; and drinking beer and swooning opinions with the Chinese store-keeper who sold everything from cutlasses to castor oil and had learnt arithmetic, like a thousand others before him and since, from Mr. E. O. Pilgrim when the latter's hair was different in colour and quantity from what it is now.

A thousand other things I shall remember — the City at 11 a.m., on a Saturday morning, with a solitary and athletic cock making up his silly mind in the middle of Water Street about the rules of the road; the wail from my wife on arrival when she took her first shower in Guiana, and turned on the tap expecting water, only to get — Lamaha; the Elizabethan robustness of beard and voice with which Nature endowed the vendor of "Sweet Cow Manure"; the variety and charm of many of the place names — Uitvlugt, La Bonne Mere, Anna Catherine, Providence, Cornelia Ida; Monday afternoons at Thomas Lands, listening to tales of cricket battles long ago as told by Hynds, the groundsman, future stalwarts batting before us; mangoes and shrimps, and avocados eaten on the sly with a spoon; friendliness; hospitality...

I shall remember.

Reading two Barbadian Poets provided...

**A HAPPY WEEKEND**

by Margaret Lee

Because he speaks so well for me personally, I like Mr. Collymore's work, and for the same reason I hear his voice reinforced by those of older favourite writers. Like so many people today, Mr. Collymore does not see anything particularly inspiring in modern living. We have made a new god whose angels —

“...have peculiar ways  
As one might well infer  
From legends of the ancient day  
About proud Lucifer.

And now we are their wretched slaves  
Nor do we dare deny  
The sacrifice their godhead craves  
Beneath the darkening sky.” (*De Angelis*)

There is something of Mr. T. S. Eliot's earlier voice in this and in such poems as '*Search*', '*Lost Eden*', '*Salvage*'. We are lost, we travel we know not whither.

“We have scorned the proffered prospectus  
Of heavenly bliss, we have missed the bus:  
And soon shall this desert of loneliness  
Be engulfed in the tide of nothingness.  
End and beginning, nothing less  
Or more: at the end of the road”. (*Terminus*)

This quiet pessimism flares out occasionally into cynicism at the artificial proprieties of living. Our guardian angels—*“the tepid smile, the suave indifference”* — preserve its brittle surface: but underneath, what murder is done:

“The old unheeded ghosts  
Peer from their shrouds and sigh  
In vain, the Judas kiss shall sneer  
Again, another die.” (**By Each Let This be Heard**)

The poet’s cynicism, like his pessimism, is never savage, it is rather, the well-bred sadness of the aristocrat;

“For we are bound about with ghosts  
And fool our hearts with compromise,  
And from the shadow of our love  
Mirages rise”. (**Mutability**)

Neither does he seek a refuge; the latter voice of Mr. Eliot is not heard. Mr. Collymore is essentially a lyric poet and he sings the eternal themes.

He is haunted by the loss of childhood when —

“From the bougainvillaea hedge  
A princess would appear  
Wrapped in a dusty cloak of green  
With flowers in her hair”.

One of the charms of convalescence is that too-familiar surroundings take on again their old air of friendly intimacy. He is equally sensitive to the power and mystery of beauty. This is the gift for all men to cherish and he calls for its praise as zealously as ever Mr. de la Mare does:

“Do homage to beauty whensoe’er  
She calls. Let not the heat’s desire  
Or the mind’s obsession or the body’s claim  
Shut out the message, dim the fire.”

In all this talk of beauty where is Keats’ voice heard? In the title **‘But Those Unheard’**, but more clearly in **‘Beneath the Casuarinas’**. Here, in smaller compass than in the **‘Nightingale Ode’**, is the same sense of being rapt away, the same awareness of the centuries past, of a power outside man, the same baffled return to our mortality. Mr. Collymore could





To show the Pimmit  
True magnimity,  
Pusillanimity  
Must not in you dwell."

And the solemn fooling in 'The Gaga' is no less clever. Amid all this nonsense Mr. Collymore still speaks on my behalf, and nowhere more earnestly than when he speaks of the cockroach:

"I don't like how I feel  
When with my heel  
I broach  
The cockroach".

If I still believed in Santa Claus, I should ask for Mr. Collymore's nonsense verse in a companion volume to his serious work.

If Mr. Collymore is in the general succession of Keats, Mr. Vaughan may be said to be in the line of Browning, for it is his vigour and confidence that strike the reader first. Possibly he himself realises the needs of confines for such vitality, for he writes mainly in sonnet and epigrammatic forms, and raps out these short terse pieces with gusto; the very titles are challenges — 'To the Unborn Leader', 'The Call', and the epigrams are addressed to men who have made their mark as leaders.

True, there is the backward glances at boyhood's pleasures, "to be *The Wind skylarking*", but there is plenty of enjoyment left—rain, voices, the names of labourers' houses, the excitement of the steel band:

"Disdain the donkey's dancing you who may,  
Reach for your trim sophisticated art.  
But I, I cannot scowl or turn away  
When naked rhythm ravishes the heart".

Beauty is a miracle, equalled only by the grossness of those who see it not, who go —

“...swaggering, crashing through  
The goddess Beauty’s vaulted calm abode,  
Knowing nowhere to ease their secret load  
Of weariness, no ritual to renew  
Lost faith, no mystery to change the heart”.

It will take death to silence this ecstatic singing of the joys  
of the world.

“...but until that fateful hour  
My feet shall find wherever Beauty is  
My voice from her alone draw all its power...”

All this delight does not blind him to the ugliness around  
us; poems like ‘**The Inquest**’ are proof of that. But there is  
always hope.

“The strength which gathers when the first young shoot  
Rises and heaves the earth apart and flings  
Its glory to the sun”

It is interesting to compare the work of the two poets when  
handling the same theme—rain in the street. For Mr.  
Collymore it provides a ‘**Minute’s Magic**’, which he interprets  
in lines of sharp and fragile beauty:

“Bells of water air and light  
Unfold, expand and fall  
To rise again petal upon petal  
A myriad dancing small  
Rain, flowers, rain fairies  
Leaping, sparkling...”

For Mr. Vaughan the transformation of the dreary street is  
a promise of eventual triumph:

“If all this heaven-sent loveliness must pass,  
Why doubt the end, beyond all grim mischance,  
Of all the dreariness that men amass?”

