

KYK-OVER-AL

Volume 3

Issue 12

Mid-Year 1951

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Mid-Year 1951.

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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 3
Issue 12

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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.¹ 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.”² 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.”³ 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.”⁴

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.”⁵ 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.”⁶ 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 enjoiner. 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.’”⁷

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.*"⁸ 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."⁹ 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".¹⁰

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.¹¹ 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".¹²

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”.¹³

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 world¹⁴), 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.¹⁵ 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.¹⁶ 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.¹⁷ 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.¹⁸

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.*"¹⁹ 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.*"²⁰ Indeed, Breiner suggests that *Kyk-Over-Al*'s outlook was "*closely tied to the dream of the West Indian Federation.*"²¹ 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 1948.²²

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".²³ 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".²⁴

Michael Niblett
University of Warwick

Notes:

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

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

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

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Persam, 'The Importance of Being Cultural', 86-87.

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

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

- ⁸ Wilson Harris, 'Fences Upon the Earth', in *Kyk-Over-Al*, 1.4 (1947): 21.
- ⁹ Reinhard W. Sander, 'The Quest for Form: Wilson Harris' Contributions to *Kyk-Over-Al*', in *World Literature Written in English*, 22.1 (1983): 20.
- ¹⁰ Harris, 'Fences Upon the Earth', 21.
- ¹¹ 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.
- ¹² Martin Carter, 'Death of a Slave', in *Kyk-Over-Al*, 4.14 (1952): 53.
- ¹³ Martin Carter, 'Death of a Slave', in *University of Hunger*, 88.
- ¹⁴ Robinson, 'Introduction', in *University of Hunger*, 31.
- ¹⁵ Michael Gilkes, 'Edgar Mittelholzer', in *West Indian Literature*, 2nd edition, ed. Bruce King (London and Basingstoke: Macmillan Education, 1995), 127.
- ¹⁶ A. J. Seymour, 'Editorial Notes', in *Kyk-Over-Al*, 1.2 (1946): 3-4.
- ¹⁷ Ibid.
- ¹⁸ 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>
- ¹⁹ Laurence A. Breiner, *An Introduction to West Indian Poetry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). 78.
- ²⁰ Ibid.
- ²¹ Ibid.
- ²² See A. J. Seymour, 'Kyk at 50', in *Kyk-Over-Al*, 46/47 (1995): 19.
- ²³ Martin Carter, 'Looking at Your Hands', in *Kyk-Over-Al*, 4.14 (1952): 52.
- ²⁴ A. J. Seymour, 'To-Morrow Belongs to the People', in *Kyk-Over-Al*, 1.3 (1946): 11.

ISSUE 12

EDITORIAL NOTE

Professor Whitehead has pointed out that the present is always an occasion which has as a cargo the past and the possible future; in the same way *Kyk-Over-Al* always attempts to preserve the tradition of the Little Review in the West Indies and also to roll back the frontiers of the creative spirit. This is an ideal to which the present issue holds closely.

Perhaps the most important new feature is *Kyk-Over-Al's* attempt to portray the qualities of leaders of our West Indian Community and to give us pride in our famous men — the series of three pen-portraits of prominent West Indian personalities. We have been lucky to persuade Mr. Justice Ward to write on Grantley Adams, the Resident Tutor Mr. A. Thompson on Philip Sherlock and St. George Cooper on his former schoolmate, Professor Arthur Lewis. The springs of exceptional endeavour are here for all to see.

With Mr. Thompson's permission we have rifled the files of the Extra-Mural Department's broadcasting activities and provided for your enjoyment extracts from the series '**Books and Places**' which deal with '**Palestine**', '**The American University**', '**The Poetry of Tennyson**' and '**James Joyce's Dublin**'.

The study of '**Christianity and History**' by Cameron Tudor is one we commend to thoughtful readers; in '**Jamaica in the Novel**' Lilian Dewar writes in her deliberate and incisive way on the social function of the West Indian Novelist and Allsopp merely whets our appetite in his discourse on Sam Chase as an Educationist.

There are gains as well as losses in the section we can term '**Community Review**.' We have added comments in art and music but lost them in films. The book review section is again full, to reflect the increasing number of books being written about the region. New names appear beneath short stories and above the poems. We commend them to you together with the old and trust you find 1/6 worth of entertainment and perhaps something more in this issue of *Kyk-Over-Al*.

We are grateful to the Editor of the *Daily Argosy* for permission to reproduce the pictures in this issue.

—A.J.S.

SEED

by E. McG. Keane

I

Fling me the wind
I am the winged seedling
Ripe for resurrection
From the tree's old season
Burst is my pod of dreams
I have a hundred breaths to brandish
Cracked my seedbox
Mature the pink fibred pinions
And the proud buoyant blades
Greened into manhood
Thinking of their career in the clouds...
Seed in the wind
Reckless speck of quick dust rollicking

II

I have lived in a thousand flowered seasons
When nature makes her bargains in regeneration
I have seen yellowing in gardens
A thousand little contracts with soil and sun
And God's green investments maturing on the hills.

III

At night
I have watched the waves foaming like wine
As the river touched glasses with the sea
And I too have been witness at
The marriage of moon and waters
With under the cape cadenzas in coral
And northward
Five wise stars trimming their lamps
But here always in this warm soil of our air
I have kept waiting for the moon to grow roots
And wondered what sickle honours the upper
Harvest of the stars . . .

IV

Seed of light
Freckling the clear-skinned sea
Into dawn's early complexions
My valley drunk
With the yellow rum of the sun
Sky in a red shivers
Ocean foaming at the mouth
Sower sun
Walking the ploughed eternal day
Scattering timefuls of frenzy

V

Time does not age
For God and the sun are of one seed
And faith does not look twice
Into the eyes of time for recognition
For God and time and faith are of one seed
And I learning in this season
How the soul of the leaf feeds only where
The roots feed
Have known that the prime cellars of the brain
Are one with beyond where are smokeless fires
Brewing gallons of rock and a black hoarded time
Reeling like an intense deed
Convict in the hot central cell
But the cell is God
And the egg of the brain breeds green universes
Keener than the burst pod
Prosperous in the wind's encouragement
And as sure as the ripe time rising from the soil's altar
Will find faith reaped pure
As prayer in the clasped hand.

West Indian Pen Portraits
GRANTLEY ADAMS

The Honourable Grantley Herbert Adams, Leader of the Labour Party in the Barbados House of Assembly and virtual Prime Minister of the Island, President of the Caribbean Labour Congress, Elected Member of the Caribbean Commission, British representative to the International Labour Organization and delegate appointed by His Majesty's Government to the United Nations, has travelled far since he first saw the light fifty-three years ago. His detractors — and they are many — attribute much of his success to the smiles of fortune. He has certainly had a fair share of luck, but his prominence in labour politics in the Caribbean rests on a firmer and more secure foundation. His father, a stern disciplinarian schoolmaster, trained him in the old-fashioned way, sparing not the rod in moulding his mind and character. At Harrison College he excelled in classics and cricket, winning the blue riband of local scholarship in 1918, and representing the school as wicket-keeper. At Oxford he was not a shining success like his contemporaries, Manley and Van Sertima, but he practised assiduously the art of public speaking. On his return to Barbados he won immediate success at the Bar, and even today when he appears in murder trials he is a great defending counsel. But politics is his love. His career as a politician, has been curious. He started in opposition to the Labour Party, scarifying Dr. O'Neele during an uneasy partnership with local conservatism as editor of the small, but influential *Agricultural Reporter*. When death and other circumstances had removed the militant leaders of Labour, O'Neele and Wickham, he jumped into the leadership of the Labour Party and has never faltered since. Twice he has been near to failure — once in 1937 when the riots in the West Indies roused political passions, and again in 1940 when the Labour Party almost split into fragmentary pieces through lack of organization. In 1937 he took the bull by the horns and went to England where he interested Labour leaders in West Indian conditions; and in 1940

salvation came through the organizing ability of Hugh Springer. The later years have been years of solid achievement. Springer's decision to place his ability at the service of the infant University College removed the only threat to his continued leadership, and today he is firmly entrenched as a courageous, militant and businesslike Labour Leader.

His success has been due to an unusual combination of qualities: an amazing ability to sway crowds with his rhetoric and a suppleness in political manoeuvre which leaves friends and foes aghast. No leader in Caribbean politics is better at pulling strings than Adams; and it would not be surprising if, when the Federation of the Caribbean colonies becomes an accomplished fact he emerges as the first Prime Minister of the Caribbean Dominion.

—E. R. L. WARD

PHILIP SHERLOCK

Philip Sherlock's keynote speech at the 1930 annual conference of the Jamaica Union of Teachers settled all the doubts in my family about the right school for me. Already admitted to the famous school he later served as headmaster, I had come to town with my mother for the final interview. In the general scramble for a word with the distinguished speaker, my mother secured his help in placing me, instead, at the school where he taught English, his alma mater. This was my introduction to Philip Sherlock. I was in my fourteenth year.

It is natural for a pupil to resist his teacher. It is healthy and can be invigorating to them both. Resistance to some teachers at our school hardened into hostility. But this happened to the bad teachers. Never to Philip Sherlock. How did he avoid this?

First, and most necessary of all in a teacher, he knew his subject. He threw open window after window into the future, showing us what we could learn at the university and how the great writers of the past and present have lived and worked. In his treatment of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* that year he revealed a profound knowledge of the upper ranges and the inner depths of that great work. "*If you prick Bunyan, he bleeds bible for his very blood is bibline.*"

Next, he liked his subject. Young people hate grown-ups who are insincere, deceitful and hypocritical. A teacher must believe in the value and interest of his subject as a doctor believes in health. The neglect of this principle is one of the chief reasons for the bad teaching that makes pupils hate schools and universities and turn away from valuable fields of knowledge.

Whenever young people meet a man who does not always say what they expect, who tells them novel stories about strange aspects of the world, who throws unexpected lights on what they sadly know as ordinary dull life, who seems as completely alive, sensitive, energetic and zestful as they

themselves, they usually admire him. Philip Sherlock was well beloved by the boys and by his colleagues.

Not infrequently in those backward days, negro schoolboys heard themselves, their past, their present, their future and, especially, their dialect disparaged by imported European teachers who sought to make little Englishmen of us. Philip Sherlock was and is a leading student of Jamaican dialect and West Indian folklore. His well-known love of Jamaican proverbs has preserved this valuable treasure, cloaked it in respectability and given Louise Bennett a place in the sun.

A teacher of the language of Chaucer, Shakespeare and King George, with a fluent command of Jamaicanese is accounted a hero by all Jamaica schoolboys. It takes a combination of scholarship with patriotism and with good breeding to produce such versatility. Philip Sherlock thus paved the way for the new dialect writing of the Caribbean region, and especially for Vic Reid's *New Day*.

He enjoyed facing the young, individually and in large groups. He mixed with them off duty, gave them an outing now and then, and shared in their games. He knew their names and nicknames and so could influence them. He was at his best at the weekly Student Christian Movement meetings in his tiny bedroom where we sprawled all over everything. At annual SCM conferences which he organized, many adolescent students from many educational institutions in the capital met and made lasting friendships.

From these beginnings I went on to active leadership in the SCM in England; attended many international conferences of students, and played a part at the World Conference of Christian Youth in Amsterdam in 1939. Later in my career, I was to join the staff of the Secretariat of the United Nations to work with several old SCM friends in the cause of Peace and International Security, and Philip Sherlock was to summon me back to service at the territorial level under his leadership.

Philip Sherlock is unquestionably a fine leader, formerly of boys, latterly of men. As befits a leader, his sense of adventure is strong. Whether he will ultimately hold the record for transferring from one post to another, or whether I

will, cannot be certain at this stage. I do not enter my record of achievement through obedience to new calls and new challenges into comparison with his. We are still "*Tommy*" and "*Mr. Sherlock*" and it will ever be the same.

Each of Philip Sherlock's changes of milieu has synchronised with a new emphasis and new gearing in colonial development in the Caribbean region. He has always been the man of the hour. His tenure at the Institute of Jamaica, his acceptance of the mantle of Professor Simey in the management of the Caribbean-wide programme of social welfare training, the opportunity afforded him to break new ground in community education as Director of Education of Jamaica Welfare (1943) Ltd., his appointment to be the first Director of Extra-Mural Studies in the University College of the West Indies and his subsequent elevation to the post of Vice-Principal of the College in 1949, fit into the pattern of response to new challenges.

My very distinguished friend, Hardy Wickwar, of the United Nations Division of Social Activities, at one of our last luncheon chats in January this year asked me to confirm a fact which he had discovered through research on documents describing present trends in social organization in the British West Indies. He had observed many evidences of a Methodist hand at work. Without hesitation I confirmed his findings. It was the hand of Philip Sherlock.

Leadership in any field is a complex affair and leaders are highly complex individuals. They differ from non-leaders, not so much in kind, as in degree. They have the same basic aptitudes, skills and personality factors possessed by all men in some degree. And it is the balance of varying amounts of different abilities that makes them outstanding, not any particular ability standing alone. Success is achieved in a number of ways. Only one thing stands in common — control in an interpersonal situation. Philip Sherlock has this control.

Speaking roughly, in leadership, personality factors are probably ten times as important as all aptitude and proficiency factors combined; yet these are relatively unknown scientific qualities. Psychologists suspect that personality can be broken down into four or five areas of difference. But they have not reached universal agreement as to what are these

four or five basic factors. The majority see evidence in favour of (1) an energy-drive factor; (2) a social adaptiveness factor; (3) an emotional-control factor; (4) an ethical factor — “*conscience*” for short.

Today, more than ever before, leadership in education programmes is group leadership. An education leader cannot function in a vacuum. Philip Sherlock’s hold on the programme of extra-mural studies is founded largely on his associates’ respect for behaviour that carries, besides, self-assurance and competence, a marked regard for group welfare. Any appreciation of Philip Sherlock becomes eventually a study of a personality socially adaptive, willing and able to say and do the things that influence the behaviour of others.

— ADOLPH THOMPSON

PROFESSOR ARTHUR LEWIS

I knew Arthur Lewis in the third or fourth. That was in the early twenties. He was a gifted schoolboy. At 13 years of age, he had taken the Senior Cambridge with Honours when some of us did the same at 15. He could not sit the London Matriculation on which the local biennial Scholarship of St. Lucia was awarded until he was 17; he therefore left school to earn a living as a typist clerk in the local Department of Agriculture—an experience which must have served him well in later years—and he came back at 17 to walk off with the Scholarship in the First Division.

Genius is a word that should be used sparingly, certainly with caution; for it connotes a quality of dominance, dimming by its splendour all subsidiary lights. I think Lewis' scholastic records fully justify the application of the term to him, for it was not only at St. Mary's College in St. Lucia that he menaced the future careers of us lesser lights, but at the great 'hub' of learning in the Empire, he set up academic records which I understand will be very difficult to excel. I have grown to believe that geniuses are born and not made, and Lewis came into the world from a family of teachers on both his parents' sides, blessed with extraordinary brain power. I remember in the Sixth, in the thrust and parry of high argument, how we discussed the mal-distribution of wealth in St. Lucia, the social and economic dominance of the handful of powerful white French creoles, the iniquity of making our Island Scholarship biennial etc. Yet no one guessed that these were the beginnings of that economic and social thinking which he was to expound so brilliantly and perhaps so incisively later in life.

We marked him out as a future legal luminary, and we were surprised at his decision to channel his great gifts of mind in the footsteps of the master—Adam Smith.

We had kept close together in our school days. Never much of an athlete,—he must have been the world's worst—I remember him rather clumsily attempting football where "*we*

urged the flying ball together", but he had to be cautious with his eyes, then weak from wide reading. We indulged in long afternoon walks, and although brilliant, I never found him formidable or awe-inspiring company, for he was always calm and gracious. We discussed literature, for that was my strong point, but he was strong in the disciplines of Classics and Mathematics. His weekly card reports in the form of graphs must have been absolutely linear, for I do not remember his ever coming second in any exam. I think he thought me a bit offensive for proceeding to win the Headmaster's Essay Prize for English Literature which was opened to the whole school and also for bringing it off again in the Cambridge Senior Examination with Honours.

Always quiet and retiring, he never cared much for social life and when I met him in England twenty years later, he was just the same. The Island Scholarship and then to London at the impressionable age of 17, where he entered the London School of Economics there to be exposed to the influences of Laski, Shaw and the great men of the thirties. Soon we heard of his exceptional performances and extraordinary brilliance. Laski, of course, was quick to recognise these exceptional powers and soon Lewis was a lecturer at the school.

I am told he was a brilliant and stimulating lecturer with a rare command of his subject and relied very little if at all on notes. I did not think however, he was blessed with a good lecturing voice. Yet I was to hear him later lecture on Colonial Development at the Senate House of Cambridge University to a packed hall of Colonial office officials, representatives of foreign powers and Colonial administrative officers. In typical professorial style, he paced the room, halting now and then to emphasise a point and sitting on the table to expound current economic problems. Lord Milverton was in the Chair, and he described that lecture as the most stimulating on Colonial affairs that he had heard for a long time. He received a tremendous ovation at the conclusion of that lecture.

I am not expected of course to write of his contribution to Economics, I can only quote the opinions of his colleagues and the other distinguished economists I met. One told me in Cambridge that Lewis was going to make a big name for himself as he was doing what few, if any other economists

were doing — that is, he was interesting himself in the fields of the industrial economics of Great Britain, in colonial economics, and international economics. Thus his recent *Economic Survey 1919 — 39* has been described as “*a magnificent book of which there is no other (so far as is known) which covers the inter-war period so completely and briefly*”. It is most effective in ‘placing’ the inter-war years in the wider panorama of world economic history.

In his book *The Principles of Economic Planning*, he discusses the problems arising from a mixed economy, and offers guidance to those people who are puzzled or alarmed at present trends. This book was recommended to be read by everybody interested in the political and economic difficulties of Great Britain. Since however the appendices deal with Planning in Backward Countries, the recommendation applies with equal force to the Governments and people of the Caribbean. A third work *Overhead Costs* is a technical discussion of the social control of public corporations, approached from an analysis of some of the difficulties of costing and price formation that arise out of the existence of overhead costs. No doubt these books have focused attention to the need of having minds like his own on Public Corporations, and he is now a Director of the Colonial Development Corporation.

Lewis generally writes with some incisiveness and seems to have the great gift of approaching a problem from angles which never seem to occur to other people. Many will remember how he wrote scathingly in the controversy with Benham over Benham’s work in Jamaica — but without malice or ill feeling. The search for truth and human welfare is his purpose. My own humble view is that his greatest contribution so far to West Indian economics is his industrial blueprint, published by the Caribbean Commission under the title *Industrialization of the British West Indies* — a work of considerable magnitude and importance, for in that treatise, he has perhaps swung the traditional viewpoint of the industrialisation of under-developed areas to an entirely new axis of thought. In his own words “*industrialisation is an investment which is very costly in the first generation and pays dividends only after many years. They are very handsome dividends when they come, but their period of gestation is longer than most private entrepreneurs can reasonably be expected to finance*”.

One wonders why he never returned to serve the West Indies. I think the answer is that he feels he can better serve them at the 'hub' than in the parochial atmosphere of Colonial circles. Engaged as he is in the task of training men who are likely to be our future Colonial Governors, he has the grand opportunity of indoctrinating them in the new and liberal approaches to Colonial thought and philosophy.

England has had her brilliant families — her Huxleys, Darwins, Trevelyans, Galtons and Frys. They have been nurtured in the great cultural heritage of their country and honoured by their countrymen. History will no doubt record the achievements of brilliant West Indian families, nurtured, however, without the atmosphere of a Bloomsbury or an Oxford or a Cambridge. But that atmosphere is in sight for the light is now shining in the west "*Oriens ex occidente lux*".

King's College, Cambridge, holds the name of Lord Keynes in great reverence. No doubt, the little College of St. Mary's in St. Lucia holds Lewis in the same light, for in my humble view, there will be found in the course of time, much similarity between Lewis and Keynes. It has been said of Lord Keynes that he was greater than Alfred Marshall and the equal of the master, Adam Smith. Manchester will one day pass its verdict on Lewis, and the West Indies will be proud for though he belongs to Manchester University, he also belongs above all to the West Indies.

In this connection, it is not often that one hears of West Indian Professors in European seats of learning. Among those who come to mind (not necessarily in Europe) are Professor E. M. Du Porte (St. Kitts) of the Entomological Faculty of McGill University, our own Professor Eric Williams of Howard, Capildeo (Trinidad), Brian King (St. Kitts) a Fellow of Pembroke College, Cambridge, Mervyn Campbell (Barbados) a recent Cambridge Wrangler and now of the University College of the Gold Coast, Dr. Dudley Huggins of our Social Research Institute, and others.

To be a Senior Professor at a famous English University, and to have served on the Board of Trade and on the Secretary of State's Colonial Economic Advisory Council— all in one's late twenties or early thirties—and to be coloured

at that, is a tribute to the intellectual freedom of England and the intellectual power of Arthur Lewis. And so colour prejudice breaks down on the intellectual plane. May it always be so in the interests of learning.

West Indians, a cynic once said, can be certain of two things—the first, that if they work hard they won't always get the palm; the second, if they do not work hard, they definitely won't get it. But all this is changing. West Indians like Lewis, Williams, and Huggins are blazing the trail and soon these thought impositions and inhibitions will give way to the dictum "*Possunt quia posse videntur.*"

—St. G. C. COOPER

Short Story
RED LIGHT
by Eugene Bartrum

"Hello Dave! Aren't you going to ask me for a dance?" A voice said near to David Bruce's shoulder.

David turned around to look into the eyes of Maizie Greene, a girl he was very fond of before he left for the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture. They were chummy then but David never encouraged a deeper feeling. He had felt it would be better to wait until he had graduated and she had grown up a little more.

Tonight she had given him his first disappointment since his return to British Guiana. Not seeing her with the other guests he asked Percy Walcott whether she was invited and Percy said *"Yes, but she may be a bit late."* There was a twinkle in Percy's eyes when he added *"Maizie's a beautiful girl, David, very popular, too."*

Not long afterwards while he was dancing with Dixie, Walcott Percy's sister, he saw Maizie dancing with a wealthy doctor he had known in Trinidad. Percy's reference to Maizie as a beautiful girl was perhaps a bit casual. He thought her beauty devastating and did not take his eyes off her until he was chided by his partner for not paying attention to the music.

"It's no use either," Dixie cautioned *"the doctor's got a crush on Maizie and Maizie's all crushed up herself."*

Now here Maizie was accusing him of not being attentive to her.

As he looked into the two large brown eyes which held the same questions as when he kissed her goodbye four years ago, his first impulse was to rehearse that farewell scene, but he remembered how rapt Maizie seemed as she danced with the doctor. He remembered Dixie's words and he kept himself within bounds.

"Hello Maizie," he said *"It's really nice seeing you again. At first I wondered whether it could be you. You look so enchanting. Now that I am sure, shall we dance?"*

He smiled as winningly as he could and as they danced he tried to forget his escapades with Maizie, the little dare-devil imp at school who brazenly tossed her unruly plaits over her shoulder one day and said to old "Cocerite" the Maths master "*If Dave Bruce can't solve that rider, no one else can.*"

He could not forget. Instead he started to recall every little prank they played together. Then he had regarded her as a pal and not as a girl.

