

Sarawak Gazette

PRICE

KUCHING, Sunday, September 30th, 1956

\$1.00

Contents

Page

Birth	115
The Elections	115
Notes and Comments	115
Arrivals and Departures	115
Life Problems—V	115
Adam Ranges	115
Notes on Kampong Bering	115
Photographic Competition	115
Missing Letter	115
Diary of a Voluntary Officer	115
No Wonder Freight Rates are Rising	115
What a Whopper	115
Correspondence	115
"New Labour's Bath" on Tunjeng Lohang	115
The Museum	115
Sale Items	115
Recent Books	115
Kuching Market Price List	115

The Sarawak Gazette

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 30th, 1956

Birth

At Kampong Ulu, Mts. on 27th August, 1956, to wife of Abang Yusuf Yus, a son, Abang Abdul Samad.

Saying for the Month

The law has no power to command obedience except that of habit, which can only be given by time, so that a machine to change from old to new laws embodies the power of the law.

AARSTOLE

The Elections

On the 4th of November the Kuching electorate will go to the polls to choose the first elected Municipal Council. Early fears that the elections would be made void by apathy have been dispelled, and now there are almost twice as many candidates as seats. Given a fine day there is every hope of a good poll. The Municipality deserves much of the credit, for its sober but effective publicity campaign, and for explaining the rules and procedures as simply as possible in pamphlets and in the press.

A new feature which we welcome is that government officers may vote, and, with the approval of the Chief Secretary, stand for election. It has been suggested that the right of Government employees to stand should

only be accorded if the number of non-government candidates is insufficient. We disagree. Indiscriminate restrictions on the political rights of any section is not democracy, nor is it for the best of the community. The rules restricting the political rights of Government servants were framed in the days when the service was composed of a very few, who were almost entirely concerned with administration. But now the government employs a large proportion of the educated population in a variety of posts, and there is no reason why any but a few of these should be turned into a group of political Vestal Virgins, shielded from the thrills of elections and deprived of the normal rights of citizenship. Is there any reason why, for example, a clerk in the agricultural department is less fit for service on the council than a businessman, if his fellow-townsmen choose him?

It is perhaps not everywhere realized that an elected member of a council is in a relatively different position from a nominated official member. The official member is naturally bound to follow within narrow limits the Government line, in the same way that a party member must follow his party line; but an elected member is responsible to the electorate, and, in his duties as councillor is acting solely as a citizen—he is only incidentally a Government employee. There is no question of the Government using any pressure to influence him. He is not a Government stand-piggy and if he seems to be acting like one, the electors have a simple and effective remedy when next he stands. The electorate has tremendous advantages over other employers: having chosen its representatives it does not necessarily have to be satisfied with them until they can be securely retired, but can dismiss them, if it chooses, without giving a pension, without embarrassment, without pension, and even without decorations. That is not all that democracy amounts to, to be sure; but it is one of the most attractive and serviceable features.

Notes and Comments

Give-away programmes on commercial radio and television shows are increasingly popular in the USA these days. We must admit the possibility of a vicious thrill when listening to someone answering a question that may win \$54,000—in crisp American greenbacks. New Radio Sarawak has its own give-away programme—For O'Gold—with prizes of \$1, \$2, \$4, and—wait for it—a jack-pot of \$15. The editions we have heard have reached depths of honesty unthought even by Twenty Questions. It promises to be very popular.

We were recently impressed by the indignation of our people over the proposal to introduce an annual tax on wireless sets. Why did not the Government tell us about this when they asked us to buy wireless sets a few years ago? They ask, many say they will discontinue using their sets if the tax is introduced, which would deprive the Government of its main channel of contact with the people. Perhaps some concessions could be made by concentrating on programmes like For O'Gold?

Another programme, Amateur Quartet, has started well with delightful piano pieces played by Miss Ong Poon Kiong. The piano at Radio Sarawak has that delightful piano-ish tone—so much better than the modern trend to marshallow-voiced pianos that sound only suitable for selections played by Liberace-like young men in pale blue suits with silver ruffled-cuffs. We hope to hear more of it than heretofore.

The 7th Mile quarry at Kuching is almost worked out, and so the PAD is preparing to open a new one at Bukit Stahar, nearby. The north face has been cleared and an access road constructed. We understand that preliminary blasting has shown good rock of the same type as that at the old quarry. Bukit Stahar is much bigger than the old quarry hill, and should be able to supply Kuching with stone for many decades.

The new salary scales for Government officers, based on the Bain report, had a fairly easy passage through Council Negri, although questions were asked about provision of a cut for the Chief Justice. Reports that the Government was negotiating for the purchase of a certain gold-plated Daimler have been discounted; more likely some to be the province of three motor-cars, to be garaged in Kuching, Jesselton and Brunei Town respectively.

In the Kuching hospital some concern is felt over the death of their herd of South African toads, *Nasopha laevis*, used in certain tests. In spite of being fed upon such delicacies as chopped liver and worms, the animals seem to pine for the scale upon which, and language used. Local toads of the genus *Rhys* have been tried, but they are not so reliable as their African cousins.

H.M.S. *Opossum* visited Borneo during September, and came up to Kuching for three days. Town and ship enjoyed the usual football, hockey and shooting matches, parties and 'entertainments'. Her Captain is Commander H. P. Westminster, of "Ashore On the Warren" fame. On this occasion, however, he proceeded up-river in more orthodox manner.

Sarawak Museum Journal No. 7 has made its appearance. Again, something for everybody, with the emphasis on the early days—as gleaned from excavations, stories of early settlements, movements of peoples, folk-stories, etc. Illustrations are many and excellent. The Museum Journal is well worth acquiring and keeping—so can we not have something better than a paper cover?

Many headmistresses, however well-meaning or determined to do their duty, are nevertheless regarded by the girls as cruel and heartless. That Miss Edith S. Andrews certainly does not come into this category, was demonstrated earlier this month by dozens of Old Girls of St. Mary's, who, having failed to persuade her to stay, bid her farewell on her way to England.

Miss Andrews is 'one of the old school'—very strict, as are told, there was no nonsense in St. Mary's—but there was plenty of fun. The concerts and plays put on in those days are still talked about, and there must be many a school-child who, enjoying a quiet lounge at home, is reminded that in his mother's young days, she did not sit around all day, but climbed to the top of Matang or Santichong.

Miss Andrews retired in 1950, but came back to work in a voluntary capacity for the Mission. She leaves many good friends behind her, but, in the words of the *Priscilla* 'there is always a place here for her, and should she ever find the desire to come back to Sarawak and be with the people again, they will see to it that a home is always ready and welcome to receive her.'

The weekend of September 26, brought fine sunny weather and large crowds for the Sarawak Regatta at Kuching. Pangkalan Bera was happily congested as ever and, there seeming to be no shortage of money,

shopkeepers and touts flourished. If boats go into any kind of hibernation, Regatta Day provides the sustaining impulse. Racing craft appear in new and purpose-colour, immaculate speedboats make their debut and the *Evagone* came out on their steady annual peregrinations. This year the unfilled boats were not seen. We hope they will reappear in future; sufficient prize money should be available from a committee flushed with this year's success.

Public interest was stirred by the appearance of Brand paddlers and outboard racers for the first time in Kuching. Schlens has such provision paddling been seen here, and many caps and trophies have found their way to Brand. This visit was a great success and it is to be hoped that H.M. the Sultan will continue to bring teams for years to come.

Parties concluded with the outboards have not yet completely ousted the paddlers, although they now take up a whole day of the programme. The crowd enjoyed some thrills, especially when a fishy hydroplane threw its rider and continued round the course at full throttle, narrowly missing the crowded Pangkalan Bera strip, and eventually colliding with two *porahs* whose occupants had, very wisely, already taken to the water.

Parties concluded with a Grand Regatta Ball, which turned out to be not a ball at all, but a mammoth zabuton in which all the different peoples of Sarawak demonstrated their skill in dancing. Altogether a very successful weekend.

Arrivals and Departures

Between 24.9.56 and 29.9.56.

Arrivals.

Mr. R. F. Martin and family (Merely appointed Asst. Executive Engineer)	29th August, 1956, on first appointment.
Mr. Joseph Wong Pak Hoo (Merely appointed teacher from Hong Kong)	29th August, 1956, on first appointment.
Mr. C. R. Smith (Merely appointed Supt. P.W.D.)	2nd September, 1956, on first appointment.
Mr. Edmund bin Sultan	2nd September, 1956, returning from Technical Teacher Training Course.
Miss R. M. Dalchoury (Formerly executive Secretary (Singapore))	2nd September, 1956, on first appointment.
Mr. L. Corbridge (Merely appointed Foreman, P.W.D.)	2nd September, 1956, on first appointment.

Departures.

