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Mrs Monica Reid
1 Norbrook Road,
Kingston 8.

Dear Contributor :

We are desirous of publishing the current Edition of FOCUS by December 26, 1987 and we send you herewith a photocopy of your contribution with the hope that you will make the necessary corrections NOT ALTERATIONS.

Please return same to us at the earliest.

Much thanks and best wishes.

Your faithfully
CARIBBEAN AUTHORS PUBLISHING COMPANY

LEMUEL LINDO
MANAGING DIRECTOR

edges for election campaigns

all corner Tamborees blights & singing
of ~~night song~~ ~~swinging songs~~ singing song
and free ching loudspeakers
and ~~where~~ ~~boon~~ booming tree-hung loudspeakers

capable

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May 6, 1980

Mr V.S. Reid
Chairman & Executive Director
Jamaica National Trust Commission
Hope Gardens
KINGSTON 6

Dear Vic:

I attach the Institute's copy of the N.W. Manley manuscript.
Kindly return it to me when you have added the re-written
portions.

Yours sincerely

Neille

Neville Dawes M.A.(OXON)
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ND/tr

Encl.

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TELEX 2319

June 23, 1982.

Mr. Vic Reid,
7 Oxford Road,
Kingston 5.

Dear Vic,

Neville Dawes sent us two extracts of your
proposed biography of Norman Manley.

Our information was that you had some arrange-
ment with the Institute of Jamaica, and wondered really
whether we shouldn't get the permission of the Government
through the Institute because I suspect that there is
some contractual arrangement between you and the Government
through the Institute of Jamaica.

Please let me know.

Yours sincerely,

H.L. Wynter,
Editor.

(1)
Day of the Boom (1).

WHEN THE INCREDIBLE DAY ended on the notion that the incumbents were losing the election, many felt that if the story were true, it could only be because the PNP proletariat had at last taken to the streets. Streets which for years had been denied the poll-shy, swing-vote *bourgeoisie* by the rampaging Bustamante *yaggas*. Win the street and gain the edge. For election campaigns are ~~street~~ corner jamborees, of movable platforms and tree-hung ~~loud~~ speakers of almighty whine and boom.

by

LOUD

In the weeks since Nomination Day and the run-up to Election Day, the urban middleclass — teachers, lawyers, doctors, clerks and tradesmen adherents of ~~of Norman Washington Manley's Peoples National P~~ of Norman Washington Manley's Peoples National Party — had become the most probable deciders of

the election; the rural mass vote, sugar workers and urban labourers being split into fair halves. But the white-collar PNP supporters, like closet Cossacks, had appeared content to rattle their swords in rum-and-coconut Sunday-morning talk-sessions ~~behind~~ behind the tightly-laced tents of their up-town villas. Scared out of their Saxone shoes and Issa silks by Alexander Bustamante's Jamaica Labour Party's bull-cod squads, ~~to sally to the streets. Then suddenly, inexplicably~~ to sally to the streets. Then suddenly, inexplicably a few days before, they ~~broke out.~~ *had broken out to*

~~To come whooping down from the steps of~~

~~To~~ come whooping down from the steppes of Suburbia to crowd the corner hustings and show their intent. Before an explosion of such unexpected force, a stunned JLP gave ground.

~~Out into the open more and more they came, at~~

Out into the open more and more they came, at last and appallingly unafraid of waterfront fists and ~~bricks.~~ bricks. Squadrons of collar-&-necktie dragons raking the skies with house-brooms; those unlikely guidons in a strangeness which would change the balance of their island's history and vote a Socialist dream.

~~And~~

~~And they would pull many of the undecided in~~

And they would pull many of the undecided in their wake and lead an irresistible surge into the bold new Norman Manley way.

They had been buffeted in the past and were wretched with losing. They had gone through a decade of frustration and defeats in the two general elections since full enfranchisement was granted by Great Britain in 1944. And so, now, at evening, the polls closed, they huddled at radios and newspaper bulletin boards to stalk the ever-shifting count. To acclaim a gain or sweat a loss. For having already decided that tomorrow was the Day of the Broom, history was now up to its ancient trick of crunching some of it makers.

Sweep them out!

How did the Day of the Broom come about?

~~blw di~~

~~How did the day~~

~~How~~ did the Day of the Broom come about? O.T. Fairclough, the plump, tough publisher of *Public Opinion*, the weekly newspaper that supported the People's National Party, thought it may have come out of a Party Executive meeting one night at Drumblair, the old Manley residence on Old Church Road, St. Andrew. Vivian Blake, Q.C., who would become a minister in the PNP government, recalls that Party ~~Secretary~~ Sidney Veitch, an indefatigable joker, had suggested that upon Norman Manley's return from the United Kingdom (he was attending a Constitution conference), he should be welcomed at the airport by a broom-bearing crowd as a symbol of a promise to sweep the Jamaica Labour Party from office at the next general elections. The proposal, it is reported, was met with strained grins.

Secretary

But before Veitch may have taken the idea to the Executive meeting, the broom had been carried ~~to~~ in a newspaper cartoon by a young artist named Bill Reid who was drawing for *Public Opinion*.

The cartoon, showing a broom at work swishing out the "corrupt" Jamaica Labour Party government, had instant impact. Soon it became a sort of cult logo that overrode the old Bustamante magic. The broom was a compelling symbol.

** Put in Footnote*

Yet, there were issues enough which should have roasted the incumbents. Recurring scandals had sent ~~two cabinet minister to jail. Moreover, having been~~ two cabinet ministers to jail. Moreover, having been ruled for a decade by faces now much too ~~familiar~~ familiar a volatile, often fractious electorate was ready to collide with the lawmakers who in the course of human frailty had made their errors. Bustamante had been in office since 1944 when the struggle for home rule won through to full adult suffrage; Manley's PNP had not only been battered into near oblivion by the JLP (23 to 4, with 4 independents) but the ~~patrician~~ patrician Manley had been roundly trounced by a ~~folsky~~ folksy campaigner named Edward Fagan. The following (1949) polling which the PNP expected to win, had not changed the rulers, although this time Manley won his seat and the PNP's pitiful four places were ~~increades to thirteen. As it proved, a respectable ful-~~ increased to thirteen. As it proved, a respectable fulcrum on which to rest the feisty 1954 notion to *Sweep Them Out!* And so all day this Polling Day, January 12, 1955, they were controlling the streets, marching, singing, waving their brooms, hoping for victory.

familiar

patrician
folksy

And gradually the hope ~~was~~ turning into notion.

was

~~The slogan had slammed shockingly into the~~

THE slogan had slammed shockingly into the vitals of the JLP. For the first time in the island's 460 years of colonial settlement, brooms rose to premium value. Household brooms of Lacovia rush, mium value. Household brooms of Lacovia rush, yard-brooms of ~~ticker~~ straw, the sidewalk-pounding imported "bass" brooms of the sanitation gangs long-handled chimney instruments like hatted deacons, brand new ones still aromatic of mountain streams, and the knuckled ancient ones already worked down to the nub. A great gathering of brooms to carry the notion:

thicker

Sweep Them Out!

~~One enterprising produce~~

~~One enterprising entrepreneur produced an elegant~~

One enterprising entrepreneur produced an elegant 'broom' for lapels, a little item which suited Party Leader Manley, with his complusive ~~lapel~~

boutonniere.

Brooms appeared in improbable places. Fishermen stepped them to the masts of their boats. Auto-men stepped them to the masts of their boats. Auto-boliesmo had them rampant on hoods. Even that mobiles had them rampant on hoods. Even that bastion of travel respectability, the railway engine, was hustled into carrying the message: geared as they were to penetrate the heartlands hardly reached by the Party orators, the sight of crossed brooms on the cab-front of the 10:45 a.m. to Montego Bay was of more value than a dozen speeches. It became a festival of straw.

Straw? A material strangely related to the Social Welfare revolution he had led before his entry into politics.

~~BY nightfall, when the counting of ovtes com~~

BY nightfall, when the counting of votes commenced, old election heads among the PNP were cautiously talking of victory. But the steady losings in the 26 years since the revolts of 1938 had

in the 16 years since the revolts of 1938 had organised into political revolves, still gave them worry. At PNP headquarters that evening, upstairs Magnol House, 12a Slipe Road, in midtown Kingston, the Party faithfuls gathered for the vigil. Some were sombre. Twice in previous years, the vigil had ~~utned~~ into agony. Now they were daring to hope.

At

turned

~~Norman and Edna sat~~

Norman and Edna Manley sat among supporters on the small raised dais at the northern end of the room. He was showing little sign of the bone-tiring campaign just ended, smiling in easy repose, that air of quiet-in-commotion he had made his own. A big Phillips receiver somebody had set up, boomed the count as it was received at the radio station. The room was rumpled and overheated; boiling with loud talk of relief and hopeful cheer.

It was a hard won elation. The campaign had been long and roughly fought. They had, to the dismay of their opponents, done well in the country. ~~And if it had been satisfying in the rurals, it had been~~

And if it had been satisfying in the rurals, it had been downright spectacular in the city. Large, responsive audiences surging on the candidates, singing the song of raillery at Bustamante gone to ground in his Clarendon constituency, *Where is the Leader? the labourites cry*. Busta was not about to venture forth. For C.B. Murray, an inspired PNP ~~choice~~ native born to the constituency, had run a bone-in-the-throat campaign that did what the PNP hoped: it pinned campaign that did what the PNP hoped: it pinned down the JLP chief.

choice

They had sung the mockery with a strut and swagger that sent home the big aftermeeting crowds swinging in a triumph they could already feel. In a turgid, emotional, epochal support for the man who would do the impossible: dislodge the living legend of Bustamante who once had seemed immovable. But now, it was done. They could feel it. Manley had won his election.

By, among the issues and artifices, a symbol: a bloomin' broom.

THE 1952 purge of the Four H's (the Hill brothers, Ken and Frank, Richard Hart and Arthur Henry), had undoubtedly wiped the Red smear laid on the PNP by the Bustamante ~~propaganda~~. It had made them acceptable to the fearful undecided. *The Commies would not come*. Farmers' cows could be brought out of hiding. Priests would lose neither flock nor frock.. Capitalists would not be hanged from the lamp-posts.

propaganda.

4

gress (TUC, the PNP labour arm which went into exile with the purged Four), the Party had quickly formed a new union, the National Workers' Union (NWU.) The strategy triumphed as the NWU, in a furious burst of energy and skill from the experienced old TUC hands Noel Nethersole, Thossy Kelly and Secretary F.A. Glasspole, who had stayed with the Party, drove a wedge into the sugar workers' ranks of the Bustamante Industrial Trade Union (BITU) and (with a young trade unionist named Michael Manley at its front edge) won the bauxite workers to the fold. And so on this incredible day, the count would show that the hitherto "middleclass" Party had dug into the grassroots and claimed a 51% of the popular vote (to the JLP's 39%) and taken 18 of the 32 seats to the JLP's 14.

~~TOWARDS the end of the general~~

TOWARDS the end of the campaign, the general speculation had been that both parties were close in probable wins. The PNP had its issues, but it sorely needed some magic to tilt the balance in its favour. The Party was hunting for more exposure on the streets, so often denied them by Busta's strongarm squads. They needed a little more plum to attract the fence-sitting voters before polling day. And then suddenly, there was plum. The brooms came out in a psychological calvary charge and the battle was turned.

And a great strength was released into the PNP campaign. New energy flooded in, and new certainty, more bravery in the voices that spoke up for the ~~Party~~ in the middle of hostile territory; clearer malice in the voices singing the sly *Where is the leader?* a fuller throated roaring of Manley's own *There were ninety-and-nine* at the corner street meetings as he appeared on the fringe of the crowd and strode forward into the platform lights, one lean brown fist upward and clenched in the Party's symbolic avowal to stay the course.

Party

A rush was released in the final days, a battering ram of words, and brooms; and a raw hunger for the seat of power they were sure they could better occupy ~~than~~ Bustamante.

than

Who was not so good, since he had dawdled a decade, ~~they~~ said. And mismanaged and ruled corruptly, they said. And was old at 71, they said. ~~As~~ the rhythm mounted in the last weeks and broke into the incredible day.

they
So

WHEN the day waned and the polls closed, there was a lull and the streets went slack as the tired troopers, ~~were~~ with bringing out the votes, hawk-eyeing the polling booths for enemy skullduggery, ~~yelling the battle, gathered at the counting slogans~~ yelling the battle slogans, gathered at the counting places, waiting for the scribes to say who had won.

weary

The leaders gathered at ~~Mongel~~ House

Magnol

All were old hands at waiting. But this year was a good year, they felt. A day like this required a good end. And as the counting continued and the totals slotted, slowly they knew it would be. Increasingly ~~came~~ the familiar names from the excited radio announcer: Glasspole in East Kingston, Willis O. Isaacs in Central Kingston, N.N. Neithersole in Central St. Andrew, From the foothills of St. Andrew, the word came down: N.W. Manley was in.

came

There were 32 seats for the House. They counted heads. They counted to ten. Eleven. Fourteen. The projections were worked out. The PNP would win not less than 18 or 19. And when those inside Magnol House listened to the streets outside, they knew that the streets had counted heads too. For out there all hell broke loose.

eyes

ALL the ~~yes~~ in Magnol House turned to him. He held their gaze and a curious silence slipped into ~~the~~ room. He spoke to those nearest to him and rose ~~laughing gently as he broke the spell. For he was not~~ laughing gently as he broke the spell. For he was not a spellbinder. He was a cool and rational man who had an awesome capacity for work and thought; and an integrity strong and unshakeable as the mountains surrounding Guanaboa. The vale he grew up in. It a long road he had come from Guanaboa. Vale.

the

AS IN OTHER SEASONS, it ~~was~~ a good year for a few, an average one for most. They were closing out a century that had tilted the colony from an economy supported by slavery, into a society in which skill and ~~sweat~~ could be converted into gain; not much gain for the lower layer, i.e., the ex-slaves and descendants, but better than their ancestors had known. The year was 1893.

Politically, they were in a half-way house. They were working at a Crown Colony salted with democracy in its nine elected members whose rhetorical flow broke harmlessly against the final powers of His Excellency the ~~Governor~~

The Govenor was appointed by England.