After they left school that camaraderie continued. When there was tide they swam together in the muddy Atlantic. When the tide was out they collected shells on the beach. They rode all the donkeys on her uncle's farm in the country, climbed mango trees, genip trees, dunk trees. He even taught her to use a shot gun and often they went hunting vicissi ducks which invaded the rice fields at the back of the farm during the rice cutting season.

One day about six months before he left for Trinidad, as she rushed into the rice field to pick up ducks which they had shot she got stuck in some soggy mud. When he took her out he saw her eyes smiling wickedly in spite of her plight. They stared at each other for a moment and suddenly he kissed her full on her mouth.

Immediately he was sorry that had happened.

"*Oh David,*" she said "*This will spoil everything.*" And he knew that their innocent friendship had ended. He liked her as a play mate, but he was not prepared for anything as serious as that kiss. He knew that she was not prepared either, so he determined to stop seeing her.

It was a cruel decision but, for both of them, he thought it better and did not see her again until the afternoon before he left for Trinidad.

At college he tried to forget her, but instead he built airy castles of what they would do together when he got back home.

The orchestra changed its rag time tempo to a waltz and those thoughts which were racing through his mind now became a medley of discord.

The tide was coming in and a cool breeze played gently against his hot forehead. Maizie was in his arms, beautiful, bewitching, desirable. But he dared not see her. He saw the wraiths of his airy castles dancing like demons in the air around him.

While they danced neither of them spoke, but, as he took her to her seat Maizie said quietly *"Dixie's a nice girl, David."*

He wondered why she said that. Did she realise how very much he was in love with her? Was she being kind, realising the futility of it all, and offering Dixie as a substitute?

Again he had a mad impulse but again Dixie's words checked him.

They were standing before the doctor and Maizie was saying, *"Ronald, this is David Bruce, an old school mate. David this is Ronald Duke...Ron and I are engaged, but we want to keep it to ourselves for a while. So please be a dear and forget that we told you."*

The doctor's eyebrows lifted slightly. David noticed this but he was too stunned to think of anything else but the stark truth he had just heard.

"Congratulations, Duke," he said almost curtly, *"you should be a very happy man."*

For the rest of the evening he danced most of the time with Dixie. He too thought Dixie a nice girl and he wanted Maizie to know it.

When he got home he pondered over upsetting Maizie's engagement. He knew that when he kissed her four years ago she was in love with him. He saw that same look in her eyes tonight. Was it for him, or was it a simulation of her love for Duke? — Ronald Duke, — the name felt like dirt in his mouth.

Had it been some other fellow, even Percy Walcott, he may not have minded so much, but not Ronald Duke!

The next day he called on Duke at his surgery.

"Hello youngster," Duke said blandly, *"a bit sore at me I expect."* *"Sore!"* David's voice was bitter with contempt *"You dirty rotter. You didn't think there was someone in British Guiana who knew about you. Now you've gone just a little too far."*

"Mr. Bruce," Duke said smugly *"Am I to assume you came here to insult me? When Miss Green introduced us last night, I thought you were a gentlemen. I understand you went to college in Trinidad... Surely travel should have improved your manners. Instead it seems to have spoilt you. Calm yourself Bruce."*

David's temper got the better of him.

"Damn your blasted platitudes, Duke. You know damn well that I know why you were kicked out of Trinidad. After that

Delaine mix up not a single person in Port-of-Spain would have given you a case. Being a 'famous' Frederick Street doctor, your name was kept out of the press. You know that. Every student at Icta knew about the mess you made of Mrs. Delaine's life. Several fellows there were ashamed to think that they sat near to you at Queen's Royal."

He looked at his rival squarely.

"Duke," he said "Will you break that engagement, or shall I air your filthy reputation in all the clubs in Georgetown?"

Duke listened unflinchingly then he said *"Blackmail, Bruce. It never pays. What you are saying you could never prove. It may hamper my career a bit, but it would ruin you if I brought you up for slander. But rather than going so far, let me show you something."*

He took a note from his wallet and David flinched when he recognised Maizie's handwriting.

"Read this," he said, folding over a part of the letter.

David read *"Ron, darling, if I had heard from anyone else I might have minded. It did give me a shock, but now I love you nothing you did in the past could ever matter. No one else knows about Mrs. Delaine. No one in Georgetown. And, darling, no one will ever know..."*

David did not read further.

He looked at Duke *"So there's still something decent about you. You told her."*

He shrugged his shoulders *"Well its none of my business anyway."*

For weeks afterwards David battled with his desire and his reason. He remembered Duke's eminence as a doctor in Trinidad. He heard of his progress for the short time he was in Georgetown and he considered it took some good in a man to rank highly in his profession, especially as a doctor. Maybe the Delaine case was an unfortunate lesson which had made Duke a better man. He considered that he could never be able to keep Maizie as comfortably as Duke could. And, if as she said, she loved Duke, he would only be a cad to stand in her way.

He started visiting Dixie regularly perhaps 'to forget Maizie or perhaps Dixie was really a nice girl. He didn't know which. He soon realised however that Dixie knew of his love for Maizie and yet she was so sweet about everything.

A few months afterwards. Dixie invited him to a picnic and to his surprise it was a foursome with Maizie and Ronald Duke.

He was a bit angry with Dixie, but as the day went on he felt himself being so attached to her that Maizie's presence didn't seem to matter.

In the afternoon when the tide was up, Duke said suddenly *"Maizie, you have often told me what ace swimmers you and David were a few years ago. Won't you entertain us a bit?"*

Maizie said *"We could, if David doesn't mind."*

As they swam out to sea, David noticed a set expression on Maizie's face. They were a good way out and she swam on untiringly.

Splashing on the left of them attracted their attention and David said *"That looks like Dixie."*

There was a wry smile on Maizie's face when she said *"This is it!"*

"This is what?" David asked angrily *"Dixie's no swimmer. She shouldn't go so far out. She seems to be in difficulty. I'm going to her."*

Maizie's voice was as calm as a ripple of air.

"No," she said *"You aren't. If you do I'll swim right out to sea."*

When David looked at Maizie he did not see Ronald Duke's fiancée but the little wench who swam alongside of him five years ago and he knew she meant what she said.

"Hell, Maizie," he said lamely *"You can't do that. Dixie'll drown."*

"No," she said *"She won't. Ron's a good swimmer himself. He'll save her."*

"No" David frowned *"No, Maizie. Sorry I can't agree with you. I'm going."*

Maizie said *"Goodbye Dave"* and she continued swimming.

David swam a few yards towards Dixie and stopped. He saw Dixie struggling about a hundred yards to his left and he looked back to see Maizie heading for the Atlantic.

For a split second he wanted to tear himself in two. It was obvious that one would drown. Which one must he help?

He changed his direction and swam desperately out to the Atlantic and was in time to overtake Maizie just as her strokes became weaker.

He rested her head on his chest and stroked backwards to shore wondering guiltily what had happened to Dixie. They were a long way out and after some time Maizie looked at him and smiled weakly.

"Why did you do that?" he asked grimly.

"David," she said softly *"Dixie's a better swimmer than you or I. While you were away she swam across the Demerara river. Did you say she was no swimmer?"*

David did not answer. He remembered Dixie saying to him earlier in the day that she could easily drown in a few feet of water.

"Why did you want to swim out to sea?" he asked *"Were you running away from someone?"*

"Yes." she said *"From David Bruce. You made me run away from you six years ago."*

"I can't understand, Maizie," David said *"God knows I can't. How does Duke come in. That might help."*

Maizie sighed.

"David," she said *"I'm going to be exactly what I was long ago — a little hussy — I'll tell you. I didn't know how friendly you were with Dixie before you left for Trinidad. but she always spoke about you while you were away. She gave me the impression she had you ear-marked."*

"I got fed up. I thought she was the reason why when you kissed me you decided not to see me again. I met Ronald at her house and he persisted in paying me attentions. You know what happened at the Carib the night I introduced you to Ronald. Dixie seemed to have upset you much. Oh I was so mad. When you danced with me you were in another world."

"That's why when I introduced you to Ronald I accepted his proposal. He proposed to me several times before and I had refused. He told me the same night about the Delaine case and asked me not to be rash in accepting. He must have had some suspicions about us. The next morning I wrote telling him that I didn't care about his past. And honestly, I would have accepted him then if he was the worst criminal. All I wanted was to be away from you."

A few days ago he told me you went into his surgery shortly after he had received my letter and wanted to eat his head off. If he had told me the same day I would have known that you...Oh perhaps it's too late."

She took a deep breath.

"This picnic was Ronald's idea. I think now he knows what he wanted to know."

As they approached the beach they saw the others in a distance. As they got nearer Ronald waved first, then Dixie, but when they reached the beach it was deserted.

A familiar shrug of David's shoulder gave Maizie the assurance she wanted.

"Seems as if our friends have left us," she said.

"So it seems," David said *"perhaps they meant goodbye, when they waved."*

The tide was receding leaving wavy rivulets in the sand. Here and there patches of white shell glimmered on the beach as if mutually aware of the water's nakedness, they both looked towards the green expanse of courida trees, so stalwartly guarding their country from the ravage of the sea.

David's head turned slowly and he looked into two big questioning brown eyes.

"Darling," he said *"my darling"*.

In his voice there was the assurance that the red light had changed.

THE CITIES

by Ian Carew

I have been to the cities,
The old cities,
Rome, Paris, Vienna,
London. Brussels, Amsterdam,
And indestructible, fragile man
I have seen
Living the flash bulb filament span
Of life
Amidst convex and vertical stones
And old monuments...
The old cities,
Where age is worshipped
And age is the worshipper...
The age bound cities,
The fog bound cities,
The stone bound cities,
The twilight bound cities,
Where age is worshipped
And age is the worshipper.
And across the Atlantic seas
I have been to the new cities,
Epilogues of the old,
The light bound cities,
The steel bound cities,
The sky bound cities,
The stone bound cities,
Where mirrored spectre of the past
Is vista of the future,
And the brooding of the old cities
Appeared again,
The mirrored spectre of age was there again.
I have gone in my searching
To the cities,
The old cities,
Warsaw, Prague,

Athens, Lisbon,
And to the new cities
Across the Atlantic seas,
Washington, New York,
Chicago, Los Angeles...
Radar-pronged antennae of my searching
Groped everywhere...
The old cities...
The new cities...
But the faces were the same.
In snow, bleak rain,
Fog and miraculous sunshine.
I have searched
I have searched
I have searched,
But the face of the cities,
The old cities,
And the new cities
Across the Atlantic seas
Were the same.

Sandbach Parker's New Building



JAMAICA IN THE NOVEL

by Lilian Dewar

A novelist has other functions than the provision of entertainment. All art has a social function, in that it widens and deepens our consciousness of ourselves, our awareness of our environment, and in doing so helps us to make more and more appropriate responses to the world about us. The artist paints a night scene at the Bourda Market: the huckster wrapped up and asleep, the fruit laid out on sugar-bags, the carbide-lamp. At once the scene gains social significance. A new relationship now springs up between the huckster and ourselves, our consciousness has been directed along a new channel; ever after our response to the huckster will be conditioned by our emotional response to the painting. The everyday scene has been held up for our admiration, it has gained social sanction, a social sanction that life in the West Indies with its imported literature, imported films, imported broadcasts, but rarely receives.

Art is thus one of the most powerful influences controlling the social behaviour of man, and since the artist is the first to react to changes in the cultural pattern, it is he who can save us from making the old response to an entirely new set of conditions; it is the artist who can carry us forward, and save us from looking back to Africa, India, China, to justify ourselves, a looking back which seems like infantile regression, and is as barren. The artist can give us that sense of community, of shared experience, which is what we hope to find in Africa, India, China.

Since reading, of whatever quality, is a far more widespread activity than any of the other art forms except the cinema, it is largely through our reading that we are intellectually conscious of ourselves. It is part of the novelist's business to make us more conscious of the cultural pattern, not in the flat, as the sociologist would do, but as the various elements in it act and react on one another. A novel has not achieved much if it has not shown us the reaction of individuals to the accepted attitudes of a society. In doing this, it of course holds

up certain attitudes, and says in effect: "*These are your attitudes, these the aims of your society, these your ideals, this is how you feel.*"

Now since the writer can widen the area of our consciousness, and make us intellectually and emotionally conscious of ourselves, and since it is a prerequisite of planned social change to know not only what we feel, but why we feel it, not only what we want, but why we want it, the attitudes and assumptions of writers who hold us up for inspection must be subject to careful scrutiny.

De Lisser's novel, *The White Witch*, was published in 1929 — the date is important from the point of view both of history and of literature. At that time in the Caribbean what happened in Jamaica was hardly anybody else's business. Social problems had not been investigated, therefore they did not exist. Social forces could not have been at a standstill, but the emancipation, though nearly a hundred years old could still be looked back to with satisfaction as the acme of British achievement. There is, of course, much virtue in looking back — except when indulged in because there is nothing to look forward to: then perhaps we run into the danger of being turned into pillars of salt.

However, de Lisser chose the period just before the emancipation. His theme may with kindness be summed up as the spiritual perils of a free white man (Rutherford) in a slave society. He is an Englishman, a future plantation owner, who has come out to the West Indies as a book-keeper in order to learn the ropes, and Jamaica is seen through his eyes. He stays about three months, when he leaves he is asked: "*Do you think you will ever come back to the West Indies?*" "*Never*", was the reply.

We cannot blame him, except in so far as he had expected in his youthful ardour to find strange adventures in Jamaica. He finds Jamaica "*a strange land of slavery and passion, beauty and mystery.*" The perfunctory treatment that de Lisser gives to the land itself is the same he accords the society; they are both backgrounds to a lurid story. Neither the land nor the society are to be lived in: that is the basic attitude, one which we who live in the West Indies cannot adopt, if only in the interests of self preservation. The land has all the hard

brilliance of a tourist postcard, the society is there to provide the source of "*strange adventures.*" It consists of the whites on the estate, the most important being the witch, Annie Palmer, the owner of Rosehall. There are the estate slaves, who are restless because they have heard that freedom is on the way. Beyond the estate in Montego Bay there is a merchant community, shadowy in the extreme, and a community of free Negroes.

Most of the passion, beauty and mystery are provided by Mrs. Palmer, not by Jamaica. The passion is for Rutherford, the mystery the deaths of her three husbands, the witchcraft she has learnt in Haiti. Her love for Rutherford is thwarted by Millicent, a free Negro, who is also in love with him. Were it not for this we feel there could be no contact between white and Negro beyond the violence of occasional whippings and illicit sexual relations.

The Negroes are habitually referred to as "*these people*", and we do not see very much of them. But we gather that "*these people have skins as tough as their dispositions,*" and that they are keenly alive to ridicule etc. They are, of course, superstitious, and try to counter Mrs. Palmer's witchcraft by their own obeah practices. But what seems to strike Rutherford most of all is their "*happiness.*" After a whipping they gather to a meal with gusto: "*they could not be really unhappy if they could take life like that*", and his conscience, disturbed by the sight of the whipping, is at once laid at rest. Or again; "*the feel of life was perfect. Something of this must have been felt even by those in bondage, for while he stood and looked about him, he heard a chorus of merry noises, which seemed to come from carefree hearts*". But these "*carefree hearts*" remain an entirely unexplained anatomical phenomenon. The slaves are in fact about to revolt, but that is to be no part of this story, and when revolt does come, it is dismissed in a few lines.

The "*West Indian ethos*" begins to affect Rutherford on his second morning on the plantation, when he "*flung to the winds every shred of prudence...He felt at once inclined to live gaily, riotously, dangerously today, and let the morrow take care of itself.*" But the commentary on white society is supplied mainly by Rider, an unfrocked parson who has succumbed to the spiritual perils that are besieging Rutherford. "*These*

tropics, with their large servile population and small aristocracy of proprietors who lived in a world of the narrowest mental and moral horizons — what a horror they actually were! If they did not become physically the white man's grave, they formed for him as deadly a spiritual sepulchre." This spiritual death is occasioned partly by fear and boredom: "Fear is in the very texture of the mind of all the white people here: fear and boredom, and sometimes disgust. That is why so many of us drink." Rider is shot, and his epitaph: "one...who had become a slave to circumstances, and a derelict in a land where human life and happiness were held so cheap."

An unhealthy and dying society. No wonder Rutherford thought the West Indies not good enough for him. De Lisser has ploughed over barren soil, which has yielded but a barren conclusion. We must suppose that the emancipation released new social forces, and was the tonic which kept the patient alive.

But still unhealthily alive. In fact Miss Bottome wonders: is this "a civilisation coming to birth, or a civilisation crumbling into decay?" *Under the Skin* bears some resemblance to *The White Witch*. The plot is equally lurid. There are two women and a girl all in love with Philip—not that there is anything to be said against that in itself, but that the improbabilities of life can always be accounted for by love — at least in fiction, and especially on a tropical island. And we are given many improbabilities, most improbable of all the subplot wherein a Deputy Principal of a girls' school, seven-eighths white, practises obeah (with the aid of a pupil) and attempts murder (with the aid of a pupil) to get rid of a new Headmistress. But what is this novel if not "*factitious local colourism?*" and how write about Jamaica, where human life is held so cheap, without obeah and without murder?

Again we are shown an outsider's reaction to the accepted attitudes of a Jamaican society. An Englishwoman (Lucy) comes to Jamaica as a Headmistress, and this is the Jamaica she finds. She too falls in love, but with a Jamaican, a coloured doctor (Philip) so she does not reject Jamaica, but decides instead to give "*her clear-skinned white body into the dark stream of the Island's life.*"

However, this Jamaica has been investigated by a Royal Commission and by Simey, and many of the conclusions we are used to are repeated:

"...they're utterly irresponsible, these natives. On the Island the sense of responsibility was weak and infantile, because responsibility had been for so long denied its native people. They have so little of their own on their Island, these dark ones,—only what belongs to other people. No language, no tradition, no religion.... I sometimes wonder what is in their hearts that is their own. 'Yes', Jessica said, in the soft uptilting drawl of the Island, with its hidden depth of questioning, as if a human being had no fixed right, even to his own speech. His sole defence against the cruel prejudice and snobbery of the white race, which had trained him to value what it would not let him share. Even now what are they freed for? To be destitute? To be uneducated? To be sick?"

There is in fact, the need to make emancipation something positive, and not a mere negation of slavery. This Lucy feels she can help to do, for it is not only love that forces her to abandon her own Island and adopt Jamaica. It is the conviction that only the English can release Jamaica from its bondage: in England children won't turn *"to her with vigour and passion for new life...she had been able to give them (Jamaican children) what they needed most, and what only a white woman ...could give them: an innate respect for human beings...If Lucy, who was white... could make each one of them realise that they were of equal value, then all life was open to them, all fear behind them."* The premise so slight, the conclusion so cosmic! Again: *"Without Lucy the younger children would not be real to themselves any more, they would have to try to win toleration by pretending to be like what they didn't understand ...a white teacher who respected them as Lucy had respected them imparted a new magic. They had found themselves at home with life itself."* We do not pretend to understand this magic It may be the old assumption already remarked by Barnes, *"that all backward peoples are automatically improved by contact with the British."* Or it may be that, like Dr. Little before her, Miss Bottome conceives of our salvation as lying in psychological and social accommodation to the English way of life. If we may be allowed to repeat ourselves: *"We see salvation in adjustment to our own environment, historical and geographical, because only through such adjustment can we ever hope to create our own way of life and it is only in accommodation to our own way of life that we can achieve balance,"* and find ourselves at home with life itself.

After all the American Negro, in spite of colour prejudice, does not seem unreal to himself, nor does he have to try to win toleration by pretending to be like what he doesn't understand. He is part of the cultural pattern he lives in, and, far more important, he contributes to it. He is not taking something to which he has not contributed, and to which he cannot contribute. He is within the scheme of values he lives by, or, as Miss Bottome puts it, "*at home with life itself*".

The main preoccupation of the book, as its title implies, is the problem of colour prejudice: "*It makes all the difference on the Island,*' *Elvira said, with tragic intensity*". The whole disproportion of the book lies in this tragic intensity about everything. After all, this is a subject for jokes at the breakfast table, and we suppose even Jamaicans must be able to laugh at themselves occasionally. But there is no humour in Miss Bottome's Jamaica, only "*a house full of laughing servants*" somewhere, those carefree hearts again. She seems incapable of seeing more than one thing at a time, a concentration that has the limitations of stills, and forces us to introduce our own ribaldry, often at moments when we should by rights be feeling most sorry for ourselves. Consider seriously, if you can, Philip's description of the most successful mixed marriage he knows.

The situation as regards colour prejudice has in fact changed somewhat in recent years; skin colour is no longer quite so much of an economic or a social hindrance: certainly it plays little part in determining the elite, either political, intellectual or artistic. But there is always a time lag between social change and our adjustment to it, and colour prejudice will persist socially long after it ceases to function economically, if only for the ease with which it can be applied. In spite of this it is a doubtful question whether, by mature standards, this subject has enough moral and human interest to merit treatment in a full length novel. *Under the Skin* does not dispel a particle of this doubt.

The Jamaica of *New Day* is a Jamaica that has been lived in and loved. To say this is to say, perhaps, all that is important. But critics have pointed out the imagination and power both in language and in conception of the first part, and the comparative failure of the second part. We feel that the

reason for this failure may point to a major failure in West Indian life today.

Reid's theme is the fight for political liberty, and the first part of his book is taken up with the Rebellion of 1865, the immediate cause of which was hunger due to long drought. The Campbells are a near-white family to whom Jamaica is unmistakably home. They own and cultivate the land themselves, they live by its produce, they have been unconsciously assimilated by Jamaica. The second son, David, attends the meetings of the discontented in the neighbouring village of Stony Gap; he himself becomes one of the leaders of the Rebellion, and the whole family identifies itself with the cause of the hungry. Blood is shed, of course, by the people during the Rebellion, and by the Government afterwards. Three of the Campbell family are shot. Then we are shown the family gradually gaining wealth (from plantations) and consequence, until it produces in the fourth generation another leader in Garth Campbell, a leader who has studied law in England, and who comes back to continue the fight for political liberty by organising labour.

But after three generations of preparation Garth Campbell the lawyer is not after all so heroic. We are meant to applaud the refinement, of the methods of achieving political liberty, the rejection of force and bloodshed, the resort to group organisation instead. What we see is that the people and spirit of 1865 have been rejected along with their methods. The Campbells have moved away from the land, they have moved away from the people. David Campbell was one among several who thought they saw what was good for Jamaica, and who were willing to fight for it. Garth starts out on a lone fight, and is later joined by a cousin of his. What has happened to the people of the barracks and of Stony Gap? Did they have no grandsons? The right to political liberty, like any other right, involves duties. What are the Jamaican people themselves going to contribute to political liberty? It seems that they are to contribute their willingness to be led, that the Garth Campbells will give them what is good for them before they even ask for it. In losing sight of the people with whom he set out so buoyantly, Reid has lost sight of social reality.

Reid's dilemma is that of the West Indian writer today. The West Indian middle class has very little of its own that is worth writing about. Its achievement is reckoned in terms of its adjustment to western European civilisation. It is therefore conscious of two standards of value. This results in mental abortion, in a literature of self explanation instead of self discovery. Seymour's picture of West Indian writers writing for each other as audience, is stultifying, and can develop into nothing but a circle within whose ring magicians murmur dark incantations. Without being ungrateful to those who in their very limited leisure make the effort to improve our social being, an effort in itself immensely difficult to make and yet so little rewarded, we may fairly say that not a little of what has been written already partakes of the nature of incantation, individual fantasies without social realism.