Miss Richard bin Shahr	26th August, 1956, to U.K. on Domestic Science Course.
Mr. Katali bin Haji Shahrul	26 September, 1956, to U.K. on a course of training in Printing.
Mr. E. Lim Hong Teo	2nd September, 1956, to U.K. on a course of training in Printing.
Mr. Yap Joo Thio	2nd September, 1956, to U.K. on teacher training course.
Mr. Wong Koo Heng	2nd September, 1956, to U.K. on Public and Social Administration course.
Mr. Wang Tui Choo	2nd September, 1956, to U.K. on Public and Social Administration course.
Mr. Tan Sheng Kai	2nd September, 1956, to U.K. on Public and Social Administration course.
Mr. Lo Yik Fong	2nd September, 1956, to U.K. on Public and Social Administration course.
Mr. W. Giles Evans	2nd September, 1956, to Malacca to attend the W.M.A. meeting.

Mr. G. Hoo Kwong Thai	26th September, 1956, to U.K. on Professional Certificate in Education course.
Mr. King Shih Fan	26th September, 1956, to U.K. on post-graduate course in structural engineering.
Mr. Francis Chan Hong Yee (Medical Department)	26th September, 1956, to Penang to attend a Dental Medicine Training course.
Miss Lilian Loke Lai Lai	22nd September, 1956, to attend University of Malaya.
Miss Tang Fong Ling	22nd September, 1956, to attend University of Malaya.
Miss Catherine Chan	24th September, 1956, to Singapore to attend University of Malaya.
Mr. Yusuf Farah	24th September, 1956, to Singapore to attend University of Malaya.
Mr. Hajang bin Mohd. Nae	24th September, 1956, to Singapore to attend University of Malaya.

Ulu Problems

Y—Justice and Strategy?
(Fifth in a series of articles)

"Sarawak is the heritage of our subjects and is held in trust by ourselves for them."

(Principle No. 1 of *Foreword to first Constitution*)

"God's mind over thoughts, wild sheep what is most dear,

Made old offences of offences new;

Must true it is that I have look'd on truth.

Justice and strategy."

Shakespeare (Romeo)

The most significant single piece of art, architecture and spiritual belief—yes, all in one—in Sarawak, sometimes shines, sometimes fades, often claims attention strangely, down on the head of the beholder from the ceiling of the Supreme Court—the old Secretariat building. In opening this finely renovated diaphan (3/56), the Chief Justice of the Three British Borneo Territories chose to ignore the magnificent set of panels overhead done by four Borneo Kanyahs from the Temar, in the aid of the Fourth Division of Sarawak, although these are among the great works of native art in modern Asia. He chose to ignore them because, I suppose, they seemed to him unsuitable to a Supreme Court. Anyway, then and since, he has ignored them.

It would not hurt anyone very much if this genuine, unforced, magnificent expression of the native people of the ulu, shown in designs, were ignored by our Chief Justice in our speech. But this commission signifies perfectly the whole vision, conception and approach of our legal and judicial system towards the ulu of countries in which it is, in fact, operating. That three countries are utterly, totally and perpetually un-English and that they have got on quite nicely under Englishness for a century without trying to be so, is neither here nor there to those who believe that LAW is an absolute non-negotiable; and that it, as Western Law, can at this late date be usefully applied to Asian countries hitherto largely—and in the interior WHOLLY—unacquainted with it, and indeed incapable of appreciating its basic assumptions.

As previous Acting Attorney-General Hugh Hickling has put it (*Sarawak Museum Journal*, VI, p. 171):

"We need a survey of the whole of the Sarawak ulu and native customary law for, unless this is available, it seems probable that the courts will continue to apply exclusively English concepts."

In the subsequent two years this has not become less true, alas. But, as Mr. Hickling goes on to point out, fairly enough:

"No judge can be blamed for taking such a course for, after all, he is not an anthropologist."

God forbid! It is so. It is the only duty of the judges to see that the Law they work under is correctly applied. As Mr. Mooney has so laboriously tried to point out as legal spokesman on various public occasions, the judiciary is not responsible for making the law—though he has an unfortunate way of going on to imply (unintentionally, of course) that judges are therefore somehow divinely above it. And perhaps there is a weary temptation towards some such feeling in a land where practically no one knows what they are talking about when one talks the sort of law they are applying in Sarawak now? It is understandable enough that when NOT given adequate guidance from other sources, and when encouraged to proceed into mine and meet new law, you should somehow look upward without seeing the ceiling, those tell-tale ulu panels in the Supreme Court.

What, though, do these panels say?

May I venture a few words, as one who can certainly not claim to understand the ulu (or any) mind, but has had occasion to try and look on truth afresh in some pretty strange set-ups, both inside Borneo and out. I also have a dubious advantage: that the panels in question were done in—or rather all over—my house. His survive on my walls, spilt out in eggs, dragons, monster spirits, scorpions, crocodiles, hornbills, phoenixes, rages, tigers and all the rest of the fiery inner heart that glows below the surface of those six head-hunter gentlemen, wearing glasses (courtesy Ken Meyer), smoking pipes (courtesy Cyril Northcote).

The Supreme Court ceiling spills out, very roughly, a way of looking at the world, differing from a judge's or a master's in not being conditioned (for instance) by:

- the written word
- a separation of decision from action upon that decision
- western Greco-Roman roots
- the church
- competitive team games
- numerical counts
- speed, records and time-keeping
- mechanical techniques
- a divide between 'natural' and 'artificial'
- a distinction between real and fantasy
- personality
- monotony
- puritanism
- progression

As we see . . .

I speak, of course, of things as they were up the far shore in the ulu and high there in the inward eye of the Supreme Court ceiling. There have been vast changes there past ten years, and they accelerate now. The new generation already suffer atrophy of the ulu mind, radiation poisoning of the corner. It is being taught to (for instance) see in perspective—that recent convention of western man's art as binding to most as the stock market, examinations or telephones. Still, trapped in its moment, the outward peering linear eye of Kanyah, Kanyah or Kribah Bicken on. Maybe, too, there is a gleam in it of that? For it takes a lot to prove to people that there is less in life than they feel they can see in it.

Looked at in that way, then, those panels gaze quietly down on the seated judges below upon their tribunal, with a sort of uncomprehending kindness which must, indeed, be very embarrassing. After all (even one spiral, with a wish) we have seen this sort of thing before. . . . Buddhists, Hindus, Confucians, Taoists, Mohammedans, Animists; we have had the lot "grooves" us and fade. They have affected us a lot, in a lot of ways, too. But none of them have been so exacting, diabolic and all-embracing as this new

rule—the rule of 'law' to which P.M. pays his proud tribute in one of his higher Legal Department passages:

“... in a country governed as this country is governed, its (Government's) sole means of performing this duty is, and one hopes always will be confined to Law”.

(Gazette, March 1956)

TO THINK of governing by example, agreement, leadership or native custom is—in this conception—unthinkable. And when I say unthinkable I mean unthinkable: such thinkers never thought of it, never glimpsed what could be done with:

(1)—less new law

(2)—more new understanding

But, of course, this ‘duty’ is ‘law’—‘Government’—the people from outside who have made the new laws. For all such who cannot bear to see the ceiling, maybe face the corner.....

Perhaps it is possible to analyse that a bit more closely, without becoming boring?

What has been the pressure on Government to make a huge new paraphernalia of alien law? To do so in an instant and at a tempo which at times seems to approach hysteria? I think there have been five main drivers, three ‘conscious’ (in the sense of modern psychological jargon), the others not. The conscious, roughly, I see as:

(1) The impossibility for a Colony carrying on with any sort of legal code based on the old, Brooke, semi-aristocratic personal rule: therefore, need for a new code (or more at all)—

(2) The desire of new departments or developments to be better organised and enabled to enforce their creations on a population often indeed unaware if not positively unwilling—

(3) The keen and sometimes ambitious urge of lawyers to do much and well.

Unfortunately the last two got tied up with a great rush of new ideas into an old country, in some ways unequipped to take them—e.g. ideas lately tried out by the Co-operative Development Department or the Registrar of Births and Deaths. And, just as our Civil Service breeds another C.S., (Parkinson's Law?), so one law soon does the same. Like a falling object obeying the laws of gravity per second per second, this process continues, in the end, a Galadriel some of rushing laws. In frustration used to this tendency and equipped to deal with it—since the tendency came out of it, inherent in its Society as its own native law—the representatives of the public at all levels from the Parish Council to the House of Commons spend a large part of their lives protecting the population from being trodden underfoot by the rush. If they fail, democracy fails too. Here in Sarawak, at this date we are starting—as far as the law is concerned anyway—the other way round. If I am being rude to my colleagues I am also being equally rude to myself (by definition, as an insider) when I say that far from casting pearls before swine—a sinful thing (Matthew, vi, 6)—we have flung the swine before the pearls!

What, though, of the two more shadowy, ‘unconscious’ motives? Well, one is reputable enough, viz:

(4) The belief that by introducing the whole panoply of Western law, we (Westerners) are actually doing a good turn to the hitherto benighted—no, in this case, Brookeland—ignorant population.