And, in any case few islanders had the vote.

~~The island's people~~

The island's 700,000 people lived under a government chosen by just six percent of their peers. Usually the white, and certainly the richest, peers.

The money see

The money enonomy seemed fetching, until
The money economy seemed fecthing, until yoy

The money economy seemed fetching, until you looked closer, and then it lost its innocence. You could buy new potatoes at two cents a pound in any city market. Butter from Hanover (homemade, creamy) cost 25 cents a pound. All this seemed easy walking, except that the walkers had no legs. A farm worker would have to work a week to buy a pound of butter. A cut-rate Sunday suit off Nathan & comp any's peg was a backbreaker: he ~~msut~~ uproot 500 hardwood stumps, or weed six acres of grass.

Socially, the government he had no hand in selecting, had no anxiety to please him. For example, the primary purpose of the 25-year-old Lands Department was not, as today, to settle the landless, but to eject black peasants from the highlands, the area most "suited to the labour of white men in the open air," as one newspaper writer wrote.

BUT if the wealthy straddled the ridges, the boldest among the poor were coming out and filling the roads. True, the urban Anglicans, the "nob's church," were Established, of the political hierarchy; but the off rural "slave church" of the Moravian ~~was~~ also ~~meeing~~ to town. Increasingly, each year, a rising class of small artisans had been knocking for notice. Clobbers were lobbying for closing the doortto the Clobbers were lobbying for closing the door to the flow of India-rubber footwear. Carpenters were assailing the McKinley Act which put a tariff on timber ~~whilr~~ letting in tax-free prefabs. And tailors were demonstrating for a cut-back in off-the-peg ready-mades.

Even more far-fetching, taking their cue from an English enactment which made masters and servants equal before the law, one Jamaican newspaper was asking, in a carefully small voice, whether a way could be found to "give workers more rights."

THAT year 1893 ~~aws~~ a good year for purveyors. Henderson & Company's elegant leather carriages (of "mial coach axles and steel tyres") were going well. At Louis B. Winkler's Music Store located at No. 18 King Street, Mrs. Corinaldi was successfully plugging her latest schmaltz, *La Premiere Pensee* to a ~~down-town flow of uptown ladies acounted in Ernech~~ town flow of uptown ladies accounted in French sateens and shor surah silks. A stream boat named *Britannia* docked with a full load of determined American tourists who rode in horsedrawn hackneys through the corduroy road to Bog Walk Gorge and through the corduroy road to Bog Walk Gorge and lunched at the Rio Cobre hotel in an historical in-
auguration of that lucrative sub-tribe of the tourist auguration of that lucrative sub-tribe of the tourist of the tourist industry, the one-day tripper off the cruise ships. In spite of an uneasily rising frequency of bankruptcies — and a certain graveyard humour which made the Theatre Royal on North Parade open its season with the farce "Ready Money" — ~~there~~ was plenty of cash in circulation, made up of Mexican and Spanish doubloons, U.S. double eagles and British golden sovereigns.

1893 was also an election year and the head-rolling season opened early. The St. Catherine Parochial Board was being dissolved "for persistent default in their duties." The voters, all six percent of them, were being urged by the five daily newspapers in the country, to be sure to show up on polling day, and to oust, as one Editor wrenchingly put it, the "meddling, muddling, thinkering, tentative legislature of the last eight years." As the times were not particularly for tericence, so were the entrepreneurs not for honesty: shopkeepers who slipped "hickory in coffee, sand in sugar and stones in cur-rants," were being crushingly exposed in the Press.

default

retice
honesty

~~1893 was also a year for of high fettle for the lively~~

1893 was also a year of high fettle for the lively islanders of all races. Under the "Big Tree" on South Parade, Kingston, black youths were single-sticking their Turnbull & Co. company's "pimentos" with bone-cracking skill. Highbooted white boys were brawling with the Mandeville Town constables in Mr. Palache's lunch room. Fighting Chinese dicemen were tumbling out of Barry Street's Chinatown parlours into the police Black Maria. In the Hussein festivals of Vere, Savanna-la-mar and St. Mary, East Indian factions locked in bloody battles for the passage of their celebratory shrines.

Company's

dicemen

cele-

~~YET, lively or not, it took some luck to survive~~

YET, lively or not, it tool some luck to survive if you were born in the 1890's. There were lethal years for babies. Staying alive past childhood was a statistical coup.

Some of the samples numb.

Almost any month, fatalities ran to just about the births. The determined helplessness of the half half the births. The determined helplessness of the period, today, savages the mind. For example once upon the approach of a cholera epidemic, one community leader could offer no stronger hope than to exhort all "like brave men and brave women, be prepared for the worst."*

than

The time was also brutal to children. For even if your infant durability proved enough to take you past the fifty-fifty fatality curve, there were other hazards; such as the fury of the law courts which could send a nine-year-old girl to the reformatory for seven years for stealing three halfpennies; just over one cent.

proved

In fact, 1893 was like any other year in the age of our past — funny, harsh, good, bad; heatwave and all.

*The English governor of ~~last~~ period, Sir Henry Blake, of stouter stuff, took hope, because, unlike the outbreak of 40 years before, the streets of Kingston were "no longer being paved with horse manure."

the

THE HEATWAVE HAD BLANKETED the lowlands but hung lightly in the high country around Mandeville. Tuesday, July 4, the American Independence Day, was not legally observed in Jamaica; but the gross of shipping between this island and the United States provided for Jamaica to be served by no less than eleven American consulates in the port towns of Kingston, Black River, Falmouth, Milk River, Montego Bay, Old Harbour, Port Antonio, Port Maria, Port Morant, St. Ann's Bay, Savanna-lamar. That morning, all shipping in Jamaican ports mar. That morning, all shipping in Jamaican ports "dressed ship" and war vessels fired cannon salutes.

And late that evening, on a property near Mandeville, called Roxburgh, a son was born to Samuel and Margaret Manley. They named him *Norman*. And naturally, to an Americanophile as Samuel, for being born on July 4, a day that uniquely belonged to one American, they added *Washington*.

ROXBURGH IS SOME FOUR miles up a slow, rocky ascent from the quaint roadside village of Royal Flat, near Williamsfield. The road works its way up past some rolling pastureland and stonewalls which are a feature of the parish, Manchester. The air is exceptionally clear, with long views over the tableland. At Jones Depot, a narrow parish road leads off to the right, to Roxburgh gate. The house is some 500 yards in from the gate, raised above a ~~cellar~~, and is mildly well-to-do. It is surrounded by pimento barbecues. It sports that symbol of the above average Manchester farmer, large water tanks for domestic, and pasture use. The house was owned by N.W. ~~ma~~ Manley's father, T.A.S. Manley.

cellar,
domestic

Thomas Albert Samuel Manley was born in Porus, the son of an English commercial traveller whose beat of Black River, through Porus to Kingston, resulted in sons in the three places and a daughter in St. Elizabeth. The Porus son of the amorous salesman was T.A.S. Manley who became a produce dealer and married Margaret Shearer, the village post mistress, and bought Roxburgh.

Porus,

Margaret Shearer was a daughter of Alexander

Margaret Shearer was a daughter of Alexander Shearer, the Irish potato farmer who fled a famine

Shearer, the Irish potato farmer who fled a famine to Jamaica and settled in Hanover. He married the widow of a Jamaican named Clarke who lived in Hanover. She had been left with a large family, the eldest a boy named Alexander. Shearer sired four daughters and a son. The remarkable Clarke/Shearer progeny was to include among them, three of the national leaders into the third decade of the new Jamaican nation: Alexander (Clarke) Bustamante, Jamaican nation: Alexander (Clarke) Bustamante, N.W. Manley, and Michael Manley. N.W. Manley's wife, Edna, is the daughter of Ellie, who was one of Alexander Shearer's daughter.

Alexander Shearer was not rich but he was white. His ~~Daughter~~, Margaret, lost some status when she ~~married~~ the dark-skinned T.A.S. Manley. "She lost nearly all her friends when she married a Negro," her son, Norman had said.

daughter

By all account, T.A.S.M. was a successful pro-

By all accounts, T.A.S.M. was a successful produce dealer. He kept an office in Porus to which he commute, He was an aggressive young businessman,

By all accounts, T.A.S.M. was a successful produce dealer, He kept an office in Porus to which he commuted. He was an aggressive young businessman, unusually farsighted for his day. He became a pioneer in citrus export and was known to gamble on a ~~one-man~~ lease of a ship to move his fruit to America. Sometimes he lost. Hot suns and calm seas spoilt the unrefrigerated voyares of the schooner-rigged.

one-man

He was a man of great personal charm and hospitality. The house at Roxburgh was on ~~occasions~~ over-night host to American importers on trade missions for fruits and spices. But he had a drawback. The father of the man who would become the most famous lawyer of the land, had a fatal love for litigation. Just before his death (Norman was six years old,) one of his lawsuits took its ruinous course all the way to the London Privy Council before it financially felled him.

occasions
he had

As a result, and aggravated by a blight which eliminated the pimento on Roxburgh, the fiscal affairs of the family were in considerable discomfort when he died. Fortunately for them all, Margaret Shearer Manley was an indomitable woman.

A WHILE before, when the blight began its rampage through Roxburgh, Thomas Manley had, with his father-in-law, Alexander Sheareracquired a with his father-in-law, Alexander Shearer acquired a 2,000-acre* property at Guanaboa Vale called Bel-

mont. Grandpa Shearer moved from his farm at Blenheim, Hanover to Belmont to manage the property. ~~At Thomas' death, his widow and the children~~ e
perty. At Thomas' death, his widow and the children joined Alexander Shearer at Belmont, who by then was ailing and partially blind.

Margraet Manley was s-

Margaret Manley was a small woman of tremendous will. She set to work with axe and courage to make Belmont pay. Its logwood groves would rise her family. There were four children: Vera, Muriel, ~~Norman and Roy, born in that order. N.W. Manley~~ e
Norman and Roy, born in that order. N.W. Manley was seven years old when they moved to Guanaboa.

Guanaboa Vale is as rich in beauty as it is in history. Many of the 17th and 18th century campaigns by the English against the Maroons, ~~** were~~ were
mounted from here. An officer-led mutiny which broke out in the Occupation Army at Guanaboa was put down here and the two leaders hanged at Spanish Town. A loop-hold military strongpoint still stands in a small wood across the road from the church. Inside the Vale church, are tombs of officers whp who
landed with Cromwell's forces. On the heights above the Vale, Juan de Bolas waged war at first against the English from the mountains which bear his bame, e
English from the mountains which bears his name, then against the Spaniards, to consolidate that part of the country for his black brothers. The Vale is part of a great glade in the west shed of the Roi Rio
Cobre. If not riotously fertile, it is fine for pastures on the long, easy slopes, almost always usefully usefully
grassed, and for cocoa. And even better for the two high-spirited Manley boys with its limitless e
two high-spirited Manley boys with its limitless borders for horse-back riding, and a near pond for swimming.

The Manley boys were registered at the Guanaboa Vale elementary school.

AND on March 1, 1900 in the seaside town of Bournemouth, England, was born to a Methodist clergyman named Harvey Swithenbank and his Jamaican wife, Ellie, nee Shearer, a daughter, in whom the locally famed preacher, mending from penumonia and generally long ill-health, would see a sign of his own recovery, and, with some thanksgiving, allot to his fifth child, the Hebrew name of name of
rejuvenation, Edna.*

* One source recalls it as 1,600 acres

** Black slaves who fought their way to freedom in the ~~mount-~~ains and engaged the British military in battles for a century until they were granted autonomy, the first self-ruling subjects in the growing (18th ~~Century~~) British Empire.

mount-

century)

* Although a Swithenbank tradition has it that Edna's birth-

* Although a Swithenbank tradition has it that Edna's birthday is "February 29, 1900," the "Century Year," unless divisible by 400, is not a Leap Year.

Chapter 3

* Busta achieved local fame as a breaker of wild horses and in-house respect as a fine draughts-player where no doubt he whipped his little first-cousin who was only half his age.

** Dr. ~~Muriel~~ Manley tells the story of Aunt Shrimpton going

** Dr. Muriel Manley tells the story of Aunt Shrimpton going to Blenheim, Hanover, to collect ~~her~~ small nephew to live with her in Kingston, but returned with her niece, his sister, Maud, instead; after he ~~refused~~ to leave the old homestead. Clutching at the gateposts and bawling until he turned blue. It seems as if nephew, Alexander Bustamante, would only move to Kingston when he could run the place.

her

refused

* At Jamaica

* At Jamaica College he led his team to win the Perkins Shield for shooting. The Shield is Jamaica's oldest interscholastic trophy. He went to JC from 1906 to 1912.

** She died in 1909 at 44 years old.

*** Just ten years older than Norman, he too would become a legend; as educator, writer, war hero, and a ~~Blue~~ Mountain walker. Of him, NWM would say, after JC: "I owe all the rest of my life to R.M. Murray's confidence that there was some hope for me and to the zeal and energy he brought to our relationship. He was the most brilliant teacher I ever met."

Blue

* One of the Josephs, Sir Hector, was later Attorney General of Jamaica.

CHAPTER 3

THE BELMONT HOUSE WAS a modestly large five-bedroom bungalow of deep verandahs and commanding views. N.W. Manley, in later years, was to ~~to~~ to commanding views. N.W. Manley, in later years, was to call it a ruinate property; but certainly the old place, cultivated since Spanish times, had paying stands of logwood, pastures, some cattle, cocoa and a fair tenancy. The family (and Grandpa Shearer) managed a living far from inconsequential: a buggy, a dogcart, riding horses, church pews, servants, and later, boarding schools. And after all, they could afford Cousin Alec Clarke, hired for a year as Junior Overseer.* Indeed, there came the time that bills for Margarte's maternal ambitions for her brood mounted too rapidly for her income. Then, like generations of Jamaicans before and since, she took the migrant's routes to America, Accompanied by her sister, Elizabeth, leaving the children with her aunt, Mrs. Shrimpton, widow of a Methodist minister, who lived in the Kingston suburb of Rae Town.**

Her plan was to send for the children to live in America. But the American dream soon faded. Her job in Washington as a postal clerk could neither support her family ~~not~~ keep them out of the ghetto where their colour would settle them. She and Elizabeth sailed for home.

