

Sarawak Gazette

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The Sarawak Gazette.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 7th, 1949.

Birth.

MORRIS.—To Dorothy, wife of R. H. Morris, at Bowral, N.S.W., on the 27th July—a son, Adrian George Holywell.

Communications.

The coastline of Sarawak is 450 miles long, yet nowhere along this shallow length of water is there a good natural harbour. In this latter respect nature has not been kind, but she has compensated somewhat by providing an abundance of rivers along the banks of which the vast majority of the population live and by means of which the export and distribution feeder services operate.

Except perhaps for Miri, all towns of any importance are situated on rivers at distances varying from a few miles to upwards of fifty miles inland. Apart from the delta area of the large Rajang River, the rivers are unconnected and the traveller visiting town after town along the coast must cross and recross bars at each river mouth. Some of these bars are very shallow, often no deeper than five or six feet at high tide; they may be sandy and subject to change without warning; and they are not always well marked. The depth of water on the Rajang bar is, however, about 25 feet at high water, neap tide, while that of the Sarawak River is about a foot less. Altogether travelling by ship along the coast is slow and costly at the best of times and in the *landas* season it may be a hazardous proceeding, requiring expert navigation and extensive local knowledge.

The rivers on which these coastal or semi-coastal towns are situated have their origins in the high mountain ranges of the interior, and the largest rivers—the Sarawak, Batang Lupar, Rajang, Baram and Limbang—commence from the highest range which forms the spine of Borneo and is regarded as the boundary between Sarawak and Dutch Borneo. There are no good roads into the interior, and to reach it one must proceed upriver by launch, outboard, paddling and poling in that order. Sometimes there are jungle paths connecting the rivers, providing short-cuts and the like, but generally speaking the only means of progress is by water. In any case walking over jungle paths is an unsatisfactory and uneconomic method of conveying produce and supplies.

The principal towns have their streets and roads, though few towns have roads sufficiently surfaced or long enough for useful motor traffic, and animal-drawn vehicles are seldom seen.

Very few roads run into the country for any distance and most of these lead from Kuching. One links Kuching with Bau about 25 miles away, but after seven miles it becomes a very poor highway and on the Bau side of the ferry at Batu Kitang the road is now almost useless in parts. Another, continuing from the seventh mile already mentioned, carries on to the tenth mile with a fair surface for medium traffic and then continues for another 11 miles to Segu over a road much of which is now almost impassable. This latter road finishes at the site of a bungalow (now re-erected in Kuching) which had been built by the Rajah as a holiday camp. A third road, continuing from the tenth mile mentioned above, runs to Serian on the Batang Kayan 39 miles from Kuching. The surface of the last 29 miles is good enough for heavy traffic but travelling over its rough surface in a medium-sized car is not a pleasant experience.

This road was built in the early thirties and was called, rather optimistically, the Simanggang Road. A survey was made right through to Simanggang but construction stopped at the true left bank of the Kayan River. Evidently the Japanese intended to continue where we left off because they built a heavy though structurally unsound bridge at the end of the road, but it seems they gave up the idea with that initial burst of energy. After its construction the upkeep of the Simanggang Road proved a very heavy drain on the State's resources—so much so that at one time abandonment of the last 29 miles was seriously considered and upkeep became negligible, although by that time some two thousand settlers had taken up land along the half-mile strip on each side of the road that had been opened to alienation. The manner of alienation probably is still a source of embarrassment to the Lands and Survey Department.

Simanggang, Betong, Sarikei, Sibü, Binatang, Miri, Limbang and Lawas each have a few miles of very inferior roads leading into the country. Simanggang and Betong are connected by an inferior road, one can motor between Mukah and Oya between high tides and there is a road leading from Miri into Brunei, but with the wide Baram River to cross by ferry.

A ditch ten miles long connects the Oya River with the Igan, commencing in the Oya at a point just above Dalat. Several plans have been made to open it, and before the war considerable sums were spent on deepening and widening, but Sungai Kut remains a ditch for the present.

For most practical purposes Sarawak is a country of waterways, but with a water transport system by no means sufficient for the country's needs in this modern era. Supplies and produce are carried between Sarawak and Singapore mainly by one shipping company but freight charges are a heavy burden on the people. Internal distribution of supplies and collection of produce is effected usually by small vessels and launches, owned mainly by Chinese. Government has a small fleet of launches, but at present most of these launches spend much of their time in dock. The pre-war Government fleet was a good one, suitably constructed for Sarawak conditions, but was almost totally lost. The present vessels cannot be said to be suitable replacements, but more suitable vessels are now being constructed.

It might be expected that, with the abundance of waterways, water transport would be well-developed, with speedy, suitable vessels, capable of economic transport of goods; but such is by no means the case and some of the river vessels have to be seen to be believed. It may be that lack of competition from land transport has something to do with the poor quality of the water transport system, but the fact remains that lack of efficient transport is imposing an extra-heavy cess upon our produce at the expense of the producer, and the cost of supplies to the consumer is enhanced for the same reason. This country is at the end of the supply and demand lines of the world's markets and the people suffer accordingly, but on top of this they must pay for a costly transport service. As a matter of interest we may be permitted to point out the effect of Sarawak's geography on Government efficiency. Travelling about the country is extremely slow and, to take an extreme case, an officer wishing to visit Sibüti from Kuching for a day or so may take two or three weeks over the trip. The loss to Government in highly-paid travelling time is apparent. Similarly, though a

notification from the Colonial Office requiring to be distributed throughout the Colony may take five days to come to Kuching, it may, if it cannot be telegraphed, take many weeks to reach the interior. The chances that it will ever reach most of the interior people are very slight.

Aerial communication with the outside world has improved greatly in the last few months, and now we have a twice-weekly air passenger and mail service from Kuching to Singapore in the west and to Labuan and beyond in the east. This is excellent progress, and it is to be hoped that it will not be long before a feeder service is provided within the Colony to connect Kuching, Sibü and Miri. In this respect we venture to suggest that the main service could usefully and profitably take in Sibü as a point of call after Kuching, and the feeder service would then have to deal with Miri only for the time being, but later it should be possible, perhaps by using helicopters, to provide air service to the other towns of the Colony. However, although a good air service is an important development which, among other things, will lead to increased efficiency in Government, nevertheless it touches only on the fringe of Sarawak's commercial transport system, and land and water transport development remains an important factor in future economic development.

That, then, is a brief picture of our air, land and water transport systems, given for the benefit of those of our overseas readers who do not know the country well, or are not up-to-date with events. To those who knew the country before the war but have not been here since, we would say that, although there has been progress in the air, the roads are probably worse, and sea transport is certainly worse, than it was in 1939.

The casual observer of Sarawak's problems is apt to jump to the conclusion that an arterial road from west to east is essential to the development of the country. A main road from, say, Kuching to Miri or even Limbang is not a wild dream, but its construction would be a major engineering feat and the cost and upkeep of such a road would be comparatively enormous for such a small and scattered population, and therefore out of all proportion to the service it would render. Sarawak cannot possibly afford such a project at present, but there is every reason for pushing ahead with less ambitious schemes which could be fitted into a major road and river development plan for the future. We have already pointed out that after the present portion of the Simanggang Road was constructed, and after settlers had taken up land along its entire length, it was seriously considered abandoning 29 miles of the road for want of funds to maintain it. Economically the country is no better off, probably worse off, than it was in 1939, but large capital expenditure of this type may now be justified and indeed necessary. It would appear that continuation of the road to Simanggang from Serian would justify the capital outlay, and there are good arguments in favour of building a substantial road eastward through Betong and Saratok and onwards through the Sarikei and Binatang Districts, ultimately to Sibü. For the present, however, we suggest that the proposed road from Serian to Simanggang should be of immediate importance and highway development in the other centres should be planned so that the roads, as they are extended as time and money permit, ultimately will meet to form one main highway through to Sibü.

The Batang Lupar in the Second Division is dependent upon Kuching for its import and export trade, yet the carriage of goods between Kuching and Simanggang is most uneconomical. Vessels must put to sea to go from one river to the other but these vessels must be of the launch type, small enough to navigate the shallow, dangerous and lengthy Batang Lupar. A road between Kuching and the Second Division would provide an invaluable service for the transport of goods and at the same time would open up land for intensive farming. Almost a third of the road is now in existence and even for this poor country it should be possible to afford the expense of construction of the remaining two-thirds, bringing with it as it will valuable developments in transport and agriculture. But such a scheme cannot be carried out without very careful investigation. We refer to the dangers of wholesale opening of areas over which the indigenous people claim customary rights to land. These rights must be recognised and where necessary cleared, but very, very careful investigation is necessary before this is done. There are areas in the First Division where the native, with only one form of industry, namely moving cultivation, now finds himself without sufficient land for his needs because non-indigenous people have been allowed to encroach upon his domain, and his economic state is now precarious. In some such areas the Land Dayaks are now on the borderline of starvation; their whole economy has been upset; and their social and religious system has been undermined. That is a consequence of "opening up the country" without planned development which a road to Simanggang would aggravate. We would point out, for the benefit of those who do not know the interior people well, that the docile Land Dayak of the First Division has been gravely neglected in the past; had he been as voluble and aggressive as the Sea Dayak there might be a very different story to tell of First Division "progress." As it is, the Government now must face a very delicate and difficult task of reconstruction of the Land Dayak social and economic structure; further development without regard for the rights of these people will only aggravate a situation already far too serious for complacency. The same argument applies, though perhaps to a lesser degree, to other races in other Divisions also.

It would seem that a complete plan of road development for the Colony should be drawn up at once (and maybe it has, but the public are not aware of it.) Into this plan would be fitted those land development schemes which are within the resources of the country and which will provide land for the agriculturist who is now demanding it. Native rights over these areas affected by such schemes would be thoroughly investigated and recorded, perhaps in some cases being extinguished with compensation; then the schemes would be pushed ahead and land made available for intensive cultivation by indigene and non-indigene. In some areas rivers, and not roads, would provide communications; the settlement of native rights applies equally here, but mention of river transport brings us to another matter which probably requires attention and which should be part of the main scheme.

We have mentioned the huge wastage in transport from one river to another and the difficulties of combining sea with river transport. Certain rivers in this country can be connected by canal.

Some of them were connected before the war, but the canals were mere ditches and have not been enlarged or maintained. Loba Kara, which joins the Santubong River with Batang Salek and provides access to Sibu Laut and beyond, could be profitably straightened, deepened and widened. Loba Tanju, which provides access from the Sarawak River to the Samarahan, could be dealt with in the same way. There is room for similar improvements in the Rajang delta. Sungai Kut, joining the Igan River with the Oya, has been talked about for generations and could be made into a good canal, and there must be many other places where engineers could provide short-cuts for river transport and effect great and lasting savings in transport costs.

This article is not meant to be a criticism of Government inaction. The wheels of Government necessarily move slowly; funds are not inexhaustible; trained staff are difficult to find; skilled labour is not plentiful; engineering schemes require careful and lengthy consideration; and the settlement of land tenure problems is a slow and laborious undertaking. Schemes hastily undertaken usually result in failure, and it may be that Government has advanced much further in its plans for development along the lines suggested than the public are aware. We know that the extension of the road to Simanggang from Kuching has been considered (but we do not know if plans have been made for the investigation of native rights along the road proposed), and we believe that Government proposes to open Sungai Kut. However, we do think that Government might take the public into its confidence a little more than it appears to have done. The idea of citizenship is still new to our people; perhaps only one in a thousand realises, yet probably imperfectly, that the aim of Government is to make it his Government, to induce him and all his people to take an ever-increasing interest in the affairs of his country, and to proceed by stages until he and his people control and regulate the affairs of Government; but unless development or any other plans are made public and free for discussion, this aim of Government must suffer delay in realisation.

The preceding article was shown to the Director of Public Works before publishing, and we are grateful to him for the following summary of proposed road works to be undertaken:—

"An extensive road programme is planned and applications for C.D.&W. grants have been approved or are being prepared for submission.

The programme includes—

(a) Construction of a road from Serian (or Tebakang) to Simanggang. Survey for this starts next month (approved).

(b) Survey of a possible road connecting Nanga Banyau (Baleh) to Nanga Dap to avoid Pelagus rapids. This is nearing completion. (It does not of course mean that construction of the road will necessarily follow—that is doubtful).

(c) Sarikei-Binatang-Sibu road and eventually Sarikei back to Simanggang (planned with C.D.&W. aid).

(d) Other secondary road proposals include Limbang-Brunei border road (approved and under construction) and Miri-Sibuti (planned).

(e) Pathway cycle and motor track Betong-Ledong (completed).

(f) Pathway cycle and motor track Serian-Tebakang (completed).

(g) Roadway from 32nd Mile Simanggang Road to Sungei Ensengai (under construction).

(h) A number of minor projects either in hand or in course of preparation."

Our New Governor.

His Majesty the King has been pleased to approve the appointment of Mr. Duncan George Stewart, C.M.G., as Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Sarawak in succession to Sir Charles Arden Clarke. Mr. Stewart was born in 1904, and educated at Winchester and Oriel College, Oxford. He joined the Colonial Service in 1928, when he was appointed to Nigeria as a Cadet. In Nigeria he held at various times the posts of Private Secretary to the Lieutenant-Governor of the Northern Provinces, Assistant District Officer, District Officer and Secretary to the West African Governors' Conference. He was appointed Colonial Secretary, Bahamas, in 1944, and Financial Secretary, Palestine, in 1947.

Mr. Stewart is expected to arrive in Sarawak early in November.

Notes and Comments.

The following telegram was sent by His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government to His Highness the Rajah on the occasion of the Rajah's Birthday:—

"Please accept my sincere congratulations occasion of your birthday on behalf of all officers Sarawak Service and from myself personally."

The following reply was received from the Rajah:—

"Much appreciate your birthday greetings. My best wishes to you and all officers Sarawak Service."

His Highness Ahmed Tajudin Akhazul Khairi Wadin ascended the throne of Brunei in 1924 at the age of eleven, and on the 20th September he celebrated his Silver Jubilee as Sultan. Among those who gathered at Brunei for the occasion were Their Excellencies the Commissioner-General (Mr. Malcolm MacDonald) and the High Commissioner for Brunei (Mr. C. W. Dawson). His Majesty the King had been graciously pleased to approve that the Sultan be appointed an honorary Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire. The insignia were flown out from England and arrived just in time for the ceremony, where the presentation was carried out by the High Commissioner.

Kuching's first post-war regatta was held on the 12th September, the official holiday in celebration of the liberation of Sarawak from the Japanese (the 11th being this year on a Sunday). The weather was fine and large crowds came to watch the races and to patronise the tote and cash sweep. An account of the regatta appears elsewhere in this issue.

The Sarawak Turf Club's first post-war meeting is also reported in this number. It was held on the 24th and 26th September, and, in spite of heavy rain on the first day and a continuous slight drizzle on the second, was a great success.

His Excellency the Commissioner-General arrived in Kuching on the 22nd September from Brunei. He was able to see the first day of the Turf Club's Autumn meeting, in which his pony *Bujang Balleh* was racing. He left on the 24th evening on an unofficial holiday visit to the Balleh.

Though poor soils predominate on the agricultural land of Sarawak, preliminary experimental work by the Department of Agriculture has shown that, under certain conditions, these soils will respond well to applications of fertilisers if these are used by "placement" methods (i.e. buried in lumps fairly close to the plant, instead of being broadcast on the surface). Indigenous guano, though very variable in composition, has been found to be well suited to use by "placement" methods, but Sarawak's guano deposits, although large, will not last indefinitely. Certain imported fertilisers can be used successfully, but their high price and the fact that they are in short supply may make their widespread use impracticable at present.

It is therefore of considerable interest to learn that the Department of Agriculture is investigating the possibility of suitable fertilisers being manufactured in Sarawak. It is understood that such manufacture may prove feasible and economic. Although it is of course important to guard against extravagant hopes, this information does justify a certain optimism with regard to the future of Sarawak's agriculture.

A Handbook of Sarawak is now being printed and should be ready towards the end of November. It will contain information about the geography, history, people and government of Sarawak, about trade and commerce, production and mineral resources, and a great deal of general information. There will be several illustrations, population distribution maps, and rainfall map and a good map of Sarawak in colour showing relief. The book will be on sale at \$3.50 a copy.

Work was commenced in August on surfacing part of the Simanggang Road. It is planned to surface the eleventh and twelfth miles of this road by the end of this year and to continue surfacing in 1950. Furthermore, a survey is about to be commenced of the route of the remainder of the road to Simanggang. It is not yet known if the road will cross the river at Serian or at Tebakang. The plan is to complete the present unformed section to Simanggang over a period of from 5 to 6 years and the cost of construction will probably be met from the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund.

The Director of Public Works very kindly has supplied the following information regarding the new airstrip at 6th Mile:—

"The plan is to provide a paved asphalt surfaced runway 50 yards wide and 1500 yards in length with 200 yards graded grass surfaced overruns and undershoots at each end. On each side of the surfaced runway there will be a 75 yards wide safety verge of graded and compacted earth, grass surfaced. Easy approaches for air-

craft are available at each end of the runway which will conform with international requirements. The bearing of the runway is 028/208 degrees. A contract has now been placed for the metalling and asphalt macadam surfacing of the runway and it is expected that this will be completed and the runway ready for service in six months. The safety verges will not, however, be completed for some time later.

An airport building providing control tower, signals room, meteorological office, customs, immigration, health offices and waiting rooms will shortly be erected. Also there will be quarters for staff, two of which are now in course of construction.

Up-to-date telecommunications and radio aids are also being installed.

Night landing facilities are not to be provided for the time being."

Dr. Hwai-Chun Lu, who has come to take the place of Dr. Ying-Wing Chan as Consul of the Republic of China, arrived in Kuching on the 11th September. Dr. Lu is a M.A. and Ph.D. of the University of Ottawa, and his last post was Second Secretary of the Chinese Embassy at Lima, Peru.

An issue of postage stamps in four denominations, to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Universal Postal Union, will be on sale with effect from the 10th October for a maximum period of three months or until all stocks are sold, whichever is the earlier. The denominations are 8 cents (red), 15 cents (blue), 25 cents (green) and 50 cents (violet).

The farm and buildings of the Rural Improvement School at Kanowit are suffering from rats. The Principal prefers to combat these with cats rather than with snakes and poisons, but is unable to obtain a cat in the Kanowit area. He would be grateful if anyone having a healthy cat or cats, of whatever sex, age or parentage, for gift or sale, would inform him (the Principal, Rural Improvement School, Kanowit), stating offer and name and address. Arrangements will be made to collect and take delivery of accepted offers, but no undertaking is given to accept all or any offers.

A Singapore lawyer, Mr. Mark Morrison, appeared in the First Circuit Court in Kuching during September on behalf of three appellants who had been convicted of offences under the Customs Ordinance. The appeals were allowed in all three cases. It is believed that Mr. Morrison is the second practising lawyer ever to have appeared before a court in Sarawak. The first was a Mr. Smalley, who appeared in 1930 in a case between Messrs. Ong Ewe Hai and Ong Tiang Swee.

The Kamala Circus, the first circus to visit Kuching since 1936, arrived on the 12th September, and the unloading of the animals provided a welcome diversion for those who were wearying of the long intervals between races in the Regatta. The Circus installed itself on St. Thomas's Football Field, and the gala opening took place on the 15th in the presence of His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government and Mrs. Dawson. In spite of the heavy rain, all seats were occupied. The circus will go on to Sibü after Kuching.

We understand that it is expected that radio-telephone communication between London and Singapore will be established by the beginning of 1950, and we naturally wonder with some trepidation how long it will be before the Colonial Office will be able to speak direct to Kuching.

The Accommodation of Visitors to Sarawak. This is a question which already deserves attention, and one which, if our community goes on increasing in the same ratio as of late, must force itself more and more upon the public. (*Sarawak Gazette*, 15th July, 1871).

Tempora mutantur?

"To-morrow to Fresh Woods and Pastures New."

(A POLICY FOR SHIFTING CULTIVATION).

The articles by the Director of Agriculture and Mr. Kay in the *Sarawak Gazette* for September, 1949, must have been of particular interest to those concerned with the Sarawak countryside. The former indicated that the resources of his Department would be concentrated for some years on developing "the comparatively accessible alluvial flats of the deltas and coastal regions (apart from the deep peat swamps) and possibly some of the hinterland hill areas bordering on those flats". The latter described (amongst other things) the padi problems of the Land Dayaks in the Sadong area, and indicated as a solution that they should occupy themselves with animal husbandry and the cultivation of other crops, using animal manure. "There appears to be no solution to the up-country problem other than mixed farming. It can happen only very gradually, but it is surely what must be aimed at if there is to be any future at all for the up-country people." It is interesting to recall that the Director of Agriculture for the Frontier Areas Administration in Burma came to similar conclusions after a tour of shifting cultivation in the Kachin hills.

Mr. Kay raises the question of the longhouse and is in favour of its abolition. In the Balleh considerable de-centralization has been achieved by the system of farming huts (*dampas* and *langkaus*); on the more distant farms the people may spend as much as six months of the year living in their farm huts, and the longhouse becomes little more than "a centre for meeting and parties"; some of the *dampas* are almost as solidly built as the parent longhouse and as comfortable to live in (Temong-gong Koh's house maintains several such). On the other hand for administrative reasons no longhouse of less than 10 doors is at present permitted, and many are undoubtedly too large units of population for efficient farming under any system. It is to be hoped that the sociological experts will be able to advise on the ideal and maximum permissible size of longhouse; to abolish it altogether would be a drastic operation, and a system of small longhouses with satellite *dampas* is a possible solution.