The middle classes must re-establish contact with the "*somnolent masses*" from whom they have cut themselves off, those masses who have at least subdued our environment in so far as it has been subdued. They must write for them and about them. Only in this way can they maintain contact with social reality, for in the people, and not in the middle classes lie the new social forces that will shape the future.

NEW DAY

by Martin Carter

Not hands
like mine
these Carib altars knew:
nameless and quite forgotten are the gods;
and mute,
mute and alone,
their silent people spend
a ring of vacant days,
not like more human years,
as aged and brown their rivers flow away.

yes, pressing on my land,
there is an ocean's flood;
it is a muttering sea,

here, right at my feet
my strangled city lies,
my father's city and my mother's heart:
hoarse groaning tongues,
children without love,
mothers without blood,
all cold as dust, nights dim, there is no rest.

ah!
mine was a pattern woven by a slave
dull as a dream encompassed in a tomb.

now still
are the fields
covered by the floods;
and those rivers roll
over altars gone:
naked, naked loins
throbbing deep with life
rich with birth indeed,
rouse, turning to the sun.

and more fierce rain will come again tonight.
new day must clean, have floods not drowned the fields
killing my rice and stirring up my wrath?

AMALIVACA

by A.J. Seymour

A darling of the sun the great canoe
Riding across the unquiet sequined sea
By day and through the blowing velvet night
Charting a path from the slow star ballet.

The startled Essequibo still lay drowned
In its own channel and the sullen waste
Usurper heaved beyond its far commands
When Amalivaca came.

The circling sun had not yet swung his wheel
Leaned still his light out of the eastward sky
The day the fabled spate came to an end
And the mantling flood contracted from the earth.
First King Roraima brought his forehead clear
Towering behind with seaward-looking eyes
And his huge shoulders rising from the waste
Of seething waters steelfaced like a shield
Which slowly sank.

Then Kukenaam

And next Wei-assipu — they caught the sun
And Ayanganna, so splendid in its pride
And many a mountain more, whose name to tell
Would make a hoarse deep music and would beg
The storm for thunder,

And while these islands stood
On ocean-hooded resurrecting land
Amalivaca came.

Men called the place Amalivaca stayed
The Tramen cliff above Imbaimadai
And there he carved upon the mountain side
Strange figures of maids dancing in the sun
Shining above them. These timehri loom
Today above the shrunken river courses
With the dance frozen still within their limbs
As that prime artist conjured them—the virgins
Leaping in reverent rhythms to the sun
Blazing his power upon the patient earth,
Husband of all the earth's fertility.
And with these strange rock signatures he declared
The idiom of his coming, that he would write
Upon men's hearts imperishable poetry.

Behind Amalivaca's eyes dwelt lore
And national legend long forgotten and still
While in his fingers slept a skill of craft
Learnt through the powerful limbs from the calm brain
President, a craft that rifled wildwood
Bark for unguent balm and sooth-sense herbage
And searched the choreography of the heavens

Or aromatic shifts of wind before the Trades
A felled tree he could take and with slow fire
Shape to a hollow instrument of grace
To move with rippling power upon the river.
Rough land, flood-widowed, he engineered it smooth
The snaking paths pulled straight to villages
And threw a circle around the huddling huts
Within whose ring the forest should never stride.
Those broad and coffee-coloured water-roads,
The swiftly tumbling rivers, with a breadth
Beyond the flight of a birdling he decreed
A federation of ways for villages
Throughout the nauseless centuries for link and trust.

(To be continued)

Footnote—

Dear Ann and Joan,

I told you this story of Amalivaca once before when we were sitting around the dining table but later I found myself wondering whether I shouldn't write the story all down and give it to you as a Christmas present. You see, other girls and boys may want to read it too—and perhaps a few grown-ups also—and there is one reason why this story of Amalivaca belongs to all the children in Guiana and to children living in other places too. The men who study these matters and who have written great heavy, brown-covered books with gold lettering on them, tell us that the name Amalivaca is found sprinkled all over the Caribbean sea, an area of thousands of square miles. It keeps cropping up in the legends of the Caribs that a mother tells her children while the sun is going down to put them to sleep, and now and then she would add, "*Now dear, go to sleep and Amalivaca will watch over you.*"

So perhaps Amalivaca did exist long long ago and we're taking scraps of stories that the Caribs have left, perhaps some in Antigua and some in Belize and knitting the fragments together. This is just another piece of unrecorded history that the Amerindians have given to us here in Guiana It has come down by word of mouth and been mingled with so many children's dreams.

—A.J.S.

SAM CHASE AS AN EDUCATIONIST

Some time during 1950 it was reported that Sam Chase had given our local public 25 years of mirthful service. Now I do not know much about Sam though after seeing a few of his productions and having met him on a few occasions, I have some idea of the nature of the man. To my way of thinking however, it is just as well that I cannot give a reader — who may perhaps have been attracted by the title, and will I hope not be disappointed by the contents—the facts of the man's upbringing, date of birth parentage, etc. I cannot even recall the first time I heard of Sam Chase but I can remember distinctly the first show I saw.

It is noteworthy, and I believe authentic, that Sam was at School with the present Public Information Officer, and from what I gather, was quite keen, alert and bright. Whether he acted in the little school plays, or used to make monkey motions of the teacher, or precisely what inspired his developing into a sort of Public Entertainment Officer, is unknown to me; but such he is: and his speech, script writing, wit, puns and so forth are indicative of a fair basic education and a penetrating understanding and insight of the local community.

Now seeing that I am neither equipped to tell you the facts about Sam Chase, nor to give you a literary or dramatic criticism of his productions, I am afraid that, having lured you on thus far I can only give you a few impressions that have been collected after having seen nearly a score of his sketches.

I saw first his '**Matron Broomes**' and '**Men of Several Worlds**'. I considered the show to be immensely amusing but tedious because of the long pauses; the inevitable encores of mediocre singing and calypsos; and the unschooled attitude of the audience. Sam needed a good producer and a cooperative audience. His productions have improved, they now start more or less punctually, the fluorescent lights do not have to be fixed after the first act, the playwright now

incorporates the removal of stage property with some act such as a levy by the Police; and you get away very well before midnight. With a more understanding audience, everyone would enjoy the show and sequences would follow more smoothly.

The evolution of his plays over a short period too is quite remarkable and while it has always been said that you can listen to calypsos or Sam's scrip and not detect anything lewd—depending on the level of your mind, his innuendo has apparently, become far more subtle and clever as it generally eludes me! I think that at his shows some of the local calypsos, — I mean of course *Shantos*, pardon me! — are not yet wholly fit for gentle ears, but Sam does not resort to the obscene as a secure of amusement but relies on ridicule and lampooning of the interesting public happenings of which everyone has heard something.

It is here to my mind that his strength lies in captivating an audience. The basis of his humour is its lack of finish; he assails the revered political and governmental bosses and the pit loves it; and not only the pit! It points perhaps to an undesirable element in colonial life, that of dragging down "*the great*", if not in actual fact at least on the stage. They revel in the fact that "*the Mare*" was beaten up in Sam's version of the Municipal Bonds' Issue or that the Doctor who leaves his patients for a tennis engagement gets a severe thrashing on the stage! A study of Shakespearean and Elizabethan drama would show evident similarities in the way he caters for the vulgar desire and yet tries to get over an idea. Some may even go so far as to say that Sam Chase's drama is at the Elizabethan stage of development.

It is not however just merely the lampooning of those whose downfall cannot otherwise be obtained, that interests him, because he has of late resorted to drawing morals verbally from the proceedings. He would implore his audience "*to laugh and stop*", to have their fun and then listen to the serious part. Thus he moves perceptibly from hilarity to morality, thus he cautions the women to beware of back talking and slack living, thus he admonishes the obeah addicts, severely, cruelly, but with good intent. He pokes fun at the great or the small—provided they have attracted public attention. He

deplores the housing conditions; he eulogises the merits of skinfish; he castigates the administration for the soft drinks tax and explains that the "*Dictator of Finants*" was decorated with K. I. L. D. E. P. O. O. R., not because of what it spells, but because he keeps increasing Levies and Licences and Deprives Even Poor Orphans Of Riches. In '**Gentlemen the King**' he is a racist, a moralist in '**the Dreamer and the Jar**', in '**The Ruler and the Boo Boo Man**' a satirist, in '**Guardroom Jitters**' a typical blustering but obsequious policeman,—Corporal Sargeant Blight, an idealist in the '**Mare and the Bonds**' and an excellent parodist in '**the Collapsible Bridegroom**'. He is a versatile comedian. His feminine portrayals in his Lizzie Series, Matron Broomes. Tiny Davis, the Collapsible Bridegroom, etc. were completely satisfying to both sexes of the audience, and his voice control and modulation and emotional depiction would gladden the heart of any ventriloquist. What if his remarks are seditious or even slanderous, he has been careful to warn his audience that names, appearance and portrayals "*have not even the remotest connection with people who have ever lived, wished they were alive, or would like to live.*"

His advertisements are explicit, true they are part of his dialogue, but they never fail to amuse, and what better advertisement to the impressionable mind is there than amusing instructive information. The expression of admiration for another actor's dress evokes the boisterous comment that the material came from Lall's Camp Street Bazaar while she loudly declaims the direction and latest price quotations; or that it was an old piece of material which (loudly) "*was washed with Zex Soap which makes white clothes whiter and coloured clothes brighter*". He is a good publicity agent as he has his audience assured. They laugh with him, but listen to him, and he reaches a level of popular understanding that perhaps cannot be otherwise scratched.

Yes, there are many weaknesses in his productions still, but I have noticed that during the short period I have attended his shows, that apart from getting a more docile audience in the more austere surroundings of the Empire Cinema, the levels of the audience like the admission fee has been raised. There have been groups of people filtering in from the

most squeamish cliques of society, and there have been those who go not only for ribald jests—the intelligentsia, educationists; and I venture to suggest to you, patient reader, that Sam Chase too, like Pepys, in his own particular way, is an Educationist.

—W.H.L.A.

SEA BIRD

by A.N. Forde

Scrawling a signature across
The map of the sky you fly
With the grace
Of a warm memory
Touched with the scalpel of time past.

In the mosaic of the clouds
At sunset you fold proud
Wings to lie
Upon the palpitation of the waves

Leaving behind a tender trace
Of your lightness on the sand
For the careless sea to trod
On and erase.

Or in powered dives
With taut limpness down
The shafts of air your limbs
Sink in a sharp plunge
To the rocky ground.

Or rising from the catacombs
In an equipoise of wonderful
Propulsion your arms
Climb the tiers of the air
With an upward roll.

Your nest left huddled
In the ear of a rock
Mid the blast and wrack
Of fretful billows
Clamouring to be heard
You ride into the silence of the sky.

And far below you
As you soar
I envy your freedom
From the tug of time
Your glory
In the welfare of the air.

ALIEN IN GUIANA

The 'plane lost height slowly. She peered out of the window, seeing the neat fields, so many different shades of green and some gold, the earth was deeply marked in rectangular lines, and she thought "*how neat and pretty*". But she couldn't see both sides of the picture. On the other was water, a whole ocean to be exact, and here the sea-surface moved lazily, sluggishly, an unattractive dun brown with a line of lighter brown resting uneasily on the thick water.

She was glad to be at rest even in the strange room, whilst outside the one-o'clock sun cast a short shadow and the immense trees created an illusion of cool shade. The guide book had said it would always be cool, but then guide books were sometimes, like Eve's apple—the pretty-pretty covers enclosed black and white print which gave nothing away.

She was growing more critical as weariness left her, and now she looked about, measuring and comparing everything she had experienced. The food, strange but palatable. The houses, like shoe boxes on stilts —how tiresome to climb all those steps, and the floor unpolished, the stairs uncarpeted.

She began to feel angry — she had gone out to do some necessary shopping and everything was so expensive, the quality was so poor. She remembered some of the things said to her : "*A beautiful city; marvellous entertainment; wonderful weather; a fertile land*". Viciously, she swore. She hated the flat small crowded living space, she felt choked and restrained. The beauty of the flowering trees, the blazing colour, the call of the birds, the cooling rain at night, nothing soothed her.

The sharp rise and fall of the foreign voices, the dust rising in clouds prickling her face and arms, meshing her hair with particles of fodder from the square where the animals fed caused her to wheel suddenly in the road, thrusting a woman aside. She walked quickly and with purpose to the office of the Airways, and emerged with a smile—she was going home tomorrow

—A. M. L.

Books and Places

THE POETRY OF TENNYSON

Nor, is the Victorian Age or its chief poetic voice however much abused, in any danger of being forgotten. The fame of the great Victorians has not, making allowances for changes and differences in taste and the shifting of perspective, perceptibly diminished. The position is, in fact, rather an amusing one. We are Noah's naughty sons who, having stripped the garments of pretence and outward conformity from an age which loved to clothe itself in shams, now subject its imperfect body to a scrutiny which it would have found embarrassing and above all else eminently distasteful. We are, I fancy, more destructively critical of the Victorian than of any other age in English history. Their once admired Queen is the subject of indelicate gibes; their morality the target of attacks which vary from the most imperceptible of sneers to invective as virulent as the twentieth century imagination can make it; their statesmanship (or their lack of it) and their economic theories are blamed for many of our present-day ills and their literature has been condemned as formless, insincere, evasive of the deeper issues of life, lacking in psychological insight, and as giving a completely false picture of the relationship of the sexes to each other.

Tennyson, who stands forth in some modern minds as the poetic exemplar of all that was smug and artificial in his age and who was the acclaimed laureate for the overwhelming majority of his contemporaries, has not escaped the onslaught of tribes of hostile critics. He was certainly, judging by worldly standards, a very successful poet, graduating from his birth place in a country parsonage to the peerage in which he died, respected and respectable, and thereby qualifying for burial in Westminster Abbey. Some critics seem to have found the odour of respectability generated by these surroundings a little nauseating and more than a little suspicious. What they have had to say may undoubtedly be true, much of it, perhaps, is only too well justified. But, nevertheless, while the critical and, as so often with the critical, the destructive

eye perceives nine-tenths of the truth, seeing faults by the score and dragging them into the glare of broad daylight or pushing them under the microscope of analytical observation and ruthlessly applying the scalpels of critical dissection, yet it is, after all, the eye of love which, when it is equally discerning, alone sees the remaining tenth and fills in the canvas which the ingenuities of captious criticism may have left a blank.

—MALCOLM DELPH

THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

The foreign student — especially if he comes from a little known country, (and more especially if it is an intriguing country which some place in Africa, some confuse with New Guinea and others insist on calling Honduras or Jamaica) — such a student is really in the position of a plenipotentiary in that the fullness of his powers of describing, selling or disparaging the merits of his country is limited only by his conscience. He is frequently called upon by the YMCA's and YWCA's, International organisations such as Rotary, Kiwanis and Lions Clubs, Church Groups, Political Parties, Women's Organisations and so forth, to talk to them, dine with them and in other ways to entertain them. His time is rarely his own — more so if he proves to be friendly and a good talker — and apart from the work of the sundry committees on which he is put, he has to maintain a high scholastic level of work or else he would be thrown out. The University not only charges higher fees for students who are not residents of the state in which it is established, but will tolerate dead-wood only from the State itself, so that the foreign student trying to learn a lot about people and his work, is very hard put to it.

Of the 27 Universities which I had the pleasure to visit in the United States the one I know best is the University of Wisconsin. Though by no means the largest American University, Wisconsin had a student enrolment of over 21,000 in 1948. Such a University which has one large rambling compound, more commonly known as a campus, is in itself a city, for it has all the services which are essential for the modern living of a civic community today. The University has its police and fire brigade, bus service, road maintenance service, pure water supply system, telephone system with a student directory about four times the size of the B.G. telephone directory, daily newspaper, bank, hospital, housing scheme — apart from student dormitories, housing and employment bureau, observatory and weather bureau, radio station which is incidentally the first established in the

United States, — “*the oldest station in the nation*”, bakery, restaurants, cooperative student book-and-clothing stores; chapel and churches, library, cinema and theatre as well as YMCA and YWCA. Then, of course, they possess their own orchestra, military band and, for students only — tennis courts, baseball fields, football stadium with a seating capacity of 45,000, basketball indoor stadium for 15,000 and an athletic gymnasium. Also for the students’ pleasure, entertainment, and education in the extra-curricular field, there are available either free or at nominal charges numerous opportunities such as concerts, plays and lectures featuring world famous artistes, dances, the cinema, intervarsity football, baseball, basketball, skiing, boating, folk dancing, hiking, photography and crafts of various descriptions. These things though University-sponsored are mostly arranged by interested students with faculty supervision.

When I once expressed my surprise at finding such an autonomous and almost completely independent community, I do recall the following rejoinder: “*Yeh, we try to have everything here, we even have a communist party and a president!*” I suppose that when an institution sets out to prepare students for every phase of activity in life, it must have facilities for such training and as the acquiring of such facilities is subject only to a financial limitation in the final analysis, the American University is at an obvious advantage.

— W. H. L. ALLSOPP

PALESTINE

It is a strange experience to visit a place that you know already from books. In reading, you are inclined — or at least I am myself — to forget or disregard the commonplace details of ordinary life, and think only of the “*heart of the matter*”. So it came as something of a shock to me when I was in Palestine seven years ago, to meet on every side places and names that I had known from childhood, mixed up with the ordinary trivialities of modern day-to-day life. A signpost saying: ‘Nazareth 4 miles’, or a bus announcing its destination as ‘Jerusalem’: these things seemed incongruous, even a disillusion, as they reduced to the scale of everyday reality the pictures my mind had formed of the Holy Land. Then there was Gaza — where Sampson pulled down the temple of the Philistines; but now Gaza to me is also a railway station, where we had to leave the train for a quick meal, which was always an obscure mixture known as Gaza stew.

At Jezreel there was a higgledy-piggledy Arab village, with houses built of mud bricks; while over the valley, beyond the road to the Jordan, lay two neatly-designed Jewish settlements, well kept and evidently flourishing. The inhabitants themselves were as much in contrast as their homes; the Arab shepherds and farmers looked much as the shepherds who “*watched their flocks by night*” must have looked nearly two thousand years ago — pastoral, primitive, unchanging: but the Jews appeared as a new type of farmer, almost a contradiction in terms — a modern peasantry, whose younger members tilled the fields by day, and changed into shorts for tennis in the evening.

— C. M. BERNARD

JAMES JOYCE'S DUBLIN

Joyce has put it very clearly: *"I will try to express myself in some mode of life or art as freely as I can, as wholly as I can, using for my defence the only arms I allow myself to use, silence, exile and cunning."*

"I do not fear to be alone, or to be spurned for another, or to leave whatever I have to leave." Joyce was very young in years when he wrote that. Being young he was an idealist. Listen to this description of a young student emerging after sheltering from rain on the steps of the National Library:

"Stephen walked on alone and out into the quiet of Kildare Street opposite Naples hotel; he stood to wait, patient again. The name of the hotel, a colourless polished wood, and its colourless front stung him like a glance of polite disdain. He stared angrily back at the softly lit drawing room of the hotel in which he imagined the sleek lives of the patricians of Ireland housed in calm. They thought of army commissions and land agents; peasants greeted them along the roads in the country; they knew the names of certain French dishes and gave orders in high pitched provincial voices which pierced through their skin-tight accents.

How could he hit their conscience or how cast his shadow over the imaginations of their daughters, before their squires begat upon them, that they might breed a race less ignoble than their own? And under the deepened dusk he felt the thoughts and desires of the race to which he belonged flitting like bats across the dark country lanes, under trees by the edges of streams and near the pool mottled logs."

Could a purpose be more vast — more difficult than to inspire a people to beget a race less ignoble than their own?

—F. COUNIHAN

TOURIST

by Owen Campbell

By the slow moon you saw
The living sea and the jewels,
Bright on each wave in the light,
Hung soft in the breathing night.

In the still air the hills
And the sloping capes are silent.
Only the sea moves, wishing
In wind of the waves' washing.

Your ship slid softly in,
And was bright in the day before
It stood still in the quiet
Pool of images it brought.

Visitor to islands.
Feel depth of the sky in your heart,
Peer at the hills huddled there,
Find peace in the moonlit air;

For here is no Korea
Where thunder is the softest word,
Where daylight meets casualty
And the blown smoke heartlessly.

Here is the dance of light
On the speaking sea, and meaning
In the calm of craft that lie
With tall masts searching the sky.

"La bouche garde le silence
Pour écouter parler le cour;"
And the jewels by moonlight
Flash swiftly on in the night.

NORETTA

by Owen Campbell

Remembering the song of the coins in the palm of her hand,
Noretta sits waiting
In her wreck of a room
Near the half-broken door
In the night.

The stare of the stars from the solid grey sky is as still
And as silent as she;
And the tear in her heart
Glistens wet at her eyes
In the light.

From the famished wick and the perishing life of the lamp,
Shame grew her quantity
Of tears; and she would weep
Till from the dark she hears
"Noretta".

In the hush of the night the answers and the creaking door
Is tales of the tear dried
For the task shameless now,
And the unfaithful coin
That dupes her.

The nervous hand with the song of the coin turned to howling
As it falls in exchange
For the coveted meal
When her guilt is complete,
Is memory.

The Meaning Changes...
THE WEST INDIAN

by A J. Seymour

Poised as we are on the verge of nationhood, it is paradoxically a creative impulse that leads the people of the West Indies to dwell upon the recipes for nationhood prepared by social theorists and thinkers of the past. The West Indies are moving with dramatic swiftness from the community conditions common to the Ancient World in which a master race under a King ruled over conquered and subject peoples, a condition described in the histories of Assyria and Persia and in the annals of Rome, and we are approaching that state of social organization in which the will of the majority is the sole, active and energising principle. The paradox lies in the fact that the European mind while applauding the part that nationalism has played in knitting together the elements of a society stands dismayed before the intolerance, the exclusiveness and even hostility that are the products of the later stages of nationalism, so that the hope of West Indian community and nationhood belongs to a climate of opinion that has fallen out of fashion in Europe. But old-fashioned or not, this process of becoming a nation is at work in the Caribbean and we will learn if we look, though only briefly, at one or two statements of national theory.

Herodotus sought blood, language, religion and temperament as the four criteria of nationality, although Renan two thousand years later rejected these, claiming that a nation is a fusion of peoples and that nationality is derived from two roots, common memories especially those of failure and defeat and a common desire to maintain a common way of life.

Examining these statements, Harold Stannard has suggested that the inward impulse of nationalism tends to find an external home in an individual — a Henry VIII, a Louis XIV, a Washington — and he has added another statement to the effect that early European history displays this struggle for national sentiment mixed with struggles for religious beliefs

whereas in the later pages of that history economic motives begin to emerge. So we find the European struggle against Napoleonic domination taking place in a world into which the Industrial Revolution was introducing new issues.