The only thing wrong with this belief would seem (to me) to be (if I may be so bold) that it is sadly out-of-date in S.E. Asia in 1956. If I may go further still, I believe that by thinking thus we well—in the end—only confuse the issues that confront Sarawak

and adjacent Crown Colonies on their way to being something else. That, even in the short run, the innocent area of the legislator will suffer, by the ill-will thereby engendered. Again, I speak of (though not, of course, for) the able. Last, the coast may or may not need so much law; that is another matter, outside my present competence.

The fifth and shadowy motive for recent legislative trends seems, on my own analysis, from the fourth, and is less attractive even in intention. This is the idea that by imposing all this new law on Sarawak, ‘we’ will somehow be better able to keep control of the country. I doubt if any decent person consciously thinks like this. But the lurking possibility that it will—in the silent watches of the night cannot be simply ignored, as those who eyes gaze down in silence and unobserved sadness from the Supreme Court ceiling!

But one can go on juggling words like this—like a lawyer, if you like; strictly a bush (jungle) lawyer in this case, thank goodness! Any such analysis is bound to be as artificial as any other imposed system of weights logic onto the naturalism based on many constraints of living in, on, with and through Borneo.

It boils down to this: is it all necessary? is it helping? helping what? is there a consistent theory of government or leadership or development or control or direction behind it all where does it end—and can the end soon be explained to the rest? Where, for instance, Temonggong Oyas Lawai, M.B.E., the most influential single man inside Borneo, asks me to explain the documents to be put before him next day in the Council Negri (12.9.56) what am I to say? To say, for example, of the Companies Bill—whose humble purpose is only:

to consolidate and amend the law relating to Companies—in 414 pages.

How can I—let alone he—understand why quite recently passed laws already need so much amendment: Forests of 1953 (and even then a word is left-connected on his copy at section 3-53-(3)); Post Office Savings 1952, Kuching Municipalities, Kuala 1954, Charitable Trusts 1949, Societies 1945, and so on. How difficult to obtain why this time only the staff of the Prison's Department is the subject of special legislation—and two lots at that! Well may Mr. T. Achesonough be proud of S. 194—rule 2c, writers qualifications: ‘where members deflected—31 inches, but how can even a fairly informed head of department know why an other has been singled out for a part in this next (Galadriel) wave of definition and coded advance? How explain, for that matter, the embarrassing apparent inconsistencies in the new Constitution so politely pointed out by Mr. Ong Koo Hui, so amiably accepted by the A.G. The representative for the law could not be expected to understand any more than I, whatever the definition.

What is one to do?

While there is light there is hope, though. Eyes to the sky, here; backs to the wall, ceilings up.

For there are always these two ways about it. On the one hand, there are always the able people, and most of them are not ‘offenders’ or afraid. However much the law and new acts, surely the native spirit can survive in Sarawak without being driven to the extreme of distress and consequent violent revolt new commonplace in so many other lands? We may reassure ourselves, for a little while at least, by noting Burke's adage that “in all forms of government the people is the true legislator”; or what that bore Shagadel called:

“imaginative sentiments that no legislature can manufacture in one people.”

That ceiling reassures us that this imagination survives. How long, though?

On the other hand, there is always—in the 'good old English' way—Justice AS WELL, as law. Or is there? For this is really the crucial point in the whole thing, as far as the *ala* is concerned. However numerous, complex, unintelligible and senseless the laws, if they are tempered by understanding, justice and mercy, then no one will be the worse. This is the very essence of the position now, in 1936, for the great mass Sarawakians who inhabit the larger half of Sarawak, the interior. NOTHING else matters so much, to them, in the final analysis, than that they should feel in all things fairly dealt with, whatever happens, by those on the seat who so far know more (about certain things) and have more (power). And so, rapidly, the *ala* gets to know more and to have more, so, very rapidly, this matters more and more.

The goodwill of interior Sarawak, in so far as any sort of non-Sarawak interest is concerned, depends in these days—and more and more every tomorrow—on the degree to which outside codes and controls regard it as "a heritage held in trust". So long as others help Sarawak for itself, it can continue to be the remarkable place which the Brooke—*and no one else*—made it. Above all the Brookes gave justice to the *ala*. Rough justice, yes. But in a rough *ala*, too.

Obvious? Sure. But it is a simple fact, which I as Government Ethnologist know with certainty, that this goodwill is beginning to run low, swiftly. Naturally, the reasons are complex. Some of them have nothing whatever to do with law, or even with the outside acts of government in all its multiple facets. Some of the complicated causes, recent or otherwise, I have tried to trace out in native articles on sociology and commercial activities. In final bursts of fabrications, I will try next to consider the more positive efforts of government, itself, in 'welfare' and related fields. For here, at last, the prospect brightens. Brightens considerably, and sometimes even in colours which those old Ministers of Long Bako would readily have misrepresented in the Supreme Court sitting, had they then known, or read, or seen—or understood.

TOM HARRISON

Adat Bungun

Mr. A. M. Phillips, who sent us this account of the birth and growth of Bungunian custom—

"I enclose an account of 'Adat Bungun' as it was told to me when in the Ulu Kelang, which may be of interest. It may or may not bear out Tom Harrison's point that Jok Apai (Apai?) could not have conceived his operation if outside missionaries had not already set the precedent. I prefer to think that it was independent of the missionary influence in weakening old beliefs in passages. I think that it was the visible example of Jok Apai's change of fortune which made the belief such as to just."

Told by a Kanyah of Lapa To or Lapa To, Long Nawang:—

In 1900* in Ulu Julan, a Kanyah house at Long Gak in the Apo Kayan (Indonesian District of about 15,000 population administered from Long Nawang), there lived Jok Apai. He was very unsuccessful in all he did. He was thin and weak and so was his wife. He planted padi—his crop failed. His wife gave birth and his child died. He went hunting but with no success. He got to the stage where he considered that life was not worth living and he hoped that he and his wife would die.

Then one night he had a dream. It was just before midnight and it was a waking dream. Two spirits appeared, one male and one female. The male was

three times as tall as a normal man. He wore a white loincloth. The ends of the loincloth were made of hands. He wore a porous. The sorbwood was made of bones and the handle a human skull. His waistcoat was made of hands. His bangles and armlets were snakes. His hair was not very long and he had no tattoo. But he had a long beard.

The woman wore a long sleeved jacket of fine coloured hands and a long white skirt. She had no earrings or headress and she looked like a white woman.

The man said to Jok Apai "Do not worry more. I will give you my nest. You must not take any notice of birds and omens any more. If you follow me you will not become rich, but neither will you be starving and poor. Tomorrow you must take one egg and call on us and ask for our help. You must not take notice of any more passages, and in order that you need not follow the passages of the langhouse you must leave a gap of one fathom between your house and the rest. It can be joined by a bridge. When the time comes to fall and burn—fall and burn. When the time comes to plant—you must plant. When the time comes to harvest—you must harvest. You can eat all birds and animals. You can eat sting and wasp, mosquitoes and pythons. Should you see a bad omen you must offer an egg to us. My name is Bungun Luan. This woman's name is Bungun Mitan. You must call on Bungun Mitan for she is the strength of this Adat. She made all the birds and beasts for your food. I work for her." So saying the spirit took off his waistcoat and handed it to Jok Apai and the vision disappeared.

The next day Jok Apai did as he had been told. He went off to farm. He passed a snake and he heard a falling but he took no notice. Instead of dying as misfortune became him. He cleared and killed his farm and returned to his house. When he heard or saw an omen he offered an egg to Bungun. In due season he planted and harvested. He hunted and killed and brought back all he killed for food. He and his wife got fat. His padi store was full and his wife gave birth to a healthy child. At one time his child became ill, and he was very worried. The female spirit appeared to him and said "You must take an egg and call for help to me, Bungun Mitan". He did so and in four or five days his child recovered.

And so he continued to follow Adat Bungun.

When his brother and the others in Ulu Julan saw him healthy and fat when he had been lean and saw his padi store full when it had been empty they asked him what had caused his change of fortune. He told them the story of Bungun Luan and they held a general and placated the old spirits with offerings and food and took leave of them and called on Bungun and told her that they were now becoming his followers. And so in due course slowly at first but quicker and quicker other houses followed, sometimes whole houses sometimes only parts of houses until now Adat Bungun is followed all down the Bating Kayan, the Baran and the Belai.

When a person "masuk Bungun" it is not that he does not believe there is no power in the old spirits and passages but that Bungun will protect him from them.

A. M. PHILLIPS

*This is the date I wrote down and I cannot believe that I did not check with the village as to whether it was before the occupation or not. However I will not return to this A. M. P.

Notes on Kampong Bering

Kampong Bering is an offshoot of Kampong Baidi, a sizeable kampong in Indonesian territory. The present six doets moved into Sarawak territory about 1932. They are of a different tribal origin than the Trigingau kampongs which came originally from Kampong Gwang near Bantuan in Kuching District. They are also of different origin from the Javan kampongs of Bera. All Land Dayak settlements in the Bera District came from a central origin i.e. they split off from one large original kampong and the reasons appear to be mixed, political and economic. The turn of the 19th Century saw the Land Dayaks of the various areas in Bera and presumably other Districts under the political control of the Malay ruling class and intertribe strife and incursion of Bera from the Kuching and Lunan Districts forced these relatively defenceless Dayaks to the top of high mountains where they could more easily defend themselves.