That however is by the way. This article is written in response to Mr. Kay's plea that others will offer suggestions for shifting cultivation, and it is written from the particular angle of a Forest Officer, with special reference to the Ibans of Kapit district where conditions have not yet reached the critical state of the Land Dayak areas. He is concerned because forest and soil conservation in such

areas as the *ulu* Rejang and Balleh ultimately depends on shifting cultivation being stabilised.

His point of view has been set out in the leading article on "Disafforestation" in the *Sarawak Gazette* for May, 1949, and it is suggested in that article that further inroads in our high forest areas be prevented by direct legislation, "something stricter than the Pak System". As a temporary measure the Iban penetration can be checked by purely negative and repressive measures, but in the long run this will be no more effective than was the Maginot line; for increasing hunger and population and a progressively greater say in Local Government will enable the Iban to break through sooner or later.

Quoting from the same article: "The Iban intrusion into the Third Division during the last half century, after devastating the lower and middle reaches, has been steadily pushing up into the headwaters." Anyone who has seen shifting cultivation in other countries must immediately be struck by the *rapidity* with which the Iban destroys the fertility of the soil; I suggest that it is due to the fact, not that he is a shifting cultivator, but that he is a *bad* shifting cultivator; his only rival is the Lisu, who has his headquarters in the Salween valley but has been migrating westwards into the Myitkyina and Bhamo districts of Northern Burma during the last half-century and ravishing the soil in a similar manner; whereas the Kachins have been quietly growing their rice by this method for centuries without any obvious ill effects.

It is therefore pertinent to enquire closely into the Iban's method, and what actually happens in the Balleh at the present moment is something like this. A longhouse leaps up some river past all the other longhouses and establishes itself in an area of virgin forest. For the first three or four years farming is more or less confined to virgin forest, because other things being equal virgin soil produces a better harvest than soil that has been farmed before. Rumah Sipang, the top-house in the Entulu-Merirai, is in this stage of development, having moved to its present site in 1945. There comes a time when some of the *bileks* find themselves inconveniently far away from the longhouse, and they can then choose one of three alternatives:—

- (a) to farm a fresh patch of jungle yet further away, or
- (b) to farm their present plot for two or more years, or
- (c) to go back to one of their earlier farms (*damun*).

It should not be forgotten that the Iban in the *ulu* is still a very primitive type; the casual observer notes his intelligence and vivacity and jungle efficiency and is apt to be misled into believing that he thinks in the same way as an educated European; whereas he is more likely to be guided in his decisions by magic, omens, dreams, and such-like than by ratiocination.

So some *bileks* choose one alternative and some another; the farming is irrational and there is little evidence of planning for more than one year ahead. There is a distinct tendency to farm a plot to exhaustion, especially if it is near the longhouse, either by growing rice on it two or three years running or at very short intervals; thus the farm behind Penghulu Jinggut's house started as *damun*

in 1946 and the rapid deterioration resulting from cropping in successive years was graphically illustrated by the Penghulu himself—he described the padi as being about chest-high in 1947, waist-high in 1948, and knee-high in 1949. The ground is now *tanah kusi* and will be given a rest while some other plot is farmed.

The Iban is not entirely oblivious of the evils of his "method" and if you ask a *Tuai Rumah* why he does not farm on a longer rotation he has two stock answers:—

(a) the longhouse has not enough farming land, or

(b) the *Prentah* will be angry with us if we spread ourselves over too big an area.

The first excuse can easily be proved or disproved by an actual survey of the land at the disposal of a random sample of a dozen or twenty longhouses; but from ocular estimates I would say that it does not hold good for most longhouses in the Balleh.

There are probably better grounds for the second excuse. Until very recently the primary responsibility of the officer in charge of a district such as Kapit was to keep the peace; and therefore very rightly he decided, or was instructed, to keep his lively chicks closely tucked under his wing "within administrative reach". Thus the report of the Acting Assistant District Officer, Kapit, for February 1926 described how a series of longhouses which had settled themselves in odd nooks and corners of the Katibas were chivied back to the main river; and as a result too many people were probably settled in too small an area, while the Ibans of Kapit district as a whole got it firmly into their heads that they must make themselves as small as possible. Hence Dr. Leach's comment in his report:— "Where administrative officers are liable to go wrong . . . is firstly they underestimate the total amount of fallow jungle that is required per village and therefore force the villages to exhaust the resources of their land, and secondly that they aim at making the village too large . . . thus the danger of *ladang* (i.e. shifting) cultivation is, in a sense, not that it may use too much land but that it may use too little."

As mentioned earlier, the Iban intrusion into the Third Division is little more than half-a-century old; and therefore the significance of studying the farming in the Balleh is this: that in all probability the methods he is using there to-day are those that he used in the Second Division, or over the Dutch border, 50 or 100 years ago, whatever method he may have adopted there now. My first proposition is that it is not legitimate to rule out shifting cultivation as a permissible method of growing padi merely because, as practised by the Iban, it has devastated the soil over large tracts of the Second and Third Divisions.

I do not know when the Government of Sarawak realised the disastrous results of farming hill land on too short a rotation (and *a fortiori* in successive years). I have been told that it has been known and appreciated by Government officers for many, many years. If so, it is surprising to find, as recently as 1926, the following paragraph in a *Sarawak Gazette* editorial, with reference to "the more primitive inhabitants whose chief occupation is the cultivation of padi, especially hill padi":—

"Conservative in their customs and as yet unlightened by modern methods they are content

to destroy thousands of acres of timbered land annually in order to plant their crop; seldom, if ever, is the same area planted for two years in succession, often an interval of as much as seven years elapsing during which period the ground is supposed to lie fallow."

The writer obviously thought they should go on planting the same plot year after year. Whatever may have been the general opinion in 1926, the evils of the short rotation are well known to-day and the following controlled experiments, initiated by the Forest Department in Malaya, give some insight into the process.

An area of hill forest was felled early in 1945 and hill rice cultivated; the plot was left fallow after the harvest in 1946, but in 1947 the *temuda* (or *belukar* as they call it over there) was slashed in July and burnt in August, but part of it failed to catch fire; no rice was sown because the area was in a forest reserve and the offenders were prosecuted. Sample plots were laid out to study the subsequent history of the three types, i.e.

(a) *temuda* dating from 1945/46 and not slashed in 1947,

(b) *temuda* slashed in 1947 but not burnt,

(c) *temuda* slashed and burnt in 1947.

The interim conclusions, after 18 months, are as follows:—

"The vegetation differences between the burnt and unburnt area are most marked, the extra burn obviously having killed a large number of stumps that would have coppiced and roots that would have sent up sucker shoots, as well as killing the large quantities of dormant seed, which are always present in the top layers of the soil. The resulting delay in obtaining a vegetative cover, as well as the impoverishment of the soil, has permitted the appearance of wind-borne colonisers such as *Imperata arundinacea* (*lalang*) which, once present, is difficult to eradicate, and in itself prevents or delays the invasion of woody species."

Five stakes were planted in each plot and the soil level marked at the beginning of the experiment and again after 18 months. The average of the five stakes works out as follows:—

	Increase in inches.	Decrease in inches.
Slashed and burnt plot		0.76
Slashed but not burnt plot		0.32
Unslashed plot	0.40	

The following conclusions were drawn:—

"These plots show very clearly the effects of cleaning and burning *belukar* and the resultant soil degradation, the sharp difference between the burnt and unburnt areas being particularly striking. In the burnt area the soil has presumably not only been impoverished by the leaching out of the mineral and organic nutrients but by the wash off of a considerable amount of top soil. Erosion has also taken place in the slashed area, but to a minor degree and only in one locality". The increase in top soil in the unslashed plot is also of considerable interest.

These conclusions were confirmed by observations in the Ballah. The farm behind Penghulu Jinggut's house already referred to, which had been slashed and burnt three years running, showed hardly a tree or shrub, other than the common weed *Melastoma*, the vegetation being composed of most of the typical

constituents of the *lalang* association. Another farm further away cut out of virgin forest in 1948 showed ample and vigorous regeneration of trees and shrubs, and it was obvious that if left undisturbed a complete cover of woody species would be established within one or two years. All this is merely another illustration of the well-established fact of plant ecology: that repeated burning of an area results in a rapid retrogression of the vegetation from the climax type (tropical evergreen forest in Sarawak) to a post-climax or fire-climax savannah type (the *lalang* association in Sarawak).

My second proposition therefore is that shifting cultivation is a legitimate method of growing padi only if it is worked on a rotation long enough to ensure a rapid restoration of the vegetative cover of woody species. There is no direct evidence on this point, but from observation of methods in other countries it is generally agreed that a rotation of 15 years is permissible.

Here then is the crux: to impose 10-year rotational farming on to the pattern of haphazard, irrational, magic-controlled farming that is now practised.

A clue to the solution is to be found in the following quotation:—"Man is constantly turning natural vegetation to his own uses, cutting forest, using grassland for the pasturing of his flocks and herds, but he usually does these things ignorantly and therefore wastefully, without foresight, because he has no adequate understanding of the kinds of vegetation he uses, or any sufficient intelligent anticipation of what will result from his actions. We cannot deal with any situation in the world successfully unless we understand it thoroughly, and, for the thorough understanding, patient and genuine scientific study is necessary" (Tansley & Chipp, *Aims and Methods in the Study of Vegetation*).

An intensive programme of research is the first essential. Although the problem of shifting cultivation is of international importance and affects most of the countries of South-East Asia, up to date extremely little basic research has been undertaken and the only controlled experiments of which I have seen reports are those now in progress in Malaya. The FAO Forestry and Timber Utilization Conference for Asia and the South-West Pacific (held at Mysore, March-April, 1949) recommended that a regional Forest Research Committee be organised to co-ordinate all research work in this sphere: it would be interesting to know what has been done by the Dutch in Indonesia and Dutch Borneo, and it should be possible to find out through the medium of this Committee when it is set up.

The experiments in Malaya need to be repeated all over Sarawak in different types of farms and on different gradients, to study plant succession and to measure the loss or gain of top soil. We need figures of surface run-off of water and silt for slopes of comparable gradient under different types of vegetation (including bare soil), to assess the effect of hill farming on floods with greater accuracy. We need the basic figures of:—

(a) Area of farm per *bilek*,

(b) Ratio of padi yield to padi sown.

This last is subject to so many variable factors (a bad or late burn, raids by birds and animals, insect pests, fungal attack, etc.) that a large number of figures would have to be obtained and statistical

methods applied to obtain figures of much value.

Most important of all, perhaps, is a census of all existing *temuda* (using that word to connote any land over which customary rights have been acquired through original felling of the virgin jungle for the purpose of farming padi), to determine the area of farming land available for each longhouse. Aerial photographs are essential for this purpose.

Now suppose it is found that a longhouse has 1000 acres of land, and that it is farming the whole of it on a 5-year rotation. Clearly you cannot, merely by issuing an edict, increase the rotation to 10 years without putting the people on half-rations. There are only two things you can do :—

(a) Keep the population constant but grow half its rice requirements on wet padi areas nearby, or

(b) Halve the population by transferring half to "fresh woods and pastures new".

There is reason to believe that in the greater part of the areas now inhabited by the Ibans, i.e. in most of the Second Division and in the Lower Rejang district, the rotation has already fallen below 10 years, and Government has been trying to cope with the problem by pursuing alternative (a); there has been an intensive search for wet padi areas for the past 12 years or so, and the Iban has been forced to remain where he is and not allowed to migrate to fresh woods, where he would only ruin more virgin land. It would only be legitimate to adopt alternative (b) if there was some large area of wet padi land awaiting development, on which the excess population could be re-settled.

In the *Sarawak Gazette*, 1949, p. 217, it is stated that there are about 800 square miles of land in the Fourth and Fifth Divisions believed to be suitable for wet padi cultivation; and at the rate of one adult per $\frac{1}{2}$ acre this land alone should when fully developed be capable of supporting 1,024,000 adults. The population of Sarawak in 1948 was estimated at 552,000 (*Annual Report on Sarawak for the year 1948*, p. 2) but given peaceful conditions in which to develop and with annually greater medical facilities it may well have passed the million mark by the end of the century. There should be sufficient land for alternative (b) above to be adopted.

If the scheme is successful and the pressure on the hill land can be relieved, then steps can be taken slowly to improve the degraded soils of the hills by planting or sowing quick-growing trees along with the padi seed and allowing trees to grow for the 10 years of the rotation; hillsides that had been degraded to *lalang* and bracken in the Bhamo hills were successfully reclaimed by the compulsory planting of *Alnus nipalensis*, a fast-growing alder indigenous in the hills; and in the Taron and Ahkyang valleys of the Myitkyina district the Nungs and Lisus were found to be sowing this tree on their own accord in their farms, because they found by so doing they got better harvests.

At first sight it might appear that the rice requirements of the whole Colony could be grown in the Fourth and Fifth Divisions; actually of course it is not practical politics to transfer the entire population of say the Kapit, Kanowit and Baram districts to these wet padi areas, and the sociological experts might argue that it was undesirable to settle more than the absolute minimum of Ibans in the coastal swamps, because hill tribes such as the Kachins,

Gurkhas, and Ibans tend to degenerate rapidly under enervating conditions.

Therefore my third proposition is that shifting cultivation on the hills, whatever we may think of it as an agricultural system, must continue for a generation or two yet to provide the bulk of the rice requirements of the tribes that practise it now. That this must be so should be clear from my opening paragraph; and what will happen to the forests and the soils in the Balleh meanwhile? The Forest Officer sees only too clearly the danger that his forests will take their cue from the Bellman and—

"Softly and silently vanish away,

For the Snark is an Iban you see!"

I suggest therefore that some attempt should be made to stabilise shifting cultivation and minimise its destructive effects as a necessary interim measure. A policy for shifting cultivation might include a ten year plan on the following lines :—

TEN YEAR PLAN

A. First Five Years.

- (i) Census of *temuda* with aid of aerial photographs.
- (ii) Basic research into soils, erosion, ecology, etc.
- (iii) Develop wet padi cultivation in local swamps.
- (iv) Prevent migration of longhouses to "fresh woods" by Paks or "something stricter".

N.B.—The last two items are already receiving the close attention of the Agriculture and Forest Department respectively.

B. Second Five Years.

- (i) Raise the rotation for shifting cultivation to 10 years—
 - (a) in thinly populated areas by administrative control,
 - (b) in over-populated areas either by transferring sufficient longhouses to "pastures new" (Fourth or Fifth Division) or by taking the pressure off the hill land by sufficient wet padi cultivation in adjacent swamps.
- (ii) In areas where a 10-year rotation has been achieved, reclaim degraded lands by compulsory sowing or planting of fast-growing tree species.
- (iii) Experiment with animal husbandry, cultivation of crops using animal manure, and terraced cultivation.
- (iv) If emergency demands, allow limited migration to "fresh woods" under control.

Mr. Kay's plea that "there must be something planned for these people if they are not to starve" is only too true. A recent copy of the *Jinghpaw Shi Laika* (Kachin newspaper) carries a report of famine in the *ulu N'Mai Hka*, where a mixed population of Lisus and Nungs depend on shifting cultivation for their food; the area is so inaccessible that famine relief can only be organised by air; in 1948 this was not forthcoming and it is estimated that 1504 people died of starvation, a succession of bad harvests and plagues of rats having exhausted all the food. I knew those people well and their sufferings naturally mean more to me than they can to those who have never visited their remote valleys; but if such tragedies are not to be enacted in

Sarawak, the necessary staff and funds must somehow be obtained to carry through the various agricultural plans. What would have been a catastrophe in the *ulu Baram*, but for Government relief (in the form of 638 bags of rice), is described in the *Sarawak Gazette*, 1937, pp. 24-25; here again a plague of rats, following after two bad years, did the damage, and, although no deaths from lack of food were recorded, "poor food and less of it left the people prone to illness."

It is not purely a question of agricultural technique. In dealing with primitive peoples it is fatal to ignore the human aspect of the problem, and it was a far-sighted piece of planning to send out sociological officers to Sarawak to carry out basic research into the customs and beliefs of some of the principal tribes; such research is complementary to the basic ecological research I have suggested in this article. One of the greatest administrators we have ever had in this country, Dr. Charles Hose, was insistent that Government officers should have a working knowledge of anthropology ("*Fifty Years of Romance and Research*", Appendix B).

At present Mr. J. D. Freeman, Sociological Research Officer, and his wife are carrying out an important survey of the Balleh Ibans from headquarters in *Rumah Nyala* in the *Sungei Sut*, and their scientific investigations should supply valuable preliminary data on farming—not only on the present technique but also on the beliefs and superstitions, magic and ritual, behind that technique. This article is based partly on observations we made together on the farms and discussions we had with the people, and partly on some illuminating comments received from Mr. A. R. Snelus, District Officer, Lower Rejang district, who has travelled widely amongst the Ibans of both the upper and the lower Rejang.

B. E. SMYTHIES.

[We understand that the whole question of shifting hill/dry padi cultivation in Sarawak is discussed very fully by the Director of Agriculture in his Annual Report for 1948. The Report was submitted to Government in early April of this year, but it has not yet been possible to publish it, owing to accumulation of work in the Printing Office. The present position is analysed on the basis of some statistics obtained during the preliminary stages of the "Soil Survey". Some estimates of the relative labour requirements of the hill/dry padi and swamp/wet padi crops are also made. The Director has discussed the general low natural fertility of Sarawak's soils, which is undoubtedly the basic cause of the "shifting" that characterises Sarawak's agriculture. Further information has been obtained since the report was written (thus some invaluable observations were made by the Director on his recent reconnaissance flight over Sarawak). We hope that he will be able to prepare an article for us indicating the present position and Government policy with regard to the matter. We learn that experimental work on the utilisation of Sarawak's hill land is being conducted at the Tarat and Kanowit Agricultural Stations and the Bedil Experimental Garden, and that some promising results have been obtained.—EDITORS.]

Fifty Years Ago.

THE SARAWAK GAZETTE, 2ND OCTOBER, 1899.

SARAWAK AND BRUNEI.—The latest report from Mr. Consul Keyser gives a depressing account of the condition of the native State of Brunei, in North Borneo. All that now remains of the once vast territories of the Sultan is an area of about 15,000 square miles, with a population of about 45,000 people of various origins, the rest of the territory with its most important rivers and districts having been at various times ceded to British North Borneo and Sarawak. The capital, Brunei, which is built over the water in one of the upper reaches of the Brunei river, has now become a vast collection of hovels, with a population of about 10,000 people, who do little or no work and subsist on the prawns and shell fish found in the mud under their houses. Nothing is done to improve the condition of the town or the people; the Sultan and chief officials rarely go outside their own houses. There is a good harbour and the soil is well adapted for cultivation. The taxes are farmed out to Chinese traders and the Sultan and chiefs live mainly on payments made by British North Borneo and Sarawak in return for territory ceded to them. Sarawak has an area of about 50,000 square miles and a population of half a million. It has 400 miles of coast line in Borneo and many navigable rivers. Kuching, the capital, lies 23 miles up the Sarawak river, and steam communication is maintained with Labuan and Singapore. The State produces gold, silver, diamonds, antimony, quicksilver, coal, gutta-percha, indiarubber, rattans, camphor, beeswax, sago, tapioca, pepper, gambier, tea, coffee, and cutch. The climate is healthy for Europeans and the Government medical officers devote much attention to the study of tropical diseases. The State is in a very prosperous condition; the revenue is increasing under nearly every head, and the expenditure is less than the revenue. Last year there was a large increase in the export of all cultivated produce, such as sago, pepper, and gambier. The sago cultivation and trade, which is largely in the hands of Chinese (like that of pepper and gambier), show a great increase in recent years; there are now ten sago factories in Kuching, and eighty schooners are employed in carrying the raw sago to them. Sarawak sago always fetches a good price, owing not only to careful refining, but also to the excellence of the sago palm there. The Government is now turning its attention to the improvement of the rice cultivation. Chinese and Indian labour is abundant. The coal mines are worked by Government, the present output being about 170 tons a day, which it is hoped to increase shortly. Gold is worked by Chinese from alluvial deposits, and large cyanide works for the treatment of low grade ores have proved successful. Diamonds are only found in small quantities, and rarely of any size. An opportunity for the development of the timber trade exists, the Rejang river district containing a vast supply of hard woods, while the entrance to the river is deep and navigable for large vessels. Pig and deer abound in Sarawak in the dense jungle, and wild cattle and rhinoceros are found in the interior, but the country is not inviting for sportsmen.—(*The Times*.)

Past History, 1941-1942.

(Continued)

Extracts from Section XIV :—

"The Japanese Occupation of Miri, 16th December, 1941.

1. In the early hours of the morning of the 16th December, 1941, a strong Japanese Naval Force arrived off the coast. At the time the Miri coast was experiencing one of the worst gales ever recorded in that locality, but strong Japanese Military Forces were landed in flat-bottomed barges at various points along the coast from Seria to Kuala Baram. The seas were rough and heavy rain reduced visibility to a minimum and reports indicate that Japanese losses from drowning were considerable. The landings were a complete surprise and successful occupation was carried out immediately after dawn. No resistance was offered except at Tanjong Lobang (where the lighthouse keeper killed two Japanese before suffering the same fate) and possibly at Lutong, where it is rumoured that a Sikh policeman was shot.