Virginia Woolf with her usual penetration has remarked in one of her essays that American writers find themselves in the position of having to interpret a vast new civilisation with its crudeness and vigour by a language grown old and rich in a life almost the direct opposite; it is this incongruity that explains the wrenchings, sometimes joyous, sometimes exasperated, which are producing the American language. It may be that something of the same condition is felt by writers in the West Indies. If it does, both poets have concealed it from the reader; the southern image fits smoothly into the northern frame. Mr. Collymore has used the comparison of the two islands most happily, and in '**Farewell to the Islands**' has developed from the descriptions of England and Barbados the natural metaphor of the islands of human personalities.

This, then, was my happy weekend. And since I have no poetic talent to voice my praises, let me avail myself of the poet's voice once more:

"So I, acknowledging this day's gift conferred  
Upon me, must perforce be content with happiness'  
unspoken word."

## THE HEART OF GOODNESS

...There is a world-mind composed of the richest and best experiences that the human spirit has ever acquired, and all down the ages the outstanding personalities of each period have contributed to that world-mind. The visions of Moses and Isaiah are a part of that mind, the sayings of Socrates and Plato and the teachings of Jesus. To that mind Beethoven and Bach have added their melodies, Michelangelo and da Vinci their arts. Statesmen of all races too have brought their creative insight, the Indian Emperor Asoka and the American Abraham Lincoln. Those are only the great names, but in a word, every thoughtful action, every deed that has the character of beauty and truth and makes similar deeds spring in others, all that is noble has contributed something to the growing heart of goodness and spirit in the world.

Some people have described this world-mind as the creative part of civilisation because of the way books and music and art inspire us to be our better selves and others have called it the theo-psyche, a compound word that means the God-seeking spirit. But whatever you want to call it, there is this power of goodness working in history, achieving victories for the human spirit, building hospitals or the Boulder Dam, assisting the surgeons who perform an operation of mercy in an out-of-the-way village, or trying to control natural forces for the sake of man, malaria or the atomic bomb...

—A.J.S.

## LOOKING BACK

Historians place 1748 as the year in which the brandwagt was first erected, probably on the site of the present St. Andrew's Church, and at night anxious men peered out into the darkness from the guard house to see if smugglers were sweeping down the Demerary. The first building in the precincts of the City of Georgetown was therefore precautionary and coercive.

The bicentenary of the brandwagt finds largely unconscious of their history, the people who buy and sell in the Stabroek Market and who throng the commercial places within a stone's throw of the site of the ancient smugglers' guard house...

“...your doors are ever open...”

## NINETEENTH CENTURY GEORGETOWN

by Eric Roberts

At dawn the City of Georgetown has the appearance of a rural village, with its many trees and palms through which peep the many towers and steeples boasting of all creeds and denominations. Here could be seen the shrines and mosques representing the religions of the East, in close proximity to the edifices of its Western neighbours, a symbol of religious tolerance. Alongside of these are the many schools primary and secondary, endeavouring at all times to make Citizenship for the future the fundamental part of the Curricula. In the City's oldest street, Brickdam, stands the Catholic Cathedral, which destroyed by fire in 1913, has been rebuilt over an extensive area. Reminiscent of the monasteries of the Dark Ages, its grim walls, boasting of no ulterior magnificence, have ever been the centre of relief to destitute families. To the south and running in an easterly direction is the Cemetery of Le Repentir,—

“each in his narrow cell forever laid,  
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep”.

Here among thousands of graves, within vaults and beneath marble tombstones are the remains of our City Fathers, whose early exertions, vision and courage have not only helped in laying the foundation-stones, but have built on them. Here at rest in the sublimity of the morning's sun, they seem to be ever happy and pleased at our sturdy growth and development.

From 1782 until '96 when it passed into British hands the Dutch did what they could in making the new town of some importance. In the possession of the former, however, some real progress was made during the six years which followed from then until 1802, when by treaty it passed again into Dutch hands. The change in itself proved disadvantageous to the planters, who enjoying prosperity under British rule, came into ruin. It again changed hands the following year,

and since then has remained British. In 1812 in honour of the Prince Regent it assumed its present name.

The town, one mile in length, ran in an easterly direction from the river Demerara with what is now Brickdam as the centre of activity, and on both sides of the road were to be found the homes, offices of government, as well as the residences of the planters. Cess-pools and quagmires were to be found in every yard, while mosquitoes and frogs were a constant nuisance to the population. Conditions of health and sanitation were negligible concerns. In 1831 the three counties, then under two separate governments became one, and six years after, the Municipality came into being.

Within a few years some changes were made on an appreciable scale, and many muddy tracks had been converted into moderate-sized streets along with the building and repairing of bridges which spanned the many canals. Slowly with an increase of the town population, areas adjacent to what was formerly Stabroek, and termed as wards, were amalgamated within the limits of the City, of which Cummingsburg and Robbstown are leading examples. But the greatest problem to be solved by the new Corporation was the encroachment of the sea on its northern coastline, where were to be found the Eve Leary Barracks and the little village Kingston. Flooding at intervals was not uncommon or infrequent in those early days.

In 1864 the Municipality had its great baptism of Fire, which caused considerable damage to both houses and commercial centres. Impediments though there were, the City continued to make sure its progress. In 1872, gas-light replaced lamps, amidst open consternation of the inhabitants, climaxed by an evening of discomfort at the Assembly Rooms when it held its first Gas-Light Ball the same year. It is here recorded by Henry Kirke, one time Sheriff of Essequibo, *"the hall was swarmed with cockles and dancing was almost impossible, everywhere cockles were to be seen, on clothes as well as in the drinks"*.

The final decade in the last century may be considered the most prolific period throughout the brief experience of the Corporation. The Sea Wall was completed in '92, St. George's Cathedral was also completed and Bishop Austin celebrated

his Golden Jubilee. Here for half a century, he remained. He died the same year, at a ripe old age and beloved by all sections of the communited head of the Anglican Church, well remembered for the tribute paid him by Queen Victoria in 1842, as "*the youngest and most handsome bishop in her dominions.*"

Five years after this, the Queen celebrated her Diamond Jubilee, and as ten years earlier the Colony joined with the rest of the Empire in the pageantry; the City recovering from the effects of earlier sufferings ran wild with jubilations, climaxed by the discovery of gold and diamonds in large quantities. With these memorable activities, a century alive with the memories of Stabroek, then Georgetown, nurtured among vicissitudes, riots and uprisings, among epidemics and deaths, passed away within the records of history.