The advent of Sir James Brooke's Government and a more settled state of affairs infused the Dayaks with a new feeling of security from outside attack and in the Century proceeded more and more of the mountain top Dayaks, split off into their respective farming groups and moved down the mountains to live in their farming settlements on the more level plains around.

This move continued during the 19th Century, and the early 20th Century saw the establishment of semi-permanent village settlements having a mainly functional purpose, that of farming. From these semi-permanent 'polauns' or farming settlements spring the various kampongs one finds to-day in the Bera District. This process, I think, applies equally to the Trigingau area as to the Bera area and no doubt kampong Bering is the result of a search for new land and the final settlement on satisfactory land and the gradual evolution of the original band into a settled village. I must point out here that the above theory is of my own making and it is not substantiated by proven facts although there is evidence to support the main theory.

The main facts however are that a group of Indonesian Dayaks from an Indonesian tribe came to settle near to Kuching Dayaks and all these settlements came under the administrative control of the District Officer. Bera, who, at the time these came over from Indonesia was in charge of the whole area including Pongtuen Kamp and a large area South East of the Benge range to Gunung Sepuluh and including Poremas.

These days the Bering folk travel to Bera for a two or three days stay and they combine the trip with a holiday and spending time as do other 'Ulu' peoples of Sarawak. These people are only about 15 miles in the canoe line from Bera and yet the journey to Bera is a good two days' travel, at Dayak walking speed.

The people are unsophisticated, shy and extremely hospitable and generous. They have good land but they have to work hard for their rice harvest every year. They appear to be happy and content where they are, and I think it is about the only remaining kampong in the District which can produce young girls (at about 18-20 yrs) who can sing the old traditional Land Dayak songs 'an ensemble' of long ago.

A. Rowbottom.

Photographic Competition

The Sarawak Gazette Photographic Competition closed on the 1st September with a total of 37 entries from 16 competitors—rather fewer than last year, but then the time available for preparing photographs was shorter. Entries were received from all the Divisions of Sarawak and from Brunei, with the majority coming

from Kuching and the Offshoots. Subjects were many and varied, ranging from portraits and still life to unusual patterns of light and shade and artistic water effects.

The winners are:—

- 1st. Mr. Kuang—by Lai Suen Yian of Kuching
- 2nd. Sunset—by Phang Sang of Lutong
- 3rd. Picnic—by H. T. Jerns of Kuching

In addition to the prize winners the Judges selected a number of 'runners up' or 'honourable mentions'.

These were not put into any order of merit and are:—

- Descending—by Lim Poh Ching of Sibau
Ulu Journey—by H. J. C. Kirk of Kuching
The Tree (English)—by Ho Ah Chon of Kuching
Morning Ride—by H. T. Jerns of Kuching
Unput Unsun—by Ho Ah Chon of Kuching
Silhouettes—by Ho Ah Chon of Kuching
Cat and Dog—by Lai Suen Yian of Kuching

The Judges had few comments to offer on the competition as a whole, but they thought that the general standard of the photographs was, if anything, higher than last year's. 'Mr. Kuang' was outstanding for its good technique and good expression, and set a very high level of attainment.

The Editors wish to congratulate the winners on their achievement and to thank the Judges, Mrs. Hilda Morrison, A.R.P.S., Mr. K. F. Wong, A.R.P.S., and Abang Marthin bin Abang Haji Jaya, for so kindly offering their services. Thanks are also due to The Sarawak Tribune, The Sarawak Vanguard, The Sarawak Bulletin and Radio Sarawak for free publicity given to the Competition, and to Mr. Fisher for the use of the Kuching Municipal Council Chamber for the judging of the photographs.

All entries will be put on exhibition for a few days in the Information Office, Kuching.

Moscow Letter

As I went for the Leningrad train in Helsinki, I noticed with misgiving that my ticket was marked 'Hard Class'. There are two classes on the Soviet railways, hard and soft. I know something of hard travel on the Indian railways, third class, where I have been congested on hard boards with sweating humanity, incontinent infants, live and dead stock, and Heaven knows what baggage. It came therefore as a surprise to find that my hard class ticket this time gave me access to a Wagon Lite, four to a compartment, each with a corner seat by day and a bunk by night, the whole beautifully appointed. My only complaint was that the radio did not work, but when I pointed this out to the attendant, he said that it had been disconnected of set purpose, as it might not be used on Finnish territory.

Apart from the immigration forms, the currency returns, and the customs, I had had a passage with the Finnish authorities. In London I had been told that holders of British passports did not require Finnish visas. In Helsinki I found that a more austere view was taken: only holders of British passports issued in the United Kingdom were permitted this indulgence, having a Sarawak passport, I was given permission to stay one night only and wanted not to enter the country again without a visa. Fortunately in Moscow I was able to get a Finnish visa for the return journey, and so avoided being committed to jail, but other Sarawak travellers should take note and equip themselves with visas accordingly.

I wondered what immigration thrills awaited the traveller at the Soviet border, but here was an anti-climax. The train stopped for a few moments at a

barbed wire fence, two immigration officials came on board, the passports were collected, stamped, and shortly after returned, and that was all. Recrossing the frontier on the way out the same procedure was followed: no immigration forms, no currency forms, no customs, nothing. Would to God the various British territories in Eastern Europe had not a similar humanity with travellers!

What strikes the traveller most forcefully in Russia, today is the extraordinary friendliness of the average man in the street. I know of no country in Europe, except perhaps the West of Ireland, where the total stranger is greeted with such exuberant friendliness. This comes as a surprise, for there has been built up in Western Europe a picture of the average Russian as a grim, heartless person, whereas the man one meets in the streets of Moscow is the man one met in the pages of Chukov, Gogol and Dostoevsky, gay, easy-going, and exuberant. But for the difference of language, the people one finds in a Moscow bar are the same as one finds in a Dublin bar.

In streets, in shops, in museums, in undergrounds, and elsewhere one tends to fall into conversation with total strangers in a way that never happens in England. The request for direction "Where is such-and-such a place?" invariably elicits the reply "Come, I shall show you." To give but two examples out of many of Russian friendliness: I was walking one night with a journalist in Leningrad and we required of a passer-by the way to the Summer Garden. He insisted on escorting us, and as we walked along the boulevards we met a friend of his with a young lady on his arm, who asked where we were going. We told us to the Summer Garden, to which he replied, "We also shall go to the Summer Garden". So away we all went and strolled alongside the fountains of the Summer Garden talking of this and that, till the two young things left us for a cinema show, and our acquaintance suggested that we adjourn to a garden where there was music, this we did, and there ate sprouts and drank vodka to excerpts from Verdi. When at midnight we rose to go, our acquaintance insisted upon paying for everything.

Again, one of the businessmen of our party was interested in racing. Together we went to the Moscow race course on Sunday. When we presented ourselves at the grand stand enclosure and told that we were strangers and were interested in racing, we were told "Then you must see the Director". We were posted from one official to another till we ended up sitting on gold plush in the Director's box surrounded by the notabilities of the Moscow turf. We had a delightful afternoon's racing, and when we rose to go were kindly escorted to a restaurant where we disposed of large quantities of caviar and brandy washed down by champagne. Fortunately the Director sent us home in his car, otherwise we should have gone sadly sorry. It is, then, unnecessary to labour the point that Russians are most hospitable, even with total strangers.

This is the first year in which the gates have been thrown wide open to all and sundry, whatever their political colour or affinity. The party with which I travelled was composed of business and professional people from various parts of Europe. We even included a refugee White Russian. Yet there was no difficulty about visas for anybody, and I was told in Moscow that visas are now issued to any part of the Soviet Union. Most Europeans travel in parties on account of the currency difficulties, of which more anon, for this enables them to secure black bookings in hotels at reduced rates, but Americans, who have no such worries, tend to travel on their own. In both Moscow and Leningrad I met Americans who had travelled over wide areas of the Union independently. Hotel bookings have to be made through intermediaries, which controls all the accommodation. The Russian hotels are, by English standards, wretchedly constructed on account of the large rooms that they contain. The flood of

tourists this year has been so great that additional beds have to be put into many of them, so that two persons sometimes have to share a room. New hotels are in construction, but I doubt if they will keep pace with the increased demand, for an even greater flood of tourists will probably invade them in 1957.

Although it is a great advantage to speak Russian, even those who cannot are seldom deficient for long. English and German are widely taught in the schools. I was amazed at the number of people who spoke English and astonished at their excellent command of it, the more so as most had never been abroad, and few had even spoken to an Englishman. The teaching of English is obviously very efficient. Editions of the English classics (in English) are printed in Moscow and are widely displayed in the shops. More surprising was the accessibility of the English press. In the reading room of the Leningrad public library I saw the weekly editions of the "Times", the "Manchester Guardian", the "New York Herald Tribune", and other English and American periodicals, including so violently anti-Soviet a periodical as "Time". In the history section of the library there were all the latest English publications, including even A. J. P. Taylor's "Struggle for the Mastery of Europe". Finally, people who speak English seem to listen to the B.B.C. quite widely. Countries to accept ideas, the Russians go in for powerful radios, quite capable of picking up broadcasts from any part of Europe. In Moscow I noticed a new type of receiver which was claimed to have a world-wide range.