Meanwhile, after a short stay at Wolmer's Girls' School, Vera and Muriel, the two eldest of the Manley children, had been transferred to the boarding school at Hampton, an academy then expensively reserved for daughters of the gentry. Norman remained at Wolmer's Boys' for a year, until he was ten and then was pulled back closer home because of a

and then was pulled back closer home because of a drop in the family fortunes, to the free Guanaboa Vale elementary. After a year, and a lift in the famr's

2
earnings, he was sent to the less expensive "parish" high school, Beckford & Smith's, in Spanish Town. Boarded with the headmaster, he rode on horseback the twenty miles to and from school each Monday and Friday, mostly at a gallop so furious it brought many warnings from the local law enforcers. He finally entered his third secondary school, when, with his brother Roy, he was enrolled on a half scholarship at Jamaica College in St. Andrew. There he would make marks in scholarship and athletics unrivalled in the total by any of his countrymen before or since.

BELMONT was a property to gladden a 12-year-old boy's heart; two large ponds proffered ~~fishing~~ fishing and swimming through the long school vacation summers; birds flocked the great glades with the acres of guava trees, yielding shoots of baldpates, pigeons, ~~ducks~~ ducks; miles of riding trails twisted up and away into the Juan de Bolas mountains. The two boys roamed Guanaboa Vale, inflicting their pranks upon the indulgent countryside: Roy, the younger, impulsive, outgoing, an explosion of laughter; Norman, lean, ~~j~~ hard-riding, the high priest of jinks.

~~The countryside was lenient to their fun. Those~~

The countryside was lenient to their fun. Those were the good years for the new brown aristocracy, themselves remotely controlled by the ascendant whites at a carefully encouraged level of arrogance to be the ruling divisives among the non-white masses. ~~The two boys could have turned rogue, as did~~ The two boys could have turned rogue, as did, traditionally, the descendant encounters of white masters and black female fieldhand, lively, high-boothed and spurred, above the populace. Conversely booted and spurred, above the populace. Conversely, given that at this season in the society, Quality was a state denied those of the Manleys tribal persuasions, they could have become genteel fallow. That ~~neither~~ neither became the case, had its reasons in the work-laws laid down by Margaret Manley, that small woman whose ~~dcaenced~~ strength held her children even. whose cadenced strength held her children even. Widow Manley's Belmont dictum ~~deleared~~ declared that labour, and only labour, brought rewards. She herself handled the property, some cattle, logwood and the postal agency (kept in a room of the house) her resourcefulness had acquired for Belmont, with equal proficiency.

Everybody worked at Belmont, the girls at whatever was going for young ladies of the times, the boys at chopping wood and cleaning pastures. "We grew up to ~~neither~~ gifts not pocket-money," N.W. Manley has observed. "We made our wages."

~~At home from Jamaica College in thess~~

At home from Jamaica College in the summer, and occasional weekends, he honed his skill at the aex ~~until~~ until he could make his wages, and better. He could challenge and beat most of the Belmont professionals on the property's logwood stands. "I was tough as hell." And even into his sixties, before the heart attack, he was still handling the 3-foot splitting axe with absolute ease. At Belmont, in his teens, that skill bought him the guns and saddles for the sports he favoured.*

Margaret Manley died when N.W. was sixteen, but the spiritual energy which had welded this volatile and highly talented family into a unit at Guanaboa Vale, still held. She had worked hard and passionately to give them a good education.**

It was an event that would provoke the profound change which gave the man to his time. Manley in the middle period of his high school years was a teenage terror. In style and substance a natural leader, he had, after a year or two of being a victim, busted the necessary ~~umber~~ of noses to earn a gang-boss rating at JC, "a tough school in those days." For a couple of years he broke every rule, "undermining the authority of any master we thought showed signs of weakness" and earned a "thoroughly disreputable weakness" and earned a "thoroughly disreputable reputation" as assessed by his headmaster, an outraged cleric, Rev. Canon Simms. But at sixteen, he sobered. Her illness and death may have brought him to the realities of what losing his scholarship meant. With Pauline conversion, he concluded to ~~drop~~ his disgusting ways and "turned over a new leaf by going to the headmaster and announcing I meant to try for the Rhodes." Since the award of the Rhodes scholarship carried a requirement of good character as well as academic excellence, neither of which was to be found in that fifth former's file, the Canon smiled painedly.

number

drop

Norman however had a friend in the second master, Reginald Myrie Murray, whom, Margaret, just before her death, had engaged as a private tutor in maths, the only subject that caused a glimmer of curiosity in the otherwise uninterested bravo.*** He also thinks that Simms, knowing of his mother's gallant fight against illness and limited means, gave in to a sympathy. That her children should all have a good education was Margaret Manley's "one great fixed determination in life," Manley has said. "She ~~made all our clothes, made jellies when guavas were~~ made all our clothes, made jellies when guavas were in, kept a small chicken farm, a few cattle, a little copra. Singlehandedly she managed all these things. ~~When~~ night came, she disappeared to her own room to write letters to her few remaining friends, nearly all of whom had deserted her when she married a near black man. When not writing, she was a wide and voracious reader."

When

~~It would appear, too, that Thomas Manley's~~

It would appear, too, that Thomas Manley's nicely developed discernment for precedents, which had made him, a produce buyer, ~~from~~ inland Porus, into a character of blue water ships for his exports, ~~was not lost in his children. When Vera won a music~~ was not lost in his children. When Vera won a music scholarship to Britain, and with Norman going after the Rhodes, it seemed an appropriate time for a the Rhodes, it seemed an appropriate time for a wholesale migration to Britain. ~~N.W.M.'s~~ plan to apply for the Rhodes scholarship meant he would stay a while longer in the island, but, by August 1911, Muriel was at King's College, London, and Roy was attending a public school at Felstead, Kent.

from

N.W.M's

It was to an extent typical of the later man that NW's instincts led him to teaching, and to teach all through the three levels of the island system: primary (at Titchfield,) secondary (at Jamaica College) and agricultural (at Hope Farm School.) The knowledge and insight gathered through his gift and ~~and insight gathered through his gift for~~ detail and and insight gathered through his gift for detail and concept, cultivated an authority in agricultural and general education that strengthened his political career. He had grown into a thoughtful, quiet, young man with a passion for reading and music — and horseracing.

SO far, the luck had mostly broken good for Norman Manley. He had been a fine scholar and athlete at Jamaica College. His ten seconds for the 100 yard dash in the vintage year of 1911 was to remain unbroken for 41 years (although it would be equalled by a few including his son, Douglas.) In track, field and team games, his prodigious ~~performa~~ ances made him the all-time unsurpassed in college athletics. But in the two years while he waited in Jamaica to be called by the Rhodes Committee, and, perhaps, be awarded the coveted blue ribbon of scholarship, his luck ran out.

perform-
college

His luck cracked one Saturday afternoon after the races at old Knutsford Park, now the site of New Kingston. He was at the track with his close friend, Leslie Clarke. Clarke avers that he seemed to be in good ~~health~~, fluttering gamely, although his horses ran slowly. "But that ~~was~~ characteristic of him," says Leslie Clarke. "He did everything fullblooded, win or lose. We left Knutsford together after the last race. Next morning he was dying.

health
was

The Manley bout with typhoid was phenomenal. His well-slung athlete's frame thinned to gaunt bone and knuckles. He was too tough to die, but it was close. They took him to the Nuttall "hospital," a hospital in lower East Street, where they fought the fever for three weeks. He had made plans to travel to the United States (with ~~Clarke~~) and then go on to Oxford, for, by that time, he had been awarded the Rhodes. But these plans had to be aborted while he mended at the Hope residence of his friends, the ~~aged~~

Clark

Josephs.* He finally sailed for England in 1914. He entered Oxford.

~~The illness had a crucial effect upon his uni~~

The illness had a crucial effect upon his university career. He would have undoubtedly dealt definitively with the record books. ~~That~~ he never ~~made a Blue in his years at Oxfoe~~ made a Blie in his years at Oxford was due to the post effects of his illness. However, in his second year, there were more important matters for his attention. The war broke out. He enlisted in the Royal Field Artillery and was committed to the Somme.

that

important

That

SO NOW, THAT YEAR, 1914, the Manleys were together again, Vera and Muriel in their London flats, Roy, a public school boy, and Norman (temporarily) at Jesus College, Oxford. Not quite Guanaboa Vale So true, but neither essentially alien, since, in bone and breeding, there was a good deal of England in the four. Moreover, not unlike the Rae Town aunt, there was another aunt in County Cornwall, with a brood of nine energetic first cousins. Aunt Ellie Swithenbank, of nine energetic first cousins. Aunt Ellie Swithenbank, sister of Margaret Manley, lived in a house on large grounds with her husband, the Reverend Harvey Swithenbank, a Methodist minister. The Cornwall manse was home for the young Manleys, and to it they turned in their holidays.

Methodist
Manleys

The summer was good that 1914 for the Manley brothers. True, one could not gallop across to Lloyds, or walk the hills of St. Faith-Macca Tree, climb to Point Hill or fish the ponds at Belmont. Nor was there money left over for spreeing, since, on \$700 a year, the value of the Rhodes, it was hard enough to keep up with the cost of those monogrammed cigar-ettes which the young Manley-about-Town, down from Oxford, affected. But there were long golden days in Cornwall, and good conversations and vigor-

cigar-

ous rambles, led sometimes, by a leggy girl cousin named Edna Swithenbank.

Pranks were not so easily executed as at Guana-
boa Vale. Englishmen, even when disguised as Corn-
nishmen, were wretchedly uneasy at any inroads into
their privacy. What was even more shaking to the
pair of Anglo-Jamaican youths was that they were, in
spite of blood, upbringing and outlook, alien corn.
It, of course, brought them even closer. Intelligent,
high-spirited and proud, they accepted certain truths
that were emerging and settled into as full a life as
the circumstances allowed. And this meant that for
the two, living was not without incidents; occasions

privacy.

proud,

in which there was flashing ~~turn~~ to the funny,
engaging whimsy that pervades an N.W. Manley caper.
Such as the day, when footloose in London, they
entered an auction room, and, in an excess of good
manners, each time the auctioneer nodded in their
direction, politely nodded back. They naturally
ended up owing the item, a great load of cheap
alarm clocks.

return

when,

Shaken, but functioning, they hired a barrow,
waited for the end of the short London day, and,
quietly as possible, trundled the barrow along the
Embankment and dumped the lot in the Thames.

London

BUT summer ended and with it came the guns
of August.

N.W. MANLEY had turned 21. He did not start
his second year at Oxford. He and his brother enlisted
his second year at Oxford. He and his brother enlisted
in the Royal Field Artillery and were soon in France.
Roy was killed in action in a way marked for him by
his character. He left his dugout during a heavy
shelling to rescue a fallen comrade. His loss was
a tragic irony in that, by the time he was hit, the
wounded soldier he bore on his back had been dead
for some time. The futility of the sacrifice was to
haunt his brother.

NORMAN Manley would emerge from his
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soldiering in an English regiment with no visible racial

NORMAN Manley would emerge from his
soldiering in an English regiment with no visible racial
scar but with a gut awareness that skin-colour was a
factor. He had a sinewy intellect, equal to the urgen-
cies of his will. And so, although previously he had
allowed it unheeded, at least in silence, he had caught
the sounds of ethnic skeletons t

the sounds of ethnic skeletons rattling in the family
closet during his growing-up in Jamaica. But here, in
England, those old bones were whacking.

in

The descent of the darkskinned Manleys on
Cornwall had collided, however, gently, glancingly

Cornwall had collided, however, gently, glancingly,
with the life Ellie Swithenbank had made for herself;
however harmless, it was a contrivance; described by
our hard pressed black American cousins as "pass-
ing."* There is no doubt the evidence was lodged in
the young Manley's awareness. A few years later, be-
fore they were wed, he was to question the wisdom
of "men in my position" having children. Not so
Edna. Furiously she wrote him: "I don't want (my
child) to be white. I want him to have your own
beautiful brown skin. . ." And to prove she was not waffling
beautiful brown skin. . ." And to prove she was not
waffling on the resolve, she made it public a dozen
years later in an English newspaper, shattering the
English Swithenbanks by parading her own part-
African
African ancestry.

lodged in

But more particularly at this time in his life,
Norman Manley was facing a new reality. He had
been ingested into the rough and tumble of the
British Army.

3

THE English enlisted men, specially the Cockney, was noted neither for tact nor a tender heart. A ruthless phrase-smith of quick dexterity, to him, A ruthless phrase-smith of quick dexterity, to him, the darkie

THE English enlisted man, specially the Cockney, was noted neither for tact nor a tender heart. A ruthless phrase-smith of quick dexterity, to him, the "darkie" on his ranks was a go the "darkie" in his ranks was a Godsend. All his life Manley had been a leader of the pack, a fine academic

* *A survival ploy by Bustamante when he lived in the U.S.A., as reported by Cousin Norman.*

who could also run and jump and shoot; already, ~~"even then a National Hero," as Sir John Carberry, a~~ ~~"even then a National Hero," as Sir John Carberry, a~~ retired Chief Justic of Jamaica and an early professional colleague, once asserted. The sudden exposure to the raw power of the English peasant-on-horseback must have assuaulted his ego.

The Tommies in his Company lost no time in deciding ~~who~~ would be the Company's foil: "Darkie," the black fellow from the Colonies. But soon what had seemed a perfectly good go, was stumbling on the cobbles. It happened that "Darkie" was not ~~not~~ much better educated than any in the ranks, but possessed a wickeder tongue, could out-shoot, out-ride, out-box and out-~~run~~ the best of them; and was an incomparable axe-weilder at clearing a forest for artillery. Not only that, he was a great deal more handsome, a fact respected by the many pinched ~~specimens from London's East End.~~ Their tribal worship of class, ~~was~~ in him the "gent," the "guv'nor." So, "Darkie" was changed to "Bill," a solidly English handle. When incoming new replacements to the regiment began the baiting that ~~was~~ as natural to them as spitting, they were swiftly and obscenely put right by old hands in the platoon.