The swift switch that is necessary to take us from the metropolitan governments to the outfield of colonial administration is best accomplished along these new economic forces introduced by the Industrial Revolution and Eric Williams of Trinidad has clearly demonstrated how these forces cooperated with humanitarian impulses to free half a million of slaves in the British Caribbean in the first third of the 19th Century

Our short account of the West Indian character properly begins with the words written from Trinidad in 1846 by a Governor to Colonial Office. The writer is Lord Harris and the words are *"A race has been freed but a society has not been formed."* These words have attracted the attention of commentator after commentator as being a summary of the problem which confronted the freed populations in all the West Indian colonies, suddenly finding themselves the property of no-man and set to live in an environment, made hostile by the instruments of political power in the hands of their former masters. It does seem from the records that apart from the Church, once the British Parliament had broken the chains of slavery, all public sentiment evaporated and economic forces held their sway.

I have before me a few accounts of the West Indian social scene in the years immediately after emancipation and whether the writer is U. D. M. Thorpe, writing of Barbados, or Hugh Paget writing of the Free Village System in Jamaica, or Cecil Clementi or A. R. F. Webber referring to the sullen resentment of the planters in Guiana, the pattern is clear that in these years the planters in the W.I. colonies organised a campaign against freed labour. Barbados and Jamaica in 1823 had openly defied the British Parliament resolutions for improving the conditions of the slaves and both Thorpe and Paget provide numerous instances of the wholesale ejection of the freed labourers from their former homes on estates as the planters proceeded *"from prejudice or a mistaken idea of their own interests to wreck the policy which had been imposed upon*

them by the force of public opinion in Great Britain." The words are Page's and apply to Jamaica, but Thorpe records that *"as the Barbados estate manager wanted labour at no cost or the lowest possible cost to the estate...for the rent of a cottage, every individual member of a family group, including little children capable of labour, was required to pay his or her own quota of dues in service on the estate."* In Guiana, Webber records that a compulsory labour law passed as early as 1838 by the legislature was promptly disallowed by Her Majesty.

It might be possible to summarise the reaction of the Colonial Office by two extracts, one by Lord Olivier and one by the Duke of Buckingham, Olivier writes *"In mixed communities in which there is a small dominant property-owning or employing class and a large politically uninformed labouring population, the considered principle of British policy founded upon experience is that the Crown must reserve the power to act as Trustee for the interests of that less advanced majority, and that the official view of policy is more likely to protect their interests."*

This principle was at the back of his mind when in 1868 in a circular despatch to the W.I. Governments, the Duke of Buckingham, Secretary of State for the colonies, outlined the true political situation that had arisen in these colonies. The despatch pointed out that the W.I. Planter Assemblies elected by a very limited number of the colonists performed their office of Legislation under no real or effective responsibility; since the population at large consisting of uneducated Negroes neither had nor could have any political powers and were incapable of contributing to the formation of any intelligent public opinion. A historian of Jamaica, Gardner, records the end of representative institution in Jamaica in 1866 after an existence of 202 years with the promise that when education had raised the mass of the people to a higher standard, when all prejudices and animosities had been forgotten, then but not till then, would representative institutions be advantageously restored.

In Barbados and in Guiana the pattern of Crown Colony Government was not imposed during this century and Clementi in his prologue to his constitutional history of British Guiana displays partiality rather than judgment when he claims that an *"oligarchy of sugar-planters came to be a Negro demagogy...and an autocratic executive could no longer rule."*

Since the Duke of Buckingham wrote those words in 1888 we have come a long way and the very word West Indian has changed its meaning — a change which bears some relation to the grant of political power to the classes and masses and to the overall advance of education in the W.I. communities.

In the old days the West Indian interest stood for the English Plantation owner who owned many slaves and had colossal wealth. In 1698 the West Indies were sending back annually to England about 300 children to be educated, the difference being according to Davenant, that the fathers went out poor and the children came back rich. In *Capitalism and Slavery* Eric Williams has a chapter describing the wealth acquired by sugar planters resident in England, the Beckfords, the Hibberts, the Longs, the Gladstones, the Codringtons and the Warners, and he tells us of a very popular play in 1771 '**The West Indian**' where the reception was being prepared for a planter coming to England on the scale we associate with the coming of Princess Alice. In the play one of the characters soliloquises "*He's very rich...They say he has enough rum and sugar belonging to him to make all the water in the Thames into punch.*" I think too that we all know the story recorded in Ragatz of King George III on a visit to Weymouth with Pitt, coming upon an imposing equipage, complete with outriders decked in livery. The King turned and asked what might the owner be, and when he heard it was a wealthy Jamaican, His Majesty was displeased and said "*Sugar? Sugar eh? All that sugar! How are the duties, eh Pitt, how are the duties?*"

In the 18th Century the West Indian interest in England was a powerful combine of the English mercantile community and the absentee proprietors of the W.I. plantations who lorded it in England. They bought pocket boroughs and so got into Parliament and until American Independence struck the first great blows at monopoly and the Lancashire cotton interest appeared with the slogan of *laissez faire*, the West India interest exerted a powerful influence upon English politics.

But perhaps we are anticipating. The word West Indian, as we say, attached first in the English language, to the forceful and resourceful Englishmen who came into this area, developed

their fortunes and returned to England as the centre of arts and pleasure where they could buy large estates and pass sensibly or insensibly into the landed aristocracy. Thereafter they were West Indian in name only and to their neighbours as the term explained the source of their wealth, but they hardly ever again travelled south across the Tropic of Cancer. That they left to their younger sons (the elder being engaged on learning the arts of peace proper to a landed aristocrat) who paid periodic visits to the West Indies to oversee the managers and who would even settle there, intermingle their bloods with that of the basic population and become creoles—that is if the circumstances and the climate conspired to that end.

As late as 1831 this exodus of younger sons was still taking place if we trust the authenticity of H. G. de Lissers's novel *The White Witch of Rosehall* which tells the story of Robert Rutherford the heir to a Barbados sugar plantation who is sent to Jamaica as an overseer-book-keeper in order to learn the planter business from the bottom up. So we may note that from the year, 1776 onwards, when the rich West Indian families lording it in England in absentee splendour began to lose their grip upon English trade, there is a wavering identification of the term West Indian with the planters in residence in the area where the younger sons, the poorer owners and the managers had gradually become creoles and were in effective possession of W.I. sugar estates.

It is important to remember that these would be members of the English middle class but removed from contact with their people at home in England and in the words of Henry Nelson Coleridge, cousin of the first Anglican Bishop of Barbados, "*regarding the colonies as a temporary lodging place where they must sojourn in sugar and molasses till their mortgages will let them live elsewhere*", while they remained in the W.I. they were intent on making money for a comfortable retirement in England, and not at all concerned with building a sense of community values in the British Caribbean. After the days of the Triangular Trade had died, it is this second type of "*West Indian*" that we have to remember when we read of the sullen and at times implacable opposition to the British Government's measures now known to be half-humanitarian, half-economic

for making better the lot of the slaves. This is the West Indian who if he knew the words would endorse Shylock's bitter rejoinder "*You take my life when you do take the means whereby I live*". The "*West Indians*" are defying England. But it is one of the successful applications of the economic interpretation of history that the defiance was in vain, that emancipation ordered from England broke the old social order while the resentment and negligence of the planters who dominated the political assemblies in the West Indies ensured that a new social order was not supplied in its place.

In his short *History of the British West Indies*, H. V. Wiseman had provided a summary as useful as any, of the trend in the economic and social conditions in the 19th century. Because our purpose stresses the human relationships, we must note the poverty into which the area sinks, the gradual subtraction of political power from the planter assemblies and the substitution of Crown Colony government in order to protect the interests of the new subjects of the realm, the search for labour forces in other continents to replace the working power withheld by the emancipated people of African descent, the gradual assimilation of racial stocks, the growth in education under the initial stimulus of the churches, the failure of the mulatto and coloured people to form an effective middle class. The centre of gravity and the core of meaning which had shifted from the British Isles to the Caribbean began then to adjust further in order to take in the half million slaves and the considerable minority of coloured peoples who knock at the gates of franchise.

The first half of the 20th Century has witnessed the firm identification of the meaning of the word West Indian with the descendants of the slaves in the British Caribbean. When we say "*W.I.*" today, we think principally of the cricket team just returned from a triumphant tour of the playing fields of England, a team in which Ramadhin and Valentine with their respective Indian and African origins are merely outstanding types of the interwoven racial strands. Or we think of the team of politicians who pleaded the cause of the W.I. sugar interest against the unsympathetic ears of the British Ministry of Food—a team where names like Adams, Gomes, Edun, Raatgever with their African, Portuguese, Indian and Dutch

origins and associations measure the distance travelled since Wm. E. Gladstone made his maiden speech in May 1833 in defence of slavery on the family estates in Guiana.

I think it is perhaps the whirligig of time bringing in its revenges when we note the coincidence of Sir Pelham Warner's (of the important and historical West Indian family of Warners) being the President of the M.C.C. in 1950 when the W.I. defeated England in the Tests. But it is certainly indicative of the great change in meaning of the term "W.I." when we consider the composition of that team and realise the centuries of endeavour and suffering necessary to bring about that change.

May we say that for us Renan is right as the W.I. approach to nationhood lies through a fusion of peoples with common memories especially those of failure and defeat and with a common desire to maintain a common way of life.

Travelogues

THE SYMPHONY OF MAZARUNI

by Sheik M. Sadeek

In the days of great gold and diamond 'shouts' in the jungles of British Guiana, the only means of travelling to these remote, and then untrodden areas of our vast and wealthy hinterland, was a unique experience. For, there was no roadway, no airline, and the forest then, impressed us as impenetrable.

Not quite all of us, I should say; for there were pork-knockers who were nicknamed, because of their heroic deeds, undaunted and carefree dispositions: "*Sultan-of-Turkey*", "*Tengar*", "*Skybar*", "*Ocean Shark*" and so on.

I shall endeavour to give a vivid description of my initial journey from Georgetown, the capital of this beautiful country, to Apaiqua, the stop before the terminus Isseneru, hundreds of miles up the wealthy Mazaruni, a tributary of the giant Essequibo, the most dangerous of Guiana's waterways.

Stabroek Market's clock showed some minutes after six; when, beyond the boiling wake of water the City began dwindling. Flanking the steamer on her left until around ten o'clock was the irregular growth of grey-green courida trees, that fringe Guiana's coastlands. On her left muddy water lapped, and further and yet further, Atlantic miles capped by white crests stretched until they were lost in the misty blue of the horizon.

I knew not at what time we had started up the River Essequibo. Everything seemed so muddled. But about eleven o'clock, and about an hour after we had left Parika stelling, I found myself looking at the island that has a page in Guiana's colourful history: the historical Fort Island, with the remains of the old Dutch Fort Kyk-Over-Al; a green fringe of wild cocoa trees in bloom on which numerous iguanas were basking in tropical sunshine.

It was around three, when a shout went with the first sight of the flat mining town of Bartica lying like a stranded man at the water's edge; at the junction of two great rivers; at the foot of a green hill.

We did not get passage up the River Mazaruni until the Friday, and during that time we did what little shopping we had to do.

It was far from daybreak when we left Bartica. On a dark beach a dim lantern showed me a seat, and carefully I settled myself. Then, distinctly a gruff voice shouted:

"You heard what the Cap'n says? Cap'n says 'In boat?' And you know who is it speaking, the Sultan-of-Turkey!!"

And the motors of that oval-bottom bateau, with its gunwale not more than eight or ten inches from the water, grumbled. And the powerful propellers tumbled, leaving a boiling wake of phosphorescence in the darkness as the leaden vessel slid against the black ebb that blurred the distant lights of Bartica.

Once more darkness was broken by the shining ball that slowly emerged from beyond the forest boughs. For the very first time I was really breathing the sweet, fresh air of our jungle — a jungle no less cunning; no less intriguing; no less alluring than Edgar Rice Burroughs' captivating **'Edens of Africa'**.

Slowly, as though with the sun, the boat began to take on life; until a gaiety so rare, so strangely hilarious, filled the atmosphere.

Immediately, while mooring to camp that evening about 5.30, the men like wild monkeys, sprang ashore with their hammocks in their hands in desperate efforts to secure tie-places. I came out along with the captain and soon found myself lost. The commotion was just too much for me.

"Aah! There's a good place." I said to myself, making for the opening where a prospecting knife's blade bit deep into the hard wood. At the same time a partner of mine shouted:

"Com-on with the rice, Son. The fire wastin'." Quickly, I slung my hammock then grabbed the calabash gourd and dashed for the water to wash the rice. When I returned my hammock was on the ground. I looked at the rope, and it was cut. The knife was absent from the wood. I turned, and facing me hard was the squatty and compact Sultan.

"Is that your hammock?" He growled. *"Ye-ye-yes, Sir."* I stammered politely.

"Oh! Me think was any Buxtonian's." The anger in his tone had vanished though his jaws remained firmly set.

Later that day, I got to know that Sultan was a native of Plaisance, a neighbouring village of Buxton, on the east coast of Demerara. And that pork-knockers of these two villages never agreed. They were constantly trying to outwit each other.

That was the character I had heard so much about — a character that was rapidly becoming a legendary figure. Until deep into the night the form of that broad-shouldered man, every inch a typical African, kept dancing before my eyes. The camp-fire was burning low. Beyond the fire a hammock creaked. Yes, that's Tengar I mused, jovial Tengar. There must be a way to get on with Sultan, Tengar does, a murmur escaped my lips as I rolled over for God's good sleep.

It was a hubbub early the following morning to me. The men, scrambling and dashing, each with his own job hustling to be in line, the mist had not cleared yet; a damp — a depressing silence reigned throughout the whole forest. Only the eternal falling of a fall was heard roaring in the distance, when again that gruff, commanding voice repeated the captain's order as his broad, thick palm slapped repeatedly his thick chest in stress of utterance:

"In boat! The Sultan-of-Turkey speaks."

Tengar took that day: tall, broad and full-faced Tengar. His intelligent look was not deceiving. He was the strong, country-type, West Indian Negro who entertained us perfectly throughout our journey with his numerous bush-yarns about 'Di-Dies,' huge, ape-like monsters of the treacherous jungles; and 'Masakurumans', legendary demons of the black waters. And at times he would swing to such colourful subjects as: Fairies and Rainbows and Flowers. Believe me he was a rare type.

Pulling paddles and hauling the boat over the rapids to the lusty rhythms of deep-throated shanties, one of which ran thus:

"Buxton gals ah wash dem bed —;
Wash dem beddin's:
Only when the rain come down —;
The rain come down.
Shanty maan!!! Oh, shanty m..a..a..n!!!"

was real fun. I felt wonderful.

Slowly, another day went by. From the men's reactions I knew it was a typical day. But not for me: for never in my young life had I seen such magnificence. I watched, with an ever-growing glut for nature, and saw my country break rugged and new with each turn, each twist. Never had I dreamt of such misty headlines; of those hazy, blue-capped mountains that ranged one beyond the other to the far ends of the earth

Gazing around me, while the boat vibrated to the strain of the engine, I saw a forest so green that its colour looked fictitious. Flowers of different hues, even gold, played on the trunks of giant moras, greenhearts and other timber trees; or waved mid-air on vines, or even trailed in the black water where a musty smell mingled with their heavy sweetness.

It was yet early when again we camped. But we had to, for it was at the foot of Tobouku, the great waterfall before Apaiqua.

Another morning — from behind the towering, foggy summits the fickle sun peeped mockingly, piercing the dew drops as though hate that only enhanced the beauty of this scenic country. Before tropic mist had retreated, those ram-stams — those vigorous ruffians of the gold and diamond 'diggings' were already stretching their ropey muscles knee-high, waist-high, even chest-high in the roaring waters of the fall on the boat-lines. Their broad flat feet with claw-like toes, planted with death-like grips on the rip-rap of Tobouku's jaws.

In that struggle for life, someone called aloud in a voice, commanding, yet imploring, as though Venus and Hercules were at war:

"Shantie ma...a...n!! Shan..." The voice was muffled. A stifled scream followed. The man kept rolling over death like a battered buoy pressed against the boiling current; tacked to life by two weakened hands, getting weaker and weaker under its unique ordeal.

"H...ee...lp!" The voice was lost as worn fingers refused to grip life, that was but a bubble. We only glanced at Cuffy.

What else could we have done without sharing his fate? He went off like an ant milling in a late stream.

We were more than half-way up the fall, and it was around nine a.m.

"Keep it up, Fred." The captain shouted to the bowman. At that very instant, Fred had eased his paddle to refresh his hold. In a split-second the boat had swerved broadside, sweeping us. Quickly she flooded, rolled a little, then the undercurrent took charge as light cargoes went express. In a matter of seconds everything was reduced to scattered chunks of wreckage; momentarily visible amid the froth, or rolling upon rocks covered with green, grey or black mosses, pointing jagged ends to the sky; leaving the men bubbling shouts and screams in the foaming jaws of the master-criminal Tobouku.

A few seconds after I had lost footing I found myself dashed on a rock. About ten yards from me, was Sultan on another rock.

One after the other the drowning souls passed—passed in thundering foams and churning foams: in hissing crests which the rocks and wind shattered into shimmering, cascading sprays.

Then one man came passing very near to Sultan. Not that I had expected him to stretch his hand to the man, for even a mad-man wouldn't risk such a thing in Tobouku. But I did expect him to be a bit serious towards precious life at such a time and place. Imagine hearing these words coming clearly, majestically above the roar of the underous fall:

"Passeth thy way, Padna, from mortality to eternity; for if the Lord had wanted thee to be saved, he would have provided a rock for thee, as he hath provided one for me," and slapping his hairy chest in emphasis, concluded, *"The Sultan-of-Turkey."*

Surely, the drowning man did not hear a single word of what he said and Sultan did not care either; for, he was that kind of character who was never really serious towards life. He believed in destiny; so everything was fun—everything!

Under the blistering sun, for nearly two hours we remained on the rocks while the angry waters tumbled and splashed around us.

It was about one o'clock when the throbbing of an engine was heard as its boat crawled inch after inch up the rocky rapids. Then they flung lines for us, and thus we were rescued. In the boat were seven other survivors of our boat. The rest had suffered the horrible fate in the black waters of Mazaruni. The next day we reached Apaiqua. And the first

thing I did was to write home. For, I knew news of the washing-away wouldn't take long to reach Bartica,

And, as I started to write the letter, as when I started to write this, the faint music of a new-born symphony began — like an autumn leaf it floated down through the still, jungle air to rest on a dormant pool. Gradually, the pool took on life. Gradually, it increased, holding autumn in a whirlpool, and I wasn't my own self. Soon, unconsciously, I was writing a travelogue—I was reliving the most thrilling, the most eventful chapter of my life.

It was a symphony of quaint, old Georgetown: the determination of a fearless youth after a fortune of gold or diamonds. It was a page of Guiana's colourful history, and fear on a dark beach. It was the grumbling of motors and the tumbling of propellers.

It was the breathing of the sweet, fresh air of a cunning, an intriguing, an alluring jungle. It was the hilarity of a rare gaiety.

It was the chattering of monkeys, the creaking of hammocks, the commotion of a mining camp in a bedewed and misty morning. It was the pulling of paddles to the lusty rhythms of deep-throated shanties. It was the many colours, the many awe-inspiring things of a tropical jungle.

It was the screeching of parakeets and macaws. It was toucans on turu palms and iguanas basking in the sun.

It was the struggle for life in the tumbling, the roaring, the falling, the splashing, the hissing, the black, hostile waters of the waterfalls. It was man, with an unmatched, ruthless sense-of-humour.

It was life resurrected to live in a jungle endowed with the calls, spells and charms needed to hold captive all those who dared enter it.

CHALK HILL

by Eric Roberts

Some months ago I had the privilege of seeing the Essequibo coast, and by being there, also had the opportunity of visiting Chalk Hill.

The mode of conveyance was by motor launch, which left Adventure around nine in the morning one Sunday. The weather was excellent for such a trip, plenty of sunshine, lovely breeze blowing from the Atlantic and the tide which had just begun to ebb.

One by one we passed the cosy little villages and abandoned sugar estates many of them owing their origin to the time of Dutch occupation, where quite a few illegible tombstones in the churchyard at Adventure, and some old rusty iron railings at Huis-T-Dieren speak well for themselves. To our right stood the three sentinels of the Essequibo River, Leguan, Wakenaam and Hog Island, while on our left we brushed past the tiny inlet of Iteribisci. Some distance from Troolie Island we turned into the river Supenaam, leaving the mighty Essequibo to lick the beaches of its many hundred islands which interrupt its course.

The Supenaam wends its way by a series of curves, ending up in a sort of peninsular shape as it nears its source. From its mouth and for a few miles within are spots of isolated farming, not far from which an Amerindian settlement boasting of a handful of people is the only human habitation to be found for more than thirty miles upstream. Travelling for as much as three hours without seeing anything else except bush and water may prove somewhat monotonous to the aspirant, accustomed to the gaiety and excitement of the town: but the mind with an inclination for peace and quietude would surely find such environment very much to its taste. On the way we are surrounded by the sturdy growth of wild vegetation, green, and rising tall and majestic above the dwarfed foliage which grows in abundance on both its banks. Skilful is the hand of Nature in this part of country, and language truly fails to describe the flora of our untamed

hinterland. Blossoming trees with many a limb though deformed by time and age, still contributed a flower or two in this scarce accessible locality. The appearance of large blue butterflies which matched the sky in colour, was something strange as well as novel. There they were, fluttering from one tree to another, and then crossing at intervals the limited expanse of water, in which the reflection of their graceful forms was soon made invisible by the surf from the approaching launch. Ferns uncommon elsewhere, but indigenous in that remote area, were also worthy of admiration. Then suddenly the beat of the engine ceased, and there confronting me was my destination—Chalk Hill.

How disappointing it seemed at first. I went with the hope of seeing an Amerindian settlement, and to get a glimpse of those people whom I have learnt to revere mainly through reading fragments of Guianese history. There was no one there except an old watchman, who lived in an abandoned hut at the foot of the hill. Then I was forced to realise that the nomadic tradition of the Amerindians had again exerted its influence and that they had now removed to within striking distance from the river's source. All that remained as proof of their tenure, was the skeleton frame of a bush house. The hill was about seventy feet high, and from there the varying degree of vegetation is most pleasing to the eye. At one time moderately dense, at another with a negligible under-growth.

At first glance one notices the array of white sand somewhat tinged by decayed vegetable matter which made up the site, while behind this hill stood a mound of lesser elevation, brownish in colour and very fertile as judged from the small flowering shrubs which grew in abundance. A narrow gorge runs between these two sites and gives one the impression that in times not so remote, a little stream ran its way through. Cool and verdant is the valley where shaded by the overhanging foliage and one cannot easily pass by without first taking a brief rest before ascending once more to face the light and heat of the sun.

From its peak my thoughts began to trace time and events and circumstances giving due consideration to the forces of Nature which had changed the features of the earth and man, since the beginning of the world. Below stood the limited

expanse of water almost ebony in colour but pleasing in countenance and into which rank forests dropped their twigs and leaves. From here I viewed the undulating slopes with their many tracks and "*sirahees*" leading here, there, and everywhere into the forests. Then my thoughts ran upon early Amerindian civilisation that probably rose and reigned and fell, while that of Europe's was yet in the making. Of the Incas — wondering at the same time if this now drear and deserted territory was not part of their inexhaustible empire. Of a truth there are no relics in support, but should lack of these things prejudice our minds from believing that here was not a centre of activities? Perhaps it has witnessed many a bloody conflict in the mad quest for power by which former civilisations have been distinguished. Today neither descendants nor history remain to give in any glowing account of that individuality which had given them greatness, and which had welded the fragments of their empire into one whole, and somewhat indivisible. Like Egypt and Persia and other ones of lesser significance, the empire of the Incas may be termed a mere chapter of incidents.