Moscow and Leningrad differ widely in aspect. In Leningrad, as perhaps nowhere else in Europe, the eighteenth century lives on. It is a city of distinctive character built according to a well-derived plan. Its spacious boulevards radiate from the Admiralty, and are intersected by canals in a manner that recalls Venice. Its buildings have a uniform baroque character, and although the details are sometimes over-ornate (e.g. the Winter Palace) the ensemble that they form are of great beauty. The many palaces have been preserved with care, and new buildings have been erected in the same architectural tradition, so that there is a wonderful harmony about the whole city. During the war the German armies besieged it for nine hard-fought days and it suffered a fearful battering by bomb and shell. Today the damage has been made good and new residential areas are in construction to cater for the increased population, but there has been little time for maintenance in general, and many of the streets look distinctly dowdy. A few tons of paint would transform Leningrad.

Moscow is wholly different, for since it became the Soviet capital in 1918 it has been almost entirely rebuilt. Here there was no established architectural tradition as in Leningrad and the architects have experimented widely. Styles range from the most austere cubism to what can only be described as Soviet flamboyance. The result is a lack of over-all architectural character, but many stimulating buildings. The newest buildings are of a uniform and restrained character. Wandering round the back streets one still sees the two-storied buildings of old Moscow, but they are of no particular interest and all are subsequent to the great conflagration of 1812. Of recent years a number of skyscrapers have been built and the distant view of the city is most impressive. Owing to the width of the boulevards these buildings do not create the canyon effect that those in New York do. When the traffic lights turn red, one may count as many as ten cars abreast in the half-width of one of the main streets.

In London one is accustomed to the morning and evening rush hours, but in Moscow every hour appears to be a rush hour; indeed crowds are an essential element in every Moscow scene, day or night, so that one sometimes wonders when the Moscovites are not so to bed. This odd impression of continuous work is partly due to the fact that many factories work

sound the clock in three eight-hour shifts. From Monday to Friday there is an eight hour working day for everybody, except miners, farmstynesmen, and others doing heavy work, who have less. On Saturday work is for six hours, and Sunday is a holiday. To cater for these arrangements food shops are open from seven in the morning to midnight, and other shops from ten in the morning to ten at night. Sunday is the great shopping day, and the stores are then congested to capacity and beyond.

Apart from large multiple stores and the ordinary shops there is a profusion of street vendors, ice cream sellers, purveyors of aerated drinks, (who are distinguished by their large cylinders of oxygen with which they violently shake glasses of liquor), fruit sellers, tobacconists, etc. etc. all of whom are employees of the Ministry of Food. Advertising is strictly lacking, but at night shops are tastefully illuminated by coloured neon signs; indeed Moscow by night looks very gay, for many of the fountains in public places are illuminated by coloured lights. I had thought to see everywhere slogans of an imposing character, but found none. A large inscription on the embankment wall in Leningrad, which I took to be one, turned out upon closer inspection to read "Do not drop anchor here".

There is a high standard of cleanliness. One is specially impressed by the food shops, which are much cleaner and more hygienic than those in London. The streets also are remarkably well kept. Women are paid these handsome roubles a month to keep a variety of their street clean and swept. Every twenty yards or so there is a litter bin, and anybody throwing litter on the pavement is amenable to the law. Leningrad is even more rigorous than Moscow in this regard. I heard there of one luckless tourist who threw a cigarette butt down on the pavement and was forthwith apprehended by a constable, who relayed to him at length upon the anti-social character of his action and then dismissed him. Unfortunately linguistic difficulties prevented him from profiting to the full from this exhortation.

Although for convenience we use the word Russia when we mean the Soviet Union, this is obviously an inaccuracy as using New England to designate the United States. The distinction is brought home by the large number of people from the Central Asian republics that one meets in Moscow and Leningrad, mostly it would seem students at the universities or technical colleges. They are of Turkish or allied race, and it is not surprising to learn that there are more Turks in the Union than in Turkey. They wear not a kumlek but a low round or square cap, generally very tastefully embroidered. They have mosques in both Leningrad and Moscow; the former is specially attractive being ornamented with blue tiles. In size and beauty it compares with any in Cairo.

Amongst the Christian bodies there would appear to have been some sort of religious revival. All the churches that I visited were well tended and had the appearance of wealth; most had been recently restored or redecorated. In service time they were always full, and their congregations were such as one would see in the West of Europe: persons of various ages but predominantly women. I attended pontifical mass at the Nikolsky Cathedral in Leningrad. Although it was packed to capacity so that standing one could hardly move, when it was seen that I was a stranger, I was levered into the centre of the nave. The singing was beautiful; with the incredible Russian basses one understands why the Orthodox have never taken to the organ. In the crest of the cathedral was an astonishing sight: an apparently endless queue of mothers bearing their babies to be baptized. The Orthodox baptize by immersion. Apart from the prayers, one heard a succession of splashes followed by yells. One sees why the more practical Latins favoured baptism by effusion.

There are in Leningrad fourteen Orthodox churches in current use. I was interested to ascertain how many

there were in Moscow, so I went to a public enquiry bureau and put the question. The lady in charge was completely non-plussed but said that she would ring up the "Ministry". This greatly intrigued me, for obviously a Soviet Minister for Religion must be a man of parts. However, he did not know how many churches were in use in Moscow, and a closer translation revealed that he was not really a minister at all but a sort of permanent under-secretary. The poor lady was stampeded, but I pointed out that this was a public enquiry bureau, and she was a government official charged to answer questions. I suggested that she ring up the Patriarch. He was not available, but his secretary gave the odd answer "Between fifty and sixty." Why the numerical latitude? It was subsequently explained that they were very short of clergy and not every church could be used every Sunday. Some of the old monasteries are now handed over to the Orthodox as seminaries. At Zagorsk they said that there were now thirty-five thousand students in training for the priesthood throughout the Soviet Union. Religious books are printed by the Patriarchate Press; last year a new edition of the entire Bible was produced, a massive work, almost like the Victorian Family Bible.

Greatly to my disappointment I could find no trace of the Old Believers (Kholobniki). They would appear to have either died off or become Baptists, which is a useful pity, for they were an interesting survival. Catholics have never been more than a handful, and then Polish or of Polish descent. These are churches in Moscow and Leningrad under the Archbishop of Riga. I got no further than the porch of St. Teresa's Lermontov St. in Leningrad, so great was the press for mass, and even there I was pinned against the wall by late comers. Amongst the worshippers were two soldiers. Taking morning I went to an early mass at St. Louis' Malaya Lubyanka St. in Moscow and found the church crowded but not congested. Finally the Jews would appear to flourish. Their great synagogue in Leningrad was the largest I have seen anywhere, and the warden told me that there were six other meeting houses in the city.

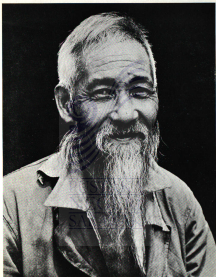
Travelers who go to the U.S.S.R. in parties are not, as is popularly believed, led about on a leash. The advantage of going with a party lies in the reduced hotel charges, but the tourist is free to follow his own devices in employing his time. Informa is very obliging; in organizing visits to places of interest for either groups or individuals, but all such expeditions are purely optional, as would be similar excursions in Rome or Paris. The party I joined seemed to implicate: businessmen went about their affairs, medicals disappeared into hospitals, my own time was for walking about the city with a street map, looking at things that interested me and talking to ordinary people. The result was that I got a picture that was necessarily incomplete but intimate, and I acquired some understanding of life in the Soviet Union. I only hope that the first Soviet tourists to visit Dublin will receive a welcome comparable in warmth to that which I received in Moscow and Leningrad.

ROBERT NATHAN.

Diary of a Sedentary Officer—I

Written by R.N.

Introductory note by the diarist: It is not given to all of us to have great and marvellous themes to write about in the Gazette, such as "His Excellency the Governor's Visit to Brunei" or "My Penang Diary". In recent years readers of the Gazette have been enthralled by the unedited diaries of people who tried to make parts mentioned above, or even further afield. I myself have for some years kept a private record of my life, which has been, in my regret, comparatively uninteresting and prosaic. It was meant for



MR. KUANG
By Lai Tze Yuen



SUNSET
by Phang Song



PICKERS
by M. T. Jeeah



CAT AND DOG
by Lai Yuen Yuen



SILHOUETTE
by Mo Ai Chon



EMPAT ANGAR
by Ho Ah Chon



THE TREE
by Ho Ah Chon

my eyes alone, but in a weak moment I showed it to my great friend, Elsin Waters, who was kind enough to suggest, nay insist, that it should be made available to readers of the Gazette. No, with many misgivings, I am sending these selected but unadorned excerpts from my "little red book" to the Editor of our beloved monthly—How unlike that dreadful *Work Enthusiast* it is!—in the hope that, if it is thought worthy, he will print it some month when there is not available one of those more cosmopolitan diaries of visits to far away romantic places like Jerusalem or Hong Kong.