...her place in...

## THE HEAVEN OF THE HEART

by O. S. W.

The story of her life would read like a fairy-tale. It was anything but, believe me!

I don't know how old I was when Nana became a part of our household...I could easily find out of course but it really doesn't matter now...to me there was no one like her before ...there has been none like her since. In the good old days of the tramcar; of Brother Sonny; of Atom and Patrol; when Willie McCowan was teaching us how to play Cricket and the one and only Alfred Athiel tutored us in his well-loved Virgil, it was Nana who really saw to it that our lives should be more or less as we would have it.

Nana was strict, but only to a point...where two eyes of a parent, naturally more exacting, probed, she let but one stray; when anyone interfered with us unnecessarily and suffered the inconvenience of a mud-ball in his back or even a BB shot on his neck (or elsewhere) Nana was always sure that it was only our aim that was at fault. And before any tribunal she would most convincingly take that stand and no other. In these circumstances it was Nana who was in effect the judge, the heads of the house were merely the executioners. Which made things very easy indeed, for once Nana was on your side you were safe; otherwise you were in for it and could make such preparation as you and Nana could devise to offset or postpone sentence.

At table, however, it was a totally different matter. The slightest misdemeanour brought Nana's wrath with its unquestioned authority and undeniable force upon your head and it often took hours of sidling up to and under her long skirt before you were forgiven.

Junior was her favourite, Missey her pet and they both knew it so well that they took the most inglorious advantage of their enviable positions. At the same time Junior was ever trying to rid Nana of her pearls or earrings and even her clothes and was ever-ready to share whatever mud that accrued to

him on the Sea Wall with her. The muddier he was the more tired he became but never was the spotlessly clean lap denied him as he slept his weary way home in the tramcar. Missey was never, never allowed out of Nana's sight and when I look back and recall the days of which I write, I can honestly say I have known nothing to equal the adoring and protective love which Nana bestowed on my sister in her youth.

But that was Nana. She took a pride in everything she did and she was most inordinately and — I might add — at times most unjustifiably proud of her wards. She was part of the family and the name we bear was as wonderful to her as she helped to make it to us. We in turn were equally as proud of Nana and she has with due formality been introduced to all Governors, Members of Parliament and other notable visitors who visited our home.

Nana retired many years ago; that was temporary; she has now retired permanently leaving with us reverent and respectful memories that time can never dim. The contentment and pride which was hers in her closing years was an object lesson of the faith which can be gained from constant reading of the Word of God...Nana has at least earned her place in the heaven of our hearts.

West Indian Traveller  
**DANCE OF THE SEA**

by J. A. V. Bourne

A bell struck twice and awakened me from a deep sleep. I sat up in the bunk and peered into the sky-light. It was still dark. That would be five o'clock, I said to myself.

My first night on the schooner had not been a happy one. I stepped over the edge of the bunk and went up on the deck of the vessel.

The keen breeze rushed over me cooling my fevered cheeks. Astern, clutching one of the davits for support, I watched the far horizon where the sky was overcast with heavy clouds. I hoped they would disappear and the morning break fair.

The schooner was rolling and groaning, much more so than on the previous evening for we were already in deep water. Only yesterday morning the *'Manuata'* with my wife, my young son and myself as passengers had dropped moorings at Georgetown and hoisted sail. During the day brown water had changed to green and now the ocean was dark blue. We had made good time on the first day's run.

Leaning on the poop I gazed thoughtfully at the horizon for Barbados and a long holiday lay ahead.

The wind freshened. It blew steadily from the east where a thin moon and a single bright star faded slowly into the grey as dawn broke.

The schooner began to dip along briskly cleaving the waves. Four bells struck and the morning watch was changed. A fleck of smoke coming out of the galley forward sail. The cook would soon be coming along with the coffee.

I hoped land would be sighted on the morrow, for I was anxious to relieve the misery of my wife and little son. They were ill in the cramped cabin below. John had been the first to be sea-sick and it was a sorry experience for him.

Why did I venture to take this risk when I could have travelled by airplane? I should not have counted the cost for in a few hours time I could have reached my destination. Now I was surrounded on all sides by water...and there was no escape from the waywardness of the wind.

The schooner lurched suddenly and a big wave broke over the side. The spray of the sea was blown against my face. Now and then frisky waters threw themselves glittering against the blue air. A huge fish leaped and dived gracefully into a wave. The sun crept over the horizon and the clouds were dissolving. It would be another hot day.

I wondered if the wind would fall as it threatened to do the afternoon before. I didn't like to hear the captain whistle for it as I had read of sailing vessels becalmed for days on the tranquil ocean. Would this happen to the '*Manuata*'?

Last night a passing storm had frightened me. Vivid flashes of lightning and the crash of thunder mingling with the creaking rigging had awakened me.

The schooner had rolled heavily in the tumbling water. Back in my bed I had lain listening helplessly to the noise of the storm and watching apprehensively for each flash of lightning.

And in the blackness of the night I had seen in my mind's eye this lonely vessel on the vast expanse of surging water — a tiny speck tossed hither and thither by the winds and waves. Suppose it sprang a leak! What chance an open lifeboat on the lonely ocean.

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The sun was well over the horizon when I went down the steps that led to the little cabin. The others were asleep and I was glad for that because the night had been awful.

I crept silently into my bunk and lay down. It would be another day of misery for all of us but the longest day must end.

Strange how time seemed to stand still when anxiety grips the mind! Each tick of the chronometer seems to be an hour. I sank into a profound reverie. The range of my fancy grew and grew. Came an illusion that I was lost in a timeless world — that I had somehow slipped into the fourth dimension!

I tried to conceive time, and the idea appalled me. Could time be expanded or contracted at will?

The monotony of just waiting and listening to the movement of the schooner, while seconds and minutes moved

slower and slower, was terribly agonising. One could experience a lifetime of misery in a few hours. I must have swooned slightly.