2. At 5.35 a.m. the General Manager, Sarawak Oilfields Ltd., telephoned from his office to Mr. R. L. Daubeny, the Resident, to say that the Assistant Resident, Belait (Mr. R. N. Turner), had just informed him by telephone that Japanese were said to be in Belait and he, the Assistant Resident, would telephone again, if possible. The Resident prepared to leave the house at 5.55 a.m. and telephoned the information received to the Assistant Secretary for Defence, who decided to go at once to the office to destroy the contents of his safe. However, a few minutes later it was seen that the European homes were surrounded by Japanese soldiers.

3. At 6 a.m. five Europeans were arrested in their homes at Tanjong Lobang. They were taken to the Government offices, where they were joined by two more Europeans Late afternoon all of them were taken to the jail and the next morning were cross-examined and finally interned in Father Jansen's house.

4. Mr. Parry escaped. His car was seen by the Tanjong Lobang party at 6.30 a.m. abandoned on the main road outside his house.

5. Kuching received a wireless message at 7.30 a.m. on the 16th from the Miri wireless operator, as follows: "Wait! something happening here." The same day, and at several times later, the operator at the look-out post at Kuala Baram wireless information to Kuching Messages from the Resident, Brunei, also on the 16th, confirmed the Japanese occupation of the Oilfields.

6. The Japanese are said to have landed 10,000 troops on the oilfields within a few hours. They met no opposition, but the storm raging at the time must have taken heavy toll of their early landing parties. Their occupation was successful, but they took over oilfields so completely wrecked that an enormous amount of work and material would be required before the fields could become of any oil-producing value again. However, there were certain comparatively minor omissions from denial, as follows:

(a) Practically the whole Sarawak Oilfields Ltd. fleet of eight launches, four lighters, four motor

tongkangs, one full loading vessel named the "Tiong" of about 200 tons, and cargo boats "Angus" and "Borong", each of about 200 tons, fell into Japanese hands. It had been intended to send these vessels to Kuching but unavoidable delay resulted in their capture, as the surprise occupation of Miri allowed no time to destroy the vessels.

(b) A large number of Sarawak Oilfields Ltd. motor vehicles fell into Japanese hands. It is true that many of these had been immobilised but as the Sarawak Oilfields Ltd. garages held spare parts it was only a matter of minutes for the Japanese to induce the Asiatic garage hands to fit new parts.

(c) The Japanese found the Lutong ferry in good running order.

7. The surprise arrest of the European Government officials was so complete that all confidential documents, including codes and cyphers, and currency amounting to \$80,000, were found undisturbed by the Japanese. Fortunately the codes and cyphers were of little use to them, particularly as the safe containing them was not opened by the Japanese until some time after occupation and the Secretary for Defence had taken precautionary action by that time.

Extracts from Section XVIII :—

"The Voyage of the "Shinai", "Maimuna" and "Lipis" from Miri to Kuching.

1. Evacuees were distributed among three ships, the "Shinai", "Maimuna" and "Lipis."

2. "Shinai" left Miri at 9 p.m. on 13th December, 1941, and stood well out to sea. "Maimuna" followed at midnight and "Lipis" left at 2 a.m. on 14th. "Shinai," well out to sea, made her way independently of the other two vessels. "Maimuna" kept well inshore, with the "Lipis" further out but always in sight.

3. On 14th, at 11.45 a.m. a low-flying, light, twin-engined Japanese bomber approached "Lipis" and passed without attacking. The plane then turned and attacked from astern, dropping three bombs, all of which missed the ship as the Captain changed direction. The bombs must have been light because they did no damage, though the first exploded fifteen yards astern, the second five yards to starboard amidships and the third twenty yards ahead. The plane then turned again, and, flying low, raked the ship with machine-gun fire. By this time two Lewis guns and six Bren guns had been manned and they returned the fire. Two more attacks were made by the plane and then she made off, flying towards "Maimuna", but she was not seen to attack that vessel. The two Lewis guns were operated by Major Slatter and 2nd. Lt. Hodges respectively. Both officers, with their men, were in very exposed positions, the first on the monkey-island above the bridge and the second on the stern poop-deck. Major Slatter and Lt. Hodges' Assistant Lance-Naik Muhd. Akbar Khan were killed instantly. Another sepoy died of wounds that evening and all three were buried at sea. The Master of the "Lipis", Captain Jones, was wounded and his place was most ably taken by Chief Officer Parry Thomas. The company suffered 28 other casualties, some very serious, making 2 killed, one died of wounds and 29 wounded in all. Fortunately there were two Sarawak Oilfields Ltd. doctors on board to attend to the wounded.

4. From the nature of some of the wounds and marks on the ships there is reason to suppose that the plane used small cannon as well as machine guns. The wireless aerial was shot away but this was soon repaired. Otherwise the ship suffered no material damage and was able to proceed to Kuching.

5. "Maimuna" was not actually attacked but the plane came near enough for military personnel to fire on her, unfortunately without any visible success.

6. Meantime "Shinai" was having trouble also. At about 11.45 a.m. a low-flying, twin-engined Japanese bomber circled the ship and then vanished. A few minutes later she returned and dropped a small stick of bombs, flying from port to starboard. These dropped harmlessly about 30 yards away on the port side. The plane returned to the attack three times, each time dropping a single bomb, but always missing. After the last attack she turned quickly and poured one short burst of machine-gun fire into the ship. No damage was done to the ship but one policeman received a small flesh wound. Machine-guns and rifles on "Shinai" fired on the plane at each attack but no visible damage was done to her. The attack created considerable confusion on board "Shinai" among the very nervous crew. After the first bombs had been dropped theengineers are said to have shut off steam and rushed on deck. One man attempted to release the port lifeboat by cutting the ropes with an axe, but the Volunteers cleared engineers and crew from the decks and drove most of them below. Though steam was cut off, the ship had sufficient way on to proceed while being attacked and the Captain took the wheel.

7. "Shinai" is said by her Captain to have arrived off Tanjong Po at 3.30 a.m. on the 15th and she remained there until 10 a.m. on the 16th when a pilot came on board and conducted the ship to Pending. As "Shinai" entered at Muara Tebas, a Japanese plane flew across the ship three times at a height of about 5,000 feet, dropping one bomb each time, but again no damage was done though the nearest bomb fell about twenty yards from the ship. As the bomber was taking up position for the fourth attack, two Dutch fighters appeared at low level and thereupon the bomber disappeared. On this occasion the crew are said to have conducted themselves satisfactorily."

(To be continued.)

Kuching Regatta.

A Regatta! The very sound of the word conjures up a vision of sparkling water, fleecy clouds, and sunshine! Here in Sarawak we sometimes have all of these, but never the natural accompaniment of white sails filling to the breeze as dainty yachts dance on the waves, carrying all the hopes of the amateur builder-owner-crew trying out the boat on the opening day of the season before the critical eyes of many a yachtsman, to say nothing of the landlubber.

But instead we have in this country of people, many of whom are practically born with a paddle in the hand, the equally splendid sight of a long

racing boat, light in construction and carrying as many as 30 men whose paddles flash in unison in the sunlight—whose bodies bend in harmony to the exhortations of the flagman who stands, flag in hand, in the middle of the boat to urge it to victory over the mile-long course along the river.

Such is one's usual conception of a Sarawak Regatta, but very often the vagaries of the weather turn off the harmony, and any race may become a dogged task of boat against boat fighting it out in the pelting rain while officials and spectators cower for shelter.

However, September 12th, the official holiday celebrating the liberation of Kuching from over 3½ years of Japanese domination, dawned bright and fair. A light breeze from the north-east, high, soft-looking clouds, a not too hot sun, and an air of expectancy greeted the early arrivals of whom there were many.

At 8 a.m. there was quite a procession to the Pengkalan Batu where a Judges Stand and cash sweep-cum-tote had been erected the day before (palm-leaf roof, round jungle-pole frame, and roughly-sawn planks for floors, *plus* many willing hands, explains all that).

So began the first Kuching Regatta since 1941, a function usually held on New Year's Day and dating from 60 or 70 years ago. This is so long ago that it was already known as *Lomba Prahlu Januari* when I came to Kuching and very often only *Januari* for short.

After a slight hitch or two which nobody seemed to mind very greatly, if we except the unfortunate Organising Secretary, the first race got away to a start of sorts at 9.30 a.m.

The second race started about an hour later. (Never mind the programme—that's out of date and in any case don't you know we are thinking of having daylight saving and the earth is said to be wobbling on its axis owing to the weight of ice at the poles—let's enjoy the sunshine of the tropics while we may!)

The sun did continue to shine, and so did the faces of the people pressing around the cash sweep window; and no wonder—what with two or three hundred dollars if you drew the lucky ticket on the first boat!

Up on the Judges Stand a mixed crowd of officials, wives and friends came to and fro, and not even the casualties to the programme could take that picnic spirit out of the air.

Some time before lunch a harassed Steamship Manager appealed to one of the Clerks of the Course, who happened to be a policeman, to see if anything could be done for the situation on the Ban Hock Wharf; Here it seemed was a real *fuore*. A Circus had arrived! What? A Circus?—yes, a real Circus. Unfortunately the Ban Hock Wharf was one of the vantage points from which to view the Regatta and so there it was! Half the crowd wanted to see Regatta but couldn't because of Ship with Circus and the other half wanted to see Circus but couldn't because Ship could not find any room on the wharf to put Circus! The appeal fell on good ears and order was restored without fuss.

By lunch time things were moving more according to rule, and perhaps it may be as well to tell you what had happened on the river.

Race No. 1.

CHAMPION RACE.

The Commissioner-General's Cup. Presented by the Rt. Hon. Mr. Malcolm MacDonald, P.C.

For 30 men boats.

First prize to owner \$200, to crew \$90; second prize to owner \$100, to crew \$60; third prize to owner \$50, to crew \$30. Entrance fee \$3. From Jalan Haji Mataim to Pengkalan Batu.

Owner.	Name of boats.
1. Mrs. R. D. Clarke-Jones	... Menteri Suka
2. T.K. Dol Osman and Salleh	... Rantai Mas
3. T.K. Udin and Tuah Kasa	... Buan Rasa

Race No. 2.

CHAMPION CUP.

His Excellency's Cup. Presented by the Officer Administering the Government, the Hon'ble Mr. C. W. Dawson, C.M.G.

For 15 men boats.

First prize to owner \$100, to crew \$45; second prize to owner \$50, to crew \$30; third prize to owner \$30, to crew \$15. Entrance fee \$2. From Jalan Patinggi Alli to Pengkalan Batu.

Owner.	Name of boats.
1. Mr. E. W. Howell	... Puteri Baru
2. Zainudin and Adot	... Anak di Sayang
3. Mr. E. W. Howell and Datu	... Sri Kala
Bandar	

Race No. 3.

OUTBOARD.

THE BORNEO COMPANY'S CUP.

Presented by Messrs. The Borneo Co., Ltd. Outboard. Entrance fee \$3.

1. Zen bin Haji Drahman—10 H.P. Sea Horse.
2. Haji Usop bin Haji Arbi
3. Haji Osman bin Haji Sebli

Race No. 4.

WEE KHENG CHIANG'S CUP.

Presented by Mr. Wee Kheng Chiang, C.S.S.

For 20 men boats.

First prize to owner \$100, to crew \$40; second prize to owner \$50, to crew \$30; third prize to owner \$25, to crew \$15. Entrance fee \$2. From Jalan Haji Mataim to Pengkalan Batu.

Owner.	Name of boats.
1. Mrs. R. D. Clarke-Jones	... Menteri Suka
2. T.K. Dol Osman and Salleh	... Rantai Mas
3. Mr. E. W. Howell and Datu	... Sri Kala
Bandar	

Race No. 5.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY'S CUP.

Presented by the Hon'ble Mr. R. G. Aikman.

Office Race.

First prize to crews \$15, second prize to crews \$10, third prize to crews \$5. From Jalan Haji Mataim to Pengkalan Batu.

Name of Department.	Name of boats.
1. Municipal Department	... Anak di Sayang
2. Food Control	... Sri Kala
3. P.W.D.	... Puteri Baru

Race No. 6.

THE STEAMSHIP CUP.

Presented by Messrs. Sarawak Steamship Co., Ltd.

For 30 men boats.

First prize to owner \$150, to crew \$60; second prize to owner \$75, to crew \$30; third prize to owner \$35, to crew \$15.

Owner.	Name of boats.
1. Mrs. R. D. Clarke-Jones	... Menteri Suka
2. Mr. E. W. Howell	... Buan Telanjor
3. T.K. Dol Osman and Salleh	... Rantai Mas

The afternoon maintained the promise of the morning and a cool breeze followed the turn of the tide, when racing had to go the other way. That is, they started from Kampong Surabaya across river from Padungan instead of from Jalan Patinggi Alli or Jalan Haji Mataim, which are on the upstream side of the town.

The results of the afternoon's racing were:—

Race No. 7.

TAN SUM GUAN'S CUP.

Presented by Messrs. Tan Sum Guan & Son.

For 15 men boats.

First prize to winner \$75, to crew \$30; second prize to winner \$45, to crew \$25; third prize to winner \$30, to crew \$15. Entrance fee \$2. From Jalan Haji Mataim to Pengkalan Batu.

Owner.	Name of boats.
1. Mr. E. W. Howell and Datu	... Sri Kala
Bandar	
2. Mr. E. W. Howell	... Puteri Baru
3. T.K. Dol Osman and Salleh	... Rantai Mas

Race No. 8.

THE BORNEO COMPANY'S CUP.

Presented by Messrs. The Borneo Co., Ltd.

Outboard—Entrance fee \$3.

1. Jeman of Landeh—22 H.P.
2. Haji Osman bin Haji Sebli
3. Abang Hood bin Abang Haji Suhai

Race No. 9.

CONSOLATION RACE—THE PACIFIC CUP.

Presented by Pacific Traders (Borneo) Ltd.

For 20 men boats.

First prize to owner \$60, to crew \$30; second prize to owner \$30, to crew \$20; third prize to owner \$15, to crew \$10. Entrance fee \$2. From Sungai Gersik to Pengkalan Batu.

Owner.	Name of boats.
1. Zainudin and Adot	... Anak di Sayang
2. Trusan (Banting)	... Sri Belalang
3. T.K. Dol Osman and Salleh	... Rantai Mas

Race No. 10.

PERAHU TAMBANG.

First prize \$10, second prize \$5, third prize \$3.

1. Tambang No. 181
2. " " 31
3. " " 116

Race No. 11.

SIME DARBY'S CUP.

Presented by Messrs. Sime, Darby & Co., Ltd.

For 30 men boats.

First prize to owner \$100, to crew \$60; second prize to owner \$50, to crew \$30; third prize to owner \$25, to crew \$15. Entrance fee \$3. From Batu Beliong to Pengkalan Batu.

Owner.	Name of boats.
1. Mr. E. W. Howell	... Buan Telanjor
2. Trusan (Banting)	... Sri Belalang
3. T.K. Dol Osman and Salleh	... Rantai Mas

Towards evening a dark cloud gathered over in the direction of Matang but apparently thought better of it, and no rain came.

To conclude a memorable day, His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government gave a speech of commendation, after which Mrs. Dawson presented the prizes, consisting of a fine array of cups for which the Regatta Committee are very grateful to the donors thereof.

So ended the first Januari since the war and the organisers are deserving of great credit for being

able to revive a function which could have compared favourably with any of those great up-country affairs if more boats had been entered; but it is hoped that this first attempt will encourage entries for future regattas. Financially the regatta was a success, a sum of \$948.61 remaining after expenses have been paid.

Cash sweep result:—

Boat No.	Name.	Drawn by ticket No.	
1.	Menteri Suka	...	15828
2.	Sri Kala	...	17223
3.	Rantai Mas	...	18282
4.	Anak di Sayang	...	17311
5.	Sri Belalang	...	18026
5.	Victory	...	20596
7.	Buan Telanjor	...	12400
8.	Puteri Baru	...	16503
9.	Buan Rusa	...	13910
Total Pool	\$13,238.00	1st Prize	\$4,633.00
Less 30% pool Tax &		2nd "	2,316.00
Regatta Commission	3,971.40	3rd "	1,158.00
	9,266.60	Starters (6) each	193.00
		Fraction	1.60
			\$9,266.60

I understand the Second prize (Ticket No. 18282) is still unclaimed.

(Contributed).

Our Economic Future.

I hesitate to pass any comments on your recent leading article on the above subject, as to do so is more a matter calling for the consideration of the trained economist.

Certain factors however must be considered and, if those that I have listed below should serve to provoke either thought or argument, this commentary will have served some purpose.

No attempt has been made to prepare an argument step by step but rather to comment briefly on some of those matters which must be considered in any discussion of the national economy.

Sarawak is a poor country; just how poor is uncertain, as no statistical information is available from which either the national capital or national income can be computed. This being so, it is probably impossible to arrive at any figure approximating the maximum revenue which can be raised without causing too great a dislocation of the economic well-being of the country. It is probable however that under existing conditions the present figure could not be increased to any considerable extent without increasing costs and thus detrimentally affecting the national economy.

The national output of a state is the product of labour working on capital. In other words, it is equal to the total of wages paid to labour plus profits paid to the owners of the (domestically owned) capital goods in production. To all intents and purposes the revenue of a country must come from the national output.

Let us then look in turn at the two factors of production, taking in the first instance "labour." The total availability is without doubt very, very, small indeed and the maximum figure might not exceed 25% of the total population. The quality of the

labour is even more lamentable and, as is so frequently the case, "cheap labour" is in fact very expensive labour.

Unfortunately the figures for the 1947 census are not yet available but probably not less than 60% of the population are engaged in subsistence farming; possibly, taken overall, only 10% of their effort is available as a contribution to the national output, the other 90% of their effort being devoted to producing their own basic requirements. This in effect means that from the point of view of the net national output 54% of the total population are non-producers, though they must still be supplied with some of the services provided by the state.

The difference of 6% is in fact the labour component employed in the production of jungle produce, timber, a little surplus food and as unskilled labour on the oilfields.

Of the remaining 40% of the population, probably three-fifths are children under the age of fourteen, old people and invalids, or women engaged in household or other duties which do not contribute to the national output. We are therefore left with some 25% of the total population which we can assume forms the "labour factor" in national output, say 125,000 people.

No attempt can be made to estimate the national capital, but it seems likely that it is considerably less per head of population than is the case in most of the other countries in South East Asia.

Many of our national assets are depreciating alarmingly; to take merely two examples will suffice. Forests are being felled and burnt to provide farming areas used only once in many years. In addition to the timber actually destroyed, the secondary effects of erosion, floods and soil impoverishment further increase the depreciation.

Rubber gardens are ageing rapidly and very little attempt seems to be made to replant with better quality trees, in fact it is doubtful if present prices give a sufficient return to provide for investment. We may therefore reasonably expect an increasing rate of depreciation over the next few years, resulting in a decrease in quantity and decline in quality. And yet rubber at the present time provides the largest single item in our revenue (in 1947 over \$3 million).

Communications in the colony are exceedingly poor, resulting in a disproportionate amount of the value of exports and imported consumer goods being eaten up by middlemen in moving them between consumer-producers and the few ports of the country. The actual time-lapse caused by poor communications also tends to increase the number of times goods and services must be handled between producer and consumer, each single step being paid for at a comparatively high rate. Furthermore, the actual number of people engaged in the provision of these services comprise a disproportionately high percentage of the "labour factor." The overhead resulting from poor communications must be enormous and no doubt has the effect of greatly reducing production.

There are many at the present time who believe that the salvation of the colony lies in increasing the production of paddy to the stage where Sarawak

will cease to be a rice importing country. There are however many dangers in this which must be faced. The first is that to produce more paddy labour will have to be diverted from other production. Secondly, the price of rice is notoriously elastic and it is almost inevitable that within a few years the big rice exporting countries will overtake demand, resulting in a fall in price to the stage where it is just profitable for the producers in those countries to continue production, but since the rice producer in Burma and Siam starts with the advantages of greater skill and greater capital (the latter includes such items as buffaloes, better water control, better soil, better communications and the ability to procure imported consumer goods at a lower price than can Sarawak), it seems very probable that imported rice will be landed in Sarawak at a price which will not provide a sufficiently attractive return to the producer who is not prepared to live near subsistence level. What then?

A further factor in Sarawak's economy which must be faced is the fact that Sarawak's invisible exports must reach a very high figure: quite a large proportion of the population have dependants overseas and a proportion of their wages are sent out of the country as remittances; again, a large slice of the nominal capital of the country is owned abroad and interest, at a high rate, is in consequence paid to these investors. At the moment there is little inducement for these investors to reinvest their savings in the colony. Under present conditions then it is probably over-optimistic to expect any appreciable increase in the national capital; there is even a possibility that it may decrease.