Monday, 25th. Woken up, as usual, at 6.45 a.m. by cookie placing my morning cup of tea for "cupper" as Eva jocularly calls it by my bed, and shouting "Teh!" in my ear. I wish he would not shout it quite so loud, but find it difficult to correct him on any point without his taking offence. Cookie is still sulking from last week when I investigated the appalling rate of sugar wastage, and Eva chided him about the filthy state of the kitchen.

Read in "Memoirs of H.R.H. the Duke of Windsor", in a nicely bound "book-club" edition until 1.45 (too late for my convenience), shaved, and sat down to breakfast. Cookie cooks breakfast at 7 o'clock, and leaves it in the oven until 8.05, with results that can be imagined. Must remember to take it up with him later, when he has stopped sulking. Arrived punctually at office, though a little breathless (clocked 28 m.p.h. in Rock Road?). Director arrived 2 minutes later.

Rest of day—not so eventful.

Tuesday 26th. Delayed in Rock Road today by taxi (?) driven at 15 m.p.h. in middle of road. Aggravated, because I like to consider myself a bit of a "Speed merchant" (while keeping within the 30-mile limit, of course), and made me late for office. I make a point of being punctual, to set a good example to junior staff.

Cardie came in at ten past nine, said "wincer Corey!", scratched the forehead of my desk, and sat on his desk reading it. I was annoyed for several reasons. Cardie, having disconcerted from period of the Civil Service List (as Stud Book as he indelicately calls it) that my second name is Cornelius, has taken to calling me "Corey", which I consider a gross liberty. Secondly, I make a point of not reading the *Foreword* (for which, incidentally, I pay) until lunch, for the same reason that I like to be strictly punctured. Cardie has no such scruples, and has also the aggravating habit of reading out what he calls "idiotry", mostly cases of outraged modesty, etc. I am coming to the conclusion that Cardie has no conception of "service", or of the standard of conduct appropriate to a Senior Officer. Certainly, there he came from W. Africa some months ago, he has treated me with an increasing and most unbecoming familiarity, in spite of the fact that he is 17 months junior to me.

Wednesday 27th. Had some trouble with the grocer's to-day. Ordered by phone, and I speak very distinctly, a bottle of Worcester sauce, but at mid-day a lorry arrived with two cartons of formic acid. Managed to get the mix-up sorted out, but we were still without sauce at supper. Eva put-out.

This evening was Scottish dancing practice. How Eva and I love the healthy exercise in compressed company! The sobriety produced by absence of more wine soon blows away. We both have one Scots parrot and so enter into the reels and personalities with enthusiasm. I suppose it's in the blood. This evening was rather spoilt by Cardie, who arrived in a somewhat intoxicated state with a woman in very brief shorts, who turned out to be a round-tripper from Singapore. He started to fool about, whooping around and reciting "Scots' wae" Haw", and made some rather offensive remarks to Miss Wendenham. Gladys may be a little calmer on her feet, but she's a grand old trouper

and a great favourite in the society. However, he was sidetracked by one of the committee into the bar, where I believe he became an admirer. Also Mrs. Page-Windley, who must weigh 12 stone if she weighs an ounce, landed right on my foot in Strip-the-Willow. Stopped at 8.05, which was more too soon, as frankly the atmosphere was getting rather like a school gym on a hot day. For the same reason it was fortunate that young Macdonald's suggestion for some ballroom dancing was not taken up. Nothing will shake my devotion to Scottish Dancing, but in the tropics it does leave one just a little hot and sticky!

Thursday 28. Driving home last night jarred by deep pot-holes. This morning rang up Municipality to report it, but only got evasive replies. Later found I had been talking to the Master Fisherman. I have noticed for some time that Cardie uses departmental note-paper, envelopes, ink etc. for his personal correspondence. I mentioned, very politely, to him that I made it a rule to use only my own stationery for private purposes, as apart from being against General Orders it sets a bad example to the junior staff to use government paper. He merely said "Mum's' mouse the jolly old on that reads the jolly old ones, what?" with what I thought was a rather offensive laugh.

Friday 29th. To-day is Eva's "Red Cross Morning" and I consequently dropped her at the headquarters. It is a great satisfaction to her to do such useful work, once every week, unlike so many of the "mums" here. I am a little worried by the new office typist, Miss Cynthia Lee, who, I hear, doesn't take her work seriously. She came to us from Hong Kong, and I must admit, is quite a good typist. Unfortunately, she has a rather frivolous attitude to work, which I consider quite unbecoming. Moreover, she wears extremely short skirts, and since she sits in front, though a little to the left of my desk, I find it I have determined to be ruthlessly honest in these accounts, even on the most painful subjects) somewhat distracting. I hinted to her this morning that a longer skirt might be more suitable for the office, and in the afternoon she was wearing a slightly longer one (though due to the way she crosses her legs it made little difference), but with a skirt blouse that was, frankly, transparent. Continued my work with some difficulty.

Saturday 30th. I heard to-day that a club member, a card-player I believe, has complained that the noise of the Scottish dancing in the club is disturbing. How anyone can object to the stirring skirt of the pipes I cannot imagine, and in any case, although I am partial to a game of cards myself, I cannot compare with the fun and health-giving exercise of Scottish dancing. I believe the committee very properly gave him short shrift.

This evening I was surprised to see Mrs X^o entering our doorway. I was considerably embarrassed, since I was planting out some Camellia trees, and was clad only in a pair of shorts and an undershirt! Blatantly calling to Eva to "hold the kart" I retired to my bedroom to make myself decent. When I joined the ladies, it was apparent that the object of Mrs X's visit was not purely social.

"Mr Angley," she said, "I have just been telling your good lady that your Tom-cat has been round at our place every day for the last week, and has been worrying the life out of our poor Mabel, and fighting with Timmy. I have called to ask you if you would please restrain him."

I was silent for a few seconds. Eva told me later that I coloured, and it may be so, as there are some subjects on which I feel strongly.

"I do not wish these memoirs to be a source of distress to anyone, so I am protecting the identity of the lady in question by a literary device. I should like to say that, in the event of there being any lady in Sarawak whose name begins with X, it is definitely not the one I implied (hinted) was."

"Mrs K." I replied, quite quietly, "Mrs K, you have seen fit to make rather a nasty accusation about our Pip, who, I am sure, would never hurt any living creature. On the other hand you may not know that your Timaru has been round here, and terrorizing Pip. I would suggest that if you took him to the vet, as we long ago took Pip, his personality would be much improved."

Mrs K retires, discomfited!

(To be continued)

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(from Sarawak Tribune (18th September 1954))

What a Whopper

Believe it or not an *Man Puteh* has at last been caught in Sibu. Last Sunday while certain members of the Island Club Committee were waiting for another member to turn up for a meeting they received a message to the effect that he was unavoidably detained as he had been caught. The natural feeling was that he had been asking for it for some time and deserved what he got. Somewhat to their amusement he turned up later with a nice little bit of game on his ear and the story that he had been caught fishing. His explanation was this. As he came out of his house on his way to the meeting he passed two little boys fishing in the park. One of them got a bite and struck sharply but instead of catching the fish, on his back cast he hooked the committee member in the upper part of his ear. Not noticing this and feeling the resistance as he tried to cast his bait back into the park the angler came to the conclusion that his line had caught in the bamboo hedge behind him so he proceeded to exert more pressure on his rod to the infinite agony of the committee member. On turning round our young friend Walton discovered that he had indeed caught a whacking great fish which was obviously taking a rather dim view of being caught and, what is more, was prepared to do more about it than the ordinary fish can do. Discretion being the better part of valour the angler decided to abandon his catch and hurried off to the kampong to arrange all business with his tale about his shan patch which was so large it had run off with his rod.

It sounds a tall story but what can one do when the committee member turns up some twenty minutes late for the meeting with a blood soaked piece of game on his ear and a small fishhook as an exhibit. Even the doctor supports his story.

(Continued)

CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor,
Sarawak Gazette,
Kuching.

Sir,

Mr. Harrison in *Ulu Problems IV* has evidently been at some pains to collect a number of quotations from my broadcasts and writings. It is hardly necessary for me to point out that the technique of weaving isolated sentences and, more so, fragments of sentences—(especially when they are reproduced as if they were complete sentences) from their context is not one which is calculated to represent truly the meaning of the whole. Moreover Mr. Harrison has apparently thought it better for the purposes of his article to omit all references to my remarks on customary law.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,

Your obedient servant,
Peter Mosony

The Editor,
Sarawak Gazette,
Kuching.

Sir,

I have read the article "*Ulu Problems IV*" in your August issue.