Suddenly my apathy was shattered by something falling upon my face. Brushing it off quickly I found it was a cockroach! Mad with anger my hand mashed it against the side of the cabin. I didn't care what happened now. The last straw!

Death would be welcome. It would be a release from this misery. I would rush upstairs, jump into the sea and end it all. Tears rolled down my cheeks. Others had gone and done it, why shouldn't I? It would be a pleasant death. Water over me...clogging my nostrils...and then...

I sat up in the bunk, but the sea-sickness had caused a subtle paralysis of my muscles. I could not move. Beaten and resigned. I lay back down.

Presently, I turned my shut eyes to the light of the cabin window and the lids inside glowed redly. I seemed to see mirrored within them strange scenes. Visions formed up in the glow awaking macabre dreams of the distant past.

The face of a demented man I once encountered in Nigeria formed up bringing back an awful memory.

Midnight at Lagos...pitch dark. Back home from a party I am about to unlock the door of my house when suddenly I hear a wild shriek come from within my house. I stand hesitant before my door. What unseen horror is haunting my house? Fearful, I insert the key. The door springs open. In the dark passage a hideous face glares at me with baleful eyes that glow like hot coals. I back away. Horrid cries again issue from the Thing!... in my heated imagination the dreadful scene was acted over again...and the cries, mingled with a creaking noise kept pounding in my brain!

Slowly the phantasmagoria dissolved, noise faded and I became aware that John was crying in the bunk below.

My delirium vanished and I sat up quickly in the bunk. Poor little chap. He must be thirsty. The sails flapped loudly in the wind and the schooner dipped drunkenly as it breasted and clove the waves. Eight bells chimed and a sound of footsteps came pattering on the deck above.

I picked up a glass and went out of the cabin door. The captain was outside with a sextant in his hands. As I poured out the water I asked him our position.

*"You look as if you'd seen a ghost," he growled. "Sea sick? Don't worry! Cheer up! we'll be home tomorrow."*

*"How can you be sure of that, captain?"*

*"Go up on deck and look. Dolphins. Hundreds of them. Leaping and diving and sporting in the brine. Sign of good weather. Land not very far away. Cheer up, man. Home tomorrow!"*

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It was fascinating and yet unbelievably soothing to watch the approach of that little green island, Barbados.

At first, it looked like a purple cloud on the horizon; then the shape of the land crystallized and objects such as the lighthouse became clearly discernable.

As we approached nearer, the wide sandy beaches with dazzling white breakers curling and foaming and riding towards them contrasted sharply with the green vegetation.

It was a magnificent morning. The air was clear and crisp and there was a cold nip in the breeze. On the ocean there was a spangling of tiny white waves, like sequins on blue velvet, and here and there in the far distance venturesome fishing boats could be seen bobbing up and down on the amethyst water. In the wake of the schooner a school of young porpoise was jumping playfully.

I borrowed the captain's binoculars and scanned the shore. Strange shapes among the mounds of sand and rocks gave the dunes a fantastic appearance. On the slopes Dutch-looking windmills could be seen dotted here and there in the green fields. The whole island appeared to be under cultivation.

Soon I began to recognize the seaside houses and the white road running along like a ribbon skirting the coast. The schooner glided on and on and on and rounded a point. There in the distance was the wide harbour of Carlisle Bay.

The *'Manuata'* glided smoothly to its anchorage.

It was certainly a fine morning, cloudless and sunny, with a mild breeze that rustled in the sails. Row boats were coming

out to meet us but the water-police kept them at a distance. The schooner must be inspected by the Health Officer before the passengers can be taken off.

On land, peacefulness seemed to sleep upon the quiet wharves. It was Sunday, and there was a distant drowsy sound of bells. A church called to worship. Nearby, a motor-boat chugged rhythmically, and against the somnolent warmth of a perfect day came the chimes of the Public Building clock telling the hour of ten!

Soon we would be ashore; and there will be breakfast, sweet-smelling and crusty bread, butter in ice and new milk. There will be a heaped plate of fruit and a crystal jug filled with cold water, and clean table napkins.

Around the Union Clubs  
**THE CULTURAL SCENE**

**“Amateur Theatre” – Georgetown Dramatic Club**

Due to the absence abroad of the dramatic director for most of the previous year, the project that should have been undertaken in 1947 was commenced in 1948. This project, the presentation of plays at various places in the rural districts, had been suggested by Mr. Risely Tucker, Representative of the British Council.

The first presentation by the Group was made on March 31, 1948, at Plaisance Village. It consisted of a few choral items by the Singing Class Group and a one-act play, ‘**The Lovely Margaret**’, with a cast of five. It was enthusiastically received by a packed hall.

Following upon this, the members wished to have at one of their own fortnightly meetings for entertainment and criticism another one-act play. It was desirable that the cast be a small one and the play such as would lend itself to critical observation of dialogue in all its aspects, of movement and of adequate and appropriate gesture. For this purpose Alfred Sump’s very excellent dialogue ‘**A Marriage has been Arranged**’ was chosen and presented on June 17, 1948,

It was then planned that the next production would be, as was the first, presented in the rural areas, and with the enthusiastic co-operation of the Group, three one-act plays were presented at Buxton on July 28, and at Beterverwagting on July 30. These plays were also presented in Georgetown on July 29. Both here and in the village audience reception was gratifying.

The expenses incidental to presentations in the villages were, for the most part, borne by funds provided by the British Council. Its representative, Mr. Risely Tucker’s ready co-operation and quick perception and understanding of our problems contributed considerably to whatever success was achieved. At the village shows no admission charge was made, but, working through the Village Chairman, invitations were



issued so as to enable the attendance of a representative section of the community. In Georgetown the entire net proceeds of all three shows were donated to charity.

The "season" is now closed as far as this Group is concerned. It is pleasant to be able to say that its enthusiasm and cohesion has been excellent; that an enlivening spirit has been imparted by their zest; that they have at moments shown competence and, at all times, patience and enterprise. It is, therefore, reasonable to conclude that when the "humours" of the year's end festivities and fuss dispel themselves, the ensuing year should find us enlarging our contribution to the Colony's Amateur Theatre.