In outlook and insight, Manley's four years of war foxed the rules into which his schooling and ~~raising could have locked him.~~ He was for the first raising could have locked him. He was for the first time committing his whole life with folk-people, although of a race that only half-way owned him, the English working-class man. At Guanaboa Vale, he had been of the local aristocracy. Working in the field did not breach his privilege as the *son of the busha*. Deference glinted, however briefly, in the down wind toss of sweat by his axemen colleagues. ~~He returned at evening to the well-bred affairs affected~~ He returned at evening to the well-bred affairs affected by the determined Margaret Manley. In the army, nobody went home at the end of the day. The shelter of Jesus College, and of the Cornwall manse, was gone. His comrades were close to his back as shirts — hair-shirts.

"Colour had meant nothing to me in the years ~~before the war, in Jamaica . . . I was by nature, a rebel,~~ before the war, in Jamaica . . . I was by nature, a rebel, and little affected by what people thought of me." But young Gunner Manley found that what people thought of him could raise hackles where he thought there were none. But "I did not, could not allow it ~~to be an obsession since I was totally without any~~ to be an obsession since I was ~~totally without ab~~ to be an obsession since I was totally without any idea of 'white superiority.' The only superiority I idea of 'white superiority.' The only superiority I accepted was (that) of 'excellence.' I had an unquenchable belief in 'excellence.'" Race held an implosive which by iron control was diffused into dialectric.

The value of 'excellence' was not of course lost on his brother, Roy, who did everything not only well, but with great enthusiasm. ~~However,~~ Roy, However, having endured the public school system for two years, was aware that racist ideas ever crept about behind the English wainscot. Strong and hot tempered, Roy was already expert at educing ~~respect~~ respect by tongue-lash or fist.

They had enlisted together into a mounted battery from East Deptford in East London, of raffishly tough lower class. The ~~Manley~~ boys would have lasted a while in the battery, had not Norman's natural excellence brought him a promotion. He was made a bombardier which placed him among the non-commissioned officers. He believed his promotion ~~was also due to the Cockneys' unaquan~~ was also due to the Cockneys' unaquaintance with horses, "and anyway, I was a University man." Although he wore only a single stripe, the lowliest on the non-com ladder, he had climbed straight into trouble.

~~"I really never knew for sure just what the men~~

"I really never knew for sure just what the men thought. I am sure they resented in a cynical way having a 'darkie' given special authority. But I was very popular and I think they just made the best of it. Not so my fellow non-commissioned officers. Without exception, from sergeant-major, through ~~sergeants and corporals, I became intensely disliked~~ sergeants and corporals, I became intensely disliked. They disliked a situation in which a coloured man shared their special rithgs and privileges and they showed it in every possible way. For two months or so, I suffered a virtual persecution. I was not then a patient person, and I treated them all with every mark of contempt, imitating superiority. Something had to snap."

What snapped was their honesty. They shook together a few falsehoods and laid charges against Bombardier ~~Mabley~~ Manley. At the preliminary hearing before the Company captain, N.W. confronted his sergeant and sergeant-major. The 22-year-old future King's Counsel had never been in a courtroom. He was given permission to cross-examine — and suddenly, it was all there.

"I asked a few simple questions," he recalls this early rummaging among the tools of his profession.

Simple they may have been, but, crushing. His captain, in the army tradition of guilty-if-charged-by-a-superior, advised he was in for a Court Martial; but a-superior, advised he was in for a Court Martial; but did he have a "suggestion?" He looked hard at Manley. was

Any soldier worth his belt buckle knew that veracity went with rank.

Manley was adroit. He caught the hint. Yes, he had a suggestion. He would give up his Bombadier's stripe on the understanding that he and his brother be transferred to another artillery battery and "the whole case could be disposed on in this simple way." Reflectively, he adds that the captain "seemed va way." Reflectively, he adds that the captain "seemed very pleased." Faces were saved all around and smiles of appeasement appeared.*

Once again, after the initial skirmishes with his new comrades, he settle easily as a private in the new new comrades, he settle easily as a private in the new battery. Before the war was much older, he had become the Company guru, writing their letters, addressing their problems, supplying a foot-locker contact with the educated world that most of his East London comrades only knew to exist. He was educated

**When he became a political leader at home in the 1940's the possibility of linking his wartime experiences to an anti-white attitude, was never overlooked by English journalists who interviewed him. He setadily denied the posture, but never disowned the experience. He never in public life displayed any racial wounds or trauma.*

offered a field commission, to full officer class this time; he refused because he would not "leave (his) companions." He made corporal. Although he has companions." He made corporal. Although he has

offered a field commission, to full officer class this time; he refused because he would nto "leave (his) companions." He made corporal. Although he has stated thta "all good advoca stated that "all good advocates are egotists," a proposition he unrepentantly himself fills, he as often a shy man, is partial to his own ways, and has never been quick to dismantle situations — as was manifestly proven in his later political life.

MANLEY'S war fought in the 1914-18 casss M

MANLEY'S war was fought in the 1914-18 classic theatres at Ypres and the Somme. It was bloody and dangerous and he fought bravely and professionally. But because of who he was, he, in the madness of mud and butchery, made himself a delegate of *Madame Butterfly* as he liberated bottles of delegate of *Madame Butterfly* as he liberated bottles of *Veuve Clicquot*, 1905, in French towns liberated from the Boche. He

from the Boche. He spoke, in his later years infrequently, of combat. Yet he knew the misery, bitterness and continuous peril of trench warfare in warfare all its ugliness. For three years.

He entered France at the beginning of 1916 and

He entered France at the beginning of 1916 and came out in the spring of 1919. His first unit was

He enr

He entered France at the beginning of 1916 and came out in the spring of 1919. His first unit was a mounted ammunition supply company. Then he became a map-reading scout, locating each battery as they moved about. The army was on the slow mount to the explosion that was to be the long drawn

frightfulness of the Somme. "Map-reading was for me an easy exercise so I was given that special task."

mble

"I will never forget four a.m., on D-day, when all the thousands of guns we had labouriously assembled opened fire at a precisely timed second (But) attack was doomed from the start.

~~"About the first half-mile of enemy held teri-~~

"About the first half-mile of enemy held territory was lightly protected but then came a most highly fortified line with enormously strong machine

**More than 500,00 men were killed at Ypres. The countryside around the town is today one vast cemetery.*

gun emplacements built on the surface, since the land was totally flat and the least rain would make it into a swamp. Well, before dawn, began one of the worst rains I have ever known, for eleven days, almost ceaselessly."

~~It was there that he lost his brother, Roy from a~~

It was there that he lost his brother, Roy, from a fragment of shrapnel that pierced his heart. "We buried him with others the next day, all wrapped in blankets, and placed in a field already established in anticipation of the battle." His full name was Roy Douglas Manley. Norman, sensitive to a childhood difficulty which made the name come out *Woy*, had calmly, in defiance of family usage, called him Douglas till it stuck.

He would name his first born, Douglas. "I cannot speak of how I felt. We were very good friends and I was to be lonely for the rest of the war, lonely and bitter."

But the war went on. They fought without shelter, in the open, and he fired his gun without break for 46 hours at the rate of a round a minute for the last 12 hours; an agony hardly understood in all its grifhtening reality; crouched;

its frightening reality; crouched, wet, cold to the bone in mud-filled shell holes in an unceasing, mind-ben-

in mud-filled shell holes in an unceasing, mind-bending noise. Half a century later, although he was not clear on whether they stayed in the inferno for six or eight weeks, he could describe the bombardment in a moving recall:

"It was to be imagined to realise how the world can dissolve into one vast sound like a great wave drowning every feeling and every emotion and nothing exists except the continuous unbroken sound broken every minute by the vast roar of (your own) gun, and punctuated constantly by the staccato tattoo of dozens of 78-pounders, pounding a practised roll like super machine gun fire — but mostly, just sound that you could feel, that enveloped you and bore you up."

THE odds were that he would be killed. The slaughter was phenomenal. More than half of his slaughter was phenomenal. More than half of his companions were. He came close to it. Once when he was running for shelter from an incoming shell of a velocity only little less than sound: "I knew from the increasing horror of noise (behind me) what I was in

increasing horror of noise (behind me) what I was in for . . . and at the last split second, dived for the ground. I felt the shake of the air but just before that, heard the shout from a runner behind me: 'Bill's gone! They've got him!'" But Bill was not gone further than the bottom of a crate dug for him by an earlier shell. Another time, on guard duty, he detected a gas attack and crept from his lean-to to shake his platoon awake. When he returned the lean-to was riddled with shell fragments.

"As a battle, it was the great failure of the war," he says of the Somme. "It cost the British 750,000 men killed and wounded, the cream of the men who volunteered before conscription was introduced."

built

brother,

it

ised

slaughter

close

was

failure

He liked the task. It was flat farm country, left to the conflict by the owners, and roaming was not much unlike Guanaboa, except for the occasional howitzer and other cannon fire that could tear your head off merely passing close. But it was *country*, "fresh, and with a beauty of its own in the early morning, ~~at~~ late when twilight fell." The map-reader recalls his luck at being ~~almost~~ lost for four days searching for the batteries, "a good four days" on his own, with horse and rifle. That sort of happiness was not, of course, for this world. There were sergeants in every army. And the Manley impishness in barefacing a sergeant with a ridiculous story of a strong young soldier, unwounded, fainting in the saddle and waking to find horse and rifle ~~gone~~, and taking another day to look for them, led to his transfer from the supply unit to a brigade of guns, a move requested by Bombadier Manley to get rid of Sergeant's heat. "In spiteful folly, he had charged me with insubordination after I showed him my rifle next day," righteously states the ex-non com.

or
almost

gone,

He lost his corporal's rank, became again a gunner, and joined D Battery of the 39th Division. He became the fastest gun layer in the west, or, ~~per~~ perhaps the battery, fast and accurate with the complex machinery that puts a modern cannon on target. He went up to the first fight for the River Somme, where his brother Roy was wounded. Shipped ~~to a~~ rear hospital, Roy recovered and in a short time talked his way back to the front. He was an able talker. He was ~~returned to the very battery in which his brother was~~ returned to the very battery in which his brother was the quickest gun layer alive.*

per-

to a

~~Both Jamaican soldiers were at the appearing of~~

Both Jamaican soldiers were at the appearing of the most remarkable military hardware since Troy, the army tank. Walking close in its lumbering wake, they discovered how an army could advance ~~further~~ in a single day than in four months of trench and charge. But since the Allies had no plans to exploit its success that year, the Somme bloodletting was

further

**Roy, says N.W., had "a prodigious gift for making friends. I have never in all my long life met anyone who found it so natural and habitual to get in touch with perfect strangers." And back in England, a 17-year-old fledging artist impatiently pushing a pen in a poky Pensions office, would have concurred. Edna ~~had~~ found Roy "strange and attractive," according to Wayne Brown. He was - and more. His siter (Dr.) Muriel Manley once observed: "He was a person of the most fantastic*

had

Manley once observed: "He was a person of the most fantastic charm (but) had a ruthless streak" with women. At a canny twelve years old, Edna had liked, but sexually mistrusted the exotic brown Romeo from Guanaboa. Soon she would find an easier affinity in the older, less ebullient Bombadier.

At

Yielded another
yielded another year.

Posted back to Belgium, at ~~Ypres~~ they stayed six months in uneasy drill for the third holocaust.* N.W. Manley's battery was to follow the first ~~wave~~ of the attack. The amour at the Somme was inconceivable; a mass of guns, wheel to wheel, sic miles broad. He would be laying his targets from a position just forward of the second line of trenches, digging dug-outs for nests of cannons, and a thousand shells to each. The shells, fullsized golgothas of 45 lbs each, ~~were two to a box. You lifted close to a hundred~~ were two to a box. You lifted close to a hundred pounds each time you hefted a box to shoulder. ~~But you worked fine, lice and mud and all; for the~~ But you ~~workde~~ fine, lice and mud and all; for the coming great offensive would ~~on~~ those guns, anchored at an end on Ypres, over the higher ground and down the plains of Belgium, and win the war. The reckoning was for four to five miles a day. ~~Tant~~ was the plan. We stayed put for six weeks after the offensive began."

Ypres,

wave

worked
roll

"That

Many historians have discussed how that unholy oblation of a generation of ~~young~~ men came about. ~~Manlye~~ speaks of the Somme.

young
Manley

"We spent two months preparing gun posotiins in in very dangerous terrain. The Germans knew perfectly well what we were doing and all cross roads were heavily shelled from early morning until the sun was well up. About 30 of us used to leave our camp at about ~~five~~ in the afternoon and walk ten miles (for) the shells. We worked until four in the morning, carrying boxes of shells to where the gun-pits had ~~been prepared. (It meant) 20 miles walking, and~~ been prepared. (It meant) 20 miles walking, and seven carrying a heavy load half the time.

five

Take out space →

HE HAD FOUGHT A bitter war of dull, nagging

HE HAD FOUGHT A bitter war of dull, nagging danger, laying and firing huge guns, sleeping in and galloping through French mud of such tenacious quality that, to some, it is the most endurable mem-

quality that, to some, it is the most endurable memory of the war. In four years, he had written no friends, seen Edna only once, at Neasden, then, in his words, "a most exciting young girl of seventeen." She was suffering in the civil service and fighting off interferences with her own chosen destiny. She was nearing graduation at the St. Martin School of Art and being persuaded to join the teaching staff at a secondary school as an art teacher, a plan she was vehemently opposing. In a kind of laconic accolade to her courage, N.W. says of that period, "In the end, she left home, endured great hardships, but had her way about teaching and art.*"

*Twenty-four years later in another country, she would give a poignant account of a small Jamaican boy in whom she saw a reflection:

I have a little pupil twelve years old, an elementary schoolboy and he ~~only~~ wants to carve. He hates painting. His hammer goes like mine.

I went in to see him work, about two o'clock (October 28, in 1941) and to tell him to go home. He was so intent, he didn't notice me. He went on banging away and the chips flying. I put my hand on his shoulder and said, "Look here, Ferdinand Escoffrey, you have got to go home."

secondary, only

The war was nearing its end and he returned from the fury in France to the quiet of England in 1918, to take a special heavy artillery course. He was coldly sick of the war. His unit had become attached to an Australian division in which the old explosive of race and colour held less heat; yet, he had brushed with the idea of seeking a Commission in his own ~~West India Regiment, long since on~~ West India Regiment, long since engaged in all the theatres.* It could have been another sign of a man weary of conflict, yet it raised a question.