So far as visible exports are concerned, Sarawak enjoys a favourable balance of trade; in 1947, the latest year for which figures have been published, the excess in value of exports over imports amounted to \$30,883,870.00, but when invisible exports and imports are considered this figure will be very materially reduced. What for example would be the total for film hire, smuggled imports and remittances sent out of Sarawak by "aliens" employed in Sarawak? How much of the favourable balance due to the export of petroleum products is offset by payments to the overseas owners of the capital equipment used in its production and refining? In 1947, for example, the surplus of petroleum exports over imports amounted to \$20,432,349.00.

The above are merely a few of the phases which must be kept in view when the colony's economic future is being considered. On present indications it seems probable that over the next few years the position will deteriorate.

I don't pretend to know the answer to the problem, but one thing seems to be quite clear and that is that, before production can be increased, Sarawak must increase her capital, and this means that overseas capital must be attracted. Before this is likely to occur there must be an improvement in the efficiency of labour and an increase in the percentage of the population who contribute to the national output. Communications must be improved, so that greater use may be made of the available national resources, and in order that transport charges may be reduced to a more economic level.

Both an improvement in the efficiency of labour and improved communications would involve the colony in expenditure completely beyond its present

capacity to pay. In the 1949 Estimates the surplus of revenue over personal emoluments and annually recurrent expenditure was estimated at \$1,496,038.00. Unless there was a corresponding increase in other revenue-producing items, a decrease of 50% in the value of rubber exported would turn this into a deficit!

One answer appears to be the raising of Government loans. This is not such a bad thing as it is so frequently made out to be, provided of course that the loan money is expended on works which directly or indirectly result in a return exceeding the annual bills for interest and depreciation. The U.S.A. is the largest creditor nation in the world, yet prior to 1914 she was a debtor nation.

There are of course ways in which economies could be effected, such as a Federation of British Borneo with a central Secretariat and unified services such as Education, Medical Services and so on, but, desirable as this may be, it would in the long run make very little difference to the total cost of Government.

R. H. MORRIS.

Pilgrimage.

"Under the circumstances", said the Major, "there is nothing for it but to go on pilgrimage." Immediately there occurred to me the lines of Chaucer:

Whan that Aprille with hir shoures soote.
The droghte of March hath perced to the roote

So priketh hem nature in hir corages
Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages.

I lay, however, not at the Tabard, but under the débris of a tent in the sweltering plain of Pallaveram in the summer of 1945. Army camps have proverbially been designed by persons of sadistic ingenuity, but those who organised the camp at Pallaveram in that summer had exhausted the resources of discomfort. The food was bad, the water was bad, the situation was bad, the reptiles were vile, and the tent collapsed. And somewhat muffled by the weight of canvas came the Major's words "Let us go on pilgrimage."

Not that the Major was a devout man, rather he was a scientist. Long years ago when he had held a cavalry commission he was a prominent figure in regimental polo, and astonished his friends by spending his leave among Buddhist monasteries and ruins in Northern India. Upon retirement he returned to Ireland and there divided his time between the paddock, where he raised a few hunters, and a small laboratory, where he was working out an elaborate thesis on Sense Perception and the Irradiation of Metals. Altogether he was a man of wide and curious learning. He had emerged from retirement and offered to serve in the B.M.A. Burma in order to study Buddhist archaeology there.

We decided thereupon to play truant daily from the camp, and to devote our time to visiting archaeological remains in the area around Madras, so that, whilst our companions remained sweltering at Pallaveram awaiting the summons to go to Malaya which never seemed to come, the Major and I spent our days in ancient temples and amongst obscured ruins in the Indian country-side. To

relate all our pilgrimages would be impossible, for many I have forgotten, nor did I ever succeed in mastering the names of any of the temples we visited, for all seemed to the unaccustomed ear to sound like "B-r-r-r-un". We travelled in those small buses which ply in a state of unbelievable congestion from one village to another; we ate the most incredibly tasty curries off leaves in little wayside shacks; we sat beside village tanks and exchanged humour with the populace, though neither of us had a word of the language.

Of all the expeditions we made, those to the Holy City of Conjeeveram were the most fascinating, for here was a treasure house of Dravidian art without parallel. In our first visit we were so lost in admiration that we missed the last bus back to Madras. We noticed however that there was a bus in the market place about to leave for Arkonam, and we remembered having passed through this town on our way from Bombay to Madras. But tickets for the bus were to be procured from a small guichet around which a turbulent crowd was milling; indeed, at first sight, we thought that they were attempting to carry the little edifice by assault. The Major, for all his high metaphysic, was a man of practical sense. He cast about until he discovered an athletic youth of aggressive mien, and gave him to understand that if he would purchase two tickets to Arkonam for us he would be amply rewarded. The athletic youth accepted this offer with alacrity and, throwing himself upon the mob, he literally climbed over the heads and shoulders of blaspheming passengers until he reached the guichet. Here he bought the tickets and retraced his steps amidst volleys of imprecations. He was amply recompensed and we boarded our bus; in due course we reached Arkonam only to find that we had a fourteen-hour wait for the next train to Madras.

Arkonam station sticks in my mind by reason of the nice discrimination used in its appointments. I remember seeing three designations, "Men", "Women", "Gentlemen (Key with the Station Master)", but for the rest I remember nothing, for we sat on the platform, and, with fourteen hours at his disposal, the Major began to unfold his theory of Sense Perception and the Irradiation of Metals. He was a man who had the gift of clothing lofty speculations in the flowing vesture of fine language, and for how long he discoursed in the darkness I have no idea, but suddenly there materialised before us a hospital train going at a snail's pace through the station. I have never seen anything more closely akin to a ghost train than this, for there was neither light nor sign of life in it, and it was a wonder how it moved at all. Nevertheless we decided to board it, and wrenching open a door we climbed in. We walked through endless dark corridors and empty wards until in some remote corner we discovered the M.O. who commanded it. He was even more like a ghost than the vehicles in which he travelled; he seemed so lost in abstraction as hardly to exist. We explained that we were marooned at Arkonam and must needs return to Madras. We asked him whether his train was going to Madras. He said that he did not know. We enquired from whence he had come, but upon this he was most vague, and finally he seemed to disappear like a wraith from before our eyes.

The Major looked out of the window at the stars and declared that we were undoubtedly travelling in the direction of Madras, so, lying down on two

stretchers in a deserted ward, we clanked our way across the Indian country-side in darkness and fell asleep. We woke the following morning at about six and found the train had stopped in the open country; it was parked on a siding with no visible means of locomotion. We therefore decided to abandon it and tramped down the track in what we conceived to be the direction of Madras. In due course we got a train to the city and so returned to Pallaveram. I have often wondered since whether the ghost train with its wraith-like O.C.s were not a conjuration cast up by the Major from some ancient receipt found in a Buddhist monastery in the Himalayas, and whether after all I was not hypnotised by the theory of Sense Perception and the Irradiation of Metals as we lay on the platform at Arkonam, and then transported by some subtle necromancy to my squalid pallet in Pallaveram, where I ultimately awoke.

I made many subsequent pilgrimages to Conjeeveram, the last a few days before I sailed for Singapore. On this occasion the Major was not with me, for he had disappeared in the night, and so had presumably gone to Upper Burma, but two other archaeologists joined with me in borrowing an army truck. It happened that a large number of new vehicles had just been delivered, and the Transport Officers were only too glad for them to be run in by reasonably competent people. With this new conveyance we went to Conjeeveram and delved further into its treasures, but coming home in the evening as we passed down the main street of the city, the engine suddenly came to a dead stop, and could by no means be induced to start again.

Looking back upon the incident I think it probable that these vehicles were in the nature of a secret weapon. They must have been designed for parachuting to the Japs with a view to throwing their transport system into complete disorder. At any rate when we attempted to examine the engine we found that it was accessible only through a small hole, just large enough to thrust in the hand. It was quite impossible to see and to work at the same time; attempts to get at the engine from below led every time to an impasse. We did what we could, feeling about in the black interior of the bonnet, unscrewing the things as best we could, and when possible screwing them back again. But if we let go of any tools they dropped into a void somewhere in the interior completely out of reach. One by one the various tools of our kit disappeared in this fashion, and we made no headway whatsoever.

Travellers in misfortune are often treated by the inhabitants of cities with crude ribaldry, but the people of Conjeeveram showed us the greatest humanity, indeed, the whole city seemed to be concerned for our welfare. Traffic stopped, and a large crowd gathered around. Some argued, some disputed, some hazarded suggestions, all sought to help, but little of the good advice proffered reached us by reason of the language bar. A Police Officer produced a piece of wire and this we twisted into the interior of the engine until it also dropped down and was lost with the rest. A representative of the local Fire Brigade brought along a bottle of petrol, which was poured in, in the hope of starting it afresh, but this proved futile. At one point a procession of devout persons beating gongs and drums and other instruments of exorcism came along, and they did what they could with the clash of cymbals and other aids, but the devil that detained us was not so easily cast out.

Later in the evening the elephant from the Temple of Siva wandered along, and after regarding us coldly with its beady eye, picked up our remaining spanner with its trunk, and would have purloined it, were it not prevented by the onlookers. Throughout the truck suffered a heavy infestation of urchins, and every half hour or so it was necessary to purge it of some dozen small boys. A silver merchant, who had a shop opposite where we stopped, early in the evening produced a pressure lamp which enabled us to see the malign hole more clearly. A cloth merchant on the opposite side of the road then produced an electric torch which enabled us to look inside. The silver merchant, not to be outdone, produced three gilt chairs with green-plush seats and entertained us to coffee. Indeed, we seemed to be the object of universal benevolence.

Having disposed of all our tools in the course of some four hours of futile labour, we were preparing to bed down for the night when two Indian soldiers made their appearance, one of whom could speak English fluently. To him we explained our difficulty. He went up to the engine and by pressing some secret button lifted the bonnet completely off, revealing the whole nakedness of the mechanism. He then set to work removing the tools that we had dropped in and restoring the parts that we had undone, and in the course of a few minutes the engine started up with great vigour amidst the applause of the populace. It was obvious that the man was a master craftsman, and for fear of further mischance we invited him to drive the truck back. His unit was stationed just outside Madras, and he was only too glad to get a lift thus easily. He and his companion climbed into the cab and we three pilgrims got up behind.

We had spent upwards of four hours tinkering with that truck in the main street of Conjeevaram, and now it seemed that all the velocity which had been pent up during that period was suddenly let loose. In the hands of our driver the truck leaped forward into the darkness and raced towards Madras at an unbelievable speed. How long the journey took I have no idea. I am so nervous of traffic that to travel in anything faster than a wheelbarrow fills me with apprehension, and throughout most of this nightmare trip I was prostrate and barely conscious. But as I clung to the frame-work of the vehicle, I dimly perceived, flashing past in the night, trees, houses, villages, farmsteads, drivers wrestling with bolting bullocks, the debris of fowls, the odd remains of a stray dog, and so on. Were it not that our driver was such a master of his vehicle, the journey would have been one of unutterable horror, for we sped through the night, now on three wheels, now on two wheels, and at times seemingly thrusting through space. Rather as a great artist sometimes takes liberties with his instrument, playing upon it all sorts of extravagances, and even perhaps throwing it into the air and catching it again in his exuberance, rather thus did our driver treat his truck, playing with it in a fashion of familiar abandon. But as I have said, my impressions were clouded, for I clung to the framework half stupefied and expecting instant death.

Some time in the early hours of the morning the truck stopped with the screech of brakes and the grating of tyres, and the driver announced that his unit was camped close by and he must now leave us. Weak and dazed, I descended and, after a brief period of recovery, thanked him for what he had done. I said that we could with difficulty express

our gratitude for the manner in which he had rescued us from the impasse at Conjeevaram, and that I was lost in admiration for his skill at the wheel. Finally I said that I would write to his Commanding Officer and record these facts, in the hope that it would lead to his promotion in the service. At this the driver ceased blushing and became alarmed. "Please Sir," said he, "do not do so. You see, I am not allowed to drive. I am the Orderly Room runner."

ROBERT NICHOLL.

News-letters from Outstations.

SIBU,

29th August, 1949.

August has been a busy month for Sibu, socially, if not otherwise. On the eighth we were lucky to receive a visit by the *Rajah Brooke* bringing with her many friends from Kuching. On the two following days the Directors of the Sarawak Steamship Company kindly entertained on board many of the inhabitants of Sibu.

Following soon afterwards came the "International Magic Show" which played to a full house on three successive nights at the Rex Cinema. Apart from the usual "wise guys" who saw through every trick, the remainder judged it a good show and one well worth seeing.

The biggest attraction, towards the end of the month, was the exhibition given by the Badminton Champions, Messrs. Wong Peng Soon and Ong Poh Lim, who, sponsored by the Sibu Recreation Club, played exhibition games at the Rex Cinema on two evenings. They, together with certain other players, provided some of the best entertainment seen in Sibu for some time!

Entertainment of an equally high value was provided by five elephants from Siam brought over for the Borneo Company Ltd. in the *Buloh*. Unfortunately, they were transhipped in mid-stream and so only a privileged few were able to see their antics when being off-loaded. They were taken on upriver the same evening under the watchful eye of "Batty" Miles, who has recently returned from furlough.

During the month the writer spent a pleasant week visiting Penghulu Brinau's area, all the houses there, nineteen in all, being visited. During this tour the "Tin" census was taken in each house and the following figures, taken from the census of seven houses, may be of interest:—

No. of married women with children.	Children born.	Children still living.
127	499	307

This works out, approximately, at four children each, of whom three out of every four have survived their earlier days. The average age of the women from whom these figures were taken was thirty-six, as near as can be judged. It would seem that the infant mortality rate amongst the Sea Dayaks (if this cross-section is in any way representative) is not as high as it is often believed to be.

(Contributed.)

Notes from Mukah.

The month of July was well spent on official and unofficial duties. The writer had only a few days in his station, spending most of his time travelling and living out of a travelling leather suitcase, *rotan* basket, bazaar-modelled painted kerosene tin and Land Dayak *jantong* (basket). These containers are most suitable for travelling.

Late in July an unexpected order arrived, and a trip by outboard motor was made to examine the corpse of a victim of gun-shooting in *Langkan Uman* during a *begawai* (festival). It was an unpleasant but unavoidable duty as the corpse had been placed inside a coffin and left on raised stilts for four days, and even the "fan" volunteers (who used branches of trees) were made ill. Later the burial took place among a crowd of local people who appeared somewhat hostile and were distinctly unsorrowful.

The deceased person is said to have returned home, about two weeks before my visit, after having failed to obtain permission to buy a shot-gun; he was disconsolate, and it is said that at a *lubok* or deep pool, a few hours before reaching his landing-place, a handful of yellow "grains" dropped from the sky into the boat. (The friend who accompanied the deceased and related the tale inferred that the "grains" were flower buds of the jungle whirled about by a pocket of air). That night the deceased had a bad dream, in which an old man invited him to participate in a certain ceremony, and later the dreamer, on awakening, wanted a *begawai* of his own at once but could not have it until the rice wine had been prepared. The death occurred on the day of the *begawai*.

The theory of the people was that the old man of whom the deceased dreamed was an evil spirit whose hold grew stronger with the delay in preparing the *begawai*. It appears that the deceased had a birth-mark which should have been ceremoniously sucked and spat out by a *manang*, in order to get rid of the evil spirit.

The person who was responsible for the death of the deceased was sentenced to one year's imprisonment and ordered to pay \$100 compensation (*pati nyawa*).

After pronouncement of the sentence all witnesses returned to the village, and the relatives of the convicted man kept much to themselves, somewhat frightened by the hostile attitude of the rest of the village. This attitude was unreasonable, because many listened to gossips who held that the death penalty should be passed in such a case where death has been caused, whatever might be the circumstances.

Late in August the writer toured upriver with the District Officer. He heard people saying that it is easier to kill another person during festival days when rice wine is being drunk, but he told those who said so that they should be more careful in their talk and pay more attention to the principles of justice.

The writer, while on leave, visited Serian and Dayak villages looking for poisonous plants. At Mentang, a village on the left-hand branch of the Sarawak River, an inconspicuous hole on the river-bank was pointed out to him as the legendary cave of an enormous dragon. It was said that a young

woman, one week after giving birth, went down to the river to bathe; afterwards she was about to climb up again when she was sucked into the cave and lost forever. Many years later, it was said, this woman changed into a fairy and came out from the other end of the cave somewhere not far from the present District Officer's bungalow.

An outboard driver showed me how certain fish (*kaloi*) could sometimes be caught. Crawling to a quiet corner of the river-bank, with his shot-gun ready, he whistled and whistled. He was not successful, though he tried for a few hours, but the next day, paddling down to Serian, he met a Malay sitting on a landslide on the bank. This man was whistling, and then suddenly fired his gun, jumped into the water and retrieved a dead *kaloi* weighing about four katties. This seems to confirm that which Mr. K. H. Digby wrote about *kaloi* fishing in the April, 1949, number of the *Sarawak Gazette*.

In this same place, that which struck the writer as a distant visitor was the effective method of luring deer to a firing target. The bait, a length of bamboo filled with salt, was stuck into the ground and pegged securely where deer were likely to feed. A small surrounding area was kept free from human beings so that it would not be affected by their smell, and two days later the hunter would examine the area for footmarks of deer.

GEORGE JAMUH.

Capital Investment in British Borneo.

The prime factor governing the introduction of foreign capital into the British territories in Borneo is the inadequacy of local revenue. Neither Sarawak nor British North Borneo is blessed with large reserves which may be called upon to meet the commitments incurred by their new status as colonies. The British Government is committed to a policy of economic development and social welfare intended to lead eventually to the attainment of the aim of self-government. The fulfilment of this objective can have no reality in a territory which is not economically strong. Economic strength is a pre-requisite of effective independence. But it is not the only pre-requisite. The exploitation and development of economic resources must be accompanied by a general raising of the standard of living in terms of education, public health and nutrition, if self-government is to be a reality. Both the material and the personal equipment of the two colonies must be improved, and moreover must be improved as part of a cohesive and co-ordinated plan, so that the two aspects of development march forward in step, neither one outstripping the other in the rate of advance. It is in this light that the proper function of, and indeed the urgent need for, European capital investment in the development of Sarawak and British North Borneo must be determined.

The Sarawak Government found itself at the beginning of 1947 with something in the nature of one million pounds sterling which could be regarded as the unappropriated surplus available for expenditure on rehabilitation and development, after provision had been made to meet liabilities. Revenue was estimated as barely sufficient to cover

annually recurrent expenditure, and, though in the event economic recovery proved more rapid than anticipated, the Government's inability even to meet the cost of many important rehabilitation works was readily apparent.

In North Borneo the situation was far worse. Severe loss sustained during the war period, coupled with the improbability of ever obtaining reparation from the Japanese Government, resulted in the new colony finding itself without reserves, with inadequate revenue to meet recurrent expenditure, and with a reconstruction bill amounting to approximately 2 million sterling. Clearly the need for external capital was intense.

It is fortunate that the *laissez-faire* economic policy of the British Government towards the colonies in the late 19th and early 20th century has now been replaced by a recognition of the vital part financial assistance from the mother country has to play in colonial development. The change in outlook seems so complete that it is to be hoped that such assistance will now only be limited by international shortages of capital goods, though it should be recognised that, at present, the amounts being provided are totally inadequate to the needs of the situation. When it is recalled that the United Kingdom is providing only £120 million for all projects in all colonies for ten years, while the United States in Puerto Rico has spent £2 million on one enterprise alone in one year, it will be appreciated that Colonial Development and Welfare Funds cannot act as more than what has been termed 'a pump primer'. They can only help to create a framework within which individual enterprises will be the responsibility of other forms of capital.

While development plans for British North Borneo would appear to recognise this, and out of a total estimate of £5½ million to be spent on development only £½ million is being found from Colonial Development and Welfare, on the other hand in Sarawak it would appear that the entire cost of development is to be met in this way, and that plans are therefore to be limited to a maximum of just over £½ million sterling, the amount allocated under the Development and Welfare Act.

The cost of reconstruction in British North Borneo is being met by grants-in-aid from the British Government, and, while Sarawak has not sustained such damage during the war as to merit such assistance, the colony could well follow British North Borneo's lead in meeting the rest of its development costs by loans, at any rate on those items which are revenue-producing and from which the revenue would be sufficient to pay the interest and amortisation charges on a 20-year self-extinguishing basis. It seems highly undesirable, from a long-term political angle, that the already more highly capitalized northern colony should expend a so much greater proportion on capital development, especially when, in addition, the multiplier effect of a given dose of capital investment is remembered. These two territories must advance together, and the need for a greater degree of co-ordination in the matter of development plans is clear.

The recognition of the inadequacy, first, of revenue and, secondly, of Development and Welfare Funds to the task of economic and social development, is the first step to the understanding of the need for the application of external capital in other forms. The pace of change in the modern world demands that development proceeds as rapidly as

possible, and that no sources of capital investment are overlooked. While it is *prima facie* obvious that political independence depends on economic independence, and that no borrowing from abroad is without political strings, it should not be forgotten that foreign borrowing is the ladder by which more than one sovereign state has climbed to that status. The Dominions including India are among the most notable modern instances, and, though the high level of income in the Dominions and the wealthy class in India gave more scope for the savings out of which internal capital investment came, while in the colonies the inability of the tribal or closed economy to make such savings out of current income is the chief bar to development, yet in principle there is no reason why the same technique should not be applied. It is the British Government's duty in the case of the colonies to safeguard them against the danger that the economic independence of the borrower should invite political intervention on the part of the creditor, and it is also their duty to assist the accumulation of internal capital by the protection of domestic industries. It is clear that, if we hold seriously to the idea of self-government for the Borneo territories, then we must work consciously towards a situation in which they will be far less dependent on the supply of capital from outside.