**A. A. D. MARTIN**  
**Director. G.D.C.**

### **Art...**

Looking back on that week of Art, October 25 — October 30, 1948. I must say that I thoroughly enjoyed it, and found that the more often I visited the Exhibition — the more I saw. If one only went once, one should not be surprised if all the pictures I mentioned cannot be vividly remembered. These things grow on one with each visit, and perhaps there were other favourites. In Art as in everything else, we are all entitled to freedom of thought, and every eye forms its own beauty.

The week of the 4th Annual Guianese Art Group Exhibition opened by Hon. W. L. Heape, Officer Administering the Government, can truly be described as a week devoted to Art. It was enjoyed from the onlooker's point of view, and successful for the Art Group. The attendance was much better than before, and sales broke all previous records.

One of the factors that helped to make the Exhibition a success was the work of M. Huze, the guest artist. His impressionistic treatment of water in particular, and the novelty of the expression of a mood rather than distinct form were all part of his characteristics and he also showed versatility in his colourful caricatures.

The Working Peoples Art Class was another important factor that helped to draw the crowd. Some interesting work was submitted, for instance the drawings of G. Wharton often called our "local Picasso". The Newcomers Open Competition was won by a member of this Class, Hubert Baptiste — "Self Portrait". Mr. E. R. Burrowes to be commended for the good work he is putting in.

Mr. Burrowes' work this year showed noticeable change in style, his "Picture of the Year" Fort Groyne for example is painted in shades of grey and has a smooth finish unlike any of his previous work. His "Jetsam" on the other hand, was particularly attractive though somewhat abstract. This picture calls for imagination, as with each change of mood it might mean something entirely different.

Claude Hoyte, a newcomer from Berbice, won a deserving prize for his "Gay Revellers", which I like the best of his work. It put over the feeling of a holiday morning with boys sallying forth to enjoy themselves. It was an interesting study made more so, by the use of a bright red ground.

Miss Seymour, who herself had a number of attractive Bartica scenes is to be congratulated on the high standard of work submitted by her pupil — Carlotta Croal. Her exhibits had balance and good colour sense. Her "Horses on the Beach" which won a prize was an effective attempt at space filling. "The Market" however was a group study and well depicted in colour.

Francis Smith's flower studies exuded a cheerfulness that was sometimes accentuated by white frames. Among the portrait painters, Sam Cummings deserves mention with "Josh" and "Doreen". "Bathsheba" by S. G. Stevenson reminded me of a jig-saw puzzle, but was by no means unattractive in its simplicity.

I rather liked Mosnett's "Timber Point" in gouache, and Phang's "Kitty Market" was colourful though small. Pestano submitted quite a few oils, but somehow lost some of the warm tones he had in pastels, though he did achieve a certain amount of harmony. Carlton Allen was successful in pastel, and submitted an unusual view of "Leguan from Hague's Beach". Godfrey D'Ornellas excelled in his "River Side Hut" in pen and ink. Philip Wong's "self portrait" would have been

interesting if there had been more highlights. S.G. Stevenson's "Self-Portrait", on the other hand also in pencil, put over effectively his rugged individuality.

S.K.

### Schools Musical Festival

Official and other guests filled the capacious Astor Cinema, Georgetown, on Friday morning November 5, to hear the annual Schools Song Festival where the massed choir of more than 1,000 school children sang to the accompaniment of the B.G. Militia Band, under Major S. W. Henwood, Director of Music.

Twenty-seven schools in the City and adjacent rural areas provided the 1948 choir, which was utilised under the general supervision of Miss Lynette Dolphin, L.R.A.M., the programme included groups of Shakespeare songs, folk songs, bedtime songs (the delightful A. A. Milne 'Vespers' was included here) with pairs of songs to the music of Bach and Handel.

### Music

Three evenings in one week, in November in the Town Hall, Georgetown, Majoie Hajary, a young Dutch musician with considerable recital experience in Europe as well as in other parts of the world, delighted music lovers with her pianoforte playing.

Ease and brilliance characterized her recitals and Guianese agreed that it had been a long while since a performer combined youth with rich virtuosity and mature stage presence.

Miss Hajary played Schumann in two of her three recitals, the 'Symphonic Studies' and 'Scenes from Childhood' but Liszt also recurred on the programmes and so did Mozart. Composer as well as performer, Miss Hajary interpreted some of her own work and at the close of the third recital she played for an appreciative audience Martin Sperry's 'Russian Dance'.

## Evening with Shakespeare

The October 25, 1948, meeting of the B.G. Union of Cultural Clubs held at the British Council, Georgetown, was very successful, from the viewpoints both of attendance and of quality. In a room that had seating accommodation for 50 only, more than 120 persons crowded and remained during the two hours programme of song, dramatic readings, poetry-reading, illustrations of the plays, incidental music and film.

The programme began with the music of Mendelssohn written as background to the '**Midsummer Night's Dream**' and the reading of Matthew Arnold's sonnet of tribute completed the introduction, while Shakespeare's picture was flashed on the screen from the epidiastroscope.

After the sonnet '**Like as the Waves**' had been read, the well-known but still enjoyed Balcony Scene from '**Romeo and Juliet**' was dramatised, the actors reading their parts.

A recording of "*When daisies pied*" was followed by the speech "*The quality of Mercy*" and then for contrast there was a scene from '**Much ado about nothing**', which displayed high spirits on the theme of lovers and their love, including the song, '**Sigh no more ladies**'.

Shakespeare has given us many portraits of "the infinite variety" of Cleopatra. The programme selected from the play two studies coy and tragic, followed by the dirge — "*Fear no more the heat of the sun*". Then came the calm of Prospero's speech, "*Our revels now are ended*", and the songs '**Where the bee sucks**' and '**Come to these yellow sands**'.

The remainder of the programme included the display of examples of Shakespearean illustrations and paintings, with the aid of the epidiastroscope, the song with the haunting air by Quilter '**Take, O Take those lips away**' and recordings of John Barrymore as Hamlet unpacking his heart with words and Sir Laurence Olivier as Henry V delivering a battlefield address.

The century's new art-form, the film, next displayed the architectural beauty of two scenes from '**Macbeth**' and finally music from the '**Tempest**' concluded the programme.

## History

In a public lecture at the Georgetown Public Free Library on November 15, 1948. Mrs. Jean Low, M.A., spoke of the great civilisations of the past and the lessons that might be drawn from them to apply to a young country like British Guiana on the threshold of development.