Thee came the cry of "*all aboard,*" and empty space which a few moments ago was crowded with conjecture and legend, once again became actual and real. The surrounding areas lost touch with antiquity, and were once again slopes and trees, and a little waterway making a pleasant sound over the age-old "*tacoobas*" fallen there since time began. Pushing out from the hill I viewed once more the huge forest giants lying somewhat within the pathway of the setting sun, many of them victims — not to man's axe and saw, but to the fury of Nature which left them at times suspended on the stout sinews of bush rope. Slowly Chalk Hill disappeared, losing itself completely behind one of the many curves which distinguished this inland river. In less than a few hours we joined the Mother Essequibo rolling towards the Atlantic with its familiar cargo of silt and sand, escaped logs of wood, and a few patches of grass and "*bundaree*".

Reposing as I reached home, fresh thoughts of Chalk Hill and the neighbouring scenes came vividly back to me; I recollected its myriad trees and flowering vegetation, its rippling stream that has lapped its sides from time immemorial.

Then I thought that perhaps in time not so distant, this site, now remote and humanless, may be reclaimed, and thus become one of worth and purpose in this "*rich and glowing empire of Guiana.*"

THE BATCHIE

by Otho Sylvester

John Daniels had a batchie. A batchie can be defined as the dwelling-place of a bachelor. This definition, though technically correct, does not give a true picture of the batchie. To the husband it is a haven wherein he might relax in an atmosphere purely masculine and free from the petty do's and don't's of married bliss. His cigarette ash may fall unheeded to the floor, his hat can be thrown in any corner, his jacket slung over the back of any chair, and the luxury of placing his feet in the most comfortable position are all possible. To the wife it is that den of iniquity which causes her lord and master to spend quite a few hours away from home. To maidens it stands out as a challenge, a challenge to their charm and beauty which lure so many men into the bonds of matrimony. To bachelors it is a symbol of their freedom, a freedom which they zealously guard until their Eves come along. The batchie is the hallowed sanctuary of the male where women rarely enter, and when they do, the length of their stay depends upon the whim of the bachelor. Such was the place John Daniels used to have.

John was an engineer, a fact which his grimy, greasy overalls would proclaim as he came cycling home from work each afternoon. At the foundry he worked, and when the foundry whistle blew at eleven o'clock, at Chin-sue's cookshop he lunched. John was a big husky man and his appetite matched his size as also did his ability to work and sport. John could out-talk, out-eat, out-smoke, out-drink and out-work any man in the foundry and thus his friends were many. Most every evening his friends met at his batchie and a 'spree' was on. Though, every so often proceedings were interrupted by an irate wife who would lead away her half-intoxicated spouse by his ears, or an indignant mother who would be heard proclaiming to all and sundry that: "*Dat wuthless niggah man John Daniels only leadin' me boy-chile astray.*"

John was what is commonly termed 'sweet-mouth', that is to say he had a weakness for delicacies, particularly pastry.

Old Maud Taylor made delicious pastry, so every afternoon as she passed through the foundry with her basket she could be sure of at least a shilling's worth of trade from John. Old Maud had competition. A pretty maiden was invading her territory. The old woman, however, was not worried. She had confidence in the quality of her wares. Mary Sandiford was also confident for where her wares fell short she was sure her beauty and charm would make up the difference. Though most of the fellows deserted the old woman, John still remained her customer for Old Maud's pastry was good and that was all he wanted. However, sad day for Old Maud, her filaria made its presence felt and she was in bed for two week.

Mary Sandiford was a woman, and like all women, she was a creature of impulse. From the first day she had walked into the foundry, basket of cakes on her arm, and had seen John she decided that he was the man she wanted. When he ignored her and bought only from the old woman her desire for him was only aggravated. Now her opportunity had come and she would use it. The first two days Old Maud was ill, excruciating were the pangs of hunger which seared John's insides as he waited vainly for her arrival. On the third day he took no chance. As he passed the back of his hand across his lips brushing away the crumbs which loitered there, Mary asked:

"Well. How you like me cakes?"

"They all right," he replied handing her the empty glass from which he had drained all the ginger beer.

"Then you gon buy from me everyday", said Mary and she smiled.

John watched the dimples which danced across her cheeks and a strange feeling throbbed through him,

"Good," he answered as she gathered up her baskets and moved off. His eyes followed her and they took in the curves of her figure which swayed gently and suggestively as she walked along.

When Old Maud came out to sell again she found her clientele hopelessly depleted. Even her best customer, John, had entirely deserted her. The old woman watched the younger woman and she thought of the time when she too was a graceful slip of a girl and not the rotund mass of

quivering fat she now was. A deep sigh escaped her lips as she waddled off. It was useless trying to sell anything there; she had to seek greener fields. Mary Sandiford was beautiful and she knew it but what was more she knew how to use it to advantage. She had John under her spell and was gradually working him up to the state where she would become a necessity. He visited her regularly and often they went out together but yet John had not said anything about making her permanent. She had heard of his batchie and in her scheming mind she reasoned that if she could fit into these surroundings the permanence of marriage would seal their relationship. Eventually one evening, she persuaded him to take her there and as they enjoyed the exquisite delight of each other's company she was even more certain of herself. Later in the evening as he took her home she brought up the subject, for Mary had neither ethics nor scruples and she knew not the manners nor morals of the gentle lady. John first and foremost a bachelor was dumbfounded and though his reaction was all but encouraging she was determined to marry him.

Weeks added up to months, Mary still sold her cakes and John and his friends bought them. The sprees at the batchie though not as regular still went on and Mary still believed that it was the batchie which stood between her and John. Sunday mornings John slept late and this Sunday was no exception. Where the day became exceptional was when he awoke to find smoke issuing from his kitchen and Mary inside of it. The kitchen which was not attached to the house stood a short distance away from the stair. As he slopped out into the brilliant ten o'clock sun surprise robbed him of speech. Their eyes met and held in moments of electric silence. All at once he challenged:

"What you doin' here!"

"I come to spen' the day with you?" she replied, *"I come since nine o'clock an' I knock but you wo'n' get up. Then dem people in front start lookin' so I jus' go in the kitchen an' start the fire goin'."* It was a day of delight for the bachelor. A well-cooked meal daintily set out for two in the table which for the first time wore a spotless white tablecloth instead of the piece of oil-cloth which had stood up to the ravages of many a spree. The

place, for once in ever so long, was neat and tidy and as he reclined on the couch with Mary spooning custard into mouth; the thought that passed through his mind was:

"Dam it all dis is the life!"

It was no wonder that as he took her home from the cinema that Sunday night he proposed to her.

About five o'clock Monday morning the clang of the fire engine as it thundered past her home roused Mary from her slumber. She threw open the window and looked out. The fire was not far away, it seemed as though it was in Bent Street, Bent Street that was where John had his batchie. Quickly she dressed and was soon running towards the scene of the fire. When she arrived there the batchie was on fire and John was firmly held by two policemen. Screaming his name she ran up to the group. John was clad only in his shorts and was muttering to himself. Every few moments he would give vent to a loud burst of profanity. He was raving mad! She pressed her hands against her head and the police stared at her in wonderment as the words fell unbidden from her lips:

"Me Gawd! is wha' a do, give he too much!"

By the end of the week there was a calypso being sung everywhere. The title of the calypso was 'MARY' and the chorus was:

'Fire, fire, in the yard
John Daniels gone mad
It wasn' in the cocoa
It wasn' in he tea
An' when a ask she, how she gie he
She say you stupe
It was in the pun 'kin soup!'

CHRISTIANITY AND HISTORY

“Cur Nescire pudens prave quam discere malo?”

— Horace (*Ars Poetica*)

by Cameron Tudor

I received a letter from an old friend and see no alternative before me but to accept her challenge. Unless my memory fails me, she said that the period through which we are living is one of unmitigated confusion and constant upheaval. She mentioned its paralysing economic depressions, its unrestrained butcheries, its world ravaging wars, its approval of tyranny. She drew my attention to something even more fundamental; a loss of communion between people and classes, a breakdown in stable behaviour and the enthronement of hatred in the place of love. And here she hurled her challenge at me. She asks me whether human history is merely the journey from *“Canaan to Korea”*, and dared me to find some pattern or meaning in Human History.

Well I accept her challenge to find anything sensible in human history. But let me first say that I have not the necessary scholarship or experience to answer her thoroughly. But what I can do for her is to give her a perspective look at, and thus enable her to view human history — with its record of crime and charity, folly and wisdom, misfortune and success — as the totality of human experience.

Her difficulty, as I see it, is the difficulty of perhaps millions of people. They are profoundly disturbed by the present development in the world’s affairs, and seek to interpret the present solely by reference to itself. They find no sensible pattern in what they examine, and, quite illogically, they proceed to dismiss Human History as a *“tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing”*. I sympathise, but I cannot approve.

Now, men and women live in a time-world that is greater than that of their local environment: I mean that they inhabit the past and the future as well as they do the present. Thus to concentrate on the present exclusively is to lose hold of some of the dimensions of your experience. And when you do that,

the present will seem to be a hopeless confusion. If you know only what is happening in Korea, and not what has happened on Calvary, then you know less than nothing about what is actually happening in Korea now, or what will take place in the future.

In other words, the farther backward you can look, the farther forward you will see. When you lengthen your historical perspective, you can better escape the partialities and trivialities of your own time. By facing up to the totality of human experience, you will become aware of some element which your habits of thought and action have hitherto neglected. For there is meaning and purpose in History if you view it as the storehouse for human values. If you do not freely visit that storehouse for refreshment and solace, you will surely die of intellectual and spiritual anaemia.

Now in your attempts to deal with the problems of politics and with the interpretation of Human History, you should bear in mind the three ways in which the word "*History*" is used. First there is History as an event, as a chronicle — the sort of thing that appears in your newspaper as a news item. Secondly, there is history regarded as a process, out of which certain values — truth, beauty, and goodness — seem to emerge. Lastly, there is History as interpretation, something which has meaning, in which the key can be found to the whole process of human life.

Neither of these three senses in which we use the word "*History*" will stand on its own feet for long. For a piece of news is not merely an event. It is something which is either good or bad — there your sense of values comes in. It is also something which enriches or impoverishes the whole human scene. That is where it becomes interpretative. History has meaning and purpose if its threefold nature and threefold scope are recognised. And it is we of the modern age who ought to be fully alive to the historical problem, for we have at our disposal not merely a vast accumulation of historical knowledge; we have in addition the terrible example of our own time. We have lived through the judgment on the nations. We can therefore analyse our problem. And where you can analyse, you will sooner or later discover meaning and purpose.

Men and women are continually spilling bottles of red ink on white tablecloths, hoping that the resultant pattern will be a map of Utopia or even of the Kingdom of God. And they suffer a paralysing disappointment when the pattern turns out to be a blood-soaked battlefield in Korea, or strike area in Grenada, or a slum district in Georgetown.

So the questions remain ever the same. Can the history of the past give us guidance which will be useful in the future? Is human history, as some would have us believe, just a chronicle of failure, continuing without sense or purpose for an indefinite length of time? What about Greece, Rome and Israel? They have had their day and vanished from the face of the earth! My answer would be that History, be it ever so vast, cannot provide the answer to its own riddle, but that the answer must be sought in the supra-historical sphere.

Mere analysis is not enough. What is required is prescription and its acceptance. History as such is full of meaning only when a principle is introduced which enlightens the scene and leaves out entirely the irrational and the incalculable. We shall have to discover some central event in History which we can use as a culminating point for what preceded it as well as for what came after it. In short, it is time to make room for the entrance of God on the Stage of History. We must bring him in.

And I make no apology for so doing. I verily and truly believe that God exists, since His existence is the only principle on which I can understand myself and the world around me. I further believe and equally firmly, that His nature has been fully revealed, for all time, in the Person of Jesus Christ. And this revelation is the only principle on which I can evaluate human history and find it full of meaning and purpose. Thus I make bold to assert that the meaning of History will be searched for in vain in Science, or in Politics, or in Economics. It will be found only in Theology. So that my answer to these problems can only be given, if at all, by considering the manifold activities of the human scene in relation to the Incarnation of Jesus Christ.

Of course we may say that this is rather strong meat, and so it is. But it is also good nourishment. For what is our quest for meaning in History, but an attempt to solve our difficulty

about Man? We don't say so in so many words, but how is Human History to be understood, apart from Man? For it is he who makes and muddles it. So then whatever we do, we can't escape the Fact of Man, and the fact of Man is the other side to the Fact of God. And what we call human history — in whatever words — is just the conclusions drawn from the setting of these two facts side by side. Rightly so, for God is also Man.

So if we would understand human history there are certain things we must realise. We must first define man theologically. After we have done so, then may the economist, the politician, the psychologist and the scientist make their statements. The fact that man is what he is, is not a merely human but another-than-human concern. He is not to be understood in himself, not for the reason which is in him. His History is understood only in the light of that which stands over against him — the word of his Creator. His relation to God, and not his reason, is the summit of the pyramid, the highest pinnacle of his being. This is the way in which Man is built, and it is the only way in which you can interpret his History. And since his reason is only his second best quality, he cannot use his reason to deny his best quality, that is, he cannot ever make a convincing denial of his connection with his Maker.

And so, Human History gains its depth and significance from the dogmatic assertion that "*God became Man.*" For this fact and this fact only is sufficient to account for the range and depth of the goodness and evil which are in human endeavour. And in terms of human history it means this: that God burst into human history, "*in the days of Herod the King*", taking on the likeness of sinful flesh, and thus giving sinful flesh the likeness of the Godhead.

This means that History and Eternity are literally on all fours, and that the search for meaning in History is really the search for the Eternal. I say search "*for the Eternal*" merely for the sake of emphasis. But, in reality, eternity is here and now endeavouring to envelop History. Thus the principle which we must apply if we want to understand the meaning of History is that of the interpenetration of these two opposites — I mean the interpenetration of Time and Eternity. This is the key to the understanding of History.

II

My friend replied to this part of my answer with much emphasis and clarity. But was it very kind of her to accuse me of retracing a worn-out pattern of “*mumbo-jumbo*”? She went even farther. She angrily demanded of me either to prove that Christianity is an interpretation of history or to “*come out of the clouds of superstition and plant my feet squarely on the thorny paths of realism.*” She even quoted one of her favourite poems to justify her anger:

“Happy are they who can relieve
Suffering with prayer
Happy are they who can rely on God
To see them through.
They can wait, patiently for the end.”

I could almost see the triumph on her face as she remembered those words—triumph eased on despair. She demanded what she called the truth. You say that you are a grown woman, and that “*you have put away childish things*”. But have you? You say that your outlook is scientific, but is it really? Now you just listen to me.

The size and complexity, the nature and composition, the age and duration of the universe, as revealed by the physical sciences, have in truth and in fact no connection whatever with the fundamentals of religion. For religion is concerned, not with quantity, but with quality; with man’s apprehension of value and of a Being of whose supreme reality he is convinced; by the love which that Being awakens, and the new life which it imparts. Thus the validity of my experience of God is not affected by my views on West Indian federation, the atom bomb or the Government, unless I am silly enough to fall down and worship any of these.

So much for the general: now for the particular. The claims of Christianity to provide a suitable explanation of History, and rules of political wisdom, are both greater and less than those of the rivals. Greater for this reason—Christianity is an account of what God has done: it is not strictly a philosophy. That is why simple and ignorant people are infinitely better

Christians than Bertrand Russell who is none at all. Christianity is therefore a divine revelation resting on the authority of God Himself. And it is precisely at this point that the claims of Christianity are less than the claims, say, of Communism. The divine revelation is accepted through faith. This being a gift of God its preservation is a virtue.

Moreover, there is really nothing extraordinary in grasping and accepting the proof of a theorem in Geometry. But the evidence for the truth of the Christian Religion, though certainly adequate to justify our faith, is certainly not such as to convince the reason in the same manner as a proof in mathematics.

The Christian interpretation of History is not a proposition in philosophy; for philosophy is a purely intellectual activity, concerned only with those truths which are capable of being demonstrated. Thus there can be no original and self-contained Christian philosophy of History or politics just as it would be absurd to talk of Christian surgery or Christian economics. But the student of History who searches for its meaning has to take into account the historic significance of Christian doctrine, as of Mohammedan, Buddhist doctrines. And if he happens to be a Christian as well as a student of History, he is bound to relate the truths he knows by faith, with the truths he knows by reason.

What emerges from the combination of these two sets of truths is neither philosophy nor theology in the accepted sense of these terms, but may be called an outlook on life, which owes something both to philosophy and to theology. In this strictly limited sense, therefore, I am propounding, however inadequately, a philosophy of History, which is strictly Christian. Since everyone is not a Christian, I cannot reasonably ask support for this philosophy. But, and it is here that I make an earnest appeal, it may help us to direct a little light into dark places. When that light is turned on, we will discover that the Christian interpretation of History harmonises with what is known about the universe. Thus if the whole course of History bears witness to man's disordered nature, and if the Christian analysis of that disorder is not only an accurate diagnosis but also provides the remedy proper to the disease, then the Christian analysis becomes a true, perfect, and sufficient interpretation of History.

Now consider certain facts about man—facts rooted in his History, and common to all ages and periods. Let us admit that he has done well for himself. He has travelled from the cave to the Carnegie Hall, from woad to waistcoats, from automatism to Attlee, from cohesion to cooperation. An arduous journey, but still a journey. And yet his pride trips him up, his reason hoodwinks him; he has triumphed over nature, and yet he sinks from civilisation to barbarism; he wears the mask of smiling content, but behind it lies the ugly, distorted, and brazen countenance of Cain—the mark of the beast. Such has been the whole course of human History — triumph and failure—the latter even more impressive than the former. Now for the interpretation.

God created the universe and men out of nothing, and keeps them in continuous existence. He created them good, but with such goodness as was proper only to creatures. I must emphasise that such goodness was not a divine goodness, which is proper only to God. But man was offered an additional good, something infinitely more than he was entitled to. This was knowledge of, and intimate fellowship with, the divine source of his being. Now, knowledge of, and association with another person can flourish only on the basis of free acceptance. But since the principle of acceptance logically implies the possibility of refusal, man chose to refuse.

Now, I think that man has a reason for refusing. But a bad reason. It is this—when you love someone and someone loves you, you become a changed person, for the claims of love require a trimming and polishing of all the jutting and corrugating surfaces of your personality. It is an irksome process but it pays in the end; for the rewards are completeness of personality and mutual affection. You become paradoxically enough, a freer person because you are a newer person; but the process is extremely painful.

So man refused this additional gift, because he knew it would have changed him beyond recognition, and so it would have. He is still refusing; but examine the consequences. He knows that his nature is God-like, and this rootless knowledge has encouraged him throughout the ages to believe he is the source of his own being, and therefore of his own goodness. When he does this he denies what is

true that he is a creature, and asserts what is false, that he is his own creator. This denial of his status is what Greek philosophy called "*the lie in the soul*", and is also technically known as Original Sin. Its consequences are written large over the scrolls of history—the disorder and frustration, which we notice in our mental and spiritual life. Thus even our very goodness is painted at its source: our truth is at best a Great Grey Lie; our beauty a camouflaged ugliness: our achievements an impressive failure; our religion a superstition; our science a religion; our politics a science; What an unholy mess!

St. Paul, a very realistic man, who was perhaps the first Christian philosopher of History, sums it all up very clearly if very sorrowfully. Clearly in this way "*I cordially agree with God's law, but wrong is all I managed*". And sorrowfully in this way. "*O wretched man that I am. Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*" This is the answer to those of us who today are amazed to find that enlightenment has failed to make men happy, and against the plain facts of History continue to hope that just a little more of what they are pleased to call education will work wonders. My only comment is, that in this world, the unteachables far outnumber the untouchables.

But the history of man has shown that the fundamental defect in humanity lies in the misdirection of the will, rather than in the befogging of the intellect, although the latter symptom is a manifestation consequential to the former. The story of a man's activity in this world is thus the catalogue of consequences attendant upon a great disaster. The catalogue may rightly be divided into two sections. In the first section we would see the estrangement of man from God. In the second, which is certainly joined to the first, we should see the estrangement of man from himself. Thus the second is a necessary consequence of the first.

To rescue man from they dreadful consequences God "*seized time by its forelock.*" By that I mean that Eternity pinpointed itself into a relationship of time and space. This focusing of Eternity into a time-space relationship gives human History the character and significance peculiar to it. For if the incarnation had stood by itself, unrelated to any previous historical movement illuminating no historical consequences then it would have been a terrible failure. But it was not, as we well know from the triumph of Calvary.

III

And now for the conclusion of the matter. The Incarnation of Our Lord being the central episode of the Human Drama, Christianity therefore becomes the most materialistic of all religions. For unlike all other religions, it shows that the reality of God is expressed not merely in mystery and sanctity, though these have their place. But it also shows how the reality of God is expressed in the common places of life. In a word, the world is the product of a carpenter's shop, and the extraordinary issues from the ordinary.

But this ordinariness is truly deceptive. For if History, if the human drama, were the only order of reality, then of course the loss of time or opportunity could never be made good. But because History is not the only order of existence, but receives its meaning and justification from a supernatural source, its significance becomes at once tremendously impressive. With the unity of History and Eternity, Jesus is seen, in the words of Clement of Alexandria, as "*the many coloured wisdom of God.*" For He is the Light of the World, and human History becomes, under its brilliance, only one part of the spectrum.

So that even when Christianity gives History its meaning by underlining for us the significance of the Divine intervention, it does something even more. It allows us to fathom the dark depths of the human self. We are now, thanks to the divine revelation, transparent, and the significance of History is at one with our knowledge of human personality. Or you can say with Professor Cochrane that "*the discovery of personality was, at the same time, the discovery of History.*" But all this is only to say that the whole purpose of History is the rescue of the human personality.

All of this may possibly seem strange. But here is a line of argument which may be of some assistance. Ancient man walked a moral and intellectual treadmill, because he regarded the universe as a closed system. He had no appreciation of personality, and therefore no conception of human freedom. The chains of necessity held him fast to a view of the universe in which the same events were repeated in successive cycles. This was of course an intellectual fallacy. But its moral

consequences were disastrous. For the view that the universe is a closed system with a self-sealing device, was bound to lead to a misdirection of the human will. After all, if the targets were below and not above you, you could best aim in a crouching position.

All well and good. But practice, as they say, makes perfect. The fixing of the low targets is now responsible for this warped position which is still evident in our intellects and consciences. It is an occupational disease which has already become hereditary. That is why when we are asked to straighten our backs and aim at the higher target—the emancipation of humanity—the agony is so severe, the effort and the target so far beyond us—that we quickly resume the crouching position. We are moral and intellectual hunchbacks. We prefer to be. But we should not grumble if the events of History, or the unfolding of God's will, or both, give as a resounding kick in our spiritual hindquarters, or in our moral underbelly.

Human History on its purely temporal level is merciless apart from God's Providence. But we don't seem to realise it. And, indeed, when our consciences prick us, and we start quite worriedly in our intellectual sleep, there is always some nonsense to soothe us to sleep again. In times of soul searching crises, the Scientists preach Eugenics; the Economists talk of the price-mechanism; the Psychiatrists about each other; and the Politicians about themselves. We are never prepared to trace the roots of all our suffering into our own souls and cure them there. To us it appears easier to reform the world by redistributing other people's money, by the education of other people's children, all of which may be necessary at times, than to reform ourselves.