But while this overall consideration must be kept firmly in mind, the immediate future still demands the extensive application of external capital, and the objective must therefore be to secure that, so long as outside capital is employed, it should operate under conditions most beneficial to the peoples of Borneo. There have been grievous abuses in the past in the colonies by capital interests from the days of the slave trade and the Congo Concessions onwards, and, though abuses so gross are now only of interest to the historian, it is still necessary to ensure that profits are not earned by exploiting human resources in the employment of labour, that they do not involve a misuse of natural assets by wasteful methods of winning minerals or extracting forest produce, and that they make an adequate return to the revenue of the two colonies. On the other hand, while the welfare of the territories continues to demand the use of private foreign capital, it is essential to avoid measures which might dry up the source from which it comes. This general problem is particularly acute in North Borneo where the concessions granted by the Chartered Company have been on leases that are as yet far from expiring, and which have been so liberal as to give a quite unproportionately small return to revenue. The rectification of this situation would be costly in the extreme, and in the present financial situation the inability of the colony to pay extensive compensation seems likely to result in a maintenance of the status quo. While revenue may thus continue to suffer for some considerable time, it seems that, in the matter of wasteful methods of exploitation, negotiation where necessary may achieve fruitful results. In Sarawak this problem is limited to one major asset, oil, and the terms of the operative oil concession are extremely disadvantageous to the Government, especially as compared with those governing the Brunei field. The situation is made worse at the present time by the fact that the Sarawak field is not being exploited, since the Oil Company is fully occupied with the Seria field, and, though the oil from this field is refined in Sarawak, the Government benefits hardly at all.

It is obvious that concessions such as these must not be made in the future, for the interests of the inhabitants of Borneo must be the primary consideration, and those of the investor must only be considered in the light of inducing capital application in the present uncertain conditions of world trade. It is particularly when faced with the problem of inducing private foreign investment, which is especially acute in these two territories where there are so few readily profitable outlets, that the need for overall economic planning becomes most apparent. In an unindustrialised country industrial costs are high, and piecemeal attempts at establishing this or that industry are likely to be unprofitable. Planning achieves the economies of scale in transport, power, docks, labour skill, market organisation, etc., and by reducing borrower's and lender's risks may help to encourage the urgently needed private foreign investment. The advantage of equity shares over fixed debt charges, especially in the uncertain market conditions of the post-war world, in many ways makes private preferable to public capital, while the decrease in international confidence makes large-scale planning all the more necessary if adequate private investment is to be ensured.

The need for planning applies not only where the private investor has to be encouraged, but equally where capital is required from the new techniques instituted by the United Kingdom Government, the Colonial Development Corporation and the Overseas Food Corporation. It should be more than a coincidence that public corporations and development and welfare plans run side by side. It should be a matter of deliberate and proclaimed policy that these two methods of financing development are complementary to each other, and, since the development and welfare allocations are too small to make any real impact on the low level of productivity in these territories, they should be used, primarily, together with local taxes and loans, as the means of providing a framework of public utilities and social services on which economic enterprise can build. And this economic enterprise must be the function not only of private capital but also of the new corporations, possibly employing new techniques of the type instanced by the groundnut scheme in Tanganyika. Though the British Treasury may not have sufficient money to finance a dozen such schemes, money should be available through banks and the ordinary money market, through the semi-public industrial finance corporations in the United Kingdom, from Australia and from the U.S.A.

It should not be impossible to ensure an adequate supply of capital provided development plans are comprehensively constructed and properly co-ordinated. Though the potential assets of these two territories are not enormous, yet there is scope for fairly extensive economic development, and probably the major problem that faces the planner is the provision of the vital personal equipment without which progress and the change-over from the closed to the open society can have no real meaning. A tribal economy of self-sufficiency not only prevents capital creation because there is little scope for savings out of current income, it also breeds a mentality where there is little desire for improvement and which is lacking in initiative and enterprise. Though this may not apply to the peoples of Borneo to the same extent as it does to the peoples of other colonies, and to that degree the

problem is simplified, yet it is vital to develop a sense of individual responsibility and self-reliance, an ability to make decisions and take actions and operate enterprises, and a feeling of the possibility and the desirability of progress. The breaking down of the tribal economy and the substitution in its place of the spirit of individual enterprise that permeates the open society is a difficult and dangerous process, but, unless we are prepared to undertake it and to carry it through as best we may, there is little justification for our presence in the Borneo territories. The happy idea that we can retain the institutions and the way of life of the peoples of these territories in their present backward state and somehow at the same time turn them into sovereign and independent states fit to take their place and stand up for themselves in the modern world, is in the long run likely to be the most detrimental to the peoples concerned.

(Contributed.)

(The statement that the Sarawak oilfield is not at present being exploited does not appear to be strictly accurate. It would perhaps be more correct to say that it is being only partially exploited. —EDITORS.)

"The War in Malaya"

BY

LT.-GENERAL A. E. PERCIVAL.

The depressing story of the collapse in Malaya and in Borneo before the onslaught of the Japanese in late 1941 and early 1942 has been told well and vividly by Lt.-General Percival in his book "The War in Malaya." Throughout the book the author has attempted to make an unbiased review and appears largely to have succeeded. Nevertheless the book must be regarded as having been written from the military viewpoint, however fair the judgment of the author may be considered to be, and it is apparent in his brief summing-up of the situation and events in Sarawak that the records to which the author has had access are mainly (if not solely) military. For this reason I, as a civilian at that time, propose to comment upon some of his statements and also wish to point out mistakes where I think they exist.

On page 93 the author states:—"Towards the end of November (1941) I received reports of an unsatisfactory state of affairs at Kuching in Sarawak and decided to visit the place myself." I was Secretary for Defence in Sarawak from July 1941 onwards, and one of these reports came from me. By October I had become so perturbed by the inadequacy of the defences of Sarawak that, after addressing the Committee of Administration on the subject, I was authorised to go to Singapore and seek an interview with the General Officer Commanding (Lt.-General Percival). It should be remembered that at that time Sarawak was an independent State under the protection of Great Britain, but it seemed to me, and to the Committee of Administration, that very little was being done by Great Britain to honour her treaty obligations towards Sarawak. Of course all of us knew of the parlous state of affairs in Great Britain at that time, but we believed that, despite this, we had a duty to perform towards this country by

obtaining that help which had been promised. I had even suggested that it might be better to withdraw the very weak military forces here if more security could not be provided, as their presence might invite a strong attack (which they would not be able to repel) and perhaps bring severe and unnecessary suffering to the people of Sarawak.

An interview with the G.O.C. at Fort Canning was obtained on 17th November, 1941. I stated the views of the Sarawak Government, and the General stated his. His were, briefly, that he could promise no help other than two Bofors anti-aircraft guns in six months. He was terribly short of men and equipment, and the R.A.F. also had nothing to offer. Like everyone else we must attempt to bluff and hope for the best. He explained to me how he expected the Japanese attack to develop, and subsequently his appreciation was proved to be accurate. Before leaving, I invited the General, on behalf of the Sarawak Government, to come to Sarawak and see things for himself. The invitation was accepted. I returned to Sarawak very depressed, knowing that we could expect an attack which could not be repelled by the weak defences here.

Again on page 93, the author states that the population in 1941 was about six to the square mile. It was nearer eleven; a very minor error, scarcely worth noting.

At the end of page 94 the author states that he left Sarawak on 30th November, 1941, with a sense of great sympathy for the people but with an uneasy feeling that all was not well and with a feeling of frustration that one could do so little to put things right. Those feelings were shared by some of us in Sarawak also—those of us who knew the full situation. We knew our defences were inadequate, and our local troops untrained and untried in modern warfare; we knew that the local population would disappear into the jungle at the first sign of danger (and who could blame them?) and that labour could not be expected to work on military defences in time of danger when it became apparent that no defences existed. In those days also there was trouble over responsibility for payment of the cost of military projects. There was an agreement whereby Sarawak should contribute to the British War Fund to the limit of the country's resources while Great Britain accepted financial responsibility for the defence of the State, provided that Sarawak would pay for the raising and maintenance of all local forces. It is considered that Sarawak honoured her part of the bargain, but it cannot be said that the military authorities always did so without argument, probably, as the book indicates, because they did not have the money.

We read on page 166, in respect of the final demolition of the oilfields at Miri and Seria which commenced on 8th December, 1941, that "the programme went to time without a serious hitch and in a manner reflecting the greatest credit on all concerned, and particularly on Major Davis and on Lt. Hancock, upon whom the responsibility for most of the detailed arrangements had devolved." It is true that Major Davis played a part in planning demolition, but he had returned to Malaya before 8th December and his place had been taken by Major Slatter. While in no way wishing to detract from the tribute paid to both officers, I think it should be pointed out that the main work of planning and carrying out demolition devolved upon the employees of Sarawak Oilfields

Limited under their very able General Manager Mr. B. B. Parry (who lost his life later at Long Nawang), just as in Kuching it devolved upon the Director of Public Works, his staff and Volunteers.

On page 168 it is stated that the Japanese landed at Seria at 3.30 a.m. on 16th December. They landed at Miri also at about that time, but further details of this landing can be gained from the article "Past History, 1941-1942" in this issue. It is also stated that Dutch planes attacked Japanese shipping at Miri on 17th, 18th and 19th. This is correct, but they attacked on 20th and 28th also and are believed to have sunk at least one destroyer. On the same page the author states that, from 16th December onwards, enemy reconnaissance aircraft were frequently sighted over Kuching. They were first seen on 24th November (as the author states in a previous chapter), visited Miri frequently several days prior to the outbreak of war, and were over Kuching on 13th, 14th and 15th December also. Again, on the same page, we are told that on 19th Kuching town was bombed. This is correct, but a further statement that special attention was paid by the bombers to the Chinese quarter is not accurate. Special attention was probably paid to the Borneo Company Limited petrol dump (which was destroyed) while Bukit Mata Kuching and Chinese dwellings along and to the east of Mathies' Road were also hit, casualties numbering 32 killed and 72 injured.

On page 169 it is said that by 8.30 p.m. on 23rd O.P.s north and north-east of Kuching had reported searchlights to seaward, and on page 171 the author states again that observers at an O.P. north of Kuching reported, on the morning of 24th, Japanese transports anchored in Santubong Bay and landing craft making for the Santubong River. All this is true enough, but it should be noted that military observers at O.P.s had given several unreliable reports of strange lights prior to 23rd and, therefore, when a Sarawak Coastguards patrol launch at Salak (near Santubong) wirelessly at 10 p.m. on 23rd the presence of a number of strange vessels at Santubong, the military authorities were openly sceptical, although the report came this time through reliable civilian channels. At 7.30 a.m. on 24th our civil look-out post at Tanjong Po (in charge of Mr. C. B. Horn) gave us details of the movements of certain Japanese vessels seen off Santubong and continued to do so as long as we could receive his messages. Again, at 8.30 a.m., the same Salak patrol launch wirelessly the number of Japanese craft at Santubong and said the launch was proceeding up-river followed by two Japanese craft. The degree of reliability of such reports, coming as they did through civilian channels, happened to be very important at the time. On the night of 23rd, after receipt of the Salak message, and after taking into account all the other evidence, I told O/C Troops that that message was reliable, and recommended to the Chief Secretary that the denial schemes under civilian control should be carried out. He agreed, and instructions were issued accordingly, but in some cases they were not carried out at once because they were tied up with military plans and many of the Volunteers connected with them were away on the very important work of demolition of the landing ground.

There are a number of statements on page 171 inviting comment. Firstly, it is stated that the River Bintawa was crossed by ferry at Batu Kitang. It is the River Sarawak (Batang Sarawak Kiri)

which is crossed thus at Batu Kitang.

Secondly, we are told that the first landing took place at Lintang. That particular landing took place at about 3 p.m. on 24th and eight barges, which came up the river to Kuching afterwards, arrived there at 5 p.m. at the earliest, according to a reliable report obtained from Sgt. Major Stafford who was taken prisoner at Lintang and brought up to Kuching by the Japanese landing party. But Kuching was in Japanese hands by 4 p.m., and in fact the Japanese occupying party landed at Semariang north of Astana Road and walked to Kuching unnoticed by the military observers at O.P. Bukit Siol—quite understandably since the road the Japanese took was heavily shaded on both sides and they were extremely well camouflaged.

Thirdly, it is said that Japanese craft were engaged by forward posts at Pending. I doubt this very much, but can say for certain that the Pending post sank one of our patrol launches by mistake at 11.45 a.m.

Fourthly, it is stated that many of the Japanese troops were dressed in British and Sarawak police uniforms, and the author appears to refer to those who invaded Kuching on 24th. I have heard that report before but have never been able to obtain confirmation of it and from reliable reports and my own observations am strongly inclined to disbelieve it. The Japanese troops I saw on 24th were very well camouflaged in their green uniforms and helmets covered with greenery stuck into the cotton netting on both, but I saw no other uniforms worn by them.

Fifthly, it is said that a certain two Sarawak Government Officials were in the hands of the Japanese by 4 p.m. This is correct, but the reason why they and so many other Europeans fell into the hands of the Japanese on 24th should perhaps be stated. It had been agreed that all male Europeans with military duties would report to O/C Troops should attack occur, and they were in fact under his command. It is believed that those Europeans did so report. There were others, such as the Judicial Commissioner, Treasurer and Assistant Secretary for Defence who were under instructions to get out of Borneo with important documents as quickly as possible. Then there were others who had no particular defence duties after they had done the work allotted to them and were told to go. And lastly there were the officials who were under orders to stay: all but one or two of the latter were captured, but all of them could have escaped if they had decided to do so.

I hope I have not appeared unnecessarily critical. After all, the affair in Sarawak was only a very small side-show, and the author of "The War in Malaya" can be forgiven if he makes a few errors in respect of such a minor campaign. But some of these little things are important in the history of Sarawak.

J. L. NOAKES.

Secretariat Scrambles.

It all started when the Temporary Acting Under Secretary of the Principal Assistant Secretary to the Deputy Chief Secretary read a book. Not a full-length book, of course, but a magazine. The "Bleeders Digest," to be precise. If only we'd

foreseen the result, we'd have put the "Bleeder" on the banned list. Or at least restricted it to the Reference Library in the Museum, where "Kamasutra," Van der Velde, Havelock Ellis and all the other books too hot for general reading are reserved for the Curator's delectation.

This digest told all about some bloke who was marvellously clever at running a sort of Secretariat in some foreign country. His name was the Admirable Palsy, so near as I remember, and when he first took over the job he found that the staff took up to two years to answer letters. It's hard to imagine that any place could have perfected better delaying tactics than we have in Kuching, but you know how the "Bleeder" indulges in hyperbole. (For the benefit of those unfamiliar with the vernacular, I'd better explain that "hyperbole" is an Iban word, meaning "large in the trunk," that is to say, "an elephant," i.e. something larger than it really is, as elephants always are.)

This Palsy decided to change all that, so what did he do? It was simple according to the "Bleeder"—he issued an order that nobody was allowed to go home so long as he/she/it had one single letter/telegram/communication/file or what have you on his, her or its desk. And from that day on everyone there answered all their mail on the very same day it was received, and after a bit of practice they were answering the mail up to a couple of months before it came in. Just like that!

And this, this! mark you, is the pernicious stuff that the TAUS of PAS to DCS puts up to CS, marked in violet ink, with a minute saying "Perhaps a similar system could be followed here?" Now it just so happened that this minute reached the Chief Secretary on the 1st of the month and, like everyone else, he'd been up all night trying to figure out which bills he could afford to pay, and which he'd have to leave over till next month, and which he couldn't possibly pay unless the Cost of Existence Allowance was increased. With the sort of perverse logic that comes to overtired people, he thought it was a scheme whereby all bills were automatically paid on the day they fell due, and minuted on it "Approve, fair, and issue." Which of course wasn't fair, and if it hadn't been for his issue he wouldn't have been worried about his bills, and he wouldn't have been up all night, and he wouldn't have approved it.

Anyway, out goes the order:—"Office Instruction No. —/19 . . . In future no senior member of the Secretariat will leave the office until such time as his table is completely cleared of files and correspondence. And I'm fair dinkum, so no swinging the lead. (Sgd.) Chief Secretary." Naturally no one took any notice—at first. Then the PAS Bin was caught out, going home with 197 files still on his desk, and he was for it. As the Chief Secretary rightly pointed out, "Why the hell should I stay here if nobody's going to take any notice of what I say? I could make far more money in Kuching by advising the local towkays on legal matters and Government rackets in general. I said fair dinkum and I meant fair dinkum. Stop his increment!" After that speech, which bears a strong resemblance to a scorpion, we began to sit up and take notice. These days a stoppage of the increment to your filthy lucrement is a serious matter.

Now this desk clear business sounds all fine and

dandy when you read about it, but doesn't work out so well in practice. 'Cause why? Because if a file isn't on one bloke's desk it must be on someone else's. See?

For the first week we didn't cotton on to this, and worked like blazes. Not that it did a ha'porth of good, because the faster we shot files out to somebody else, the faster the others shot them back to us. So there we all were, seemingly stuck in the Secretariat as permanently as are the angels in Westminster Abbey. Just working continuously, with relays of office boys bringing us food and water(?). But relief awaited us.

The Deputy Chief Secretary tumbled to it first. On the eighth night he sent for his horses, which he parked in the empty PAS's loose-box with a plentiful supply of oats. On the ninth morning he mounted his best horse and cantered gaily round the Secretariat verandah to the accompaniment of loud cheers from the other Secretarians. You see, he'd carefully re-read the order, and there it was in black and white: no one could leave the office, but it didn't say we had to work all the time, did it?

Well, after that it wasn't so bad at all. At 4 p.m. we knocked off, and the office boys brought in tea; at 5 p.m. we played cricket or golf in the office square; at 6 p.m. the office boys would bring in the beer, and then we'd all play poker in the Financial Secretary's office until time for dinner and bed. On Saturday nights we had wonderful parties and dances in the Chief Secretary's room, and, one way and another, life was quite bearable for the next couple of weeks.

After that though it got a bit monotonous, especially for the married men. Another thing was that having our beds in the office left hardly any room for the office tables, and furthermore it looked a bit odd to the general public. I mean to say, when someone came into the Secretariat and saw a bed beside the desk, you couldn't blame them for thinking a man wasn't pulling his weight, could you?

The next inspiration came from the Financial Secretary. Ah, what a brain! He called a 7 a.m. conference, which the Deputy Chief Secretary and the PASes attended, and explained the plan. Once we understood, there was a roar of laughter, and we joyfully 'phoned home to tell our wives to put the clock out and wind the cat up, because we'd be coming home. Then we called the office boys, and gave them their Operation Orders.

That morning files came in as usual. We gaily scribbled on them, put them into the trays marked "Out to Tom," "Out to Dick," "Out to Harry" and so on, but the office boys weren't allowed to touch the tray marked "Out to C.S."—not then. Come 3 p.m., and the Chief Secretary's "In" tray was nearly clear. Little did he realise the steadily mounting stacks in the various "Out" trays.

Nearing Zero Hour. At 1555 GH all watches were synchronised with the clock in the Clock Tower. At 1556 GH all office boys were woken up. At 1557 GH all office boys sat up. At 1558 GH all office boys stood up. At 1559 GH all office boys were in position, one office boy crouching beside each of the seven prearranged "Out to C.S." trays.

Zero Hour, 1600 GH. On the first stroke of the hour could be heard the Financial Secretary yelling "Now," and seven previously prepared pins were driven into seven unwilling backsides. On the second stroke seven office boys grabbed each a stack of files and raced out. On the third stroke a flabbergasted Chief Secretary saw seven huge stacks of files dropped into his "In" tray. On the fourth stroke one Deputy Chief Secretary, one Financial Secretary and five Principal Assistant Secretaries sprinted out and away from seven file-bare cubby-holes.

The Chief Secretary wasn't half cross at first, but at about 2359 GH he started chuckling. Then he started roaring with laughter, which woke up the horses, and they started neighing.

"After all," said the C.S., "if they can, I can. But to-morrow we'll plan it properly and I'll be in it too." And we had, so he could, and we did, and he was, and the whole show was highly successful, not to say spectacular.

People used to come for miles to see the Secretariat Scramble, as they call it in the vernacular (風人賽跑). It was all split-second timing, you see. None of us could leave his office until his office boy had raced out, and each of us had to be out and away before any one of the madly-running boys from other offices could arrive. But I am proud to say we never missed, even though by mutual arrangement we had to stop work at 0930 GH (or 9.30 a.m. Local Time, or 0200Z or 2 hours GMT—whichever you prefer) to prepare for the rush.

The Deputy Chief Secretary always pleased the crowd. Each afternoon he'd dress in his racing silks, and have his best horse brought in ready saddled and bridled. Zero hour would find him mounted and, as his files disappeared out of one door, he'd dig in his spurs and gallop out of the other, jump off the verandah, and thunder off up Court House Road.