Mrs. Low enumerated the civilizations that had passed over the stage of the world and the pottery and fine work they have left behind them and declared that each civilization owed its coming into being and its maintenance to the dynamic ideas and the spiritual and mental forces generated by each community in the process of overcoming natural conditions. Whenever the spiritual and mental growth of a people ceased for any reason the civilization had begun to fall away and die, although a certain section of the community would refuse to admit the decay and would cause the ideas to harden into dogmatic assertions. That the flowering of a civilisation did not depend in exact ratio upon its economic security, she instanced from the glory of Elizabethan England which without resources had yet achieved a marvellous outburst of spirit in drama and poetry.

The danger of Western Civilization in its present phase was its belief that mechanization was a solution for the world's problems. Mrs. Low called on Guianese to expand their mental horizons. Mr. Justice J. A. Luckhoo, K.C., First Puisne Judge presided over the well-attended lecture.

## Working at the British Council

### **OFF THE RECORD**

by Pat Lewis

There is, at the British Council among other facilities, a library which caters for all classes and so many varying interests. Some persons come to glean knowledge from the books or else and are oblivious of everything but their information, others come to spend a morning or afternoon in our comfortable office chairs, others again come just to be associated with the institution or to visit the premises and lastly there are these who are curious to know what others come for.

Sometimes I look up from my machine and observe the manners, expressions and, in some cases, technique with which overdue books are returned to the Librarian. It is only by taking notice of these persons and the effect their manner and attitude have on others that one can see and compare one's self, make mental notes for future use and so apply them in bettering one's self. There is the indifferent person who returns the book a week late never thinking, or perhaps not bothering, to make an excuse; the casual one who mentions that the book is overdue and is most unperturbed about it. As a matter of fact he might even treat the whole issue as a joke! Then there are those who are highly indignant at being sent a notice and think they will cause lots of anxiety lest they cease to borrow any more. On the other hand there are the well-mannered who are very apologetic, in spite of the fact that they may repeat the act, and the really pleasant and clever ones whom one never gets round to reprimand.

Every year at least three Guianese leave our shores for England either as Scholars or visitors and there is nearly as much excitement in following up the names and qualifications before the final selections are made and after that in lending a hand in making preparations for their journey. One should be in our office to see the luggage going out, and the bright faces of the successful persons as they receive advice from the Representative and good wishes from the staff. Then there is their return to look forward to — how

will it affect them? — one, two years or perhaps more working in a strange land among strange people. In the majority of cases it is delightful to observe the finish, the rounding off they acquire during their stay; that is, if they did not leave with it.

I am not behind the machine all day. Occasionally I exchange a library book for someone, put through a phone call for the boss and help in preparing books for the shelves. I best enjoy making placards for the library so that the borrowers may, at a glance, distinguish the sections and also in writing in indian ink at the back of each book the section in figures, for example, the Fine Art section is 700 and the history section 900.

At my typewriter, typing matter is full of variety. I really can sympathise with the typist who types letters or figures all day. When I am tired of lists — whether they are of records, books or films — my boss is ready to dictate letters, when I have had a stream of dictation and have said goodbye to the letters, I am faced with making copies of bank review scripts to send to London and then, to vary typing even more, there is the script for our tricky programme of classical music over ZFY which the Secretary Librarian passes to me for fairing. Towards the end of the month shortly after pay day comes a huge dose of figures in the form of accounts and so the cycle goes — never, never dull.

Book Review  
***The Guiana Book* by A.J. Seymour**  
Review by Wilson Harris

A.J. Seymour's poetry marks to my mind the completion of the ornament in a century of poetry in the West Indies and British Guiana. In fact, it is to be associated with the contemporary artifice of a closed union, a finished work, a collective loyalty that one finds today so strenuously upheld by critics as the only criterion for great art. Seymour's work, however, though within this school of tradition, is no such strenuous organisation. The poet is unaware, as it were, of internal weakness, and therefore uses his scope more leisurely in a gracious dream of the past. That group of Guianese poets and prose writers, however, who intend to add ineffectual ornament upon ornament to reinforce a puppet society can no longer hope for such ease and leisure in a work of tradition. If they insist they will now have to become strenuous and forceful to achieve any measure of distinction. A measure of distinction which will be purely an imposing facade. This temptation to impose is already at work so much so that most writers in British Guiana are completely devoid of anguish or real passion, and experiment is frowned upon by them as too personal, ugly and sinister. But the poet of the moment has to accomplish a leap. He can no longer secure himself in a collective fashion but must surrender himself in actual symbols—as distinct from recollected symbols—even though the shock of his surrender presents great difficulty to an audience whose "*encased lives before the Infinite*" have found their measure in collective dreams and whose formula for existence has always evaded the actual world.

Seymour has fulfilled the ornament in bringing to finality — to impersonality, the complex individual role of a reflective and impassive temper, the temper of history. He has explored the name without committing himself to the person. The few poems where he has attempted to commit himself to the person are cautious statements without the strict unity and severe refinement of poems like '**For Christopher**



**Columbus' or 'The Legend of Kaieteur'**. It is in the raw material of the living situation that the conscious refinement of temper — so evocative and full of the epic of the past — becomes a strain and the formula can no longer be adequately sustained. For instance compare:

“...his vision had driven him from home  
And that as architect of a new age  
The solid world would build upon his poem.”

with:

“The efficient engineers dam the conservancies  
Design the canals and the sluices  
The chemists extract their sugar to the ton.”

The poet here stands on two legs both epic and grand and the other diplomatic, cautious and evasive. The formula is the same but its applicability, so spontaneous and eventful in the first instance, has begun to wear. This may mean simply, of course, a degeneration in the hero and not in the basic myth. But I think it goes further than this superficial cover and indicates a weakness of petition, a static approach that cannot be overcome by appealing to the individual at a time when no decentralization of resource or transplanting of the myth is able to free itself from collective disaster unless escape is really the abandonment of formula in search of an open mind to new and constant form.

But more significant than contemporary loss of direction in the formula is the failure of over-refinement within the truly epic tradition where it has begun to show deep signs of strain. This is course is a very definite indication of the leap that the new poet has to make if his work is to achieve ultimate form. Because it is within the legend that the art of conscious refinement operates most justifiably, and its failure here is symbolic.