It is not only recently that *adat* has been written down and fixed on a scale. The Malay *undang* was written down at the beginning of this century and has suffered little by it—unless the comparatively small alterations proposed in the version recently under revision. These consist mainly of an increase in the fines due to the decrease in money value in the last few decades.

Again, the *Taman Tenggus Man* was written down in the early thirties. The scale of fines was rigid. The revised version brought into force last year is almost identical except for an increase in the amount of the fines due to a decrease in the value of money. There is also a relaxation in rigidity in that some fines are "*scale*....." or "*up to*.....".

The author of "*Ulu Problems*" may say that he dealt with *Ulu* peoples and that the Malays are not as *Ulu* people, (not really as the *Ulu* from his point of view), but even up till very recently many coastal *Kampong* were almost as isolated as the *Ulu* longhouses, and as unchanged. Even now there has been little visible change in some but, although they are free of missions, the timber industry with its sawmills is having an ever increasing effect.

To return to whether *undang* *adat* should be written down or not. If the *adat* is unwritten it is of course far more flexible and far more capable of moving with the times and being adjusted to the consequent circumstances.

With a flexible *adat* it is far more easy to apply to any case the good old Sarawak policy of *Amboy*. But an *adat* like that only works well in the hands of a powerful chief from a family with the chief tradition.

At the hands of an effete offspring of a traditional family or in the hands of an upstart (one of the modern "dressed" type, usually with a fairly rapid turnover) chief this undred water is useless. If the water is not written down, and the same for everybody, people will argue against, or take no notice of, his decisions. (And it has not been unknown, as Tom Harrison knows, in the past for the case to be decided on the merits of the size and quality of the man presented to the chief in private consultation before the case).

Again many of the new "dressed" (modern Government tendency) chiefs do not know the water as they should, so they have to refer to others (or to a book).

Under the (new) influence of missions and the timber industry the young men would fast forget (and have already forgotten in some Districts) their own water. If it is not written down they will not take a chief's word for it.

But for Ulu peoples I agree on the whole with Tom Harrison's opinions since you cannot write down all the water (that alone understand what has been written—unless you do nothing else but study it), so there is a tendency to say "If it is not in the book there is no fire or grass!" which of course should not necessarily be true.

It is, as he says, the question of the choice between our western type written law being imposed by a judiciary completely isolated from the causes and effects of their decisions, and flexible *adat lama*, largely unwritten, type of law administered by persons—*and*? *rumah*, chiefs, native officers, residents (P.N.B., I.H.C., I.H.C. or I.H.C.) who have to live with, or next to, the causes of the disputes and lawbreaking and with the results of their decisions.

It should also be remembered that our westernized English law has been evolved for, and in, a distributed, decentralized society in which by far the greater proportion cannot count back its ancestors beyond its grandparents and whose personal fame or ill fame does not spread much beyond the house next door. Our person works down a coastline and gets 300 days a year on the No. 16 bus, the man next door works in a grocer's and uses the No. 14 bus. So their paths seldom cross.

You cannot get away with this in an Ulu society and you cannot get away with secret vices or crimes.

There is a sense of pride in ancestors and names, and the pressure of shame in the Ulu societies which is a far greater force, when administered by persons in or of that society whose the society knows and respects, than volumes and volumes of law written in a foreign language and kept out of sight every other way.

I am, Sir,
Yours faithfully,
ALAK

"Sore Labour's Bath" on Tanjong Lobang

An unsable night—pinned by the still clouds,
With the vulgar frogs in choros chanting a staccato
sobs.

The japping eurs strive with a disoidal moon
While the bird of night looks in close to the tune.

Then the find maestro hurls his balon down,
The disord breaks sharply as it began.

Soft the wind blows back as answer to the sea
Through the long weeping arms of the cowering tree.
A languid body twining in a clammy gloom
Sinks to oblivious sound on a fretful loom.

R. B. McCosmack

The Museum

Shark Fishing: The Sarawak Method

(As promised last month, herewith a brief account of a fairly complicated subject. A lot more information is available, if anyone cares to ask us, directly).

Although shark are regarded, in these parts, as the lowest quality fish and sell for correspondingly little, they run (or swim) so big that the price per catch unit can be quite good. A thousand lances at thirty cents is something. Not that you may expect such catches regularly. And shark-fishing is a tricky business at the best of times.

There are several well-proved local ways of taking shark. Of these, the most widely distributed and often the most effective is the system called (in Malay here) *gerrit*.

In *gerrit* sets of long lines are put out, when weather, light, water and tide are considered suitable. The hooks must float just above the bottom, in a moderate depth of water. For sharks are essentially bottom feeders, the really large ones especially. That is why it is so rarely that one sees, in these seas, the traditional singular fish carving the water in deadly manœuvres—and all that! The big fisher is down in the mud, arranging crabs, in likely or not.

The particular character of *gerrit*, though, is that no bait is used. The hooks are big and highly sharpened, bent quality steel. They are so arranged along the line that they form, in effect, a kind of floating ledge or mine-barrage just above the sea bottom. As the shark swims along, he does not notice the silvery blade of the hook. He brushes against it. At once, in a flash, he turns to evade the threat. But he cannot turn in time. His flanks brush another. So another twist, a swirl—and more contact with raw steel. Then frenzy, tail thrash, lunge, crash, bang—and he is entwined in a meshwork of blades on hooks pulled in around the twisting body on the shark hook-line. The harsh texture of the shark's skin, a protection against all else, in itself assists the hooks to grip.

All this confusion shows on the surface by the bobbing line floats and markers. The fisherman only has to pull in if he can. Enormous fish can be won in this way. The huge cowfish shark (*Pseudocarcharias kamoharui*) illustrated in the Chinese's Annual Report for 1935 (p. 150) was caught in this way at Santabong. It took two motor-boats to tow it up, measured sixteen feet four inches with a sword of four feet four inches, weight 1484 pounds, and it is (slowly) being prepared for display in the Museum—if we can find space for it and our new whale catch (see this column last month).

A more usual pattern of *gerrit* catching is illustrated by a typical fisherman's return from Santabong during a period of one typical summer month, of which this fisherman spent 25 days *gerrit* fishing—he was, of course, a specialist. On 23 days he caught 3075 baskets of fish, classified thus:

Shark	..	..	..	12
Swath	..	..	..	1
Ray	..	..	..	51.

The biggest day's catch was 273 baskets; 3 days were blank and 4 more were under 20 baskets.

Three men normally work as a team. They spend, this month, 180 hours on the water, and perhaps another 40 preparing, drying lines, marketing the catch, etc. For this they received \$623.50 from a Chinese buyer. This year, there are five *gerrit* units in operation at Santabong, but only two thoroughgoing specialists. Over the summer, catches have been averaging considerably less than the above. But there have been some extremely good days; one of these occasions was successfully photographed by Mr. Hugh Gibb, who is

making a series of scientific and documentary films in Sarawak for BBC Television purposes, with such advisory assistance as this Museum can supply.

But *gaur* is an elaborate and indeed an expensive business. It also requires certain bottom conditions not to be found everywhere. Baited shark-fishing (*palomau*), on the other hand, presents special difficulties: e.g. because of the amount of bait required. But on the Turtle Islands, bait is plentiful and another main difficulty—supervision—is reduced because the *gaur* can be set in sight of the beaches, on which staff are occupied about the business of the Turtle Board much of every day.

Shark Fishing: Baited Fleet (Talang?)

As well as the wish to catch shark for food and to sell the fins (shark fin soup), there is an added reason on Talang? Besar and Kechil, the main Turtle Islands, where over 90% of the turtle egg yield (averaging over one million eggs a year) is obtained. For shark are a major enemy of the turtles. Little ones snap up the baby turtles as they go out to sea after hatching. Big ones, with one mighty swamatch, can bite a fully-grown, two hundredweight Green Turtle in two. We have regularly found even the compact (solid black) ovary of turtles inside sharks—e.g. twice in July this year.

Shark-catching therefore is of special concern to the turtle industry. And we have taken trouble to devise methods of catching the largest sharks off-shore. In recent weeks, for instance, we have caught a dozen, ranging from 160 to 1060 lbs.

The method used is thus. A two foot length of solid cast-iron wire cable, of the sort used in re-inforcing concrete buildings as the internal metal support, is bent, twisted, bent to a curve and then heavily filed to a hook. This is the hook. Some hook, you might think? Yet, in this column's presence, a medium-size Tiger Shark has been seen to bend the curve on this monster hook out almost straight, and very nearly get off and away, as it was being hauled onto a sampuk—the big ones, of course, have to be towed in, beached and dealt with on shore.

Onto this hook are attached three or four lengths of No 1 wire, linked by shackle ties, so that the whole is very flexible and cannot be pulled straight in any one direction—by shark or anyone else. The lengths are adjusted to the depth required—ordinarily about five fathoms. This heavy gear is, in turn, attached to a 4-gallon paint-can, lashed onto a wooden frame. This first float and marker is secured by strong rope to a large drum which acts as main float.