But the real crowd-thriller was the Chief Secretary. He and his driver and his office boy used to practise every week-end, until the Whirl of Death at the Circus was nothing to the show they put on. The office boy's special job was to yell "Ai-oh," as the pin was inserted at Chime One (of the clock, naturally). The driver would be sitting waiting in the car, with the engine running and the transmission in second gear, and, as soon as he heard the yell, he'd engage the clutch. One second later he'd change up and, still gathering speed, approach the Chief Secretary's back door. While Chime Three was still sounding, and before the clamouring horde of office boys could sweep in on him, the Chief Secretary would take a flying leap from his back door, drop feet first through the open sunshine roof of his by now fast-moving car, and disappear towards home as the driver changed into high. How the mob roared!

But it was too good to last. We could have kept it up indefinitely, but jealousy intervened, and people started complaining. The trouble was, you see, the illusion that the Chief Secretary and his staff slumbered gently all day had been destroyed, and people always get annoyed when you destroy their illusions. Even the outstations started complaining about the Secretariat, and that's most

unusual. The last straw was a telegram which came in from an outstation, saying:—"Either Secretariat Scrambles or our Regatta must be cancelled stop there is not room in Sarawak for both it and we."

So, very reluctantly, a new Thing was issued: "Office Instruction No. —/19... is hereby amended as follows: *delete* 'correspondence,' and *insert in lieu thereof* 'correspondence, that has been there in excess of one repeat one year.'"

And so it is to this day.

JURGEN.

The Almanac.

6th October. Datu Bandar Haji Bua Hassan died, 1906.

Haji Bua Hassan was born at Lidah Tanah in about 1810, though there is some doubt as to the actual date of his birth. He was the second son of the Datu Patinggi Ali, the premier datu of Sarawak at the time of James Brooke's arrival, who claimed descent from Rajah Jarom of the royal house of Menangkabau.

He took part in several campaigns against the turbulent Dayaks of the Batang Lupar and Saribas rivers, and in the latter he on one occasion assisted Captain Keppel in quelling disturbances. It was in the course of these campaigns that the Datu Patinggi fell in 1844 up the Skrang.

On the death of the old Datu, his son-in-law Haji Abdul Gapur became Datu Patinggi, while his eldest son Mohammed Lana was appointed Datu Bandar. The story of the intrigues of the Datu Patinggi and his subsequent dismissal is well-known. Haji Bua Hassan, who had remained loyal to the Rajah, was appointed Imam at the time of the Datu Patinggi's banishment (1854) and five years later Datu Imam.

During the Chinese insurrection of 1857 the Datu, like all the Malays, again showed his loyalty to the Rajah. He collected his followers in the kampong and led them to the Astana to protect the Rajah. Finding, however, that the Rajah had already succeeded in escaping, they returned, but found themselves cut off by large numbers of Chinese and had to fight their way back to the Datu's house. The search was, however, continued and eventually the Rajah was found.

Some eight years later Haji Bua Hassan succeeded his elder brother Mohammed Lana as Datu Bandar. The rest of his long life was spent in more peaceful pursuits. In 1889 he assisted as a mediator in the dispute between the Pangeran Shahbandar and the British North Borneo Government. He was for many years a member of the Supreme Council, whose meetings he continued to attend almost till the date of his death.

He was liked and respected by all communities, and was a keen sportsman, who never missed a regatta or a tuba fishing. The Malays, hearing of his death, exclaimed:—"Pasak negri sudah hilang." "By his death," ran the obituary notice, "one of our few remaining links with the past is severed, with the Sarawak of Sir James Brooke and Admiral Keppel's day, with a time when, in spite of all obstacles and difficulties, perhaps indeed because of them, a few men, always fighting an uphill

fight, succeeded in laying the foundations of law, order and civilization in this country. Amongst these the late Datu Bandar of Sarawak must be given an honourable place."

By his only wife, Datu Isah, the Datu Bandar had 9 children and it was estimated that, at the time of his death, he had 72 grandchildren and 68 great-grandchildren. Among his sons were Abang Mohammed Kassim (appointed Datu Bandar in 1907, and died in Mecca in 1921) and Haji Mohammed Ali (Datu Hakim, and later Datu Temong-gong). Abang Mohammed Kassim's son was the late Datu Patinggi Abang Haji Abdillah, who was appointed to this post, vacant since the fall of Haji Abdul Gapur, in 1937, and died in 1946.

Sarawak Forestry Development Plan.

Of the total area of Sarawak (47,071 square miles), 42,000 square miles (or 89%) are covered by forest. About 16,000 square miles of this forest area consist of merchantable forest, the remaining 26,000 square miles being unprofitable or inaccessible forest land.

The forests of Sarawak are evergreen, of the type generally known as tropical rain forest. They may be grouped broadly into (a) the littoral forests, comprising mangrove forests, casuarina belts and other coastal forests and (b) the inland forests, comprising fresh-water swamp forests, lowland forests and mountain forests. The mangrove forests have until recently been the most intensively worked areas, both for cutch and for firewood, but increasing interest is now being shown in the fresh-water swamp forests. Among the trees of these latter forests *jelutong** is important, as it produces a latex from which chewing-gum is manufactured; there are also, in addition to the *meranti*** types, *ramint*†, which has recently achieved great popularity in the Australian market, and possibly other species, which have not yet won local commercial popularity, but which may prove suitable for export. The main species of the lowland forests in the neighbourhood of the rivers are *beliant*†† and *engkabang*‡; elsewhere in these forests the majority of the stock is supplied by the *meranti*, *kapor* and *keruing* groups§, and preliminary surveys have shown volumes as high as 45 tons per acre. It is improbable that the mountain forests will ever have a commercial value except for certain minor forest produce, such as *damar* and *rotans*, but they are necessary from the point of view of protection against erosion and general denudation.

The area of demarcated forests at the end of 1948 was a little over 3,204 square miles, or 6.8% of the total area of Sarawak. These demarcated forests fall into two categories:—

(a) *Forest Reserves*. These are fully protected against trespass. Subject to certain rights and privileges which may be conceded at the time of reservation, all the produce of a Forest Reserve and the things found in it are deemed to be the property of the Government, for whom the forest is main-

**Dyera Lowii* Hook, f.

***Shorea* spp.

†*Gonystylus* spp.

††*Eusideroxyylon Zwageri* Teyssm.

‡*Shorea martiniana* and *Shorea Gysbertsiana*.

§*Dipterocarps*.

tained and controlled by the Conservator. No one may enter a Forest Reserve save Forest Department officers, gazetted right-holders, if any, and people operating under the authority of the Conservator.

(b) *Protected Forests.* Unlike the Forest Reserves, these are not closed to the public, but, though certain rights may be conceded, land in these forests may not be cleared, nor may any forest produce be felled except under licence or permit. There is, however, an important exception to this general rule, namely that any native of Sarawak may, without licence or permit, cut or remove any timber or other forest produce which he requires for his own use, and not for sale, exchange or direct profit; while any other inhabitant of Sarawak may do the same with written permission from the nearest forest officer. It should be noted that the Conservator is empowered to close up to one-fourth of the area of a Protected Forest at any one time for silvicultural purposes.

Reservation of forests began shortly after the establishment of the Forest Department in 1919, but the policy met with considerable opposition, both from the native population and from officials, owing in some measure to the uncompromising attitude adopted by the Department, and in the first fifteen years only 1.2% of the whole area of the country had been reserved. The concessions made to local rights by the introduction in 1934 of the conception of the Protected Forest, though not such as to detract from the value of the forest, were sufficient to silence the previous opposition. The process of demarcation was accelerated, and during the first four years the demarcated area was increased nearly fourfold.

From a revenue point of view, the forests have in the past been treated as an expendable asset, somewhat in the manner of an oilfield or a gold mine. The necessity for replacing the timber stock-in-trade has not been fully appreciated, and an insufficient portion of the revenue obtained from the forests has been returned to them for maintenance. Management on the basis of a sustained yield is still to come. Revenue from the forests is at present collected through three channels:—(a) through a royalty paid by licence-holders, (b) by monthly fees paid by permit-holders, and (c) through an export duty, collected by the Customs Department, on a number of minor forest products. Before the war the maximum revenue derived direct by the Forest Department in any one year from royalties and permit fees was a little under \$141,000. In 1947 the figure was rather over \$132,000, but in 1948 it rose to over \$245,000, this being due to a very considerable increase in the timber export trade with Australia and China. A record export figure of 5,699 tons was reached in 1947, but this was far surpassed by the 1948 figure of 19,599 tons. The declared value of the timber exported in 1948 was \$1,158,335. The Customs duty collected on minor produce varies considerably, according as there is or is not an *engkabang* (illipe nut) crop; in 1947, when there was a good crop, the duty amounted to over \$618,000, while in 1948, when there was no crop, revenue from this source was rather below \$300,000.

It is clear then that, from the revenue point of view, we have in our forests a most valuable asset, and one whose returns, if they increase as they have

recently been doing, may do much to reduce Sarawak's dependence for revenue on the rubber industry. From the point of view of the people themselves the ultimate aim of course is to introduce new cash crops as an alternative to rubber, but this is a policy whose fulfilment will take time. Our forests, it seems, when under full management, will in the very near future make up a considerable amount of the revenue which would be lost in a rubber slump. It is therefore of prime importance that measures should now be set on foot to ensure the proper maintenance and improvement of the forests, to make them a permanent revenue-producing asset.

Forestry development is of course a slow process, but a ten-year plan for Sarawak has been drawn up and submitted to London for approval. This is the first comprehensive long-term development plan, as distinct from separate departmental schemes, yet produced in Sarawak, and it is gratifying to know that it has been very favourably received in London. It will come into operation at the beginning of 1950.

The first requirement is the acquisition of an area of demarcated forest sufficient to provide for both external and internal trade, and to guard against the effects of erosion, silting and flooding. Not less than 25% of the total area of Sarawak is to be so demarcated. Of this area it is intended that 4,600 square miles (10% of the total area) shall be fully productive of major forest produce under intensive management, while the remainder will be made up of protective forests of catchment areas which can be considered as a source of minor forest produce only. Exploration of suitable forest areas for demarcation will be one of the first tasks in the immediate future. Owing to the extensive devastation wrought in the past and to the physical features of the country, the bulk of the new area required as productive forest must be sought in the Third and Fourth Divisions, and the areas proposed for exploration and proclamation as protected forests are broadly:—

(a) The headwaters of the Bintulu and Tatau rivers and their main tributaries, and the true right bank of the Batang Rajang between Belaga and Pelagus (an estimated area of 1,200 square miles).

(b) The drainage basin of the Baram and its main tributaries, the Tutoh and Tinjar (an estimated area of 2,000 square miles).

There will also be large areas of semi-productive forest in the headwaters of other rivers and throughout the central range of hills which forms the boundary between Sarawak and Dutch Borneo. The former areas are provisionally protected by the *pak* system, operating in the Third, Fourth and Fifth Divisions, but it will be necessary to re-investigate and re-affirm the *paks* as soon as possible.

Detailed enumeration of demarcated forests, both those now existing and those to be acquired, will form the basis for efficient management of the forest estate. Compilation of stock maps and strip valuations have already been undertaken in some of the more accessible forests. Future surveys will be based on aerial photography and on strip valuations carried out on the ground. A minimum

valuation of 10% of any particular area will be required to enable a practical estimate to be made of its growing stock. When this has been done, the areas found to be productive will be subjected to a further strip enumeration restricted to 10% of the area, or an annual average of 50,000 acres.

It is expected that the first five years of the plan will be occupied mainly by demarcation and enumeration. After this steps will be taken to improve the growing stock by silvicultural methods. These will consist of (a) improvement of existing virgin forests by means of regeneration by controlled exploitation and by removal of unwanted species by poisoning or other means, and (b) rehabilitation of denuded hillsides by natural or artificial means; it is probable that considerable restocking by planting will be necessary. Much useful information has already been collected by experiments conducted in the past in artificial regeneration by the use of indigenous species, such as *belian*, *engkabang* and *ru ronang**. Eradication of *lalang*** has, however, proved a long-term and costly undertaking, though it appears that it may be possible to shade it out with such species as *yemanet* and *leban*††, and eventually to introduce commercial species under the new canopy.

The exploitation of major forest produce is at present undertaken partly by sawmills operated by local capital and partly by firms with outside capital producing logs primarily for export. Under present conditions it is not sound policy for Government to operate its own sawmills, and the existing system of exploitation will therefore continue for the time being. Its efficiency will, however, it is hoped, be increased by propaganda and advice, and output will be controlled by the imposition of girth limits and the restriction of areas of working. As for minor forest produce, the working of *jelutong* and *damar* in demarcated forests is already controlled, and it is not expected that any measures will be required to control the exploitation of other products.

The plan includes also the improvement of communications, which will be necessary if the forests are to be exploited in the most economic way. For this purpose further survey will be required.

The present establishment of the Forest Department is 3 Senior Service officers (which is 2 below strength) and 81 Junior Service officers, the latter including clerical staff. Obviously this staff will not be able to cope with the ten-year plan outlined above, and it will be increased by 4 Senior and 10 Junior Service officers, the senior staff to consist of Conservator, Deputy Conservator, Utilisation Officer, Silvicultural Officer and three Divisional Forest Officers. The Department is to be brought up to this full strength by 1952 and, when the programme is completed at the end of 1959, the senior staff will be reduced to the normal establishment of five. The plan includes a training scheme for the field staff, who are to receive elementary education at Batu Lintang and technical training at the Forest Research Institute at Kepong in Malaya.

An application has been made, and approved, for a free grant from Colonial Development and Welfare Funds to finance the plan for the first six years (1950-1955). The grant will cover the entire cost

of the additional staff and all expenditure on labour and equipment in connection with exploration, demarcation, enumeration and management of forests. It will not, however, cover reafforestation, improvement of communications, buildings or education. Reafforestation will be mainly in the experimental stage for the first half of the period of the plan and it will obviously have to be closely integrated with the programme of the Department of Agriculture. Requirements in respect of communications, buildings and education will be submitted separately as part of the Public Works and Education Department plans. The grant which has been approved amounts to \$392,694 (£45,815), and after the conclusion of the first five-year period the whole programme will be reviewed with the object of considering whether any further assistance will be required.

(The above article is in the main a précis of the Development Plan prepared by the Conservator of Forests.—EDITORS.)

Racing Returns to Sarawak.

RE-APPEARANCE OF THE TURF CLUB IN NEW DRESS.
BY

BROWN JACK.

Eight years to the day after its last meeting the Sarawak Turf Club demonstrated that it is now as active a body as it ever was by holding its first post-war Autumn Meeting on September 24th and 26th. Many of us who heard of the project six months ago to re-start this year approved wholeheartedly in theory, but shook their heads in doubt at the possibility of practice. However an energetic committee together with joint Clerks of the Course, Messrs. Ellis and Spurway, whose industry, optimism and confidence have been limitless, has succeeded in carving, out of what was almost nothing, a very smart race-course, which has immense possibilities for the future. Funds were raised by the issue of \$100,000 debentures at the attractive interest rate of 6%, and whilst the response was slow at first, later the results were good, and the loan has nearly been fully subscribed. Those investors who enjoyed the autumn meeting who may have had scruples about the return of their money must undoubtedly have dispelled these ere now.

The eight-furlong track, carefully laid out inside the pre-war course, has excellent promise, and although at the recent meeting it was a little short of turf, this will be rectified before long as grass grows so prolifically in this country. Bearing in mind the limited funds available, and particularly the short time, the buildings, of a temporary nature, were adequate, and will undoubtedly be improved upon. The stables, paddock, officials and weighing rooms are all handily sited together, and the members' enclosure is provided with several terraces, which will eventually become flower-bordered lawns. The grand-stand needs enlargement, and much more satisfactory arrangements will have to be provided for members at the tote and the cash-sweep, which are too far away in their present position. Those who occupy the public enclosure are also entitled to expect (and will receive) improved facilities.

**Casuarina sumatrana* Jungh.

***Imperata* spp.

†*Gmelina arborea*.

††*Vitex* spp.

Whilst the Clerks of the Course, and the several other official stewards and clerks, provided as adequately as was in their power for such contingencies as might arise, the clerk of the weather had different ideas on the subject, and bade fair to wash out the whole meeting. Brilliant sunshine greeted the first two races on Saturday, the 24th, but this was all we were allowed, for the rain started during the third race, and the fourth was run in a torrential downpour. After this the Committee wisely decided to postpone the last race of the day until Monday, starting half an hour earlier on that day than had been anticipated. The weather on Monday remained dull, but the rain did hold off, and, whilst the track was heavy, the worst sufferers were the tote and cash-sweep enthusiasts ploughing about in a veritable sea of mud.

Some of the fields were disappointingly small, particularly in the case of the North Borneo ponies, many of which had been promised to be sent for the meeting, but had failed for a variety of reasons to appear. However it was at least a start, and a very good one, and those responsible are to be congratulated, and must without doubt have been pleased at the results of their efforts. It can be confidently predicted that future meetings will have larger entries to the advantage of all concerned.

The principal and longest race of the meeting, the Autumn Cup, over 9 furlongs, was won in the grand manner by Messrs. Ellis and Dant's Mr. Chips, with the first-named owner up. This was an outstanding performance for a horse which has been dogged by ill-luck ever since he reached Kuching, but the race itself was not as interesting as many owing to the decisiveness of Mr. Chips' victory—by a distance, according to the judges' verdict.

Outstanding amongst the ponies was Mrs. Dawson's grey, Larry, which took three firsts on three outings, including the Rajah's Cup, and gave his jockey, Medin, a well-earned treble. The Movie Kongs's chestnut gelding, Fighting Fish, trained by Mr. Philip Soh Fu, was also in splendid form, with two convincing victories, and just being beaten by a short head for a third in the Autumn Sprint Plate, due to a tactical error by his jockey.

Best tote dividend of the meeting was \$9 for a \$1 ticket paid by Larry in his first race, and it is hardly surprising that he shewed not nearly such a good return on his subsequent outings! There was a brisk demand for the cash-sweep, and from the prizes paid out it is apparent that well over 20,000 tickets were sold on the individual races, apart from the unlimited sweep. First prize in the sweep on the second race was \$1,028, which is believed to be a record for cash-sweeps at the Turf Club. Medin was the champion jockey with three firsts, a second and two thirds, but Mr. J. H. Ellis ran him close with three firsts and a third. As we go to press detailed statistics are not yet available, but we hope to publish them in the next issue.

The results of the races are as follows:—

FIRST DAY.

24th September, 1949.

RACE I: THE TAN SUM GUAN MEMORIAL PLATE.

3 Furlongs.

PONIES.

Mrs. C. W. Dawson's

1. Larry (Medin) 9.7
2. Danny Boy (Ek Pah) 9.7
3. Bujang Balleh (Samsudin) 10.7

Also Ran:—The Moke 9.7, Kaswari 9.7, Wizard Queen 9.3, Tanjong Bolong 8.13 and Tarzan 8.7.

When the field was sent off, it was Bujang Balleh from Tanjong Bolong, Danny Boy, The Moke, Larry in the middle and Wizard Queen last. Round the bend into the straight, Bujang Balleh was still in the lead, but Larry and Danny Boy came up from their handy position to issue the challenge. A hundred yards from home, Larry had Bujang Balleh beaten and Danny Boy also passed him to be placed second, half-a-length behind Larry.

Tote: \$9.00.

Time: 46½ seconds.

RACE II: A HANDICAP FOR HORSES.

5 Furlongs.

Movie Kongs's

1. Fighting Fish (Tau En) 10.4
2. Spurwing (Samsudin) 9.10

Also Ran:—Mr. Chips 10.0.

There were only three horses in this race but when the small field started Mr. Chips was left standing. So there were only two horses running, though all three came under the starter's orders. Fighting Fish led the whole way round to win comfortably many lengths in front of Spurwing.

Tote: \$1.50.

Time: 66 seconds.

RACE III: THE SARAWAK STEAMSHIP PLATE.

7 Furlongs.

HORSES.

Mr. Chua Guan Hock's

1. Polly Flinders (Ellis) 9.12
2. Golden Oak (Asing) 11.0
3. Lysander (Spurway) 10.5

Also Ran:—Magic Carpet 9.5.

Off with a very good start, Polly Flinders led from Golden Oak, Lysander with Magic Carpet last. Going round the 6 furlong post, it was still Polly Flinders but Golden Oak was closing in on the outside. Up to the 5, Golden Oak was in the lead half-a-length in front of Polly Flinders and Lysander. At the Home Straight Mr. Ellis called for extra effort from Polly Flinders on the rail. A furlong from home, Polly Flinders had Golden Oak beaten to win the race drawing away. Lysander was third and Magic Carpet last.

Tote: \$3.50.

Time: 1 minute 43½ seconds.

RACE IV: A HANDICAP FOR PONIES.

5 Furlongs.

Mrs. C. W. Dawson's

1. Larry (Medin) 9.11
2. Kaswari (Lohor) 9.4
3. Tanjong Bolong (Tau En) 8.13

Also Ran:—Bujang Balleh 10.11, Danny Boy 9.4, The Moke 9.4, Tarzan 8.5.

Owing to very heavy rain it was impossible to see the horses until they came into the Straight. The first to show out were Kaswari and Larry, closely followed by the Moke and Tanjong Bolong. Then came Bujang Balleh, Danny Boy and Tarzan. A furlong from the finishing-post Larry shot out in front and, in spite of the strong challenge from Kaswari and Tanjong Bolong, he drew away to win comfortably.