Why was he content to serve in the ranks of an English regiment, an unpretentious, unprestigious, non-Guard, non-Brigade, non-famous flotsam outfit, but had thoughts of a *commission* in his own West India Regiment?

One of the answers could be that he was a product of his Colonial time. Englishmen, ~~even~~ if even *quashies*, qualified for Quality.

It was a homily that had been steadily hammered ~~home for three years. His fine spirit, had of~~ home for three hundred years. His fine spirit, had of course, rebelled. He turned arrogant and treated them with "contempt." But he was tilting with adepts. with "contempt." But he was tilting with adepts. The implant was deep. His intellect saw it ~~going~~ going in and raged as it sometimes despaired. It would, and evidence proposes, soon push him over the brink into a nervous breakdown. It would take him years to face it; perhaps never to extirpate. Not altogether, until it broke down in his progeny.

His eyes went so dark, and his hands dropped quite still; the afternoon sunshine seemed to glow for a second and I felt such a feeling of kinship, it just swept over me from head to foot. I knew his urgency so well. I knew the fatality of stopping — so finally.

He climbed down and we walked together to the gate. "Good-

bye, Ferdinand, until next Saturday."

"Yes, ma'am. Next week I finidh him."

O, Ferdinand, Ferdinand, you're so little and your feet are so big and bare. And your eyes, why did they go so dark? And now the sunshine isn't the same again.

It looks shabby without you.

**He was to withdraw the application after a court-martial as the ringleader of a protest against leave infringements.*

But he would never become one of the anxious men casting no shadow at noon. Dreaming ramshackle dreams in the long night's journey from the ~~Slave Coast to the Caribbean. He would wall it in,~~ Slave Coast to the Caribbean. He would wall it in, by mind and reason, and be able to relate, at 45, to an audience at the forming of his Party, the story of the indiscreet Englishman, who, on Home Leave from his magistracy in Jamaica, blurted in a speech that the Empire could only stand upon the "carefully ~~nurtured~~" feeling of inadequacy of in-nurtured" feeling of inadequacy among the natives. It was, conceivably, a component in the ~~extra-~~ extraordinary success with which he unbanely destroyed the Empire in his part of the world. (His sister, Vera, was even worse afflicted. "You can't be friendly with [Jamaican servants;] like you can the English ones.") Generally, the character of the Colonial mulatto of the time straddled two behaviours: timid or tumid, mewing or bellowing as a feverishly active protective covering dictated.

BUT now he was thinking of his future. He was 24, battered by war, his brother killed (at 21,) his education unfinished, and with racial experiences ugly education unfinished, and with racila experiences ugly enough to signal the impracticability of living in England. So he carefully worried out a rationale by land. So he carefully worried out a rationale by

BUT now he was thinking of his future. He was 24, battered by war, his brother killed (at 21,) his education unfinished, and with racial experiences ugly enough to signal the impracticability of living in England. So he carefully worried out a rationale by which he could "with due self-respect say yes" to the offer for re-training in England — fully aware that the war would probably end before the course was over. He was in England at the Armistice, November 1918.

He had prudently registeres for Gray's Inn the previous year, 1917. It was fortunate that he ~~had, in~~ had, in that sense, destroyed his bridges, for he ~~was~~ was being now assailed by fears of his ability ~~ot~~ to be a barrister. It was not, he thought, even a "sensible" or useful profession; chicken-breeding was better. It astounds that N.W. Manley was once severely afraid to talk in public, even in as mannered an arena as the courtroom. Thin, intense, tough as a cowskin whip, war-time training had restored the stamina that typhoid had reduced (although his fine athletic edge was irretrievably lost, at Oxford he won the long jump 20' 1", and the 120 yards hurdles) but he was wound up tight as a drum.

Chapter 5

His sister, ve

His sister, Vera and Muriel, were fairly establishedaa

His sister, Vera and Muriel, were fairly established along their careers in music and medicine. He would be stepping out of four war years, of open air life with little reading save the *King James Version*, Samuel Butler's *Notebook* and Browning's *Ring and The Book*; volumes thoughtfully packed for him by his sister to take to war. "To think of a life to be spent in talk and study, seemed a denial of self. Besides, how did I know I could talk — or learn to talk?"

study,

~~But a stern look at his finances seemed to have~~

But a stern look at his finances seemed to have restored the inherited Guanaboa resolve; even if there were few openings for axemen in England. (His brother, Roy, faced with a similar dilemma before the war, after he left public school, had done a brilliantly fast study of London streets, and, in three months became a licensed, fully qualified taxi driver.) He thought of the property at Belmont. Its sale was a possibility but he could hardly hope for more than six hundred dollars as his share of the inheritance. He had another one hundred and fifty dollars coming from his Army pay — plus a limply tailored civvy suit as a mustering-out bonus. He had eight months of study ahead for the Bar exams before returning to Oxford. Resolutely, he settled in.

he months

dollars

~~WAR, for gunners with intellect, offers fallow~~

WAR, for gunners with intellect, offers fallow years. The wheel-driver from Gaunaboa, famed along the front for his fast hook-ups and his cool handling of the team he rode through mud and shell holes on the surgical near-side of his pair, had been fallow for four years. Now, suddenly, it was all springing back. To his "delightful surprise," he found "a capacity for work" and what was more, "enjoyed it immensely." He could work for long hours and discovered that he had developed the prodigious memory which would be one of his more spectacular gifts and the most commented upon by his peers. He raced into the four papers then required for the bar exams at Gray's Inn, did three of them in six months and was first in two. He obtained first class passes in both. It was at this time also that he recognised he was in love.

two. this that

He was staying at Neasden with his Aunt Ellie, Edna's mother. Neasden was a London suburb to which Ellie had moved with her children, after her husband's death. His Edna of the "uniquely bright spirit" was lengthening into a sword of a girl, shinning and tempestuous in her will to be an artist. The post-war uncertainites, Ellie thought, elected a safer profession, but the creative energies in the 19-year girl generated the faith and kept alive the hope which the artist's observable, often losing, struggle, mostly conceals.

generated

~~Edna had suffered through severe vicssitudes.~~

Edna had suffered through severe vicissitudes. Like her Jamaican cousins, Alec Clark/Bustamante and Norman before, she was expert at riding untamed horses, and her last job had been pacifying half-wild Canadian ponies for the British army in France. At years old. (It is conceivable that Bombadier Manley at Ypres may have been plucked from the jaws on a remount supplied by the long-legged escapee from the Pensions Office.) She was also a fugitive from pulling flax in Norfolk fields (for padding airplane wings) and from gardening for a Ditchingham moneybags who fired her for being (innocently) friendly with the only other young, decently thin, person in the Manor, the male chauffeur. Calming unrestrained horses had been her most satisfying job. The Family wanted an art school teacher; Edna was for a professional artist's career; and Norman was strongly for her. The girl's solution was simple. She left home, took a small ill-paid job, lived in a rooming house (above a fish shop) and wrung our her apprenticeship.

Yet, the doubts and anguish assailed them. ~~Although they had planned to marry the following year~~ though they had planned to marry the following year, 1921, June, there were questions to be faced. One of the more important uncertainties lay in the choice of islands in which to live — *England or Jamaica*. It became a contest of doubts; she fearing the empty pomposity of the planter colony, uncultivated in any art save the military-and-cocktail-parade, he to a losing interest in law and the bar as a profession. The tension rippled between them.

Edna's appeared likely a forthright objection to settling among the philistines, with no escape routes into galleries, or museums, or concerts, or even the privacy of an attic studio in an island of open doors and windows. His was hidden, and more damaging.

There is hardly any question that, at the time, he was being deeply hurt by the English rejection on account of his colour. In the fragment of a manuscript left at his death, he returns to the race-dilemma again and again, subtly, bluntly, always hurtedly; for he knew that racism was ugly and a reducer of men. ~~He was, plainly, in England, a product of the longest continuous holocaust experienced by modern man;~~ he was visibly an issue of the slave trade. On the other hand, he had an inheritance that would have passed unnoticed, and would certainly be manageable, in his layered Jamaican society, where being "brown" and a graduate of a "good" school would have cushioned the inevitable collisions.

"Men in my position have no conventions . . . no home, no social position . . . a speck floating about in a liquid mass." Thus he wrote to Edna in the winter of 1919. A savage self-denunciation that surfaced out of "the obsessions that colour feelings can create." He thought he was fighting back by going to ground behind the defensives of what he regarded as his "arrogance," and even told himself that he welcomed their prejudices since he wanted to be left alone. Yet, in years after, he ~~was~~ to bitterly recall that in the months he read in the Common Room at Gray's Inn, nobody spoke to him.

was

script left at his death, he returns to the race-dilemma

that covert, nevertheless, he "felt," he said, a racial

treatment of his subject suddenly became nonsense

q

building

walking-campaign

N.W. Manley was, and remained, a deeply sensitive man who took to a covert of arrogance to conceal his partiality to good companions. Within that covert, nevertheless, he "felt," he said, a racial hostility "moving around" in his lodgings and the public shops he visited. The outside pounding of cunning, unspoken racism, the growing cries in the decisions concerning Edna, his own dismay at his uncertainty in his choice of ~~career~~, and the inner, sleeping damage caused by a long and dangerous war, ~~built, predictably, to a head. He was an essay doing~~ built, predictably, to a head. He was doing an essay at Gray's Inn one afternoon when he broke down. What he had thought was an interesting and exciting ~~treatment of his subject suddenly became nonsense~~ on the paper. He ~~was~~ strained and confused. He was looked about him. Nothing seemed out of the ordinary. The Common Room was silent except for the scratch of pens, the brush of paper. He ~~was~~ was shaking and resolved to be out quickly before his agitation was discovered. Public illness was unEnglish.

And that was the last he remembered until he found himself in the British Museum, hours later, looking steadily at an early Egyptian sculpture, a black, broken-shaped work that perhaps held a symbol. Shocked and frightened, he rushed from the building and caught the underground to Neasden where his Aunt Ellie put him to bed after he staggered into the door and collapsed.

WHEN he was mended sufficiently, Manley made for the woods, his constant healing-place for all his life. In his later years, it was Nomdmi, high in the Jamaican mountains. But in 1919, he headed for the New Forest, in Hampshire, some 150 square miles of as near solitude as it was possible to get in crowded England. It would be a walking-campaign retreat and he travelled light; waterproof, road maps, ~~compass~~, to get compass, toothbrush and soap and towel. He met nobody during his four days in the forest. He slept under a fallen ~~log~~, warmed between two fires and safe from the log, herds of wild ponies galloping in the night. In the daytime, he walked and cooked and thought. It was in the New Forest that he faced the truth of himself and the Law. Dry law would never be, for him, a subject of deep interest. The cut, thrust and hammer of the courtroom would always be a challenge to his love of intellectual combat. But the bench and chambers held no inducement. He never tried the former, and a short engagement with the latter, near the end of his life, proved his conclusions right. He ~~was the advocate, the workman who saw the to close~~ was the advocate, the workman who saw to the close and harmonious fit of fact and law.

His walk in the New Forest had not solved his problems but it strengthened his mind and body to struggle with them. He cooked and lodged in the woods when the village landladies had no room "for the likes of you." It occurred to him on his walk that if he could not ignore the matter of colour, it ~~was not necessary an issues to be wrestled to the~~ was not necessary an issue to be wrestled to the ground. He told himself he was a citizen of the world; and on that lofty, note, returned to London and Edna. At Neasden, he found that Edna had left home, committed her future to her art. He felt he ~~was~~ was losing her.

CHAPTER 5

too

Their's was a great love story thoroughly docketed by two people. Fortunately,

docketed by two articulate people. Fortunately, each was lonely, for different reasons; and luckily, in love too with words. Wayne Brown, in his book composed around her letters, points out that "close on a thousand letters, a million written words, passed between them" in the thirty months before the June morning (25th) they were wed at the Registry Office at Kilburn. Somewhere a mailman must have experienced an inexplicable lightening of his load. Their letters were often young and breathless and conventionally brokenhearted. It was the one time his natural gregarious ways could break through the shell the man had encased himself with. He felt misused in what he desperately called "a cheap flow of cynicism and an affection of intellectual aloofness." But his integrity was powering him to break free.

around that

It

He started out by acknowledging his vanity, disapproving his hunger for applause, and promising to pursue his "greed for ability" that would make him strive for excellence. It took a lifetime of striving, an equal share of victories and defeats, an understanding that despite his soft boasts in public — the ego-armour he encased — he had just about "enough to be profoundly dissatisfied with my own intellectual content." So the sum of him was in a Gestalt that influenced history: a generation and a future.

equal

Manley in i

Manley, in his early years, was easier with pen than tongue. Edna was the private artist who found release in words rushing from her in torrents, turning over and over in her sunny moods, glinting with ideas, flashing its pinwheels of wit and frolic — or flowing sanely, thoughtfully between them, a steady stream in their struggle for calm. Edna elated him. As she had at Oxford, the day he received the Lee Prize for his essay on Samuel Butler and she travelled up to see it. "For the first time," he wrote to her back in London, "I've felt differently to Oxford. Even a twinge of regret at leaving. I'm almost ashamed to own it."

In the unkindness of the society he loved as it alienated him, superbly fitted for it in all his parts except for a skin glowing warmly for its cold

In the unkindness of the society he loved as it alienated him, superbly fitted for it in all his parts except for a skin glowing too warmly for its cold, northern, guilt-ridden, raw-eyed narrowness, the young Jamaican soldier having fought for the empire in cool professional detachment, now fought for his woman with the urgent, unaffected sensuousness of a torrid-zone lover: "I want (my) mate . . . I am not . . . sexless. I am of the lesser breed."* In time she responded as ardently: "I love you . . . I love you . . . I'm just curled up against you."