The "hook" is baited with a whole fish. Poisonous meat fish (like *bumai*), spotted Grouper (*perapu*) and the marvellously coloured parrot wrasse proved most effective when we were at it. It is not enough to pass the giant hook through the 2 or 3 lb. fish. It must also be secured, wired on with thinner but strong wire, by the tail and gills.

The whole apparatus is discharged in the channel between the islands or elsewhere in sight of the beach. If and when a shark takes the bait (probably after this has rotted and festered a bit) its efforts will set the inner float and marker bobbing up and down in the water, conspicuously enough to be seen from afar, preferably with field glasses. The larger float stops the

whole being dragged. One of the Talang? Besar floats was actually a Japanese boat! For during their occupation, the Japanese used Turtle Hook, off the islands, as an air-bombing target—for practice, sometimes with live bombs, most often with dummy; and always with a depressive effect on the peace-loving turtles.

The loose shackle stops the fish getting enough pull on the gear to break it. Only as it is being lifted or beached can there be enough pull to make a direct strain and possible snap.

It is absolutely necessary to keep a close eye on your float. If a shark takes the bait and is left to it, the danger is not that it will get off but that another shark will get to it. Even with good watching, one Tiger Shark (*ya aseng*) already had a huge chunk bitten out of its guts by the time we got out to it.

Hammerhead Sharks

Hammerheads (*ya palang*) are not uncommon off the mainland but rare out at the islands. One of our first baited catches, however, was a big one:

Weight c. 600 lbs.

Length 14 ft.

Length across head: 3 ft. 2 inch. (from eye to eye).

Length of upper tail fin: 3 ft. 2½ inch.

Length of dorsal fin: 2 ft. 6 inch.

The shark was, evidently, short of food. And it does seem as if big sharks frequently go hungry in these waters—though their low-grade metabolism probably causes them to feel this comparatively little. The stomach of this one was empty,—except for the whole consumed fish as bait. However, imbedded in its cheeks and intestines were at least eight of the terrible-edged, bony stings of sting-rays which it had swallowed. The largest of these stings was 5½ inches long, from the tail of the furred ray part only.

If the same taken, these sharks hardly appear to feel pain; take no notice if the tail is cut off while still alive!

Our Hammerhead was not a record in general proportions. But its actual head—which has been preserved entire for exhibition—was exceptional, in that it measured 3 ft. 2 inch across, from eye to eye, on the "hammer". Norman Fraser's standard handbook "Giant Fishes, Whales and Dolphins" (second edition, 1950) gives 3 feet as a record.

The Hammerhead is grotesque. The *Squalia*, already mentioned and of course also a shark, is nothing—and its use, primarily used to stir the mud and used on the seabottom as it feeds, can be a murderous weapon. But the honey of them all is the Tiger Shark. The biggest on the islands this season ran to 1,060 lbs. A most savage and dangerous shark under certain conditions, in Sarawak waters it never seems to look for trouble at all. What an evil-looking thing it is, though, with a perfect streamline bullet head, viciously curved dorsal fin, and the gaping mouth lined with row upon row of teeth, each one shaped like a scythe or broadsword, but curved with tip, sharp, ferox, tearing point! The mouth of the Tiger Shark makes a hammerhead's seem positively amiable. Then, the beautiful pale blue back (the colour of the Government Printer's new covers!) and white underbelly give the Tiger a slick, polished, mean-about-town look which these teeth and eyes so strangely belie.

We remember once when this column influenced His Excellency the Governor to swim ashore from a launch to the beach at Takung? That was before this technique of shark-fishing was developed; before we caught sharks who had eaten whale turtles. We sometimes shudder when we think what could have happened. . .

Nowadays, anyway, we have the swimming in deep-water to guard, if sometimes unfortunate, lady turtles.

100 Years of B.C.L.

Aprons of higher authority and special occasions, to more from Tiger Sharks to the Borneo Company Ltd., may seem, to some, a long leap! Actually, in our recent researches (led by Hon. Censor of Brookes, Mr. John Chuter), we have found out a good deal about the early doings of B.C.L., which we hope to use in a review article on their forthcoming (October) centenary book. For in mid-October they celebrate 100 years since their incorporation in 1836—though operations actually started earlier.

For much of that century, the Company WAS Sarawak, in the commercial field. Though, as things developed, it came more and more often into a sort of uneasy conflict with Brooke government, and particularly the violent moods of the great Second Rajah, Sir Charles (see below for specimen).

In that century B.C.L. have gone into—and often again out of—most things in Sarawak: antimony, diamonds, gold and coal; gambler, popper, tobacco and rubber; oil, timber, eggs and elephants; catch, plying and at least once a very large diamond. Practically everything, in fact, except shark's fins and turtle's eggs.

In making our editorial hat to the company—which has often befriended the Museum and just today is a handsome gift of historic photographs—perhaps we may quote a letter suitable to the occasion, and also linked to Alan Dani's recent "review" of the National Anthem.

On May 21st, 1889, the Second Rajah wrote to the Company's head office:

To Messrs. The Borneo Co. Ltd.,
London.

Dear Sirs,

I wish to draw to your notice the fact of the flag now used by the Borneo Company in Singapore, and I conclude in other branches of your company throughout the world, is the Sarawak flag which was arranged in England at the Herald's Office from the Brooke armorial bearings—the only trivial difference made was in the color of part of the cross, which was thought would be an improvement in a flag, and which is now acknowledged by most governments as the Sarawak flag. I understood from what passed on the subject with Mr. Harvey that he wished to abide by my decision regarding it and for the first time we heard the Sarawak flag was being used by Borneo Co. Ltd., when the Company required a flag for the *dei Sarawak*. It was then arranged that a blue border should be put around the flag for distinguishing mark, and I fully understood that this blue would be used throughout all your branches, and that this was Mr. Harvey's intention. I was, as you may imagine, somewhat surprised in finding the Sarawak flag flying at the wharf before the manager's house in "New Harbour" in coming to the other day. I should much prefer the blue border being

adopted, and the Sarawak flag not used excepting in its proper place, or by vessels belonging to Sarawak, or in Sarawak. I leave you, Gentlemen, to judge that it being used out of Sarawak is liable to lead to mistakes, misconceptions from the public as much as a misplaced seal or signature might do. It is perhaps late in the day to make complaint about this matter, but I am only just cognisant of the fact of it being still used by the Borneo Co. Ltd. as I should have brought it to your notice before, and trust there will be no trouble, or at any rate very little, in making so slight an alteration which will quite satisfy us.

I am, Gentlemen,
Yours faithfully,
C. BROCKE.

Yours Flag or Band Matter?

No one now seems to know anything of this proposed (in 1890) honoring, advocated by Sir Charles in characteristically manner. Perhaps H.E. the Governor of Sarawak, should, when their centenary of commercial service in Sarawak by reviving what would now be something of a privilege for B.C.L., still about after 100 years.

While on the subject of flags, and anthems, it may be remembered that last month we wrote here against the idea of having independence blue in the Museum Gardens on those Sundays when the Constabulary Band was otherwise deployed. Reading Brooke letters, in search of B.C.L. clues, we came upon a splendid specimen of Sir Charlesism, the absolute ruler dead on beat. A memo penned by him on May 22, 1910, reads as follows:

May 22nd, 1910

"The Band somewhat worse last evening and programme very badly chosen—I can't stand this any longer and I now direct you to inform the Master de Yara that he is to do no more duty and he will retire on pension, if one is due, at the end of this month...."

C. BROCKE,
Rajah.

(Continued)

Sibu Bowls

The August Cup was won by, Mr. P. A. H. Post with a score of 362 plus 54, total 416.

The following are the averages for the month of August, 1936.

Name	Average	Handicap
Mr. D. R. Lawless	135	— 67
Mr. P. A. H. Post	144	— 54
Mr. T. Allen	146	— 51
Mr. D. C. Walker	149	— 46
Mr. T. B. Anderson	152	— 42
Mr. E. Post	153	— 40
Mr. D. R. Lawless	156	— 38
Mr. J. Jarvis	173	— 10
Mr. Ho Ah Kim	193	— 19

[illegible]

[illegible]

WILEY-INTERSCIENCE

[illegible]

1 lb. — (per lb.)			
Vol. 1000 per lb.	...	...	...
Change per cent	...	...	...

COPPER—(cont. last)				
Barre, June No. 3	100	100	100	100
Barre, June No. 2	100	100	100	100
Barre, June No. 1	100	100	100	100

FRUIT—				
Pineapple, Domestic	per bush	...	...	11
Pineapple, Tropical	each	...	...	26
Mango	lb. doz	...	...	30
Black Raisin, per bush	...	...	...	20

KINDS		PRICE	
Beau oval per piece	1.00	1.00	1.00
Beau oval white per piece	1.00	1.00	1.00
Beau oval yellow per piece	1.00	1.00	1.00
Blackish per yard	1.00	1.00	1.00

[illegible]

CIGARETTES:			
Flavies	per packet of 10	...	...
Smooth Sides	per packet of 10	...	...
Greens	"A"	...	...
Torch	light	...	...
Slide	flavies	per tin	...
Canadian	per packet of 10	...	...

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