Listen to this :

“Children dying in dozens below the decks  
The women drooping in clumps of flowers, the men  
Standing about, with anger carved upon their foreheads.”

There is to my mind no passion here, but only artifice. Passion brings about a different refinement, so to speak, a spontaneous refinement that is defiant and immeasurably grand. For instance George Campbell’s:

“Women stone breakers  
Hammers and rocks  
Tired child makers  
Haphazard frocks.”

— is full of the strange and actual anguish of nobility.

The failure of conscious refinement — wherever it occurs — in Seymour’s poems, is not so much individual but of universal interest because existing side by side with real artistry and the fulfilment of ornamental beauty it reveals simultaneously a completion of synthesis, and a reversion — a failure in synthesis — a necessity for a different type of synthesis altogether.

Seymour’s genius lies in the spirit and exploration of the name, the epic tradition, the historical monument.

“Kykoveral,  
Strange name for stones, a heap of stones  
But a strong name to take imagination  
And tie it to a peak in Time  
Above lost plains, drowned by the later names,  
The English names which still come creeping in  
On the slow gathering of the years.

And the strong name winds up the centuries  
And builds again the fort to hold the sentry  
Standing upon his picket in the night  
Thinking of Holland and of home,  
While the full everlasting winds stretch out,  
Straight as a board and stiff without a flutter,  
The Dutch pavilion overhead.”

Or again:

“But still they have their dances and at nights,  
When the drums trouble the dark with rhythm  
The violin takes a voice and patterns the air  
And then the Indians find their tribal memories  
Of victories and war and dim old journeys  
That brought them from beyond the Bearing Strait.”

Form is always the most elusive and indescribable power of art. No technique in the poem can claim supremacy. All great writing is finally a liberation from formula. This liberation is to my mind the only true indication of form and is a completely new thing, a strange chaos and surprise whenever it occurs. This surprise is all the more miraculous in the bonds that seek to hold it attendant to an external mould. The Romantic movement while subscribing to the tyranny of matter — to collective rules — recognizes this phenomenal release. But this acceptance of freedom seems to be a disguised application of the myth wherein the formative approach invites the tyranny of the external world — the tyranny of force — without completely abandoning the colourful leap of tradition. This evasion is two-fold. On the one hand it is an effort to sustain a paralysed gesture, on the other hand it is an unconscious and blind liberation, though such realisation of freedom is still constrained within an ominous bound figure, whose leap into the unknown is deemed romantic because it has not yet been granted an actual justification, an ever-changing centre, new form and spontaneous fusion release from classic Platonic memory. Essentially it has not yet been seen as a new thing, a surprise, revolution and constant abandonment of the collective myth. This conclusion of the abandonment of the myth is of course controversial and I do not wish to press it further at this stage. What is however indisputable is that the poem always must have this sense of leap, whether it be interpreted as an airy, formless, unactual recollection of God by the fallen creature or whether it be the Romantic crisis of the modern poem.

To a great extent the failure and ineffectual ornament of West Indian and British Guiana verse has been the supplanting of surprise, of leap, by moral. This is essentially the failure of Guiana poets and an examination of the anthology *Guianese Poetry (1831-1931)* reveals lines like these:-

“When there shall be no restless sea  
To picture forth infinity—  
But endless praise.”

or—

“Where yonder restless sea  
Joins with the northern skies  
Where glint the Polar stars  
The north wind takes its rise.  
That’s why the wind is fresh  
And bears health in its blow,  
‘Tis savoured with the sea,  
Whence greatest blessings flow.”

or again this priceless gem—

“We’re proud to be a living branch  
Dependent from the parent tree,  
As Englishmen with Englishmen,  
True-hearted, loyal and as free.”

In a final analysis of this anthology, however, we cannot escape signs of great promise. We have a genuine release from morals, a genuine anguish and nobility in poems like Cob Cotton’s meditation ‘**Not the Same**’ and in the sheer ornamental grandeur of Lawrence’s concluding stanzas of ‘**Ode to Kaieteur**’. And now seventeen years after the publication of the anthology Seymour’s *Guiana Book* has not deserted this promise of ornamental beauty, but has closed the cycle of the hundred years with a gracious power and leisurely contemplation.

“And so the day beginning,  
    In the vast Atlantic  
The sun’s eye blazes over the edge of ocean  
And watches the islands in a great bow curving  
From Florida down to the South American coast.  
Behind these towers in a hollow of ocean  
Quiet from the Trade Winds lies the Caribbean  
With the long shadows on her breathing bosom  
Thrown from the islands in the morning sun.  
And as the wind comes up, millions of palm trees  
Weave leaves in rhythm as the shaft of sunlight  
Numbers the islands till it reaches Cuba  
Leaps the last neck of water in its course.”

Finally in a review of the *Guiana Book* the failure to accomplish the leap lies only in a certain type of poem, is not individual but is in method, in ornament, in the living raw material which is defiant and no longer consenting, which cannot be shaped by artifice. This failure is particularly noticeable to my mind in ‘**Tomorrow Belongs To The People**’. Here the factor of consent — the fact that governments exist on the consent of the governed—is dull and late in the day and uninspiring.

“They are all heroes.  
They make history  
They are the power in the land.”

— greets one with a peculiar sense of refined uneventfulness. The poem is forced, the centre is too laboured, the heroism becomes doubtful because it is the type of heroism that is conceded within certain terms of reference, like the canned heroism of the propaganda machines. This is the penalty of formula asserting itself in the living situation where the living raw material has not been gathered up with a symbolist leap or unity. To understand the peculiar assertion of form over formula, in that living situation, listen to Laura Riding —

“Earth is your heart  
Which has become your mind  
But still beats ignorance  
Of all it knows  
As miles deny the compact present  
Whose self-mistrusting past they are.”

The original substance of the poem — collective and individual — is broken down by the strange, spontaneous chaos of surprise. And this power of the living form, this chaos of a moving or changing centre is the new generation which confronts us.

I am reluctant to close off here, though perhaps it may be fitting. But something more must be said about a poem like **‘Tomorrow Belongs To The People’**. There are indications of satire creeping into the West Indian poem. Humour has become deep and hidden and full of strange forms that are close to terror and yet are deeply purifying. **‘Tomorrow Belongs To The People’** — in this light — becomes interesting because its very lack of synthesis is satirical. Its failure has a grim weathering possibility in a line like:

“They will make a hammer to smash the slums.”