THE situation at Neasden seemed to have twanged the bowstring. Although he supported her decision, he was physically unable to cope with much. He had been through a grinder. The discomfort, danger and peril of battle, the strain to stand tall among the racist behemoths, the joylessness of his own puzzled loyalties adrift somewhere between his unsophisticated little island and the cultivated seat of Empire, the hurt and the need to show — and the years of the same ahead before he could claim his life in terms of profession, family, identity, all these combined to fella him. He was jelly for a year.

these

In the summer of 1920, he began to mend. Again, as he had done before (and

Again

In the summer of 1920, he began to mend. Again, as he had done before (and since) he took to the out-doors, or as near as he could. This time at the quiet resort of Milford-on-Sea, close to the New Forest. Cousin Edna Swithenbank was also at Milford, studying and drawing. They met every day for lunch, talked and planned. It was a good summer day for lunch, talked and planned. It was a good summer. At the end of it he was his old normal self again, intelligent and tireless, tough enough to announce their engagement and hoping that Belmont could be sold before he took his finals at Oxford. For he would be broke; and he needed the cash to be married, and to read, unpaid, in Chambers in London for a year. Then he would return to Jamaica.

He had fulfilled the first requisite of Cecil Rhodes' award which enjoined that the candidates for his Scholarship should be chosen only on the basis that they were strong, scholarly leaders. How he would meet the hope of the old Empire-building Donor that his beneficiaries possess the qualities which would be "likely in after life to guide them to esteem the performance of public duties as their ~~highest~~ aim," was still hidden behind the cool, almost highest icy composure of the 29-year-old war veteran.

~~The ja~~

~~The Jamaica to which he returned was no m~~

The Jamaica to which he returned was not much different from the days of Guanaboa Vale. The Empire was still airily bemusing the world, working its curious alchemy upon its subject peoples; in an almost unbroken silence from them save for the explosion of the Sepoy mutiny and the occasional flares in Africa. Jamaica was an English outpost, a tophat and waistcoat society serving hot afternoon teas on sun-baked awns. The impending wedding of the English princess, Mary, was daily front-page stuff for months before the nuptials.* Social consciousness ~~went only as far as a clampdown on Chinese immi-~~ went only as far as a clampdown on Chinese immigration, and an invitation to explorer Mitchell Hedges ~~to clean Kingston Harbour of its hammerhead sharks~~ to clean Kingston Harbour of its hammerhead sharks. Almshouses festered. Streets were unpaved save ~~for~~ for two or three cobbled ones. The annual revenue was under \$4-million and expenditure \$4½-million.

Manley came home to none of the protagonists with ~~whom~~ whom he would later engage. Bustamante was wandering overseas. In the United States, a ferocious ~~In~~ In squad of treasury agents was putting together a Federal frame into which they would entrap Marcus

**An island-wide appeal was launched for the contribution of a shilling by every woman in the colony to purchase a "Royal wedding gift." Domestic ~~servants~~ servants, who were being paid 30 cents a week, were thus encouraged to fork out a third of the a week's wages.*

Garvey. Island politics was a part-time exercise for a handful of gents, one to a parish. But, professionally, the lists were already up. His most formidable opponent would be J.A.G. Smith, legislator and voluble law lion whose longwinded eloquence (but sound law) could reduce a judge and opposing counsel to a blob of weary ~~lather~~ lather.

AUGUST 30, 1922, IN Chambers, before Mr. Justice H.I.C. Brown, the Irish Acting Attorney General of Jamaica, Mr. H. Kaye Ryan, made an application for the admission to practice on behalf of Mr. N.W. Manley. Mr. Ryan properly pointed out that the papers, which had been filed with the court, showed that the said Mr. Manley had passed all the necessary exams in London and had been dully "called to the bar in the Mother Country."

Seated behind the plain wooden table in his streamy Chambers, Mr. Justice Brown, wig pushed back and white cuffs hauled up for cooling, gravely

leafed through the pages and made his legal seal. He had read them before. The papers were in order. He looked up and ~~bowed~~ at the fledgling barrister. The lean young man in the artfully aged gown, wig ~~thoroughly square on his high forehead, rose, bowed~~

nodded

thoroughly squared on his high forehead, rose, bowed and delivered the neat little speech of affirmation he had carefully worked over. He was not an easy talker, difficult to begin. But once set on course, he was very good. He had licked his nervousness by working very hard at ~~auto-suggestion~~. At least, he thought so. He was still to argue his first case. Mr. Justice Brown duly enrolled him among the less than a dozen barristers who comprised the private bar.*

auto-suggestion .

**Including C.H. Beard, E.F.H. Cox, J.L. King, Josiah Oldfield H.M. Radcliff, A.B. Rennie, J.A.L. Reid, Philip Stern, K.C., J.A.G. Smith, F.C. Thomlinson, J.C. Moss.*

3

Smith straddled the Bar; a lean, black aristocrat whose fearless advocacy and unfeigned air of grace-under-pressure from the white Bench, was not lost upon black and brown jurymen. He was immensely successful, appearing in most of the important causes for a dozen years prior to Manley. He was one of the

fourteen elected members in the Legislative Council, representing Clarendon parish. He was an abrasive, relentless battler for citizens' rights with an almost unqualified distaste for local Colonial officials. He was the widest known Jamaican of his day in his country.

Norman and Edna Manley and their infant son, ~~Douglas~~, stayed with his lifelong friend, Leslie Clark and his wife, Beryl, at Retirement Crescent before settling in an apartment on Hope Road — three rooms ~~and a pae~~

Douglas,

and a part of the vernadah on the upper floor of what was to become the Andrews Memorial Hospital. He spent his early weeks looking for Chambers and visiting the courts. Like the superb craftsman he was to become, he believed in looking at the work of other professionals. In England, he had watched closely all the great jurists and had been strongly influenced by Lord Birkenhead. He admired Carson and Patrick Hastings. (The way he stood in court and the cast of his head was said to be uncannily like Hastings.) On board ship on the homeward voyage, he had the good fortune of discovering Sir John Simon who was sailing to the island for a month's rest. For the ten days remaining of the voyage, ~~the holidaying Sir John, in an expansive ship-~~age, the holidaying Sir John, in an expansive ship-board mood, practically coached the young Colonial lawyer in law, the courts and in the art of advocacy. "All good advocates are egotists," Manley said many years later, "and nearly all good advocates are happy ~~talking~~ about their cases. Sir John was no exception. I think I learnt more about advocacy in ten days than I had learnt in all my life, for here was a master talking about his own secrets and explaining the methods he used."

verandah

talking

But it was the power of observation and absorption of young Manley that fixed that fleet encounter into what soon became a familiar professional quality.

The Manley re-entry into Jamaica seemed to have been a careful blend of thrust and caution. While he stayed with the Clerks, he sent Edna and the baby into the Mandiville hills, a cooler place, containing the countryside-green of England. And they escaped the discomfort of crowding in on top of the Clerks in the small suburban house.

BUT Mandeville was a comedy of manners, an *entr'acte* of high-bosomed *grande dames* crouched at their lace curtains, alertly searching out the slightest infraction of the white-boss, black-peasantry relationship relentlessly at work in home, church and state. ~~Mandeville was no place for a free-spirited artist who~~ Mandeville was no place for a free-spirited artist who was light years away in intellect and sheer fine-mindedness. The ~~white~~ Quashies depressed her; as did what she reconed was the hostility of the black ill-used folk, perhaps imagined; perhaps a ~~white~~ flight from guilt, a self-accusing colloquy to inner indictments, since country folk of the day were notoriously amiable.

who

white

white-

Norman's paying cases fortunately came early. Like many young barristers before and since, with no powerful corporate solicitors* to support them,

**Before the fusion of the two branches of the profession, solicitors and barristers, solicitors did not "appear" in the high courts, and barristers and*

courts, and barristers, to appear, had to be briefed by solicitors. Barristers with good connections among solicitors of heavy calendars consequently received more briefs and made more money. Top-class barristers would naturally grow into heavy-calendared ones. The movement to fusion was led by attorney K.C. Burke, son of Rudolph Burke q.v.

barristers

Burke

Manley depended on the Crown for his first case; i.e. ~~as a Court defen~~

as a Court-appointed counsel for the defense in a murder trial; by coincidence, in Spanish Town where he, as a hard-riding schoolboy, racing his mount from ~~Belmont~~ to high school, had his first brush with the law when he was stopped and warned by the town constable.

Belmont

notes

In ~~notes~~ made after his retirement, he reported his advent on the legal scene:

"I will never forget the moment I rose in Court to ask my first question. All the cross-examination had been written out, with many branches. If (the) witness said, 'no,' I asked a different question and we proceeded accordingly. I had been laid up (ill) for three weeks and the work done on that simple case was tremendous. Leslie (Clerk) came with me to Spanish Town. First witness ended his story. I rose. ~~My mouth was dry, my tongue felt swollen. I stood~~ My mouth was dry, my tongue felt swollen. I stood silent for nearly a minute. Then the months of suto-suggestion came to rescue me. I felt an onrush of great energy and confidence. I asked the question. I ~~aws~~ off. What a moment. What a strange thing. This long preparation, this near prostration, then the sudden burst of light.

was

It was a burst of light that would hold, and swell and lead the judiciary in a manner no other lawyer ever equalled.

His legal career "started slowly. But two very exciting cases caught public attention in a way that could not happen now and the speed of the growth of my practice was almost legendary." The two cases were the ~~Spaulding~~ Spaulding murder trial in 1924 and the Walker murder trial in 1927.

Sapulding

After he found the rooms in Duke Street for Chambers, and the modest apartment at ~~Hope~~ Hope Road, it was by that time an easier descent from Mandeville into the heat, ~~fro~~ Edna, than a straight rush from chilly England into Kingston.

Hope

for

~~Hope Road was a good living, with~~

Hope Road was a good road for living, with fine mountains at the back and the famed poinciannas flaming in the green of the Liguanea savannah. But out in the underbush, something stirred.

~~Among the prized possessions in the lightly furnished flat of the impecunious couple were~~

ished flat of the impecunious young couple were the thirty cups and trophies he had won in sports. Today, the trophies would have been national memorabilia but for a sneak thief and an open window. One wag thought at the time that the burglar was ~~a hungry collector since the only other item stolen~~ a hungry collector since the only other item stolen was a tin of Douglas' Glaxo.

In lieu of the Glaxo, tinned cows' milk, they acquired a goat, a shaggy *Egyptian Black*, from the soldiers at Up Park Camp.

ONE evening as they sat in the living room of their upstairs Hope Road flat, ~~settled~~, presumably for esoteric reasons, in Arawk Octagonal (the eight-sided huts of these Early Jamaicans, however, were for purposes strictly utility, to baffle the lunatic hurricane winds seeking solid, fullfaced obstacles to wreak their fury on,) in walked Alec Clarke, the ~~Han-over mulatto cousin who would one day proposed the~~ over mulatto cousin who would one day propose the fiction of Arawak blood and never a nod toward Africa. Beanpole tall and lean, as any country boy home from foreign parts he ~~had~~ furnished to illustrate his success. He was home from Cuba "with all the airs of a Cuban grandee," recalls Manley; ties that matched his socks that matched his display handkerchief, his anguished hair pomaded, "full of airs and graces." They talked of this and that. Perhaps as Cousin Norman spoke of his war, Cousin Alec, never to be outdone, founded his own affrays. Then may have been born the later stories of condlicts in Spain and ~~Morocco, although never been of specific battles.~~ and Morocco, although never been of specific battles. Of his courage there has never been doubt; no less of his inventions. Alexander Bustamante, nee Alec Clarke, was ever a raconteur.

styled,

had

that

LATER they moved to Worthington Avenue, at that time close to the outskirts of the growing Kingston. They sold the single-buggy Norman had been using to his Duke Street Chambers and invested in a two-year-old Essex and a couple of linen dusters for the chalky roads. They remained at Worthington for several months, including a move across the road to a larger house called "Newara Yahlia," two words of reputed Indian origin to be an invocation believed reputed Indian origin believed to be an invocation to Allah. Well, then, be ~~tant~~ as it may. It is a fact that the following year Edna had her second son, Michael, and the *Egyptian Balck* was working double time.

Naturally fond of horses as both were, they had horses, among them a racer named "House of Cards" which was to achieve a minor fame on Mr. Dolphy's track at Marvely in Edna's gymkhana appearances. In 1924, Manley acquired a place in the woods outside Kingston called Drumblair.

chapter 7

BUT WHEN NORMAN MANLEY bought the Drumblair property, Edna was not in Jamaica. She was in England, with her son, Douglas, on a homesick voyage to Cornwall, England. He feared she may have bolted. (~~Michael~~ would not be born until the following year.) He bought Drumblair from a fellow named Volney Rennie on a loan of \$2,200, partially secured ~~by~~ his life insurance. It was bought in the period he was calling his "re-birth;" but viewed with less eye-rolling, it was simply an N.W. style retrieve, a battle-smart young veteran going into his back-up trenches; or, on another of his planes, the sincere, deeply felt wisdom of the honest gambler. It had to do with Edna.

Michael

by

The purchase of Drumblair had a similiarity with his English conquest. In the years of his nervous collapse, when he thought he had lost her, before their marriage, he had taken to the woods, arguing that alone, in the solitude and under the sheer weight of the English forest, his anguish would diminish. Now, in the ~~Jamaican~~ days, it was to Drumblair, the nearest thing he could find to a forest within easy *Essex* reach of Kingston. They had seen Drumblair once before and he knew she loved it.

Jamaican

knew

EDNA, in England, was fearing that she was a run-away wife. As a young sisteen-year-old country girl from Cornwall, she had been terrified by London, smoky, noisy, stately barbarous, half-way into its century of ugly growth. But there had been music and museums, parks and theatres, and a torrent ~~fo~~ art. ~~Jamaica was a wasteland that had exiled sanity~~ art. Jamaica was a wasteland that had exiled sanity. A land of shrewd, hard, flairless men in two-tone shoes and their semi-literate meddling wives.

of

f

~~Frontier country with an inhabited settlement~~

Frontier country with an inhabited settlement of limestone streets, queues of open warehouses, one theatre mostly closed, and a loud, undereducated, overdressed oligarchy guarding their stolen privileges with the murderous intent of robber barons. A modest two-story edifice in ~~East~~ Street housed the only national nod towards the arts; the redbrick Institute had a kind of nose-in-the-air aloofness, ready to do a little business if you could summon ~~the~~ courage to cross the threshold. Some spinsters gave piano lsssons, and a diocesan chior ~~sang~~ occasionally. Claud McKay, the only promising poet of power, had migrated to America. A handful of watercolour artists brushed their delicate talents. ~~The~~ land and ~~its~~ powerful folk fecundity, lay fallow.