All of this happens with its resulting confusion because we believe the universe to be a closed system. We talk about "fate" and have our misfortunes told by crossing the palms of wealthy, or the paths of the clever. We talk of the "Class-struggle" or of other things, just as if these were part of some vast mechanism of physical law in which our human life is hopelessly involved. And the irony is that we look upon ourselves as being more "enlightened" than the ancients. But they at least were honest. They had no notion of Freedom and

therefore carried Necessity to its logical conclusion. They thought that human beings were controlled by stars and that a man's destiny was fore-ordained for him according to the "height" or "depth" of the star ruling his birth. But St. Paul, ever the great realist, broke the chain of necessity over their astonished heads. He pointed out that neither "height" nor "depth" nor, for that matter, any other creature, could come between men and the gift of God.

So, then for the static conception of Historical necessity — which has its place — we should substitute the idea of Freedom — freedom as result of a purified will, rightly directed by the grace of God. This is a dynamic conception of History in that it sets, literally, no limits to the possibilities of human destiny. All things become possible. We are sons of God.

I am prepared to admit that habit, emotion, selfishness and struggle do for the most part determine the course of History. But I cannot be persuaded to admit, that these factors alone give it its purpose and meaning. As a matter of solid fact, there are other factors to be taken into account. For if the factors already mentioned were all, then the march of History would appear to be a march of corpses. But clear amid the gloom I also see something which, while it complicates the historical process, yet transforms the march of History into a march of living men. The noblest achievements in Poetry, Music and the visual Arts, the beneficent discoveries of Science, the finest institutions of Civilisation, and, above all the hard and almost successful battles for human freedom — all these indicate the presence of another factor.

This factor you can call the activity of God. I prefer to call it His Providence. But call it what you will this much seems to be true to me at least. This activity appears to me to be the special province of the Third Person of the Holy and Undivided Trinity. For it is not merely a question of Creation or of Redemption — functions we may ascribe to the First and Second Persons respectively — but of Inspiration. And rightly so. For there can be no question of inspiration if History is a process somewhat similar to a clockwork mechanism. There can only be winding and setting. Moreover, an accurate clock may have a self-regulating principle, but it cannot influence

other clocks to regulate themselves. For influence is only another word for inspiration.

It appears then that God is the author of Human History, and being the Author, is also its End. He is its end because he influences it within human personality and it is difficult to conceive of an Author Himself a person, working from within, a person yet working to an end other than Himself. Therefore even wickedness has its place in the Divine Scheme. And it is just here that I honestly advise the cultivation of what may be called a believer's agnosticism. I honestly know very little about God and His activity apart from the Incarnation. I do not know for example, how He reconciles His Goodness with the existence of evil. But my wisdom is limited.

However, we may take the doctrine of God's Providence to be this. Since God is the Author of History we can believe that its end will be good, and this because of what He is. But how to reconcile the goodness of the end of History with the Manifestation of Sin in the World is beyond me, and I suspect, beyond everyone else. We are faced with two propositions, both of which are true. The first is that God is Omnipotent: the second is that you and I are free beings. Now, according to human logic, both cannot be true. For if Good is omnipotent and evil exists, we are not free; and if we are free and evil exists, then God is not Omnipotent. So we must become Christian agnostics, in the certain knowledge that supernatural wisdom will clear the matter up in the future "*which doth not yet appear.*"

And so, I have shot my bolt. I can say no more about this vast problem except this. I have tried to search out, so far as I could, the inner meaning of human History and to present it in the light of an all-embracing principle. That principle appears to be the drawing up of Time into Eternity and is part of God's activity. Moreover, I have tried to interpret human personality against the background of the historical process. All of this is the result of a question which is eternal in its relevance. That question needs an answer. Mine is "*Lord to whom shall we go? Thou hast the Words of Eternal Life.*"

THE OLD HOUSE

by Lawrence Byass

We were living in one of the many 'Modern Bungalows' which were being erected in the city, when my wife's mother died. Two weeks after Helen urged me to move to a house she had seen and thought I would like. I thought she was afraid of ghosts as the old lady had lived with us for over five years, since we were married, in the house where she died. Helen took it good naturedly and we moved to our new home shortly after.

It wasn't a new house, however. Outside it looked like any other house in the City. It was recently painted white, and its dutch roof was covered with slate. There was a garden in front of which was evidently neglected by the last tenants and a narrow path covered with shells led from the street gate to the front door. But the moment you opened the door and stepped into the hall you knew it wasn't an ordinary house. It was only then you knew it was an old house — old and mellow and romantic. It had aged beautifully like a woman that age made more comely and attractive, as though each year diminished her weaknesses and defects, and brought on a greater measure of perfection. The walls of the hall and living room were panelled and polished; and the glass windows were of an ancient design; but artistic and beautiful.

I loved the old house immediately. Helen started a flower garden, and in a short time there were beds of roses and zenias and dahlias. Friends would always admire the house and passers-by would stop to gaze at Helen's garden, so it wasn't surprising when the stranger came that afternoon.

Helen had been invited to spend a month with her sister in Barbados and she had gone three weeks. I was sitting alone reading a magazine and missing Helen very much when I looked out and saw him. The window looked out on the garden and he was standing in the path leading to the house, looking at the flowers. He was tall and had broad shoulders, about thirty-two, handsome, with a brown confident face. He was a perfect stranger to me.

I got up and went out on the porch and he came up the steps.

"Good afternoon", he said. "*I was just looking at the old place.*"

"That's all right," I said. "*People are always attracted by this house.*"

"*I've already looked around it,*" he said.

"*How do you like it from the outside?*" I asked him.

"*It's a fine house,*" he said. "*I used to know it once.*"

I asked him if he were born here and he said he wasn't. I suggested that maybe he'd lived in it as a boy and he said he didn't. It struck me then that he wasn't too keen to divulge what was the nature of his association with it, so I said nothing more. We stood there for a few minutes in silence, then he said, "*I like your flower garden.*"

"*It's my wife's,*" I told him,

"*She seems to be quite good at it,*" he said. "*Those roses are rather beautiful, don't you think?*"

"*Yes, She loves gardening,*" I told him.

He said then that there used to be a garden just like that when he knew the house. I asked him how long and he said that was ten years ago.

"*That's a long time ago,*" I said.

"*Quite,*" he said,

I observed that at every pause in the conversation his eyes strayed through the open door into the house. I had begun to have unpleasant thoughts, but I yielded to an impulse.

"*Won't you come in?*" I asked,

He was evidently waiting for the opportunity. "*Thanks,*" he said, "*I'd be glad to see the old place again.*"

We went in and he stood up in the hall and looked around. He looked up at the ceiling and then we went into the living room and he looked around again.

"*The inside hasn't changed a bit,*" he remarked. "*Of course these furniture give it an unfamiliar appearance.*"

He told me that this was the oldest wooden dwelling house in the city, and it should never have been furnished with modern things. He thought I should have made it a point to fill it with antique furniture. We were standing in the middle of the living room, when he said this, and all the while he kept looking at one thing and another. Then he noticed the

old antiquated stuffed chair which had been Helen's mother's. It was the only piece Helen had kept from her mother's things, and we had got it, recovered and repolished.

"I mean chairs like those," he said pointing to the antiquated thing. "They fit in naturally here. There used to be a couple of them in the house when I used to come here. One was in that very corner."

He went up to it and touched it fondly. *"Won't you sit down?"* I said.

"Oh, thanks," he said. "But I'd be going in a few minutes. I have to meet some friends I haven't seen for ten years in just another hour."

"You don't belong here, do you?"

"Oh, yes. I was born here. But I've been away ten years now."

He told me he was an engineer in Venezuela, and for the next quarter of an hour we talked about that country. He was a good speaker and could relate a story with point. He was often very amusing. He had a fine sense of humour. Shortly before he got up to go he said, *"Perhaps you are wondering why I'm so interested in this house?"*

"Well. I won't say I'm not."

He laughed quietly. *"I suppose I'm a sentimentalist,"* he said.

"We are all sentimentalists," I said, by way of encouragement.

"You see," he said at last rather bashfully. *"I used to know a girl who lived here."*

"I don't see anything sentimental about that," I said.

"You don't understand," he said. *"I loved that girl. She was the only girl I ever loved. We weren't engaged, but there was a sort of understanding."*

There was something in the way he said this that touched me and I could see that the memory of that love was still fresh and glowing in him.

"You didn't marry her?" I asked.

"No," he said, his eyes becoming sad and clouded as though filled with memories that were painful. *"There was a quarrel. Not between us, but between our parents. I don't remember exactly what it was about. Oh, I think my mother said that her parents were encouraging me for their daughter. I think that started it. Silly of her,"* he laughed, *"I mean my mother. I didn't need any encouragement besides my own love for her."*

He took out a silver cigarette case and offered me a cigarette of a brand I'd never seen before. He struck a match and lighted me then he lit his own. *"We used to sit in that corner in a chair like that and make plans for the future. I was very young then, and very much in love."*

"Guess you're still in love with her," I said.

"I think I will always be in love with her," he said. *"She was a fine girl, very beautiful. She had the most wonderful eyes you've ever seen."*

Few minutes later he got up and said he ought to be going now. *"Come again whenever you like,"* I said.

"I'd really be going away in the morning," he said. *"I'm just passing through. I'm going to Paramaribo on business. I'd be spending two weeks there and then I'm travelling back to Venezuela by 'plane."*

"Quite a short visit to your home town," I said.

"Quite, indeed." He offered me his hand. I took it and shook it warmly, and in another minute he was gone.

It was only after he had gone that I realized that we had been speaking for the better part of an hour and neither of us had learnt the other's name. I thought of him for a few minutes and then he went out of my mind.

Two weeks later Helen returned from Barbados and it was only accidentally that the conversation turned on the old house and I remembered the stranger's visit. I was about telling Helen about him when I checked myself for no reason at all,

"What is it?" Helen said.

"It's about this house," I said.

"You seem to like it awfully, don't you?"

"Anybody'll like this house," I said. *"How did you happen to find it?"*

"Well, I didn't discover it really," Helen said. *"I used to live here before. I knew you would have liked it."*

We were in the living room and Helen sat in the old chair that had belonged to her mother. It was large enough for us both to sit in. Where the light was, it threw a shade on me and Helen couldn't see the look on my face.

"You never told me that before," I said.

"I never told you many things," Helen said. *"I don't know why I didn't tell you. That was ten years ago, before I met you. Maybe I*

thought it wouldn't have interested you. Do you want to know about it?"

"I you don't mind," I said.

"Well, it's a long story," Helen said. "There was a boy. I used to be in love with him. He used to visit here every night and we used to sit right here on this very chair. We thought we were going to be married one day."

She spoke very casually as though she was relating a story of no importance to her.

"And what happened?" I asked her.

"Oh, there was a quarrel between our families .My mother asked him not to come back. I was quite hurt for a long while. I couldn't stop thinking of him. I asked my father to remove from here, because I wanted to forget him and the house was filled with too much memories of him."

I looked at her and she seemed quite unmoved by the memories now, but it pained me to sit there and think of this love of hers.

"So you didn't choose this house because you were afraid of the other?" I said, maybe tactlessly. "Why did you?"

"I don't know." Helen said.

"Do you love him still?"

"I don't know," she said. "It's so long ago. He went to Venezuela and I've never seen him since. He's just memories that's mixed up with you and so many things. Perhaps I'd never know except I see him again."

There was a few minutes of silence. Helen broke it. *"Why you're asking all these questions, Hil?"* she wanted to know.

"Oh, nothing," I said. "Nothing at all."

FOURTH WEST INDIAN CONFERENCE

by St. George Cooper

In order to assess the accomplishments of the Fourth West Indian Conference that met last November in the Dutch territory of Curacao in the Netherlands Antilles, it is necessary to have some regard to the historical background. The Conference — a continuing body which meets every two years, — was set up under the auspices of the Anglo-American Caribbean Commission, the parent body of the existing four-nation Caribbean Commission, (viz. the United Kingdom, USA, France and Holland) and held its First Session in Barbados in 1944. The Conference has no executive power, but it provides a most useful means of consultation with and between local representatives, on matters of social and economic importance to the area.

The Second Session was held in the Virgin Islands of the United States early in 1946, and the venue of the Third Session, by the system of rotation, was the French Department of Guadeloupe, when the industrial problems of the territories were considered. The Fourth Session met in Curacao, and, as previously, was attended by delegations with advisers from the territorial and metropolitan Governments, and observers from the international agencies. The Chairman of each session of the Conference is the Chairman of the National Section of the Commission in whose territory the session is held. Dr. Hendrik Riemens, the Netherlands Ambassador to Venezuela, presided, and it was due to his great tact, toleration and statesmanship that the two weeks' sessions proved such a success.

The meeting was devoted almost exclusively to the agricultural problems of the Caribbean. It was a departure from the methods used in previous sessions where a heavily loaded agenda with sometimes unrelated items involved a dissipation of the resources of the Commission as well as the energies of the Conference delegates. The concentration of the Conference on one major theme had the effect of narrowing the field but widening the scope of discussion, and resulted

in a critical assessment of all related issues. This would hardly have been possible with a more diversified agenda.

The group of about 150 men and women from fourteen territories belonging to four separate countries represented a total population of about six million people. The population of the Caribbean, although mixed racially, is overwhelmingly coloured, and it is significant that nearly all the delegates, particularly from the British territories were in fact, coloured. The Head of the delegation from the self-governing Dutch colony of Surinam was a coloured Minister of Agriculture and so was the Minister of Agriculture from the non-self-governing colony of Trinidad. At the same time, there were representatives of the other races which go to make up "*this Mediterranean of the New World*" as the Caribbean has been recently described. Before the business of the Conference started, there was a wide-spread rumour that the British section of the Commission were out to suppress all action taken by the Commission in general. This aura of suspicion quickly faded when the British Co.-Chairman in a private meeting with the British delegations assured them that the British were one hundred percent behind the Commission in helping to solve the regional problems of the area. After this explicit assurance, the atmosphere of unanimity which prevailed throughout the Conference was illustrative of the common bases of the problems of the entire region. Puerto Rico, for example, has the same overpopulation problem as Barbados, and all are faced with problems of low productivity, lack of capital for investment in agriculture and industry, and the lack of expert personnel and technical organisation — factors which impede development: but the general feeling of good fellowship and understanding lent support to different viewpoints. Although very often territorial delegations found limitations to joint action owing to constitutional divergencies and different relations with the metropolitan country, yet resolutions were adopted within their constitutional boundaries. One could not fail to be impressed by the vigour and enthusiasm, and often the air of authority with which the delegation from Puerto Rico presented their views. Speaking with no inhibitions whatever, one could feel the growing national sense of the Puerto Ricans—their intimate association

with the development of their country, for such intimacy is essential if the full and legitimate aspirations of Caribbean peoples are to be fulfilled through development. Certainly, the Puerto Rican delegation were not complacent.

The logical and precise French stated their problems with clarity and courage. They were happy, they declared, to be Departments of Overseas France—Paris was their Mecca. One French delegate felt that agricultural development by itself would not solve the problems of the area. The problem had to be approached from the industrial and trade angles as well. In this connection, he expressed dissatisfaction with the tariff system existing throughout the area and suggested a Conference to discuss joint action for the necessary changes. Some members of the British delegation felt that too much dependence was placed on sugar which they regarded as a 'crisis crop' propped up by tariffs and preferences. Sugar was always and still is the shuttlecock of politics, and has made these islands prosperous in the past. It is hoped that the recent long term agreements with the Ministry of Food will restore the stability which the industry needs. A great deal was made of the social cost of sugar production with its seasonal employment and led to emphasis being put on the need for speedy development of alternative resources where these existed, and for initiating new forms of economic organization in the British West Indian sugar industry to meet changing attitudes, and to make the industry socially and politically acceptable. The Dutch delegation gave a good example of solidarity, often voting together for or against or not at all, and the American delegation from the smaller islands like St. Croix seemed anxious over the fact that Puerto Rico appeared to be getting the American lion's share of investment capital. Washington, they felt, might still keep the spotlight on them.

Such then was the atmosphere in which the discussions took place. The problems were treated under various Heads e.g. Soil Conservation, Water Control, Land Settlement, Agricultural Credit, Agricultural Extension Services, Agricultural Research and Mechanization. The documentation was prepared by British experts of the highest standing as well as experts from F.A.O. and other international agencies. These

papers were distributed to delegates a considerable time in advance of the Conference. The presence of experts helped considerably to clarify the issues — technical and otherwise, which were bound to arise. Indeed, this meeting and mingling of expert and non-expert opinion on the agriculture of the Caribbean ensured that the fruits of technical enquiry and discussion will be disseminated to the wider public, and support engendered for their translation into practical action. This is an issue of major importance for as the delegations were in the main drawn from their local legislatures, it is essential that they should be accurately informed on the executive research, and extension work of colonial agricultural departments, since political development impinges indirectly though powerfully on agricultural development.

The man in the street usually asks after any Conference, what has been done? How will he benefit? He is interested in action rather than in academic discussions. Pleasant and valuable contacts have been made, horizons have been widened. Above all, positive, precise and practical proposals were formulated for the consideration of the territorial Governments. Indeed, as far as the British territories are concerned, most of the recommendations correspond with what is, in fact, the declared policy of each of the British West Indian Governments. Recommendations for agricultural development must often, of necessity, be in the nature of long term and continuing activities, with the position being kept constantly under review, and efforts being continuously directed towards the fulfilment of conference recommendations.

Perhaps one of the most important results which emerged from the Conference was the unanimous decision to establish complete paedological and land capability classification for certain British West Indian Islands. This matter of land use planning is acknowledged by the experts to be the most pressing need in the Caribbean area, and tied up with it are questions of Agricultural guidance and education through a coordinated extension service, effective capital investment, and above all, agricultural leadership. Indeed, a distinguished British expert in the field of tropical agriculture made the significant comment that if the Caribbean would apply fully the knowledge already available, *production could at a*

conservative estimate be doubled or even trebled within a relatively short period. There are of course great gaps in the body of knowledge already accumulated and research programmes are designed to fill these breaches.

The implementation of the several recommendations involves the provision of technical assistance in its widest sense as well as the provision of finance for material investment. A prevalent view is that technical assistance should not come entirely from outside, for it is recognised that it take its most valuable form when the innate abilities of the populations requiring it are harnessed to the work of economic development, through an effective system of local technical training. It is considered, therefore, that, to develop local ability, must be the primary aim of technical assistance policy. The United Kingdom Government, from funds voted by Parliament under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act is making and has long been making an effort in this field comparable in purpose and in scope with the objectives enunciated by President Truman in the Fourth Point of his inaugural address to Congress in February 1949. External assistance from international bodies and agencies is greatly to be welcomed as an instrument of technical and mutually effective cooperation, but a number of procedural details and questions of "*matching contribution*", on the part of recipient territories still await clarification.

A new aspect of the agricultural problems of the Caribbean was revealed in the course of the discussions. This was the need for inter-territorial and inter-Caribbean planning to establish some sort of diverse specialisation flexible enough to reduce imports and permit inter-territorial trade. Caribbean territories, if they are to avoid a state of mendicancy and provide the framework in which economic development will complement political independence, must make a revolutionary approach to the problems of the area as a whole, and not plan in isolation. Arising out of the need for joint action, the Comptroller for Development and Welfare in the West Indies has recently announced his intention to set up a regional economic committee as recommended at Montego Bay in 1947. All the Governments in the British West Indies would be represented on the

Committee whose job it would be to thresh out economic matters in an endeavour to arrive at a common approach. In the words of the British Co-Chairman of the Commission, the Conference had the material for framing a grand design for agriculture in the Caribbean. This it succeeded in doing without vagueness or drama, but with the vigour and vitality of uninhibited honesty of free speech.

Nor was the Conference without its lighter side. There were delegates who found it difficult to divorce politics from purely agricultural questions and who would have liked the Conference to address itself to vital political issues which were completely outside its terms of reference. There was the delegate who referred unwittingly at the end of the session to the 'wilderness of ideas' (an obvious contradiction in terms out of which he expressed the hope that fruitful action would result). The Dutch Co-Chairman, referring to the vigour with which two delegates, both dentists, presented their views elegantly remarked that if those gentlemen addressed themselves with equal vigour in their dental theatres, there was hope for the radical elimination of oral diseases.

Above all, the flexibility of the arrangements made by the hospitable Dutch allowed for visits to places of social, economic and historical interest. Not to be forgotten was St. Nicholas Day—in honour of the patron saint of the island. The Conference was in session and at the adjournment, the announcement was made of the visit of an extremely important personage who turned out to be St. Nicholas in heraldic robes.

It was a healthy conference, deriving its impulse and its strength from its own emerging forces reinforced by the maturity and experience of the West.

EVENSONG

by Hilda McDonald

Sunset had called in the colours
But not yet was it dark,
The pool lay a mirror of silver
Without spot or mark.

When out from the green mirrored mangroves
Stepped a wonder of white,
A great heron wandering homeward,
Before it was night.

The pool held the moon and the heron,
And the first white star,
In a beauty beyond all imagining
As I watched from afar.

And my heart sang aloud to its Maker
In thanks and delight,
Who gave me that moment of beauty,
Before it was night.

THE SUN AND WEST INDIAN ART

There is a story of Edna Manley that I would like to put on record.

One night in June, 1950 I was part of a company of people on Philip Sherlock's lawn on the College Campus, Mona, Jamaica. The moon had already risen from behind Long Mountain and topped the ridge in clear hurdle style and was flooding the night with her serene blue illumination. A group of us fell talking about the role played by the Sun in W.I. life; there was an expert photographer present and he was claiming that in the tropics the best hours for taking shots were early in the morning and late in the afternoon. The hours around noon were wretched, he declared, with the great flat shadows.

When it dawned upon us what, he was saying, we began to argue that it was wrong to write off as bad for photography certain sections of the W. I. day merely because photographic material and technique, developed in a temperate climate, were not adapted to tropical conditions.

Then Edna Manley took over the conversation. Remarking that as a carver she had to set the angle for making portrait studies when in the Caribbean in a different way than in temperate climates, as the light fell differently, she explained first of all that she had had to explain to many English women coming to Jamaica for the first time that the midday siesta in tropical countries corresponded to the winter withdrawal from active life in northern climates. At noon, she said, the earth sleeps and regains her fertility; man too must rest at the same time and there must be no opposition; only when one accepts the natural conditions around can one really integrate with them and use them as the artist does to express his will and his emotional desire.

The conversation went on to other topics but I stored the incident in my mind as another tribute to the great paean of the sun worshippers who have affinities with all dwellers in tropical lands. The Sun is a figure of masculine power in the

unconscious of all peoples of African descent with the "*shadowed livery of the burnished Sun.*"

The number is increasing of West Indian artists who go to the United Kingdom to improve their art. Huie of Jamaica returned to his home in 1950 from such a course and while in that island I heard contradictory statements on the quality of his present work. One person was of the opinion that although Huie had gained in mastery of technique, there had occurred a certain loss of power in the work he was then doing and an uncertainty of vision. Another comment was that Huie had to assimilate the new technique he had learnt and that the value of his stay and study in the United Kingdom would be observed only at the end of a few years. The same is probably true of E. R. Burrowes of Guiana.