A grim unconscious humour seems to lurk here and change the current of this heroism into an indictment of the self same hero who has consented for a century to this “...*Empire on which the sun never sets, quantitatively the greatest imperial power the world has ever known — its characteristic architecture is the industrial slum*”. (Herbert Read — **The Grass Roots Of Art**) However, to be fair this presumption of satire becomes an unwarranted forcing of the texture of the poem. And we are compelled to go elsewhere in Seymour’s work to find a grand and sustained formulation of heroism, that is close to terror like satire and deeply purifying. The strange response to hidden and powerful forces of heroism lies close to the secret of great abandon. Can Seymour’s poetry in a final resolution of statuesque nobility, of figures carven in ornament and dance, convey this motive of abandon and therefore of heroism? This is the test of the ornament and is

not to be discovered in the canned formulative hero of 'Tomorrow Belongs To The People' but rather in a poem like 'Drums'.

"The old man beats the troubled rhythm faster  
And music jerks the dancer's head and arms  
In puppet-action. The tension grows  
Movements come Bacchic and then half obscene  
Drums. African Drums.  
Then like a leaven, see the madness spread,  
Drums, African drums.  
Caught in the mounting wind of passion  
Others come stamping in the hard-earth circle  
With eyes now half-slit and now shut and blind  
Drums, drums, African drums.  
The old drummer tightens the frenzy again  
The drum notes pursue each other fiercely  
Climbing the curious archways of the blood  
Snuffing out the brain — dancers topple balance  
And running down the scale of evolution  
Writhe like the snakes from sea or ovum seekers  
Dancing upon their bellies on the ground.  
Others are music-drunk — drums, drums, the drums.  
Then the old man unwinds the dancers, lays  
That wind of passion to rest within his drums  
Right to the last note of the octave  
Drums, African drums.

So the last note recedes finally in memory like a communion and an eternal possession.

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### SIMEY'S BOOK

What I like most about Prof. Simey's book, *Welfare and Planning in the West Indies*, is his avoidance of both sloppy praise of and hostile attacks upon any of the social groups. Although criticisms are of a radical nature, and are usually

forcefully expressed, they are always accompanied by reasonable and sympathetic explanations. Result is — one is impressed that a good attempt has been made by Simey to understand the mental attitudes and psychological problems of West Indians.

As a sociologist he is naturally very much aware that, whether we are thinking of West Indians, Americans or Europeans, the mental attitude of the individuals of a community determine not only quantity of effort but direction of effort, and, of course, no effort (or misdirected effort) means no economic development, and therefore no Social Welfare. It was therefore logical for Simey to pay adequate attention to the forces, past and present, which have produced and are preserving undesirable attitudes and social values.

Middle class men and imported Government Officials will find in this book references to themselves which should be useful, even if not always pleasing. LEADERSHIP might find inspiration therein. I think this is the purpose of the book.

— A. P. THORNE.



## PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

*Kyk-Over-Al* attaches great importance to the resolution of the Caribbean Commission to foster the exchange of information in the Caribbean and its emphasis on the exchange of bibliographies between libraries and the Commission. The Commission also hopes “...to compile a general bibliography of Caribbean titles; arrange for an exchange programme with newspapers and periodicals in the area; and make the Commission library available to the public for reference purposes”.

In its 1947 Report the Caribbean Commission gives full indication of its emphasis on information services (press releases, library exchanges, compilation of statistical data,) the establishment of a library of Caribbean literature at Kent House, Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, and the distribution of publications to Universities attended by West Indian students, other institutions, libraries and individuals in the area and without.

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Inevitably but unfortunately, the information on individual British colonies in the United Nations publication *Non-Self-Governing Territories* with its summaries and analysis of information transmitted to the Secretary-General during 1947, suffers from too great compression.

Of the government policies on Education (in the section showing the analysis of information transmitted) the objectives of the French and Dutch Governments are impressively stated. Especially does the Netherlands Indies report contain a hope for all dependent peoples “...the general aim of the new educational policy is to raise the cultural, social and economic level of the people, to educate the child to become a citizen of his country and of the world by promoting a healthy patriotism and a love for his country’s national language, its history and civilisation, as well as by developing his personality, and the understanding of his rights and duties as a citizen...”.

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*Kyk-Over-Al* congratulates Maurice Kurtz on his appointment as Secretary-General as from January 1, 1949, to the I.T.I. Executive Committee.

The Report on the First Congress of the International Theatre Institute (Prague, June 28 to July 3, 1948) makes very stimulating reading. The great theatre tradition of Czechoslovakia, inspired by Shakespeare, formed a genuine background to the international understanding I.T.I. plans to promote, based on the importance of theatre as an art and an organ of society. As Mr. J. B. Priestley, President of the Congress stated, international theatre is at least one thread in the fabric of a world society and the attempt to link theatres together and to ensure that people enjoy the best of the world's dramas shows a movement towards international understanding.

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From Malta comes Michael Kissaun's call "*...my personal idea of the National Theatre (of Malta) is a Temple in which the soul of the Nation finds expression of its philosophy and way of life*". (*Times of Malta*, March 4, 1948). In his article, Michael Kissaun outlines the administration of a National Theatre, suggests a possible building or a site, and plans a Mediterranean counterpart to the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre at Stratford-upon-Avon.

*Kyk-Over-Al* is grateful for the programme of the Children's Drama Festival with the list of the ten plays (with the *dramatis personae*) presented in the Floriana Primary School, Malta, G.C., June 16 to June 19, 1948.

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The 1947-1948 Report of the British Council shows the importance and the continued success of the link of the arts and sciences of Britain with those of the rest of the World. That the Council's financial restrictions limited its work is evident from the pages of the report but the valuable

library service now afforded by the Council to the rural areas in British Guiana and its work mainly through the Combined Cultural Committee deserve and receive the grateful approval of all discerning Guianese.

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*Kyk-Over-Al* is grateful for the gift of the finely-produced Official Souvenir Programme of the Bath Assembly, April 21 to May 1, 1948, with its magnificent photographs of the City of Bath and of its historical and literary personages, and of the musicians and players who made this period a festival of the arts in England.