Tote: \$4.50.

Time: 88 seconds.

SECOND DAY.

26th September, 1949.

RACE V: A HANDICAP FOR HORSES.

5 Furlongs.

Movie Kongsi's

1. **Fighting Fish** (Tau En) 10.12
2. **Avant Tout** (Medin) 9.12
3. **Ramu** (Ellis) 11.0

Also Ran:—Golden Oak 10.7 and Four Diamonds 9.6.

When the field settled down, it was *Fighting Fish* from *Avant Tout*; then came *Four Diamonds*, *Ramu*, and *Golden Oak* was last. Coming down the 3, *Fighting Fish* was a length clear from *Avant Tout*, *Ramu* and *Four Diamonds*. Coming down the Straight, *Avant Tout* came up to issue the challenge and, in a neck-to-neck finish, the two horses passed the Post locked together with *Fighting Fish* a short-head in front of *Avant Tout*, and *Ramu* was a fast-finishing third.

Tote: \$2.50.

Time: 69 seconds.

RACE VI: THE SARAWAK PLATE.

4 Furlongs.

PONIES.

"G.B.E." Kongsi's

1. **Danny Boy** (Ek Pah) 9.0
2. **Kaswari** (Lohor) 8.7
3. **The Moke** (Medin) 8.10

Also Ran:—*Tanjong Bolong* 8.10 and *Tarzan* 8.0.

Danny Boy took the lead from *Tanjong Bolong*, *Kaswari* and *The Moke*. *Tarzan* was last. At the 3, *Kaswari* and *The Moke* drew up level with *Danny Boy*, and *Tanjong Bolong* dropped back. *The Moke* was first into the Straight but was soon overtaken by *Kaswari* and *Danny Boy*. In a thrilling finish, *Danny Boy* was a nose in front of *Kaswari* when they passed the judges' box. *The Moke* was a trailing third.

Tote: \$4.00.

Time: 69 1/5 seconds.

RACE VII: THE AUTUMN SPRINT PLATE.

4 1/2 Furlongs.

HORSES.

Wkhead Kongsi's

1. **Ramu** (Ellis) 11.0
2. **Fighting Fish** (Tau En) 11.13
3. **Avant Tout** (Medin) 9.12

Also Ran:—*Polly Flinders* 10.11.

Polly Flinders gave a lot of trouble; she unsaddled Mr. Spurway once and delayed the start for about 10 minutes. Eventually, when the field was sent off, *Polly Flinders* was left standing. Into the lead went *Ramu*, very closely followed by *Fighting Fish* and *Avant Tout*. On rounding the bend, *Fighting Fish* drew up level with *Ramu* and was first into the Straight. Mr. Ellis brought *Ramu* out hugging the inner rail and, in the most exciting and the best-riden race of the meeting, he pushed *Ramu* a short-head in front of *Fighting Fish* to pass the finishing-post. *Avant Tout* was a tiring third.

Tote: \$5.50.

Time: 62 1/2 seconds.

RACE VIII: THE RAJAH'S CUP.

9 Furlongs.

PONIES.

Mrs. C. W. Dawson's

1. **Larry** (Medin) 10.0
2. **The Moke** (Matnor) 8.8
3. **Tanjong Bolong** (Tau En) 9.0

Also Ran:—*Kaswari* 8.10.

This small field was sent off with a very good start. When the field settled down, *Larry* was half-a-length clear from *Tanjong Bolong* with *Kaswari* next and *The Moke* last. At the 6, it was still *Larry*, *Kaswari* drew up to second place, then came *The Moke* and *Tanjong Bolong*. *Kaswari* dropped back last on coming to the 4 furlong post. *The Moke* made an effort and was at one stage only a short head behind *Larry*. Round the Bend into the straight, *Larry* widened the margin and drew away to win the race a length in front of *The Moke* and *Tanjong Bolong*. *Kaswari* was last 5 lengths away.

Tote: \$2.20.

Time: 2 minutes 57 seconds.

RACE IX: THE AUTUMN CUP.

9 Furlongs.

HORSES.

Messrs. Ellis and Dant's

1. **Mr. Chips** (Ellis) 9.12
2. **Polly Flinders** (Matnor) 10.8
3. **Flight** (Ek Pah) 8.12

Also Ran:—*Lysander* 10.5, *Spurwing* 8.7, and *Magic Carpet* 8.4.

Passing the Stand the first time, *Mr. Chips* was in the lead, closely followed by *Flight*, *Golden Oak*, with *Lysander* heading the second bunch and *Polly Flinders* last. The position remained the same until they reached the 6, when *Mr. Chips* was already 7 lengths in front, with *Lysander*, *Magic Carpet*, *Flight*, *Spurwing* in a bunch behind. Then came *Polly Flinders*, and *Golden Oak* dropped back last. Coming down the Straight, *Mr. Chips* was a street in front of the others. *Magic Carpet* was heading the tiring bunch of horses. *Mr. Chips* gave Mr. Ellis an arm-chair ride to the post. A hundred yards from Home, *Polly Flinders* came through from the inside to beat *Flight* and *Magic Carpet* for the second place.

Tote: \$6.00.

Time: 2 minutes 13 seconds.

RACE X: A CONSOLATION RACE FOR PONIES.

4 Furlongs.

Catch-weights—minimum 9st.

Mr. Malcolm MacDonald's

1. **Bujang Balleh** (Samsudin)
2. **Kaswari** (Lohor)
3. **Tanjong Bolong** (Marup)

Also Ran:—*The Moke* and *Tarzan*.

Bujang Balleh had a flying start and was a good three lengths at the 3. Next came *Tarzan*, *The Moke*, *Kaswari* and *Tanjong Bolong*. *Bujang Balleh* was a street in front when they reached the Straight. *Tarzan* weakened, leaving *Kaswari* and *Tanjong Bolong* to fight closely for the second place. *Bujang Balleh* passed the Post an easy winner. *Kaswari* was second and *Tanjong Bolong* third.

Tote: \$2.40.

Time: 68 seconds.

RACE XI: A CONSOLATION RACE FOR HORSES.
5 Furlongs.

Catch-weights—minimum 9.12.

Messrs. Leach and Kirby-Turner's

1. **Flight** (Ek Pah)
2. **Four Diamonds** (Matnor)
3. **Magic Carpet** (Tau En)

Also Ran :—*Lysander* and *Avant Tout*.

Avant Tout was badly away. *Four Diamonds* set the pace from *Lysander*, *Flight* and *Magic Carpet* with *Avant Tout* last 2 lengths away. Rounding the Bend, *Lysander* dropped back and *Flight* drew up level with *Four Diamonds*. Next came *Magic Carpet*, *Lysander*, with *Avant Tout* still last. When they went round the Bend the two horses were still locked together. On reaching the Straight, *Flight* was a length clear of *Four Diamonds*. Matnor used the whip on *Four Diamonds* but failed to catch up with *Flight* who finished a length in front of *Four Diamonds*, with *Magic Carpet* third a length away.

Tote : \$5.50.

Time : 69 1/5 seconds.

This Sarawak.

(WITH APOLOGIES TO THE NEW STATESMAN
AND NATION.)

"I regret to inform you that Office has been lack of records during the years of 1946 and 1947. A proper filing system was not born before dawn of 1949."—(Official Memorandum.)

"After lengthy discussion the (Chinese Advisory) Board recommended that the formation of a Sarawak Administrative Service should be expedited."—(Sarawak Tribune.)

"Nothing looks worse than a Police photo with crows in it."—(Official Pamphlet.)

We can well believe it. They are *such* untidy birds!

"Will you be good enough to advise the Sub-Inspector to send them to the Dispensary to have their worms treated on Sunday morning."—(Official Memorandum.)

(The Editors are unable to follow the example of our illustrious contemporary and offer a prize for the best entry in this column. Contributions from all parts of "This Sarawak" will, however, be warmly appreciated and the most favoured will be given pride of place.)

The Museum.

Last month has been rather a quiet one for contributions and new additions, though we acquired a second and even more repulsive live Adjutant Stork from the Sadong. The interesting collection of Bugis agricultural and domestic objects, which the Research Assistant (F. Manis) made near Sarikei earlier in the year, has been catalogued and written up. It is intended to make a special small exhibit of it with explanatory labels shortly.

Reactions to the revived Sarawak Museum Journal are continuing to come in from all over the place. There is no doubt that it will contribute very considerably in helping us to obtain reference books and periodicals in exchange, especially from America where it is very hard to buy anything with dollars. One of the most pleasant features was to get quite a long letter about it from the Commissioner-General, and others from Singapore from Sir Roland Braddell and Mr. R. E. Holtum. For some time we have been trying to improve our contacts with our next-door neighbours in Dutch territory, and therefore it was especially nice to receive a letter from the Director of the Zoological Museum at Buitenzorg, Dr. M. A. Lieftinck, who writes :—

"To-day I was surprised by the receipt of the fine new number of the Sarawak Museum Journal, which I am very glad to have. This handsome-looking new issue is worth our hearty congratulations; no doubt it will have taken you quite a bit of hard work to complete this volume, but the result is such that anyone who receives it should express his warm admiration."

The next number of the Sarawak Museum Journal has now gone to press. We venture to think it is up to the standard of the last issue. Again it contains original contributions on a wide range of subjects, from Sarawak Government servants, missionaries and teachers, ordinary village people, and from a variety of areas. There is an appreciable increase in the material from North Borneo, and two important papers about Borneo subjects from Malaya, and two more from Europe by world experts on their particular scientific problems.

The Sarawak Museum Journal can be obtained for \$6.00 a year post free. Just drop a line to the Curator, Sarawak Museum. Contributions for the following number will be needed within the next few months and the Curator will be glad to have material on any Borneo subject from any part of Borneo, provided it is based on original and accurate observation or study—either first-hand study or study of records, archives, early literature, etc. etc.

By the time this column is in print the Curator will have left for an expedition into the northern interior, with the two collectors and the photographer. It is hoped to follow up the Trusan River, climbing to the Kelabit Plateau (or peninsula?) and then working south, if possible into country not previously visited.

The principal objects of the trip are to continue observations of Kelabit agriculture and culture generally; to excavate certain sites found as the party came out of the interior last year in uninhabited country near the upper Baram; to make certain zoological collections around Mount Batu Lawi, the shoulder of which was first climbed in 1946, and to make survey observations; and to collect large mammals for exhibition. There are a lot of other things to do as well, but time on this trip is limited, and there are also indications that the weather is particularly bad up-river this year and rains may seriously modify present plans.

The Reading Room building is now practically complete and the necessary equipment is being installed. It should be open well before the end

of the year. Two consignments of books have arrived from the British Council which will open the book section with a flourish. The second consignment is mostly of Educational books, or books about arts and crafts, including such widely diverse subjects as puppets and metal work, boy scouting, swimming and amateur theatricals.

(Contributed.)

Extracts from Reports of Administrative Officers for the Second Quarter of 1949.

FIFTH DIVISION.

(Mr. J. C. B. Fisher, Resident).

The scheme to find a site for the new Limbang Bazaar by moving Kampong Pangkalan Trap has fallen through. There seems to have been considerable misunderstanding over this move, and the kampong people when approached stated they had every possible objection to being moved. A mass meeting of the Chinese shop-keeping community will now be called to discuss the rebuilding of the Bazaar at Limbang, and the choice of a new site if any is available.

A disaster occurred in early April when the Police Barracks at Lawas were razed to the ground by fire. This was particularly unfortunate as the barracks were in good repair. The cause of the fire is attributed to a domestic one, that was thought to have been not properly damped down in the kitchen on retiring at night. No one was injured.

Messrs. the Sarawak Oilfields Ltd. have started exploring the area around Kampong Pandam on the Limbang river.

LIMBANG DISTRICT.

(Mr. J. D. Dorrity, Acting District Officer).

A tour was made together with a Native Officer to ulu Limbang (Sungei Medamit), in which area the Kelabits live. It was found that they were living in 27 scattered houses, the largest single house being only 5 *pintu*. The Kelabits agreed to form two houses and to start work on them in October this year. One house of 15 doors will be constructed at Long Berang and another of 12 doors at Kuala Medit—both places on the Medamit river.

Eggs are difficult to obtain, but the Local Authority will consider the forming of a village market once a week at Limbang, where kampong produce may be sold, which will possibly reduce the price of this commodity—much in demand during *Bulan Puasa*.

LAWAS DISTRICT.

(Mr. A. R. G. Morrison, Acting District Officer).

The drop in the price of rubber appears to have hit some of the smaller outstation shopkeepers rather badly, as they have in most cases no secondary interest to help keep business going.

8.43" of rain recorded during the 29th-30th June was the cause of flooding at Lawas, Trusan

and Sundar. At Lawas 31 inches of water was measured in the bazaar shops, and two Government Junior Service quarters had water above their floor boards. Fortunately the flood abated quickly and no serious damage was done; although the Government jeep was covered with water up to the level of the bonnet, it was soon put into order without great difficulty.

Kuching Municipal Board.

Extracts from minutes of a meeting of the Kuching Municipal Board, held on 30th August, 1949.

Proposed new cinema halls.

169/49. Referring to T. P. C. Minute 42/49, Cr. Chan Qui Chong strongly opposed the erection of two cinema halls on the corner of Wayang Street and Temple Street, on the grounds that

(1) this would result in traffic congestion which would be a danger to public safety,

(2) the land should be used for residential buildings to relieve overcrowding in the town.

He therefore proposed that this item should be referred back for further consideration.

Cr. Ngui Ah Shin agreed with Cr. Chan Qui Chong's first point, and seconded the motion.

Cr. Teo Boon Kwee enquired whether, in fact, the Board had power to prevent the applicant building whatever sort of building he wanted on his own land with his own money.

In reply the Chairman said that the Board only had power to enforce the regulations laid down in the Municipal Ordinance and the By-laws. The type of building allowed by the By-laws in this subdivision included business premises, and it was therefore a fit and proper area for such buildings as cinemas.

With regard to the two points of housing and traffic raised by Cr. Chan Qui Chong, the Chairman further stated firstly that housing schemes to relieve overcrowding in the town were already receiving careful consideration, and secondly that traffic in that area could be quite easily controlled by the institution of a system of one-way traffic. He was therefore strongly opposed to Cr. Chan Qui Chong's motion.

The Director of Medical and Health Services pointed out that the By-laws laid down schedules for the types of buildings to be erected in the various areas of the town. In the present case the site was in an area allocated to, *inter alia*, "business premises", and a cinema conformed to the definition of "business premises" as laid down in the By-laws.

The question of traffic in this area had already been carefully considered by the Kuching and District Planning Committee which was satisfied that there would be no traffic congestion as the result of the erection of two cinemas. In fact one of the numerous conditions, to which the application would have to conform, was the resiting of the type "B" building, so as to allow a lane between the two cinemas for traffic. There was a plan in existence which allowed for the closure of Temple Street and the transformation of part of it into a car park, when at a later date it might be necessary to incorporate into the future road scheme part of that

portion of the site which in the meantime the applicant wished to use as a car park. He contended that the whole project had already been carefully examined, and he himself was satisfied that everything was in order. The recommendations made by the Works Committee were such as would ensure that the cinemas were well planned and constructed, while the recommendations of the Kuching and District Planning Committee and the Board's Town Planning Committee ensured that the siting was satisfactory. He could not therefore support Cr. Chan's proposal to refer the matter back, and strongly urged the Board not to support the motion.

The motion was then put to the vote and was defeated by 7 to 2 with two Commissioners abstaining.

Jubilee Recreation Ground and Centenary Fund Committee.

173/49. A memorandum was read from the Hon'ble the Resident, First Division, inviting the Board to nominate a representative to serve on a combined Jubilee Recreation Ground and Centenary Fund Committee.

The Chairman explained that, at a meeting of the Supreme Council, it was resolved that seven new office bearers should be appointed to serve as a combined Jubilee Recreation Ground and Centenary Fund Committee with members elected from the various schools and sports associations in Kuching. It was desirable that one of these members should be a representative of the Board so that the Board could keep in touch with the development and management of playing fields other than those under the Municipality. It was also hoped that it would eventually be possible to hand over the control of the playing fields to the Municipality.

In view of the Chairman's explanation it was agreed to be desirable that there should be a representative from the Board on this Committee.

After some discussion, members agreed that a representative should be elected by ballot, and Cr. Chan Qui Chong was elected by a majority vote.

Municipal Estimates for 1950.

174/49. The Chairman gave a brief summary of the draft Municipal Estimates for 1950. The main major items included:—

1. Two more nightsoil vehicles, and two more scavenging vehicles.
2. Waterworks project. A sum of \$400,000, as part of a 5-year plan costing \$2,000,000 for the renewal of the Matang pipeline.
3. \$100,000 as part of a 5-year road rehabilitation programme.
4. New poultry market.
5. Replacement of Hospital water mains, and Jawa Road water mains.
6. Painting and Repairs to Datu Muda Tank.
7. New Junior Service Quarters, Matang.
8. Completion of drainage system in Padungan Bazaar.
9. New Public Latrines.

10. The extension of the pavement past the Chief Secretary's House, and the widening and grading of Rock Road, between Satok Road and the Chief Secretary's House.

11. Plans for the conversion of Kuching street lighting to fluorescent lighting over 5 years.

12. New equipment for the various ornamental grounds and improvements to their paths and buildings.

It was noted that item No. 2 above related only to the Matang pipeline, and was not a provision for locating a supplementary source of water supply. The Director of Public Works, however, informed the Board that a sum of \$20,000 had been included in the P.W.D. 1950 draft estimates for the preliminary search for a supplementary water supply.

The Board considered that this provision was essential in view of the fact that the catchment areas at Matang were already inadequate for the present demand. Should Kuching continue to grow, the situation would still further deteriorate, and immediate action in this respect was thus desirable. It was therefore resolved that Government should be informed of the Board's views in this matter, and in particular that the Board considered that this provision of \$20,000 was essential and should, if possible, be included in the final P.W.D. Estimates for 1950.

Extracts from minutes of a meeting of the Standing Committee for Town Planning, held on 2nd August, 1949, referred to in Minute 169/49 above.

42/49. The Committee next considered the siting of the proposed two cinemas on the corner of Wayang Street and Temple Street, being lot 24, section 48, Kuching Town.

The Municipal Officer informed the Committee that the question of siting had been thoroughly considered by the Kuching and District Planning Committee with due regard to the future road scheme in this area, and that, with the exception of some minor amendments to the original plan, the siting would not interfere with the town planning scheme. The Kuching and District Planning Committee had recommended that the type "B" building should be resited in order to provide a central lane of 30 feet between the two theatres to serve as an additional parking area. The applicant would further be consulted with a view to incorporating the generating room and store in the type "A" building.

It was pointed out that the land around this area was not developed, and that development was desirable. The erection of good cinemas on this spot would increase both the general amenities of the town, and the value of surrounding land and buildings.

After consideration, the Committee resolved to recommend that, subject to the amendments recommended by the Kuching and District Planning Committee, the siting of the proposed two cinema halls be approved.

Library.

Books have been generously presented by Mr. R. H. Morris, Mrs. A. J. N. Richards, and Mr. G. Roberts.

New Books this month are :—

"My Late Wives": by Carter Dickson.

Here the sleuths, led by the preposterous but amusing Sir Henry Merrivale, chase murder at electric-hare speed. Too many coincidences, but exciting stuff, and quite well written.

"All Over the Place": by Compton Mackenzie.

Almost venerable and white of beard now, Mr. Mackenzie travelled 50,000 miles, mostly in Asia, to collect material for a full-length study of the Indian Army in the latest world war. This is a preliminary diary of an interesting trip, full of information, observation and wit, though rather heavily-laden with Major-Generals, cheroots, and a somewhat exaggerated second-hand view of the Japanese as 100% monsters.

"The Queen's Awards": (2nd Series), edited by Ellery Queen.

A first-rate selection of detective stories by established authors and new ones.

"Clock without Hands": by Gerald Kersh.

Three long short stories, craftily if a little too slickly told in this author's rough-tough way.

"Chatterton Square": by E. H. Young.

A character study of two middle class families living in a West-of-England town. Their outlook and approach to living differ although they live in identical houses. Plenty of interesting under-currents.

"Sun and Heir": by Stephen Lister.

Quite an amusing semi-true story of times in Trinidad and elsewhere. The humour is sometimes a little heavy and some of the characters, like Lord Cumberbatch and Typhoid Mary, are rather far-fetched, but are they real? One looks around and ponders.

"Wind in the Sahara": by R. V. C. Bodley.

To quote the foreword: this book makes no attempt to teach and certainly none to preach; where there is information, it is information which any clear-thinking desert Arab could give. (The Author lived among the Arabs for a year).

"The Last Viceroy": by Ray Murphy.

An authentic biographical study of Rear-Admiral the Earl Mountbatten of Burma against a background of great historical events. It gives a wide view and illuminates some foggy patches of the war. A fascinating book and very well illustrated.

"The Stilwell Papers": by Joseph W. Stilwell.

A diary that was never intended for publication, written with dry humour, irritation, energy and slang, making a mountainous fever chart of varying moods. Presented with courage by his wife so that readers may themselves judge this war general.

T.H. & E.F.