Dennis Williams of Guiana was an artist who like Huie made a study of European technique. His study lasted three years at the end of which period he returned to Guiana for a few months before he decided to become a professional painter.

One of the remarkable features of Dennis Williams work is that he found much affinity with the art of West Africa, and particularly with the sculpture, as if he were impelled to move from the halfway house of the West Indies and to return to the land of his ancestors for inspiration and motive power. This affinity was accompanied by a developing vision of the African in the New World which gradually pervaded his mind until on his return to the West Indies he discovered that there in the Sun and in the world of the sugar plantation was the key needed to unlock the doors of his spirit and to complete the apprenticeship period through which he felt he was passing.

While in the United Kingdom he had painted like Ruth breast-deep amid the alien corn, without engaging his full power, but after a few weeks in Guiana, he employed his time on a series of plantation studies.

It is not possible with words fully to convey the power of the seven studies Dennis Williams completed and they are now (1950) the writer believes on exhibition in New York; some notes must however suffice to indicate the treatment. The first study was of the sugar plantation as a fairy tale, with the round moon echoing the round faces of the sugar workers, pleasant

colourings and all the elements romanticized. Already in this first statement of the theme, Dennis Williams had begun to display the limbs of human beings as in some way synonymous with the jointed stalks of the growing sugar cane. In his projection of what estate managers thought of the workers on the plantations, Williams has conceived a head that resembled a button, with features that were those of a moron.

The other studies revealed a progressive shift of moods in the serial presentation of plantation character. The third was gloomy and the green of the cane stalks that surrounded the two faces male and female was a menacing shade. No longer fairy tale in quality it seemed to give the impression that these moronic visages had somehow become sinister and begun to threaten the existence of the plantation. By contrast, what one believes to be the fifth study depicted the laughter and gaiety peculiar to the West Indian of African descent. The painting was full of gay purple light, symptomatic of a people who could make fun of themselves and of their hardships and so prevent the iron brands of necessity from sinking too deep into their natures.

Before he left British Guiana to seek success abroad as a painter, Dennis Williams was painting a picture which he said should complete the plantation series and enable him to pass on to other themes. This final study had three figures in it which this writer interpreted to symbolise the West Indian of African descent and his movement away from plantation life.

First there was the now familiar moronic button head of the slave and the rest of the figure was clothed in a long shapeless yellow garment which prevented one from identifying the sex of the wearer. The garment would probably be the osnaburg of the plantation. And behind this figure are two emerging types, one male, one female. There is still the curious identification of the limbs of the figures with the jointed stalks of the cane, and Dennis Williams had introduced a technical device for sustaining interest by series of graded gray geometrical planes over the body surfaces. The heads, however, compelled attention. The male head was capped with a purplish grap cap that could indifferently be a court jester's headgear or the mitre of an

ecclesiastical dignity — seeming to suggest that the emerging West Indian had in him great capacity for entertainment or for deep religious feeling? The face of the female figure was swathed, seemingly nun-wise, with concentric bands of black and white. No longer brute power, harnessed to compulsory labour, the West Indian was finding his destiny,

Before he left British Guiana Dennis Williams declared that he had to come back to the regions of the Sun. He had felt no inspiration in England although he had learnt technique there and it seemed to him that since his return to the tropics and his work on the plantation series he had found the key he had wanted, and he felt he could paint anywhere. That this was true we know from recent reports of his work in *The Listener* and in the US magazine *Time* which speak of the startling effect of his power upon the art-loving world in London. A reproduction of one of his recent pictures shows that Dennis Williams has moved to the major problem of the 20th Century, the relationships existing among the races of the modern world.

—A. J. S.

Community Review
WRITER'S ASSOCIATION DINNER

The Writers Association's Dinner in honour of Mr. Philip Sherlock, Vice-Principal of the University College of the West Indies and Professors Manfred Sandmann and Eric Cruickshank, Department of Modern Arts and Languages, and Department of Medicine respectively, was successfully held at the Hotel Tower on Wednesday April 11. His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government, the Hon. John Gutch, O.B.E. was also present.

The function opened with a blessing from His Grace and the menu which covered the first part of the programme was given full attention. The dishes served lived up to expectation, and if excellent is the highest compliment one could pay, surely the Tower deserves it. The table set was in the form of a square, and decorated with patience and artistry. In the open centre were many species of Guiana's palms and ferns, while on the table itself were vases of beautiful flowers. The general atmosphere was one of homeliness, just the sort of feeling which usually prevails at a family dinner. His Excellency, at this stage toasted the King, and made the way clear for the second part of the programme. He rose once more to propose the Toast to the University College of the West Indies, intimating how fortunate it was for the University to have on its Staff the names of their honoured guests. He also paid tribute to the work being done by both the Resident and Staff Tutors, promising that the Government would do everything in its power to assist the University. In reply to the Toast proposed, Mr. Sherlock the Vice-Principal said how happy they all felt at the honour bestowed upon them. He went on to say that the University needed help, which the commercial community could give as well as Government. To him this was the best possible investment, as the beneficiaries would all come back and help in the affairs of the Colony. He intimated the founding of a Joseph Luckhoo Scholarship named after the late Justice Luckhoo K.C. who played a memorable part in the embryonic stage of the University life.

The Toast which followed was to the Extra-Mural Department; this was proposed by His Grace, the Archbishop. He touched on the usefulness of the Department and referred to the good work which was being done by the Resident Tutor, Mr. Thompson. Displaying much humour, His Grace disclosed how ridiculous the name Extra-Mural sounded, and suggested a change, the most likely being Home University Studies or some other term in place of Extra-Mural. In reply Mr. Thompson said how he enjoyed being in British Guiana, and the many friendships he had made. He agreed with the suggestion made by His Grace, and hoped that some change would be made. The Resident Tutor concluded by saying how progress was being maintained by the Department and was highly optimistic of its future.

To the Hon. F. W Holder K.C. fell the task of proposing the Toast to the Writers of the Caribbean. He mentioned the names of Philip Sherlock, A. J. Seymour, Norman Cameron and Dr. Eric Williams, along with others from the smaller islands, which he considered as of great promise. He urged those who were unknown to him to make a special effort to live up to their responsibilities, and so make a name in the literary aspirations of the Caribbean. The reply was by Mr. N. E. Cameron, M.A. who apart from outlining the difficulties which face the writers, intimated how success depended not only on ability but on chance and circumstances. The Toast Master then brought the function to a close.

One recollects vividly the feeling of comradeship which prevailed throughout and the feeling of regret at its termination. There was the consolation however, in the thought that this memorable occasion had a special significance, it was one of Spirit, in reality mind over matter. For Institutions are not to be considered as mortar and stone, but as living spirits furthering us on to better things. And indeed of this was the prevailing spirit at the Writers Association's Dinner, in honour of an University's Staff, who in its first milestone has taken a permanent place in West Indian life, thought and perhaps action.

THE GUESTS:

His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government,
Hon. John Gutch, O.B.E., Philip M. Sherlock, Esq., Professor
Manfred Sandmann, Professor Eric Cruickshank.

THE SUBSCRIBERS:

Richard Allsopp, Esq., A. A. Bannister, Esq., Norman E.
Cameron, Esq., Frank Dalzell, Esq., Miss Lilian Dewar, Miss
Celeste Dolphin, Dr. L. G. Eddey, Miss Ruby Franker, His
Worship the Mayor of Georgetown, R. B. Gajraj, Esq., J. W.
Harper Smith, Esq., Hon. F. W. Holder, K.C., J. E. Humphrey,
Esq., Eric James, Esq., His Grace the Archbishop of the West
Indies, Most Rev. Dr. Alan J. Knight, J. C. Luck, Esq., Hon. E.
F. McDavid, C.M.G., C.B.E., Capt. H. Nobbs, O.B.E., F. Ogle,
Esq., E. O. Pilgrim, Rev. E. S. M. Pilgrim, R. C. G. Potter, Esq.,
Hon. W. J. Raatgever, Eric Roberts, Esq., Lloyd Searwar, Esq.,
A. J. Seymour, Esq., Mrs. Elma Seymour, Kenneth S. Stuby,
Esq., A. A. Thompson, Esq., Hon. C. Vibart Wight, C.B.E.,
G. E. Willock, Esq.

—ERIC ROBERTS

ADVENTURE IN ART

by Philip Vieira

The two most spectacular achievements in art, from the British Guiana angle, which have taken place within recent time, are the emergence of Dennis Williams from the dawn of small town recognition into the full-noonday glare of world acceptance and the courageous presentation of several daringly modern pieces at the recently held exhibition by the Working People's Free Art Class.

It is perhaps more than a mere coincidence that Dennis Williams, in his very early painting career, was a student of Rupert Burrowes, 1949 British Council Scholar, and that the Working People's Free Art Class, was founded and is being led by the same Rupert Burrowes.

Obviously, Dennis Williams' tendency to express himself in the medium of the modern masters was largely influenced by his journey to the United Kingdom, in the capacity of the first British Council Art Scholar from the Magnificent Province.

It is no less manifest, that Rex Walcott's '**Under Chloroform**' and '**Self Portrait**' and Patrick Barrington's '**Musicians**' as well as Lloyd Hind's '**Odalisque**', show the influence of Rupert Burrowes which he also absorbed on his English visit,

In addition to the works named in the above paragraph, '**Guiana Tapestry**' by Basil Hinds and '**Clouds Over Guiana**' by Rupert Burrowes show remarkable assimilation and individuality in approach and treatment, although they are fundamentally derivative of the art of Picasso, Matisse, Braque and Adler.

Especial demonstration of the Adler undertones is to be seen in Barrington's '**Musicians**'.

Not unexpectedly, an extraordinary amount of comment and criticism has been aroused by this venturesome adventure into modern art by both Dennis Williams and the students of the Working People's Free Art Class.

Probably because of the fact that the great English art critic Wyndham Lewis eulogised the former, local critics showed

inclination to the somewhat less outspoken in their condemnation of his work. The members of the W.P.F.A.C., however, could not hope to escape the caustic comments of several visitors who attended their exhibition.

And *Chronicle* columnist Frank "Art My Foot" Pilgrim levelled a broadside attack on the budding Picassos of the Art Class in his review of their attempt to present their interpretations of the modern urge.

Describing some of the work at the exhibition as "*abstract twistings and symbolic brain teasers*," Frank says that in modern art, "*the customer seems to be always wrong*".

Without doubt, the person most suited to reply to Mr. Pilgrim's attack, an attack which was launched in an honest spirit of what may be described as seeking further knowledge, was the villain of the piece. E Rupert Burrowes.

In a British Council half-hour broadcast over Station ZFY, Mr. Burrowes pointed out that from "*time immemorial, artists who have had the courage to express their personal inspirations have been faced with unsympathetic antagonism*".

This antagonism, he stressed emanated not only from the ordinary layman but also found expression by the intellectual contemporaries of the artists of the period.

After making reference to one notable incident of the sixteenth century, the art leader argues thus: "*This clearly shows that the bare subject of a picture often arouses a passion of resentment apart from the quality of the picture and the skill of the craftsmanship*".

In support of his postulation, he cites the words of the most controversial figure in modern art. Said Picasso, "*Everyone wants to understand art. Why not try to understand the song of a bird? Why does one love the night-flowers, without trying to understand them?*"

An obvious question which everyone must ask, as Mr. Burrowes pointed out is "*How can I cultivate a taste for this modern art?*" And in answering the question he avers that there are two replies which may be given, the "*impolite and cynical and the kind and helpful*".

The former, he states, would be something like this, "*go live in the past*". The latter is "*Just as you know and like the streamlined loveliness of a motor car and the sleek lethal beauty of a jet*

plane, in the same way as you would appreciate the classic simplicity of structure in the building of the Royal Bank of Canada or Sandbach Parker's new building, in the same way you must approach the New Look in art as if evolves towards the general aspect of a possible Brave New World".

'SALOME'

A Review

The Georgetown public was given a treat when the Drama Section of the YMCA, which had been dormant since its formation, ventured forth on its initial presentation around mid-April. The choice was '**Salome**' by Oscar Wilde.

The Co-Directors, Mrs. Rajkumari Singh and her husband, Harnandan Singh, had their hands full, for on this effort depended the fate of future drama activities.

There were many factors to be considered, the chief being the casting. The 'Y' itself could supply battalions of soldiers, but no '**Salome**'. In the end she was co-opted from the Georgetown Dramatic Club. '**Herodias**' and the '**Slave Girl**' were also co-opted from other organisations.

The next problem was the costuming of the play. The period was ancient Judaea, so the Co-Directors had to do a certain amount of research in that direction,

Another consideration was that the story was well-known so that no halfway version would have been acceptable. **Salome**, daughter of **Herodias**, was in love with John the Baptist who openly spurned her. She took the opportunity to have her revenge to demand his head on a silver charger as her reward for dancing for Herod, her mother's second husband, who had promised to give her anything for which she had asked, even to half of his kingdom.

The Directors and players got down to it to present a play as authentic as possible. The whole action (one act) takes place on the terrace of Herod's palace. The background scene was very effective as there was a painting depicting a good portion of the palace gardens and steps leading from a path. In the distance could be seen a building like a temple.

The costumes were beautiful, and it was hard to decide which was the best as there was much variety in the King's entourage. However, I think those of '**Salome**', '**Herod**' and '**Herodias**' were the most resplendent, as was to be expected.

As regards individual performances, many opinions have been expressed for and against. However, there was little

controversy concerning 'Herod' who was magnificently portrayed by Harnandan Singh. When he came on the stage and began his lines, a general murmur of approval could be heard in the audience. He was comfortable in the role and in turn made the audience comfortable.

Phyllis Durham as 'Salome' was a wise choice. She, like Harnandan Singh, is a seasoned performer and was undaunted by the fact that the whole play revolved around her. She had a great deal to say and it was obvious that she memorised her lines well. However, in my opinion, she was inclined to lapse in to a mere recitation when she uttered some really beautiful passages towards the end.

Her interpretation of the famous Salome's Dance of the Seven Veils came up to my expectations, and was a fitting climax in the play. Her movements were graceful and she was at home, so to speak. I did not quite agree to '**Bolero**' being the accompanying music and felt that if the Directors thought that the '**Salome**' music itself was too heavy, a safe substitution could have been an excerpt from the '**Scherzade**' score.

Jokannan (John the Baptist), played by Neville Linton, was a first-class characterisation. The part was not a big one, but Neville Linton did it well and was most convincing. His voice had the ring of a real prophet.

The other supporting players, though they had not as much to say to bring them into focus as prominently as the above-named actors, deserved honourable mention, for without their cooperation the play could not have held together. Their costumes and positions on the stage gave "*atmosphere*" which certainly means a lot, especially in a period play.

Whether or not the YMCA will prove a threat in the drama field remains to be seen, but the aftermath of its first presentation has certainly given playgoers something to talk about.

—J.D.

CONCERTS

We have had many musical treats during the first four months of 1951. One of the most outstanding was of course the lecture-recital given by Mr. Henry Wilson, Examiner of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music. He delighted his audience with a wide selection of piano music—Bach, Beethoven, Schumann, Debussy—giving a short talk before each item. It was the type of recital we do not often get here in B G. and was therefore appreciated all the more.

Another big event was Miss Genya Fidler's piano recital at the Plaza Cinema on Sunday afternoon, April 8. She completely captured her large audience, not only by her beauty, but also by her performance, particularly the selections by Chopin.

The visit of Miss Enid Richardson of the British Council presented further opportunities of music-making in the Colony.

At the home of Dr. & Mrs. J. A. Nicholson on Wednesday April 25, Miss Richardson joined with two of our most promising young artists in presenting a violin and piano recital. We had the privilege and pleasure of hearing some of Miss Richardson's own compositions. A great favourite was part of '**St. Benedict's Suite**'—an impression of early Sunday morning at Mount St. Benedict, Trinidad. Two of her compositions for the violin were also presented by Bernice Waddell. Miss Waddell also showed her skill to great advantage in the other items she chose, particularly '**La Folia Sonata**' by Corelli and Wieniawski's well-known '**Legende**'.

Miss Joan McDavid, one of our most recent L.R.S.M.'s contributed two items to this programme. We enjoyed her playing.

The next evening, Thursday April 26, and continuing over the weekend, the B.G. Philharmonic Society presented another of its ever popular orchestral concerts. Guest artist Mrs. Valerie Warner joined with the orchestra in performing Beethoven's '**Piano Concerto in C Minor op. 37**', and they made a very good job of it.

'**Finlandia**', an old favourite, which was conducted by Mr. Chapman Edwards, deserved the rousing applause it received.

The Philharmonic Choir pleased both the eye — in their flowing white dresses — and the ear — with their delightful three-part singing.

On Saturday 28, Miss Richardson joined informally with the Philharmonic Orchestra to present a short piano concerto, and also played two piano duets with Mrs. R. Aaron and Miss F. Francis.

—QUAVER

THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION COURSE

The Extra-Mural Department (of the University College of the West Indies) in British Guiana arranged a course in Public Administration, in March 1951. Mr. Eric James, M.A., (Public Admin.) Staff Tutor of the Extra-Mural Department, who conducted similar courses in some of the other West Indian Colonies arrived in the Colony in March, 1951. To enable him a plan his itinerary, applications for registration had been distributed as early as November 1950. The number of applications received must have been very heartening to the Resident Tutor, Mr. A. A. Thompson, for although the limit of the class was originally set at 43, (this was the number of text books available) when the course started several persons who were anxious to join had to be refused admission and the register was finally closed with 59 students. Only four of these students dropped out and the attendance throughout the sessions was over 90 percent. Students were drawn from nearly every Government Department and there were also some students who are not public servants. What was perhaps disappointing was the very poor response from the senior administrative ranks of the Public Service.

The opening lecture was held on the 14th March, 1951, at the Bishop's High School. The Honourable John Gutch, O.B.E., Colonial Secretary, was Chairman, and among the large audience were several Heads of Government Departments. After the lecture the students met the tutor, elected a class secretary and made arrangements to meet three times a week, on Monday and Friday evenings and on Wednesday mornings. The Colonial Secretary granted permission for public servants to be excused from work on Wednesday mornings to attend the lectures. The evening classes were held in the Reading Room of the Public Free Library, and the morning classes met in one of the classrooms of the new Queen's College. The last lecture was given on the 18th of April.

The subjects covered in the sixteen lectures were:

- (i) the nature and scope of Public Administration;
- (ii) the functions of Government;
- (iii) the interrelationship between policy making and policy execution;
- (iv) aspects of organisation and management;
- (v) the department as a basis of organisation;
- (vi) departmental structure and organisation in British Guiana;
- (vii) municipal government and administration;
- (viii) personnel management;
- (ix) human relations and morale in administration;
- (x) fiscal management;
- (xi) administration regulation—the regulatory commission;
- (xii) the administrator's role in modern society.

The lectures on the several aspects of personnel management proved the most interesting and provoked most discussion.

More than fifty papers were submitted by students. This is one indication of the good response on the part of students. At the end of the course, the tutor for his own purposes got from students their opinions on various aspects of the course by asking them to fill up a check-list type of questionnaire. There seemed to be strong feeling among the public servants in the class that the Public Service would have benefited to an even greater extent if some of the senior officers of the Service had taken the course. The students hope that the interests aroused by the course will be sustained and to this end, with the kindly assistance of the Resident Tutor, plans are under way for the formation of an Association of Extra-Mural students. It is hoped that this Association will be a means of sponsoring Extra-Mural classes and other activities in the adult education movement.

—EXTRA-MURAL

TORMENT

by Ian Carew

Flail my mind
To the moment's brink,
This is my fate.
Drive me like parched lips
To a cup's rim
Then shatter the cup
Upon pavements of time
That my parched dream's lips
Might know no moistening.
Push me like rising tide
Up beaches of strange emotion,
Then let the tide of my reaching
Ebb away
With the moonrise
Of nights and days.
And when my appetite for reaching
Ceases its hunger cries
And is surfeited,
Then lull me
Under dead leaves,
Under rivers,
Under seas,
And memoryless let me lie
On the bosom of unknown forever.

Book Review

NEGRO VICTORY by David A. Vaughn

War is a necessary evil it is said and if we, in the West Indies, or for that matter the coloured Colonial Empire, judge of our progressive achievements, we may opine that it is so. After a war there must be a victory. But of the efforts and the courage which go into victory, only those who have actually experienced can tell with vivid truth. The Life Story of Dr. Harold Moody in simple terms is the story of a war fought and of a victory won, a war fought for the very principles and ideals the threatened destruction of which provoked two great wars within a generation, but fought not on the field of a pitched battle with guns and bayonets, planes and bombs. *Negro Victory* by David A Vaughn tells that story even in the very aptness of its title.

The name David A. Vaughn does not conjure up the picture of a great biography written in brilliant and fluent style. If one should accept Vaughn's words, "*I offer this book to those who loved him and admired his Christian character and his service to his own people as a feeble tribute to all he was and did.*" The virtues most apparent in the book are its straightforward sincerity of expression free of the sentimentality which a seemingly appreciative friendship begets, the unadorned simplicity of its style, and its impartial advocacy of the practice of Christian principles. Vaughn dedicates the book significantly to Dr. Moody's "*wonderful mother*", whose character and personality, by which she triumphed over the unfavourable circumstances of her early life were recognised as being inherited by her eldest son. By Vaughn's doing so and by his expression throughout the book one feels that he is paying tribute to all those principles for which Dr. Moody stood throughout his busy life. The biographer does well who can give the impression of identifying himself with the virtues of which he speaks. It gives spirit and solidity to his narrative. Vaughn seems to have done this even though this may be, perhaps, due to the fact that he was the Minister of religion to Dr. Moody.

The circumstances of Harold Arundel Moody's visit to London to pursue studies in medicine are typical of the coloured West Indian student of today. They represent the conflict of ambitious desire with sentiment, economic disabilities and the prospect of loneliness and loss in London. After a comparatively brilliant career at school, what is next? The venture of Harold Arundel Moody at twenty-two, in those times when conditions were not as democratic as come in the wake of two world wars in which coloured West Indians served and died, and at the threat of communism, is thus the more commendable. By his venture and subsequent achievements he showed that immense Christian courage was a necessary prerequisite for the coloured West Indian's success in London. For his obstacles to success are the more difficult and his barriers the higher in proportion to his ambition and intelligence, and also more intricately woven in the culture and traditions in which he has been brought up, nor is he within or without the society with which he claims this studious relationship, if only through ties of fealty and humanity. His marriage was another instance of his courage and also of the Christian expansiveness of his mind and his optimism (which are undoubted characteristics of his race) in spite of all his previous experiences. The philosophy of the coloured West Indian until recently (there is an awakening to a new philosophy if one could judge from the movements around) was exemplified by his firm faith that God will make all things right in spite of all, and the optimism and invariably the self-delusion that went with it. Harold Moody was no different in his and was fortunate in having some denominational connections in London. But the depth of his virtues if one considered the success which attended his Christian pursuits was far beyond average. His marriage also proved to him and so to his race which he represented, that the Christian attitudes which they conceive and practise with such naturally devout sincerity may be evoked in turn from the hearts of their non-coloured counterparts in spite of their prejudices.