East

the

sang

The its

But a sense of renewal was surging against those bonds of remembered bondage that were somehow immobilising the natural wisdom and song of the African, people. Soon, now, the Breakers were due. Edna Manley would be one fo the Breakers; although for now she could only rage at the misused strength ~~of her new black and white, rich and poor, compa~~ of her new black and white, rich and poor, compariots, each waging defeat on the other. They were wearing her down and she had to go, or hang fire. She had once broken from her mother's punishing love grip, and moved to London above a fish-shop. Now she broke loose and sailed for England with her baby son, Douglas, Halfway convinced that the mirrage was over.

of

IT was the best time of year in the foothills, a clear Fall light and a nice crisp to the nights. And he missed her, especially over Christmas, but held in well. ~~And~~ that Christmas he gave her a unique gift. He did "something really hard" for her. He gave up smoking for a month. It was a truly grand gesture for he was at that time a full-house smoker: pipe, cigar and cigarette.

And

So he courted her afresh (she was 24, he 31) with all the elm of his roguish Grandfather Manley, that ardent white travelling salesman who had swooned them in the ~~mid-land~~ beat from Porus to Mandeville, and produced a handful of love-children among the black peasant ladies of the hill country. And Edna was soon off-balance under the impact of those letters concerning the dream house at Drumblair, and the two-seater second-hand Durrant automobile he was dickering to buy, and the great white moon he wrote eloquently of, coming over the mountain.

mid-island

And also the artful easing-in of his success in earning \$55 in one week, and the story (this one very sneaky but effective) of Tiger, her large, black, mixed-ancestry, fiercely-loved, savagely-protective pup roaming the countryside seeking her; and that her friends stood about, missing her. And that a mutually loathed one had seemed pleased ~~that~~ she had weakened and run for England.

And
that she

And as that masterly campaign progressed, with its subtle changes of pace and direction, it now appeared to Edna's whirling mind that the marriage was not in ruins after all. That it could not only work, but be positively ecstatic. It was not long before she was passionately longing to be back "in your arms . . . all tingling." When she returned after five months in England, it was with bag and baggage — furniture she brought for Drumblair and wood-carving tools* — and the decision to have another child.

It was N.W.'s first effort at negotiating and was concluded with spectacular success. Michael was born in Nuttall Hospital, Kingston, ~~on~~ December 10, 1924.

on

**It was a parting that would change her life. Edna, who had left Jamaica as a modeller in plaster, would return a wood-carver, the medium she was to master so exquisitely her fame would go out to the world.*

chapter 7

But she had reconed without the tenacity of the ~~old~~ axeman. He wooed her anew. He wooed her by the oldest male trick since Adam lost his lodgings. A home of her own. Drumblair. The house was shabby, in need of paint but sound at the elbows. Above all, it had twenty-five acres, mighty pulling to a roaming country girl. Acres that meadowed and gullied and rolled joyously at the foot of the Blue Mountains, beautiful for riding and ~~growing~~ roses and pineapples and corn. And fine too for what he had in mind, to shield his wife from the barrens that had fled her from him: from the acarpous pomposity of the saltfish merchant elite and their wives who haunted the front porch of the Myrtle Bank, the highly upholstered hotel on Harbour Street. The Manleys, ~~he promised her in a letter, would "follow no so~~ he promised her in a letter, would "follow no social patterns" but be "free to live our own lives, to make ~~friends as we please and to develop interests where~~ friends as we please and to develop interests where we care to." Drumblair had land; "so that though we belonged to town we could imagine we lived in the country and keep horses and cows." He put a builder to work restoring the fine old house.

old

growing

DRUMBLAIR WAS A NEW beginning. It marked the creative years, a time of gifts so prolific, they would provide an abiding influence. The property occupied much of a curving leafy lane known as the Old Church Road.

The house sat well back from the public path, reached by a driveway which circled in front of the verandah. Genteel, rather ~~than~~ elegant, it had fine floors and panels. It was quickly made over into an ~~image of the talented young~~

than

image of the talented young couple who occupied it with their two sons. In what one source has described as a "curious move," Drumblair would be sold in 1928 and bought back by the Manleys in 1933, a negotiation that was hung either on a secret psychokinetic activity that guaranteed the Old Church Road would never let them go, or a deep cunning in real estate skullduggery, or sheer blind luck since they both so loved the place.

It seemed to have been the latter; yet, so ~~sus~~ suspiciously out of ~~step~~ with Norman's careful approach at the purchase, it required further probe. And, sure enough, it was the work of Edna's antic will. Recently she told it with chuckle:

sus-step

"Norman had been working too hard. I talked him into selling Drumblair and taking a holiday. We sold it to a German-American man living in Jamaica, for a good profit, and travelled. Then we bought it back again after the owner died." They lived at Bedfore House, a large house and property nearby until the return to Drumblair.

The ~~grounds~~ of Drumblair had a little of Guana-boa Vale abouts rolling foothilly acrages, laying its boa Vale about its rolling ~~foothilly~~ acreages, laying close to where the Liguanea commences to swell into the Port Royal mountains. Besides the house, they had a stable for their riding stock and a garden for N.W. Both loved mountains and as at Belmont, his childhood's first home, there was a clear view of the Blue Mountains from the north windows. It was a similarity that may have engaged Manley's responses when he chose the property; soon they were both running off into the mountains.

grounds
foothilly

Drumblair won and held a special affection to that remarkable generation of poets, writers, politicians, lawyers, industrialists, painters, sculptors, scientists, dancers, statemen, democratic leaders and the better nobility who ~~frequented~~ the place for so many years.

frequented

Even at middle age, and past it, the Manleys had a faculty for attracting the young and gifted. If his sometime impatience was from the first to cause traumas among the less shining acquaintances, ~~his~~ approval nevertheless endured through many abrasions. For his warmth was only banked, not gone.

his

He had been a shy youth; not, it appears, because of uncertainty, but because of a mind whose native incisiveness ~~dictated~~ an unwinking fix on facts. He could listen as long as it took, but a ~~profile~~ sculptured in the cold classicism of a Seneca, and a preference for logic, often ~~looked~~ out intimacy.

dictated
profile
locked

"He had," says Leslie Clerk who came closest to being one, "no intimates."

He had, of course, several friends. His wit, wisdom and aplomb attracted the clever and the sophisticated. The deep verandahs at Drumblair grew ~~famous~~ for *soirees* of cards, conversation, and that light flogging of political ideas which the times allowed. But the bottom submerged majority of his countrymen were still out of sight and barely on the edge of mind. What passion there had been in the country for the shoeless ones, had been interred sixty years before with Paul Bogle and George William Gordon.*

famous

The land was suffocating in its middleliness. Claude McKay and Marcus Garvey were fleeing to Harlem, U.S.A. seeking concern, or bent on stirring it. In a land once noted for its risings and riots in response to the rights of man, there had been a ringing silence for two generations.

SO far, the young Manley had gained success in two fields: the prodigious performances which made him a legend in the college athletic contests, and academically as the first obviously mixed-blood to obtain a Rhodes. These were the visible, highly lauded exploits. His scholarship at Oxford was less noticeable, while typhoid and the war had kept him from adult athletics. His new field of the law lay before him.

had

How challenging was the field?

The Jamaican bar was small in size and middle-weight in quality. J.A.G. Smith's advocacy was strong on the legalities but mild in techniques.** No new barristers had been admitted to the Jamaican bar in eleven years before Manley. The only King's Counsel, Philip Stren, was already aging. The brilliant incoming young man brought a whiff of fresh air into the musty corridors of the tired old courts. Litigants liked what was showing and flocked to his practice, to commence for him a 32-year run that ceased

The
Stern,

*Two Jamaican patriots hanged for insurrection in 1865, now National Heroes.

**But sometimes he juggled the Bench. As in this dialogue before a High judge:

Judge: That's foolish, Mr. Smith.

Smith: I am not as foolish as Your Honour (PAUSE, Judge throws up his head, gasps in the courtroom) takes me to be.

only when he retired to become Premier of Jamaica. Very early in his career, a former Chief Justice* was already publicly labelling him a "genius." Another Chief Justice** spoke of the "ability of his mind." The fact was, his presence in court was a promise, tacitly acceded to by the Bench, of sound clear advocacy which most often facilitated their coming to judgement.

Bench,

For these decades, there was no important case at trial in which Manley did not figure. But even while he was winning an unchallenged reputation in Public Buildings East, the lower King Street civic block housing the High Court, the politics, which was to disengage the law from his life, was going into gear a scant few hundere yards north. On The Parade.

was
East,

*Sir Adrian Clarke in the Alexander murder trial.

**Sir John Carberry, who, as a young barrister, was associated with Manley in Chambers, 1915-27

1925-27

Manley was never avuncular in the courtroom. As a rule, he gave no quarter to opposing Counsel. H.R. Ballysingh, a Crown Counsel and frequent adversary, on an occasion, after the Great Advocate had been especially merciless in scoring a judicial edge, was impelled to wail in the face of a startled court: "Cho, Mr. Manley, a big Q-C like you!"

frequent
startled

It was a gain anyway, and Bustamante was able to return to the pier with a fresh success to match and overtake Manley's. At that later meeting, the strike was called off. Thus was begun the Bustamante legend of negotiating, more posture than skill (although posture encompasses a skill) and a ubiety so dramatic that at times it constituted a magic which never wore off; and was only stalled in two elections by the other genius of Manley's intellect, and his organisation men.

A time had ended. And begun.

THE REDBRICK SIDEWALK EAST of the Victoria Park, on The Parade, is the cradle of Jamaica's modern politics. The sidewalk was then a kind of platform rising about eight rungs off the street where it levelled and ran the length of the Coke Chapel along East Parade and East Queen Street. Coke Methodist Chapel is a landmark in red brick gothic to match the sidewalk. The sidewalk was, for better than three decades, the main forum of every office seeker in the city. The speakers' platform, on The Parade side, faced the Park, where, by day, ancient banyans drooped shady and cool to the green curved-back benches.

Chapel
and

The banyans sheltered in comfort a whole generation of touts, orators and candidates for small offices, reading newspapers and arguing to the caw of crows and the clatter of electric trams switching on the tracks outside.

candidates

It was, towards evening, a short matter of crossing the street to a platform exactly high enough for effective haranguing, wide and flat enough for a limited

little limited dramatics as points were driven home to the auditorium in the broad street below, free of traffic save for the occasional horse-drawn hackney.

~~Although the voters' rolls were small the cam-~~

Although the voters' rolls were small the campaign quality was vigorous and crowds flocked to The Parade. In the flicker of three-burner kerosene lamps on poles (wealthier contestants afforded carbide flares,) the rhetoric rattled from such pros as Leonard P. Waison, Bain Alves, the young Vivian Durham, Joseph Kennedy, and the doyen of them all, Alfred "Doc" Mends, a short, thickset brown man of gallery eloquence and Napoleonic gestures whose libels enjoyed a generally accepted legality since he unfailingly prefixed his insults with "pilitical." Opponents for years fell into one of two categories, "political rascals," or "political nimcompoops." The specialist speakers were men g

crowds

Joseph

specialist speakers were men famed for their invective and gusty humour, who could and did switch sides if the opponents' liberality grew into offers that made it foolish to refuse.

The citizens had more lamplit fun than a yardful of kids in a full-moon Anancy night.

The Jamaican banana grower was on badly exposed ground. Fruit prices were fixed by the UFCo's policy of the day. Even worse, there were ~~no~~ no guarantees that his fruit would be bought at all. Only as the Company's programme willed. "It was in these circumstances," N.W. Manley has said, "that a few brave and farsighted men began to believe that it was possible to plan for a co-operative big enough to ~~own their ships, and strong enough to force the own~~ own ~~their~~ own ships, and strong enough to force the their Company to bargain with them."

MANLEY, the lawyer, asks his own book, an unavoidable but reluctant conclusion, ~~since~~ much of the clout in his political career came from the insights into the Jamaican character he had gained through his work in law. He was to defend the high and low, rich and poor, shredding prosecution witness* and causing such edginess among high court justices that for fear of losing in the Courts of Appeal, they would rather fudge than adjust. A successful civil negotiation was to prepare the ground for every ~~social~~ reform in Jamaica since 1938, the year when the

since

tion was to prepare the ground for every social reform in Jamaica since 1938, the year when the State took notice.

social

**Especially "handwriting experts" whose richly embossed certificates emanated from clip-our coupons.*

Yet, the truth is that the early Manley looked the least likely political fellow. He grew up on a farm but his instincts were trained to the bourgeoisie for he was the owner's son. He defended shanty town in the courts but sat in the Stewards' box at the track. And in the event that the electoral vote became the property of all Jamaican citizens, poor folk would outnumber his own kind ten to one. It would require a miracle to gain their trust.

Original 91 (2)

LIGHTS burnt late at Drumblair too but for other reasons. Now in his thirties, Manley's capacity for work was dismaying to his adversaries. He had a knack of unlocking details. His law briefs, ~~closely~~ studied through exhaustive research, powerful perception and an uncanny memory, became an avalanche as eager solicitors sought his services.

closely

Like all courtroom giants, he was a consummate actor. The chased profile under the theatrical flow of hair escaping at the back of his wig, the eloquence and striking gestures, the ability by the ~~lay~~ of his head or the shrug of ~~his~~ robe to compel attention, gave him a style so personal, that, though widely imitated by many younger lawyers, denied a true copy. It was a curious side to his character that he seemed to exude the same warmth to a jury as he did in the intimacy of his home or among those he liked, but hardly elsewhere.

lay
his

~~His emoto~~

His emotional orchestration was for the chamber, not the symphony hall.

His pull on the great crowds that would, later in his life, hang on his words from the political hustings, was activated by hard practice and his unquestioned integrity. They knew the odds were that he was *right*, and were certain that he was honest.