Press Release.

INTERNATIONAL RUBBER SITUATION.

June, 1949.

The following advance information of the world's rubber position is given by the Secretariat of the Rubber Study Group. Full details will appear in the Group's monthly "Rubber Statistical Bulletin," the August issue of which will be available later this month. Figures are in long tons:

Natural Rubber.		June.	Jan/June.
Production	...	115,000	700,000
Consumption	...	120,000 (1)	732,500 (2)
Stocks end period :			Change since January 1st, 1949.
In producing areas	...	215,000	- 15,000
In consuming areas	...	265,000 (3)	- 40,000
Afloat	...	200,000	- 35,000
TOTAL	...	680,000	- 90,000

(1) Including estimated imports into Russia of 12,500 tons.

(2) Including estimated imports into Russia of 67,500 tons.

(3) Excluding government stocks not available to industry in the U.K., U.S.A., and France.

Synthetic Rubber.		June.	Jan/June.
Production	...	35,000	235,000
Consumption	...	40,000	237,500

Change since January 1st, 1949.

Stocks end period : ... 120,000 - 7,500

Exports of rubber from the Federal Areas of Indonesia during June, 1949, amounted to 26,442 long tons including 11,699 long tons of estate rubber. Calculated exports from Republican Areas during June were 2,073 long tons, indicating a total Indonesian export of 28,515 long tons during the month. Total exports from Indonesia during the first half of 1949 were thus 186,226 long tons including 111,629 long tons of native rubber.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PUNAN OR PENAN.

LAWAS,

24th September, 1949.

SIRS,

You ask for further comment on the chronic question of *Punan-Penan*, raised once more in your columns, and very properly so, by Mr. Ian Urquhart.

As you rightly observe, editorially, "the subject must be dealt with on a Borneo Island basis." Some aspects of this matter have been gone into in some detail in an article in the current number of the *Sarawak Museum Journal*, based on contact with Punans in both Sarawak and Dutch Borneo; there are no persons bearing this title nor living a nomadic life in North Borneo. Behind most of such arguments on the correct use of the terms,

there usually lies a fundamental misunderstanding. Very few of the terms we now apply to native peoples originate from them or represent any social or cultural reality in terms of their own lives.

The term *Punan* or *Penan*—also often spelt *Poonan* in early works, and *Poenan* in Dutch Borneo—may be as loosely or as widely applied as the term *Dayak* or the term *Murut*. In Dutch Borneo all the pagan peoples are known as Dayaks, and the Controller of Dayak Territories stationed at Malinau on the Sesajap River does not in fact control any people whom we in Sarawak would admit to be Dayaks. In North Borneo, on the other hand, the term is generally only applied to a small group of people living in the headwaters of the Padas River, who have been called, by those living down river, the *Lun Daya* (*Daia*). Actually this only means "people of the up-river," and is often used in everyday talk among the Muruts and Kelabits, when referring to people living further up-river than themselves. These *Lun Daya* (whom Woolley and others have classed as Dayaks in the Sarawak sense) are what we in Sarawak would call Muruts,—exactly the same people as the Muruts of the Trusan and of north-west Dutch Borneo (from whence they came). These Ulu Padas people, along with those on the lower Mengalong, are the only ones in North Borneo that we should classify as Muruts in the *Sarawak* sense. Many of the people described as Muruts in North Borneo would be called Tagal Dayaks in Dutch Borneo or Tagals in Sarawak—where we have small pockets of them up the Merapok River, and in the middle Trusan, where they are mixed up with the Trusan Muruts, and are quite recent immigrants from North Borneo.

The fact of the matter is, that these terms can never be arbitrated about. *Murut* simply means a hill person; and *Dayak* has usually derived from the root term for any sort of person, and by extension to any up-river person in some dialects.

Kayan has the same type of derivation, and, quite apart from the people to whom it is applied in the 4th and 5th Divisions, it is a common name on the upper branches of rivers hundreds of miles from any known Kayan person, e.g. 1st Division. The term *Punan* is in the same class. In many dialects it simply means "up-river" or "the headwaters." The Murut village in the extreme headwaters of the Trusan is generally known as *Punan-Trusan*. Dialects differ, pronunciations of the word vary; different ears even hear it differently, and on my files are letters from Native Officers and other informed persons in the Baram describing the same group of people there in three different spellings. The term as applied to the nomadic people of Sarawak, and to some who are settled, is simply an imposed term like *Dayak* or *Kayan*, *Murut* or *Kelabit*. Most of these terms obtained currency in fairly recent times, because everybody found them conveniently descriptive. But there are of course a number of ways in which any group can come to be called *Punan*, for the reasons already indicated. Thus the *Penan Bah* in the Belaga area, merely because they have that name, need not have any common origin with the nomad Punans in the Madihit tributary of the Limbang. They are, in fact, closely inter-related to the Skapans and other similar groups in the territory bossed by Penghulu Puso above Belaga.

Nor have we any evidence that even the nomadic

Punans scattered over a very large area of Dutch Borneo, in at least fifty separate bands, have any common origin or uniformity. It is quite possible that they have several separate origins. Some of them are certainly runaway slaves or people who took to the jungle in despair during the great Kayan and Iban periods of expansion and warfare. Others again would appear, from Kenyah legends recorded in the Baram, to be persons who preferred to live off wild sago, while others of the same stock developed settled methods of rice farming. Like so many Borneo groups (or alleged groups) the origins are multiple and confused.

Therefore, in my view, these terms must be used as terms of convenience. If we try to define them, the definition is bound to be arbitrary and we can only seek that definition which is most satisfactory and agreeable to all concerned. It is useless to argue about exact spellings or exact meanings, since by their very origin and development these terms never have been exact, and have never had one simple origin. On the contrary, many of the terms in every-day use now have developed out of misunderstandings and distortion, as have the names of many of the mountains and rivers now in accepted use on our maps. Present usage is a compromise or series of compromises. It is not ordained by any holy writ of ethnology or etymology.

TOM HARRISSON.

KAPIT,

16th September, 1949.

DEAR SIRs,

I was glad to see Mr. Spurway's letter about Punans, and I hope further correspondence will be forthcoming on this subject.

I travelled the Mujong last August and found that of the original ten members of the Punan Batu, all had died of old age or sickness, except for two old women who now live in Tuai Rumah Merapoh's *bilek*. These two women were famous for their fine close weaving of mats, and the usual test was to fill the mat with water, and if it was impermeable then it was up to standard.

However even these two remaining Punan Batu women are now too old to carry on their work.

Yours faithfully,

I. A. N. URQUHART.

OUR ECONOMIC FUTURE.

KUCHING,

23rd September, 1949.

DEAR SIRs,

Arising out of Mr. Jacks's letter in the September number of the *Sarawak Gazette*, it should be pointed out that the Director of Agriculture in his 1947 Annual Report (already published) acknowledges the valuable help he has received from administrative officers in making the preliminary surveys on which his development plans are based. In his 1948 Report (submitted to

Government in April, 1949, but not yet published) the Director again acknowledges the assistance he has received.

The Department of Agriculture have frequently stressed the desirability of administrative officers continuing and intensifying their efforts, wherever practicable, to persuade farmers to grow more and yet more* swamp padi. The Department have pointed out that much of the existing swamp padi land of Sarawak can carry many more farmers than it at present does carry and the aim should at present be to fully utilise these areas by the extensive methods at present practised rather than to attempt to open up new land whose suitability for the crop is not certain. It takes little technical knowledge to carry out such propaganda and the administrative officer, by reason of his intimate knowledge of the rural population, is obviously the man best suited to do it. There has undoubtedly been a considerable increase in the acreage of swamp padi in Sarawak since the liberation, and there is no doubt that this is due in no small measure to the efforts of certain administrative officers. Surely the leader in the August issue meant to imply that so much more could be achieved if all administrative officers as well as educated members of the public undertook such simple propaganda work.

The Department of Agriculture are following up the administrative officers' introductory propaganda with demonstrations of intensive methods and technical instruction, wherever suitable sites are found and the staff situation allows.

The padi purchasing scheme was introduced in 1947 by the Controller of Essential Commodities and the Director of Agriculture in the face of by no means negligible high level opposition. The specialists provided the tools, but all admit that the success that has attended the use of the tools has again in no small measure been due to the efforts of some administrative officers.

It is learnt that in the near future the Department of Agriculture hope to be in a position to demonstrate results they have obtained from experimental work now being conducted. It is their job to establish the demonstrations and explain them to farmers, but they look to administrative officers to publicise such demonstrations and to persuade farmers to visit them and learn how to make better use of their land.

Surely the whole matter is one for team work and not for unprofitable discussion as to whether the administration or a technical department are doing the best work.

Yours faithfully,

UMPIRE.

KUCHING,

20th September, 1949.

DEAR SIRs,

I regret that I cannot agree entirely with "Kheh's" statements in the correspondence column of your September issue.

We all admire the industry and painstaking work of the Chinese pepper and vegetable gardeners along the Kuching-Simanggang Road—they produce a great deal from poor soils under difficult

climatic conditions. What we do not admire though are the large areas of eroded and *lalang*-infested land that usually follow in their wake. The methods they employ have probably been evolved after centuries of experience on flat land in China and may be well suited to conditions there, but they are not suitable for the poor hill land of Sarawak under the exceptionally high rainfall that is usually experienced here. In spite of the general undoubted poverty of Sarawak's hill soils, there is no doubt that sound stabilised systems of intensive agriculture are feasible on them, provided fertilisers are properly used and sound methods of soil conservation are practised; there is absolutely no need for the large areas of derelict land that are scattered about Sarawak. It is understood that the Department of Agriculture are conducting experimental work on the matter and that some most promising results have been obtained; confirmation of these results is needed though before they can be publicised.

Again, in all fairness, we must record our admiration of the skill and industry of our Chinese padi farmers on the swamp land. Their work is an excellent demonstration to the natives of Sarawak of the proper utilisation of swamp land. It would be wrong though to regard the Chinese padi farmers' work as perfect; there are many ways in which their yields per acre can be improved and production costs lowered; for instance, by the use of modern drainage and irrigation methods, by the use of modern cultivating machinery, by the use of fertilisers by modern methods and by the use of improved varieties selected by modern methods from existing types. Again, it is understood that the Department of Agriculture are conducting energetic experimental work on the matter and hope to stage demonstrations of their findings in the near future.

Yours faithfully,

FARMER JARGE.

AN HOTEL FOR KUCHING.

MIRI,

23rd September, 1949.

DEAR GENTLEMEN,

There has been little discussion here on the subject of an "Hotel in Kuching" and details of discussion elsewhere have not yet reached us; consequently one may be wasting time and your space by suggesting that the Government Rest House in Kuching removes itself to a site adjoining the Sarawak Club and surrenders its present site to the new hotel provided, of course, that such an arrangement would not upset unduly the planning for a greater Kuching. The Rest House would thus become an annexe of the Sarawak Club, it would provide a dining room for those whose servants insist on punctuality at mealtimes and might indirectly swell the profits of the Club. The promoters could then build an hotel within easy reach of the golf course, shopping area and museum with its show-case.

Yours faithfully,

G. A. T. SHAW.

ACCOMMODATION IN KUCHING.

20th September, 1949.

DEAR SIRs,

In your September editorial you refer to the shortage of Government accommodation in Kuching. I wonder how many of your readers realise quite how bad the situation is. The Senior Service Housing Board, whose function is to advise the Chief Secretary as to the allocation of Government quarters, has for the last year or two been working on a "hand to mouth" basis, and has hitherto been enabled to overcome impending crises, partly by moving certain officers about from pillar to post, and partly owing to the difficulty that has been experienced in recruiting new officers. Now, however, recruits are beginning to come forward in considerable numbers, and it is said that, by the end of the year, some eighty officers are likely to be stationed in Kuching, for whom there are about fifty-seven quarters available.

The PWD are erecting permanent quarters, but the rate of completion does not average much more than half a dozen a year, which is totally inadequate to cope with the personnel expected in the near future. Hitherto the Rest House has been looked upon as a convenient dumping-ground for all homeless officers, but, as you have pointed out, this is already now occupied to a considerable extent by permanent residents, and in any case it lacks the comforts of the normal house and is hardly calculated to give the most favourable impression of Sarawak to the newly-arrived officer, especially if he has a wife and children. All newly-appointed officers are informed before they accept their appointments that quarters are provided and, although the word "quarters" on a very wide interpretation might cover even a pig-sty, the average man's conception of "quarters" is a house (or flat) in which he and his family can live their own lives. Some officers have not unnaturally felt that they have been misled when they find they are expected to occupy a room in the Rest House for an indefinite period.

The officers arriving now and in the near future have in a great number of cases been "on order" since 1948, and this situation could have been foreseen at least a year ago. But I very much doubt if any plan has been drawn up to solve the housing difficulty, even temporarily. If there had been any such plan, we should have expected to see temporary quarters being erected long ago. By these I mean houses of a semi-permanent type, with good posts, wooden floors, mat walls and thatch roofs. These can be erected comparatively quickly, they are in many ways cooler than houses of brick, and they can always be converted ultimately into permanent houses. If recruitment of officers is not to cease, construction of temporary quarters is an immediate necessity.

Another temporary measure, which will have to be enforced soon, until such time as quarters (temporary or permanent) are available, is the sharing of houses by officers. In a very few cases this is already being done, but only by bachelors, spinsters or grass-widowers. There is no reason *prima facie* why young married officers should not be called on to share houses also. Allocation of separate houses should be made on the basis (a) of seniority and (b) of length of time for which an

officer has been waiting in Kuching for a separate house. But, while a senior officer has every right to a house to himself, there can be no possible justification, under present conditions, for him to occupy a large house, which could well accommodate two or more junior officers. So long as quarters are inadequate, the large houses should be shared. When sufficient accommodation is available for everyone, the senior officers can return to their more spacious abodes.

To sum up, the steps required to relieve the present very bad situation appear to be *either* to suspend recruitment of officers till sufficient quarters are available, *or*

(a) to make it quite clear to officers before appointment that they may have to share quarters till the building programme is further advanced;

(b) to allocate the larger houses to be shared by two or more officers till temporary quarters are ready, and not allow them to be monopolised by one senior officer;

(c) to start work at once on the construction of temporary quarters.

Yours faithfully,

D.P.

Notice.

CHARGES FOR USE OF GOVERNMENT MEDICAL DEPARTMENT AMBULANCE.

Members of the public are hereby notified that with effect from the date of this notice the charges payable to Government for the use of the Medical Department Ambulance are as set forth below. It will be within the discretion of the Medical Officer-in-Charge, General Hospital, Kuching, to waive these charges in the case of persons unable to pay.

Journeys within Kuching Municipal Area	...	...	\$1.50 per trip
Journeys outside Kuching Municipal Area	...	...	.50 cents per mile for double journey.

C. E. GASCOIGNE,

for Acting Chief Secretary.

Kuching, 13th September, 1949.

Notice.

Notice is hereby given that the business carried on under the style of Syn Huat Hin at No. 70, Main Bazaar, Kuching, has been transferred to Koh Kiat Hin as from 30th September, 1949, and that I shall not be responsible for any debts incurred by the said firm after 30th September, 1949.

LIM SIN HUAT *alias*
LIM CHIO POR.

Kuching, 30th September, 1949.

Sarawak Turf Club.

LIST OF DRAWING ON THE ST. LEGER STAKES
DRAWN AT THE LILIAN HALL, KUCHING, ON 9TH SEPTEMBER, 1949.

Horse's Name.	Ticket No.	Drawn by
1st Ridgewood	34651	T. N. M. Kongsri
2nd Dust Devil	18598	Yong Kam, Miri
3rd Lone Eagle	12211	Chiang Kai Sek
Acceptors:		
Barnes Park	23090	Min Tan Chi Co.
Boisson	42018	Public Gift
Donnington	21983	E. Jaluton
Forethought	34837	Leong Ann Pan & Lee Seng Sim Co.
Grey Tudor	44519	Aw Thuan
Hindustan	26671	Teo Bee Tin
Krakatoa	37136	
Laissez Passer II	41434	Lian Hap Co.
Marvel II	23463	Jerijah
Mon Chatelaine	15371	Lok Hua Yew Ee, Simanggang
Moon dust	24428	Png Chiew Lee
Musidora	38578	Lai Hin
Peter Flower	25933	Yeo
Royal Empire	12416	Hiap Lee
Royal Forest	24924	B. J.
Swallow Tail	22920	Kee Tim Kongsri
Ngongo	26159	Sim Neo Huat
Unknown Quantity	38151	Kok Khian
Total Pool	\$34,030.00	
Less 10% Government Tax	3,403.00	
	30,627.00	
Less 20% Club's Commission	6,806.00	
	\$23,821.00	
50% to Drawer of Winning Horse	\$11,910.00	
25% " " " Second "	5,955.00	
12½% " " " Third "	2,977.00	
12½% " " " 18 Acceptors @ \$165.00 each	2,970.00	
Fraction	9.00	
	\$23,821.00	

D. C. WHITE
B. J. C. SPURWAY
ONG HAP LEONG
WILLIAM TAN
A. P. MERRELLS

Scrutineers.

Kuching Market Price List.

Monthly Average Market Prices from 20th
August, 1949, to 20th September, 1949.

RICE—(per gantang)			
White milling	...	...	\$1.83
Local, polished Dyak	...	...	1.72
SUGAR—(per kati)			
Java, White Sugar	...	...	.37
Nipah Sugar	...	...	.19
SALT—(per kati)			
Coarse	...	...	.10
Fine	...	...	.12
FLOUR AND BREAD—			
Wheat Flour, per kati	...	...	.38
Bread per loaf	...	...	.07
MILK—			
Milkmaid per tin	...	...	.55
Golden Wheel per tin	...	...	.50
EGGS—(each)			
Duck, fresh	...	...	.13
" " salted	...	...	.15
Fowl	...	...	.11

EDIBLE FATS—(per kati)			
Coconut Oil	...	...	\$.70
Pork Fat No. 1	...	...	1.60
" " 2	...	...	1.29
PORK—(per kati)			
Lean No. 1	...	...	1.80
Lean with fat, 2	...	...	1.29
BEEF—(per kati)			
Beef, steak	...	...	2.20
Beef, curry meat	...	...	1.20
Buffalo No. 1	...	...	2.00
" " curry meat	...	...	1.00
Kambing (daging)	...	...	2.00
POULTRY—(per kati)			
Capons	...	...	1.60
Duck	...	...	1.20
Fowl, Chinese breed	...	...	1.50
Fowl, Dayak breed	...	...	1.30
FISH—(per kati)			
Fresh fish No. 1	...	...	1.11
" " 2	...	...	.69
" " 3	...	...	.30
Prawns " 1	...	...	—
" " 2	...	...	.85
Crab " 1	...	...	.60
" " 2	...	...	.50
Salted fish " 1	...	...	1.22
" " 2	...	...	.78
" " 3	...	...	.40
" " roe	...	...	.92

VEGETABLES—(per kati)

Banguang (Yam beans) ...	...	\$.08
Bayam ...	...	.23
Bean Sprouts ...	...	.20
Cabbage, imported ...	...	.53
Changkok Manis ...	...	.22
Dann Bawang ...	...	.80
Ensahi Puteh ...	...	.32
" Bunga ...	...	.25
French beans ...	...	.61
Garlic, fresh ...	...	.30
Kachang panjang ...	...	.18
Kangkong ...	...	.17
Keladi (China) ...	...	.25
Ketola ...	...	.24
Kribang ...	...	.06
Kundur ...	...	.10
Labu ...	...	.08
Ladies Fingers ...	...	.39
Lettuce (per tie) ...	...	.05
Lobak (Chinese radish) ...	...	.25
Lobak, salted, imported ...	...	.50
Onions, Bombay ...	...	.25
Onions, small ...	...	.49
Potatoes, Bengal ...	...	.39
Pria (Bitter Gourd) ...	...	.30
Bamboo shoots, salted ...	...	.20
Tronit (Brinjals) ...	...	.17
Yams ...	...	.15
Cucumber (timun) ...	...	.16
Ginger ...	...	.30
Chillies (red) ...	...	.87
" (green) ...	...	.39

Sauerkraut, imported ...	...	\$.50
" local ...	...	.20
Tamarind ...	...	.29
Tomatoes, fresh ...	...	.72

TEA—(per kati)

Tea, Lipton per lb. ...	...	2.80
" Chinese per kati ...	...	.60

COFFEE—(per kati)

Raw, Java No. 1 ...	...	1.10
" Java No. 2 ...	...	.95

FRUIT—

Pisang Umbun ...	per kati	...	.10
Pisang Tandok ...	each	.05 to	.10
Pineapples ...	per kati	...	.10
Papayas ...	"	...	.10

SUNDRIES—

Bean Curd ...	per 8 square piece	...	.10
" Cake (white) ...	per piece	...	.10
" " (yellow) ...	"	...	.20
Kerosene Oil ...	per tin	...	4.10
" " ...	per bottle	...	.20
Charcoal ...	per pkl.	...	4.50
" semi-converted ...	"	...	3.00
Sauce (kitchup) ...	bottle (local)	...	.70
Blachan ...	per kati	...	.47
Dried prawn ...	"	...	2.40
Coconut, fresh ...	each	...	.14
Bako Wood ...	per panchang	...	19.00