The media and methods Dr. Moody chose to campaign on behalf of his race and his success show with what elegant finesse a revolution in the ideas and the outlook of a nation

may be effected by a Christian minority whose ethical standards until then were considered inferior. But the author writes "*all the circumstances were exceptional and not typical. Moody had been brought up in a Jamaican church intimately associated with the C.M.S. He was a living practical demonstration of the power of its Christian witness. In a way by honouring him it was honouring its own work.*" Such then in spite of achievement was the patronising recognition given the coloured West Indian. This attitude Dr. Moody himself recognised when he wrote "*We would, however, like to utter a word of warning to the conservative self-confident and paternal Englishman, whose only conception is that if the coloured man is to advance, he can do so safely and securely only when tied to his apron-strings*". The struggle begun by Dr. Moody to remove these misconceptions is still on and doubtless his initial work, time and the activities of succeeding generations will accomplish what he only did in part.

In spite of their successes, the members of the L.C.P. reflected the characteristic lack of unity of purpose and petty jealousies among the coloured peoples, and an extract of Dr. Moody's appeal in *The Keys*, official organ of the League is as timely today as it was when first written "*By far too many of us are lacking in pride of race and are quite content to be thought English. How can the Englishman respect us if we do not respect ourselves? Also by far too few of us are prepared to put in any solid work for racial development...There can be no self-enrichment without self-sacrifice.*" Perhaps the truth of Dr. Moody's remarks is the more palpable today because the race lacks true leaders in these parts. In an address to a League Conference on the subject, '**The Negro in the Future**', he said it was important to the Negroes' future to deal with the white man and laid down four propositions as follows:

One, the white man must recognise his hypocrisy and seek to become a Christian, at any rate as far as racial relationships are concerned.

Two, the white man must cease to condemn us for his own sins which he projects on to us such as bombast and ostentation. The African is imitative as illustrated by the statement of one who was wishing to commend himself when applying

for a job. *"Me good Christian, me smoke cigar, me drink whisky, me say damn."*

Three, the white man must begin to educate his children to know that the black man has a past that is worthy, and that he has great accomplishments to his credit since emancipation.

Four, the white man must be prepared to look upon the Negro as a man and to work with him on equal terms.

He pleaded for the removal of some general misconceptions concerning the Negro, such as, he is a barbarian and not worth preserving; he is inferior and cannot attain to the mental, moral and spiritual standards of the Britisher; he is unfit for freedom. On the latter point he added it is only the practice and enjoyment of freedom which make us fit for freedom. He appealed to the Negro to seek the truth and face facts however uncomfortable they be; be prepared for hard work etc...overcoming their inferiority complex and healing the painful divisions between the intelligentsia and the masses.

Of things directly political the W.I. Royal Commission, Deliberations on the Federation of the West Indies and the University of the West Indies with the possibility of its establishing a distinctively West Indian culture in so far as it gives stature and independence to West Indian thought and expression, may be said to be results of the agitations of the L.C.P. Dr. Moody himself wrote. *"We must make it perfectly clear that our aim is self-government within the British Commonwealth,"* and *"If these colonies are to progress it is their own people, led by their own leaders, who will play the major part."* He also reflected the social order of things in *"The student of West Indian affairs cannot fail to be impressed by the extent to which the social pattern of slavery remains stamped upon these islands. That pattern of society in which a handful of people owned most of the wealth, while the vast masses laboured in poverty on the property of the minority."*

The grand tour Dr. Moody made, though he apparently failed to stimulate those who heard him speak to the realisation of his ideal of the Cultural Centre in London, was a fitting finale to his symphony of selfless sacrifice and striving on behalf of his race. That his final effort failed may be due to the optimism he had in the response of his race to such a unifying

ideal and possibly to the inability of its members in spite of his eloquence to realise at that time its full practical and spiritual significance. However, let it always be said that he finally failed and died in a just cause.

Negro Victory is just over one hundred and fifty pages, simply bound, in harmony perhaps with the simplicity of its expression and the life-story it relates, but it tells a wonderful lesson of a life lived courageously, straightforwardly, and in doing so it expresses the courage, hopes, attempts, agitations, frustrations and failings of a young nation of predominantly coloured West Indians growing up to realise and reclaim a glorious heritage and build a future independently on the basis of mutual respect and equality for other races and nations. Its message rests upon two words—Courage and Hope, and it speaks with the voice of a Christian.

Negro Victory —The Life Story of Dr. Harold Moody, written by David A. Vaughn is published by the Independent Press Limited, London, at 7/6.

—HORACE L. MITCHELL

Book Review
A WEST INDIA FORTUNE

Richard Pares, Professor of History in the University of Edinburgh, has written a much needed and exciting book which he has called *A West India Fortune*.

In his foreword the author states that "*The Book I have now written is an attempt to practise what I preach*". Mr. Pares believes that there is a great need for histories of individual businesses studied from their own records.

"Until we can quote histories of representative banks, steamship companies, ferry-builders, tea-planters, wine-merchants, servant's registries, coalmines, and the like, we shall still be talking about the history of economic policy, not about economic history—a peculiarly bad mistake to make about a country like Great Britain where the efforts of society have usually counted for so much and those of the rulers of society, comparatively speaking for so little."

West India Fortune describes the history of a West Indian sugar plantation in the island of Nevis, and then that of a sugar-factory business in Bristol, to which the Pinney family, with whom the book is concerned, transferred their attention. It is a family history which covers the history of the West Indian sugar industry, not quite from its beginning, but from its formative years, not quite to its end, but to the decline of its greatness.

The Pinneys are a West Country family who have preserved a wonderful collection of their records, from letters written by the first Pinney to go to Nevis, in 1685, to the last recorded letter written by the House of Pinney and Case in 1850.

Out of these and with the generous assistance of living members of the family, Richard Pares has been able not only to plot with accuracy the rise and fall of the two sides of the business, but to show the influence of individuals on the family fortune.

There are many clever little portraits of some of the Pinneys and their employees.

Azariah, the first to go to Nevis, was condemned to transportation there by Lord Jeffreys, for his part in

Monmouth's rebellion, but arrived there a free man. Azariah, who had no living children at the time of his death, adopted a young cousin, John Pretor, afterwards known as John Pinney, to succeed to his estates. It was a lucky adoption, for John it was who built the fortune up. It was the emotional intensity with which he felt and lived, that distinguished John Pinney from less successful men of his time. He could not bear having nothing to do. Above all, he feared and hated debt as other people fear and hate weeds, or dirt or mortal sin. In one of his letters he mentions the inexpressible comfort of being free of debt. Interest on money is like a moth in a man's garment, never asleep. So seriously did he take his affairs, that he tells a correspondent that he "*could not sleep all night for thinking of a bad piece of business.*"

Then there is Charley Pinney, who in 1831, was elected Mayor of Bristol, but whose term of office ended somewhat ignominiously after two days; and there are a host of others, all playing their part, great or small, in the history and fortunes of the family. There are vivid pictures of life on a plantation during the French wars and of life in Bristol at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

Although the author has written what is essentially a valued piece of economic history, he has also succeeded in making a book that appeals to the layman as much as the expert. The illustrations, from portraits and prints, are apt additions to the text. This book should be of special interest to people in the West Indies, and is well worth its price of 21s.

—EILEEN BREAKS

Book Review
THE WRITER'S SITUATION by Storm
Jameson

"The writer has a double duty" says Storm Jameson "to remind us that the unit of value in the world is not a mile of frontier territory or a dollar or even a bushel of wheat, but a single human being the most obscure, the least able to speak for himself...The writer's other duty —I am thinking of English writers, not being in any way competent to talk to the others about their particular duty— is to persuade the English that we are responsible to Europe...Writers will be treacherous fellows if they do not insist on the value of values...a writer has a duty to believe, that freedom, courage and justice are worth more than individual lives".

Storm Jameson, herself a novelist of distinction, has been President of the P.E.N. Club and she has collected in this book (Macmillan, 10/6), 12 essays and addresses prepared between October 1939 and 1949. They deal with the form of the novel, the novelist today, the crisis of the spirit, and the responsibilities of the writer, and they are all variations on a theme, the question *"Can man survive?...It is our luck—at least in Europe — to be born at the moment when an enormous wave which has been gathering itself up, up, is just about to break and rush down"*. Her variations include glances at the quality of the writing of Kate Roberts of Wales, Andre Malraux of France, Auden of England and America, and Marie Kuncewiczowa of Poland. In at least three of the essays she affirms the debt of Europe to the civilising spirit of France, and always she shows the integration of the English writer with the complex web of European civilisation.

The writing is sensitive, the individual judgements on writers are acute and in an instinctive woman's way, Storm Jameson is heavy with the sense of her responsibility as a guide, as one who had had much to do with the literary movements of the European countries. In this book she has spoken for them all. But the pessimism of Europe overlays every part and it is doubtful whether this volume can be adequately reviewed, or reviewed other than as an academic

exercise by a writer in the West Indies who does not live in Europe and whose climate of opinion is different.

Perhaps the crux of the matter may be found in two further extracts. Writing about Kate Roberts, Storm Jameson says *"The words a child learns in his infancy remain, whatever speech he learns later, the language of his deep life; through them he is in touch with the whole past of his country...There is a nationalism of the spirit; the only one worth fighting for"*. The second is in the essay on Auden: *"In an age of faith, a writer adds himself, his work, to the living growing civilisation he has been born into. In a dying civilisation he can only try to detach himself, to free himself from the weariness creeping over his age, by withdrawing from it into his own words."*

The West Indies is now entering an Elizabethan era. We are building a nationalism of the spirit and as writers we are adding our work to the living growing civilisation we have been born into. There is existing in this region an age of faith and the major bond of kinship we share with Storm Jameson is that of social responsibility. So we listen to the pessimistic overtones of the book as strangers listen to a foreign song, and we remind ourselves of the unity of the Atlantic civilisation that has fertilised America and the West Indies from its seminary in Europe.

Archibald MacLeish has a fine description of the man of letters—the writer on contemporary matters who is also the scholar with a deep intimate knowledge of the past, and who brings all this cargo of history into the harbours of the present. The creative minority, which Arnold Toynbee tells are the really important people in each age and civilisation, includes the man of letters with the artist, the politician and all the other engineers of society. In the West Indies we are now beginning to provide the writers who may later become the men of letters and who are certainly a part of Toynbee's creative minority. I hope Storm Jameson will be heartened when she is reminded of the fertilisation of spirit for which Europe is responsible in the Dominions and elsewhere and particularly in this West Indian region.

Take heart, Mrs. Jameson. Man will survive; the new nationalisms' of the spirit are all rooted in the old, and the unit of value is still the individual.

—A.J.S.

Book Review
SHADOWS MOVE AMONG THEM by
Edgar Mittelholzer

Shadows Move Among Them has something to say. It seeks to capture that intangibility between body and spirit — indeed “*the shadow*”, it etches the horizon of “*urges*” and “*inhibitions*”, and establishes that real living comes of harmony of spirit and body. Subjugation of one, or of the other, leads to an unbalanced state of being.

Each of the characters makes play about the shadows. It is an expressive story about a certain character, not infrequent in this present nerve-racked world. Gregory Hawke is lost and desires to find himself.

Gregory comes to British Guiana to stay with a quite unique family woven out of the jungles of the Berbice River. Readers need to bear with the varied “*shadow surveys*”, and were the writing not entertaining, some pages might be tedious.

First we meet Olivia — the adolescent — she is drool, fantastic, puckish, wistful, passionate, volatile, so downright wholesome...and lovable. My favourite of the book. Olivia is heard to say “*I wonder what new shadow he’s (Gregory) bringing with him?*” Gregory says of the family, “*shadows made a dancing screen between him and them.*” Berton, the sensitive younger brother, staunch pal of Olivia, remarked about the shadows that move among us so we might go on and on about these “*shadows*” sought to be pinned or banished.

Other characters besides Olivia are well-sketched, except the Rev. Gerald Harmston, leader of a belief (which can hardly be called a religious one) of strange creeds and values. His terrific punishment of the manservant Logan, and the lack of insight into the lewdness and cruelty of the woman-servant, Ellen, with its possible disastrous effects, are inconsistent, Mrs. Joan Harmston, his wife, is a true study of the *mater familias*. Mabel, the elder daughter combines an average, though not typical, young Eve. Her character is flexible under impressions, environment and pressure, until her awakening, and the making of her own decisions.

Does the author mean to mock at religion? What had the creed of Parson Harmston substituted that was better? Ideas in the Reservation Squads of stern discipline alongside a queer freedom of action seem somewhat confused and contradictory.

Or, does he throw down the gauntlet for truer religious communities? It appears that he wishes to merge what he thinks the best of each doctrine and to unfold practical and cultural living to the Amerindians. There are many reasonable suggestions for helping and organising Amerindian Reservations no doubt. His striking out at the complex and chaotic world politics and too restricted living in big cities is merited. Gregory was so sick of it and satiated with civilization.

Sex is much stressed in this book. To some it may be informative, shocking, even exciting. And to others, who absorb no harm from such writing, it will furnish a type of humour and amusement!

But — “*if love were all?*” (and is not lust or passion sometimes mistaken for love?) take note, that it has been proved that there is more harm caused by sexual over-indulgence than the less frequent souring and drying-up process often accredited to the spinster, by absence of sexual intercourse (we cannot always call it love). Mated society is also known to suffer from repressions, denial and hysteria, so nail the hackneyed attack on the spinster. Sex is not the cure for all ills, no support for unnecessary free love — careful what we serve the primitive people and children. Candour about sex takes pruning, else it may grow coarse and a nuisance in a modern world, even though sex makes the world go round!

The Author has put over, well, exciting happenings in a small circle. The portrayal of that type of sturdy backwood Colonial family is good. They're natural, loyal, loving. They squabble, they give and take, are rude and frolic, all engulfing human characters. And the rough setting in Guiana's forests and river, and knowledgeable information about flora and fauna typical to Guiana could interest the outside world much.

Repartee goes easily, there is an element of surprise and trickery; the vignettes of the England left, behind are clear-cut; original expressions and rare words there are in plenty,

there is clever use of sounds like that “plep” when a berry drops in the river. Phraseology is often poetical, we read of “lassoes of love”, “young moonlight” ...and these are not the best lines; many pages hold truthful philosophy too. For human understanding quote — “*They would probably not understand even when explained*”, says Gregory, when in lonely and baffled mood.

The Book is without climax but is a steady build-up of Gregory’s return to the normal. In part I, 16 chapters, his near mastery of his madness is covered. Part II in 10 chapters gives further fading out of his Neurasthenia, and Part III, 9 chapters, sees the conquest of self, by the ending of himself when “*shadows returned to the shadows.*”

And so the story ends on the keynote of happy conquest-spirit harnessed body, and harmony was born. The best of the Old World uplifts and fuses with the New World.

But we are interested to know how Gregory and Mabel’s mating weathered time, what further grew of the forest settlements and the riddle of the death of Sigmund, and most of all — what of fantastic Olivia’s development into womanhood? We are for the aura of phantasy around life adding romance to everything...We await a sequel.

The book is recommended, it’s different and entertaining.

—CECILY LORD

Book Review

THE BRITISH WEST INDIES by W.L. Burn

Professor Burn has written a compact "*Survey of the thought and activities of men and especially of Englishmen over three centuries*" in the British Caribbean. It is a good, racily-written history of the British in the West Indies. But the West Indian, whose history is not here recorded except for tantalising glimpses, will read and approve the scholarship which is here in abundance, and the skill in compression which reveals the significant detail; but he will look in vain for warm illuminating sympathy with the life of the people.

The sway of conquest, the cross currents of international treaties, the delineation of difficulties facing planter and colonial official, all receive their quota of analysis. On the abolition issue, there are sections of the book such as page 96 *et seq.* and page 108 where Professor Burn seems to be writing in direct opposition to the thesis of Dr. Eric Williams' *Capitalism and Slavery*. He says "*only on a superficial view is it arguable that abolition was merely one more trick in the political game...British opinion was not concerned merely with the economics of the West Indies: it was concerned also with their social, their constitutional, their judicial and administrative arrangements; it was engaged in subjecting them not to a partial but to a general, detailed, highly critical examination.*"

The West Indian reader will judge for himself.

In his treatment of modern times Professor Burn is pessimistic in a way that no West Indian can approve. He is too prone to judge the future almost completely from the past and leaves no room for the dynamic of a people's history. He says "*the time may come when what is being thought and done in Kingston and Bridgetown and Port-of-Spain has more effect than what is being thought and done in London. Should that happen, the future of the West Indies would be of extreme interest.*"

Well, the future of the West Indies will be of extreme interest.

—A.J.S

Review
THE PIONEER PRESS

— *Poetry for Children*
— *Maxie Mongoose and Other Animal Stories*
— *Anancy Stories and Dialect Verse*
— *14 Jamaican Short Stories*

I came just by chance upon *Poetry for Children by Jamaican Poets* edited by Una Marson, (Pioneer Press, 1950). I picked it up and began to read some of the poems to the children of the Kindergarten. I watched their interest grow and their eager desire to hear more. Their pleasure was heightened when I read the poem '**Some Things I love**' by Constance Hollar. Each stanza deals with a subject that is familiar to them e.g. "*the curl in the wave*", "*the sound of waves in hollow shells*", "*the patter of the rain*", and "*the lightning flashing bright*". It was the familiar made beautiful for them. The music of the lines caught them and in a short while they were all saying the lines over and over again.

I like this little book of poems particularly because we get away from the terms of Spring and Autumn, the Cuckoo and the Sparrow, the moors and the marshes.

Now we can enjoy a poem like '**The Laughter of the Raindrops**' by Lisa Salmon or '**Gifts**' by Daisy L. Hill which so beautifully describes Creation,

"God lit the night with diamonds,
The Dawn He cloth'd in gray.
Morning He decked in sparkling gems,
To herald in the day."

And so it goes on until we come to the climaxing beauty of the poem where God's message lies "*In the flaming heart of sunset, and the peace of evening skies.*"

The next in the quartet is *Maxie Mongoose and Other Animal Stories*, by Laurice Bird. I must say here that I have a very appreciative audience. I have read several of these stories to the children who clamour for more. They are well written and the children are fairly familiar with the animals,

many of which they have seen in our own Museum, here in British Guiana. The stories are rather amusing and both children and grownups can enjoy them. Maxie Mongoose is a most interesting character.

The third in the quartet is perhaps the most interesting and amusing of the lot. It is a collection of *Anancy Stories and Dialect Verse* by Louise Bennett and others.

I remember well it was Philip Sherlock who really stirred my curiosity to know more about these Anancy Stories. He was giving a lecture in the Town Hall, Georgetown, and began with an Anancy Story, The audience roared every time he treated us to the Jamaican dialect proverbs that were introduced in the story. I remember him asking the question: "*Why are they disreputable?*"

In his introduction to this little book, Philip Sherlock says that when Anancy, the Spider crossed the Atlantic with the people who came from West Africa and settled in the Caribbean he came in to another world and the Anancy story of the West Indies is set in our own familiar landscape. In this way the story became the vehicle for satire and the ridicule of the masters of the slaves. The stories are written to be read for pleasure and delight just in the same way as the Calypso of Trinidad is written for amusement. I am sure the reader would like to know the story of '**Anancy and de King daughta**' by Louise Bennett and also how '**Hog got his Mouth**' by Una Wilson. There are only two of the many stories to be found in this book. Then, for those who read dialect verse well, there are quite a few by Claude McKay, George Wallace and Una Marson, together with Humorous Verse by Louise Bennett and Jamaica Folk Songs.

There is nothing disreputable about these Anancy Stories and to quote Philip Sherlock again "*those who complain that the Anancy Story glorifies guile, is immoral and should not be told, miss the point.*"

Children enjoy them, their grandmothers and their great-grand-mothers enjoyed them.

We come now to the last in the quartet — *14 Jamaican Short Stories* by various writers and among them Vic Reid, author of *New Day*. Unlike the other three books, this one is specially intended for the grownups. They are all very well written,

but I have selected for special mention Vic Reid's '**No Mourning in the Valley**' and W. G. Ogilvie's '**Half a Fork**'. This collection is a real treat and West Indians should try to secure copies and become familiar with the writers of the Caribbean.

—E.E.S.

WEST INDIAN BOOKSHELF

by The Editor

Building a literary tradition is one of the essentials of a national spirit, and it is encouraging to see the gradually increasing number of books on all subjects written for the West Indian Bookshelf. Even when it is the July 1950 *Times* Survey of the British Colonies with its mischievous attack on the style and intellectual quality of West Indian writers, the ill-founded comment is half forgiven because of the informative accompanying summaries of Canadian Trade, Sugar Industry, the Trinidad Election forecasts and West Indian Cricket. This is just another instance where the falling curves of European endeavour intersect the rising curves of the West Indies. The booklet reprint of eight articles and a leading article from the *Times* entitled '**The British Caribbean**' is a better bird's eye view and helps West Indians to see themselves as England sees them in matters like sugar talks and race rivalries as factors delaying constitutional reform and so on.

Those two are written at adult levels to inform the UK of her Caribbean colonies. More important from the West Indian Bookshelf's point of view are books written for the adults and the children of the British Caribbean where the errors of facts and attitude matter more because they stand in a way of people's grappling successfully with their environment. Philip Sherlock has compiled as one of the Practical Work Books in a *Nelson's Geography and Social Studies*, a good and well-illustrated introductory booklet '**The West Indies**'. Nelson has brought out also *Our Heritage* by Carter, Digby and Murray, a promising study in the continental origins of the present population and the first book in a series of four dealing with the History of the West Indian Peoples which is designed to place the development of the Caribbean in a Commonwealth setting and take the story up to the standard of the School Certificate Student.

At adult levels, the West Indian Bookshelf has had additions in Adolphe Roberts' *Single Star*, a competent and well-articulated novel of the 1890s which shows how different

languages and traditions are no barriers where adventurous Jamaicans desire to assist the independence movement of Cubans, and also Edgar Mittelholzer's new novel *Shadows Move Among Them* which takes its place beside *Corentyne Thunder* and *Morning at the Office*.

In specialist fields, there are Professor Arthur Lewis' *Industrialisation in the British West Indies* and Dr. Neumark's *Importance of Agriculture in Caribbean Economy*. Anyone interested in the literary expression of the Caribbean will find an introduction to the subject, in the booklets *The Literary Adventure of the West Indies* and *Caribbean Literature* by the present writer, while the historically minded will welcome the first issue of the *Caribbean Historical Review* scholarly edited by Dr. Eric Williams. The articles in this issue treat the Caribbean region as an indivisible whole, showing through research in diplomatic documents some of the discussions on Cuba, Puerto Rico and Barbados in relation respectively to the slave trade, 18th century diplomacy and the Confederation question. The articles on Schoelcher the Frenchman who waged a lifetime's war to abolish slavery in the French West Indies, though not as documented as the others make a most valuable contribution to the knowledge of British West Indians.

Other welcome additions are N. E. Cameron's *Thoughts on Life and Literature*, Professor Harlow's November 1950 Inaugural Lecture on '**The Historian and British Colonial History**'.

George Cumper's study in three booklets on '**The Social Structure of the British Caribbean**' excluding Jamaica (Part II dealing with the West Indian Family throws much light on the variation in the pattern among the Colonies) and Eric Williams' '**Education in the British West Indies**' written in 1945 and published in 1951—this study represents the basic ideas in a memorandum submitted to the West Indies Committee of the Commission on Higher Education in the Colonies and deals with the aims of education in a colonial community against the background of its economic, social and political characteristics.

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