For years, the lights at Drumblair were darkened only some four hours most nights; he would make up the loss with an extravagant *six* hours sleep some nights.

His success was long, and colossal. The, "Yes, Mr. Manley," from a high court Bench when the Presiding Judge called on the defence, came to be known as the commencement of a virtuoso performance which was, for force, skill and eloquence, unmatched then as now.

The profession quickly ~~recognised~~ his remarkable gifts. Solicitors and the growing bar were soon filing the seats of the courts in which he appeared. Many young lawyers had unabashedly taken to lurking in the seedy law library (then serving the Supreme Court on the second floor of the East Block) in the hope of obtaining a gratuitous opinion on a knotty point. His natural generosity ~~for~~ a while obscured the play. When he did catch on, he took to visiting the library on a Sunday morning, but soon a surprising number on a Sunday morning, but soon a surprising number lawyers were breaking the fourth commandment.

recognized

for

Nobody then foresaw that the miracle would be wrapped inside a civil court action involving one of the earliest and most powerful multinational corporations.

Meanwhile, the shocking workload he was carrying and the tensions of dissatisfaction with *sheer law* as his reasonable life purpose, took its toll. Made a King's Counsel in 1932, he was soon awarded his first ulcer.

purpose

HE had settled into no familiar pattern. Forty-five years later, looking back, short weeks before his death, he was satisfied that in the days of adapt-or-diminish, he had "lived (his) own life in (his) own way" and flourished. But his life being largely with the law, and resolute as he was to his decisions, his own way could lock him into plights where his ego goosed his judgement to disastrous consequences. One such was to bedevil him all his political life.

resolute

It came about this way.

The unlikely alliance of Marcus Garvey and wealthy Jewish corporation lawyer Lewis Ashenheim* was one of the peculiarities of politics. Ashenheim was head of a firm of solicitors often associated with Manley in High Court cases. Ethically but recklessly, in the teeth of the wind rushing out of

of

**Actually, such alliances in Jamaica were common a century and two before when the disenfranchised Jews made compact with the equally deprived blacks to shake the Anglo-Saxon/Caucasian dominance.*

black consciousness and pride as Garvey's propositions and predictions proved agreeable to black ambitions, Manley risked a lasting imperilment by placing himself in professional legal opposition to the Garvey-Ashenheim side of a court matter.

Before that, Manley, unfortunately but in accordance with the law, had, by *Opinion*, supported the city council's ruling that Garvey's seat was vacated the city council's ruling that Garvey's seat was vacated since he had been absent from three council meetings; due to being in jail for contempt of court. (The day the *Opinion* was given in the Council Chamber, N.W., and his future fellow National Hero, squared off and nearly came to blows. Garvey, a beefy energetic man, chuckled at his slight but sinewy challenger's invitation to "step outside," and declined. Thus was lost an incomparably hilarious footnote to history.)

Worse was to come a few months later when again he placed his legal skills at the service of a lady litigant suing Garvey for an alleged libel published in his paper *The Blackman*. Garvey, the layman, lost to Manley, the lawman (Garvey had argued his own case,) but it was barely perceptible victory.

case,) but it was a barely perceptible victory. Manley's own words on the outcome tell of the bruises he sustained: "He made a brilliant closing address to a Special Jury hearing the case. He was witty and amusing (taking) every advantage open to a litigant who defends himself. Though I won the case, which was really quite indefensible, he got that jury to award a bare half the damages we had expected It was a fine performance."

The most famous of the three legal clashes was that in which an American UNIA official named George Mark brought action against the Jamaican UNIA for unpaid wages. Mark, with N.W. Manley arguing, was successful; and Liberty Hall, the UNIA headquarters on Upper King Street, a valuable block-wide property, went under the hammer for settlement. The local UNIA, in effect, Garvey ~~appeared~~ through their solicitor and won. But Liberty Hall had already been sold.

appealed

Ashenheim, desperate for Garvey's support of his own political ambitions, turned ~~up~~ at the auction and made an uncharacteristic loudmouthed protest which cost him the then whopping fine of \$300 for contempt of court. Then in one of those curious ~~turn-about in courtrooms manner~~

up

turn-about in courtroom manners, it was Manley who appeared for the Jamaica UNIA and won what he called "substantial ~~damages~~," enlarged, he believed, by the faulty decision charging Ashenheim with contempt.

damages,"

**The island is wryly referred to as The Rock by Jamaicans abroad; the economic exiles seeking shekels while unceasingly scheduling The Return.*

comfortable cousinly request, in the early Thirties, to read over a contract Busta was negotiating for the purchase of an apiary. To clear the document of any hidden stings, Cousin Alec consulted the bright one of the family and was assured that the contract would hold up. The second was the famous Manley intervention (along with J.A.G. Smith) during the Thirty-Eight Troubles which freed Busta from the Tower Street gaol and hurtled them both into politics.

After all, what Ashenheim had, granted, loudly, declared was that anybody who bought Liberty Hall would live to regret it, since, he, Ashenheim, expected to win his appeal. Which he did.

The stories of Manley's tilts with Garvey were amplified and made bodeful by his political opponents in later years. "Any suggestion that I had any thing else to do with Marcus Garvey is totally untrue," he wrote vigorously in 1969 in a ~~last at-onf~~ effort to lay the ghost with which he said the Labour Party had sought to embarrass him over many years. Anti-Garveyism would be a very real impediment to the success of any politician in Jamaica. And so it was that the explosive quality of "black" politics, which Garvey's great lifework was to subsequently entrench in Jamaica affairs, was always critical in the reckoning of both N.W. and Busta — both undeniably ~~"brown" or mulatto", and targets for ruthless~~ "brown" or "mulatto," and targets for ruthless rejection by the poeple if either showed a grade-by-shade leaning; any bias towards the fairer-skin rock-dwellers.*

last strong

"Both Bustamante and I," N.W. once confessed, "in our years of (Party) growth, were careful to refrain from references to Garvey and the UNIA," And so neither ever lost the black mass support each depended on.

On the two occasions that Lawyer Manley had a professional involvement with Busta, the first was a

As he journeyed up and down the land, practising the law that was, already in his own mind, apprentice to his politics, he came under scrutiny of concerned men whose growing "look to Msnley" was assuming a kind of cult. For he had the kind of identity for which the young Jamaicans of the literary and debating clubs had begun to vaguely hunger.

clubs

~~He was a strong dark presen~~

He was a strong dark presence, accomplished as hell, in a sea of vapid tea-slopping English faces that floated like ghosts behind the jalousies of wealthy suburban St. Andrew. He had proven that he could out-run, out-jump, out-talk them all, He was handsomer than the malarial sahibs and an authentic war hero to boot. Above all — *swallow your collar studs, Britons!* — ~~he~~ had been to Oxford. So they boasted about him, partly self-mockery, partly true.

he

AND YET, NOT EVEN in those younger days when he lived the life of the young gent-about-the-upper-town, did he lose touch with the marketplace; for his choice ~~for~~ fun and games held a social luck. While he did not turn his back on the stewards' box at the tract, nor sit in the cheaper seats at his beloved boxing nights,* it turned out later to be sound political collateral that his public sports happened to be folk-sports. Chess or tennis would not have served as well.

Almost casually, he was being groomed; in spite of address and profession, and a style perilously close to hauteur.

~~But in the bosom of home, that side of cool,~~

But in the bosom of home, that side of the cool, aloof young lawyer, hardly ever on view away from his family, was, as usual, there; droll ~~frankly~~ comic, marshalling with a dry wit a personal pack of fun-devils. His love of pranks and unconventional ways could reduce his family to appressive shivers or throw them into howling laughter.

He was a man notoriously careless of his own safety, thinking nothing of mounting high roofs or going to the top of giant trees by an illogical system of double ladders that never failed to work, A great

**In 1937, both he and Edna were Board members of the Jamaica Boxing Association, he as Chairman.*

lover of classical music, a discerning critic, his own performance however never endeavoured beyond virtuoso blowings of ~~the~~ mouth-organ. (His expert ~~stroking of the wondrously indecent folk-montos~~ stroking of the wondrously indecent folk-mentos still jellies memories.)

On the long summer-days at Nomdmi, their cabin-in-the-sky in the Bule Mountains near Guava Ridge, he could cully give range to the imp that was removed

never far removed from his most serious moments. (Time and again, in courtroom and parliament, the Imp would show up, in apparent innocence, yet suspiciously enabling to his case.)

The new politics took hold and rapidly replaced the old talk-shop on the Coke Chapel steps, throwing out the professional touts whose flamboyant oratory had no grip. The long, arduous walk to 'Thirty-Eight had begun.

N.W. MANLEY saw history for what it was: an infinity of mirrors; images held in the shaky hands of historians unaware of the state of the art. While the "growing and expanding middleclass" had been the pioneers in working for "Jamaica as a possible national unit," the peasant farmer represented "the most stable element in the community — patient, humorous, accepting life and whatever was brought into it with great fidelity and tenacity."

It was Guanaboa and Drumblair. Tiller and elite. And for now, they were walking well together, and he was satisfied. One day it would be his political gift to focus them in himself; and execute the political victory he was beginning to want. Meanwhile, others would commence the long walk.

But the hunger was not widespread. A sprinkling of young intellectuals had discovered Karl Marx and was cautiously brushing their fingers over the mosaic proposed to fetch political power to the working class. Yet, Marx's philosophy had its foundation and growth in an industrial rather than agrarian economy; it owed its soul more to the tight wage-bond between mill-owner and hand, than to the at-large irrelation of scattered peasant farmers whose one-acre demesne was home all the year. (Farm labourers on the sugar estates were vastly seasonally employed.) Bauxite was thirty years away and manufacturing factories further.

mill-owner

The wait for an industrial working class would be crunching to the hopes of the small in numbers but passionate and impatient intellectuals. There was, as yet, no large black middleclass, although the urge existed, strongly, among the sons and daughters of the rising artisans. And it was here, among these, that the Marxian irony happened.

the

The young, hopeful *bourgeoisie* were clamouring for a transfer of power to the "middle-class;" for them to hold until the "working-class" was ready.

But irony is often a shortcut to reality.

The new thinking gained strength as the harsh days of unemployment and feckless Colonial rule wore on. The new enquirers replacing the old barkers on the Coke Chapel steps were bright, often travelled young men, in whose minds erudite lawyers could no more be put of politics than *Das Kapital* be out of print.

replacing

True, the blacks had acquired sufficient votes, years before, even on the limited suffrage, to become kingmakers; but because they had no precedents, only those heads which could approximate a West, minister paradigm had any hope for a coronation. Generally, the most likely successful candidate had in him the least folk.

successful

And precisely because they lacked precedents, they had diagnosed their political problems by instinct and worked at the solutions with laconic good sense: and would finally overpower the sense of inferiority which had been so carefully nourished in their psyche by skilled Empire builders and local caretakers. It had weakened their inward struggles towards a belief in their own capabilities and caused them to self-efface crazy.

precisely

overpower
had

But even while they practised a public dislike for personal political gain, they were pushing secretive shoulders any Son of the Soil who seemed likely to burrow to the top. They could laugh at Leonard Waison, a not uncomical political tout, but their tears abd bottle anger were for Garvey and his enemies

dislike

laugh

enemies.

An effective weapon of the white/brown Empire caretakers, the elite maaintenance men, was the virtual non-appearance of black achievers in the Press. The newspapers of the day bear a ghastly identity to the American journals' confinement of black life to the

newspapers

THERE WAS NO LEADER so the walk did not kick into a march. Kenneth George Hill, an articulate young journalist, with his National Reform Association, came close. In a lesser way did the union movement, came close. In a lesser way did the union movement of tall, thin, hardworking A.G.S. "Father" Coombs.* St. William Grant, an honest earnest war veteran who had ~~but~~ his eye tooth in Marcus Gervay's Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), was holding his regular 'banyan lectures' under the great banyan trees in the Victoria Park, unaware of his destined meeting with Bustamante and the role of John the Baptist that would lose him his political head.

cut his

There were other indications of the new awareness. E.L. Allen, a diminutive battler for elementary school teachers' rights had taken over the Clarendon Parish Teachers' Association and was bombarding the press on their plight; first ~~of~~ the new young classroom people who would cut such a swathe in Jamaican politics. Father Gladstone Wilson, the Roman Catholic intellectual and teacher-priest, ~~who~~, but for the strictures of his Faith would have been an activist, the strictures of his Faith would have been an activist, was lecturing on such erudite subjects as "The Origin

of

who,

**Both would win seats in the House of Representative years later. Coombs served as Minister of Communications in the PNP Governem*

Government.

and End of Human Society" to heavy listenership, including Bustamante. Several Citizens' Associations, begun as suburban improvement groups, were turning ~~their~~ eyes from sidewalk mending to political fancing.

their

American journals' confinement of black life to the crime pages. The annual beauty contests sponsored by the Daily Gleaner featured only white, ~~or~~ mulatto, entrants.* Thus was reflected the real colour bar which locked most Jamaicans from hope or clarity; they went to the back pews from memory. A very thin sprinkle of browns and blacks had by hard push penetrated the edge of St. Andrew society; but no blacks held important jobs in banks nor most offices; nor ranked above non-commissioned officers in the constabulary or military; nor held rectorship in fashionable Anglican, nor any catholic, churches.

or

Hardly any voices rose in protest certainly not among the buba-kin offsprings of darker-skinned progenitors working on an escape route and terrified at being caught in consanguineous associations.** By their treasured "tax" or "property" votes, blacks had sent several teachers, planters and lawyers to the legislature, but none with the charisma to lead them out of political wish into reality.

N.W. Manley looked like the one who could do it. He was young, rich or capable of becoming rich, ~~handsome, eloquent, dars~~

handsome, eloquent, darkskinned enough for identi-

**The idiocy was resumed, although abated, after a lapse of several years while the Socialists governed. In March 1983, as HMS Invincible, with crew-member Queen Elizabeth's son Prince Andrew aboard, drew into Montego Bay, some footling Jamaican whites in the north-side city, planning a picnic for the officers, stated they would be inviting "fifty of the right girls" to entertain them. Daily News columnist Desmond Allen caustically remarking on the difficulty "nowadays to get fifty white girls." observed that "The whole thing smacks of high class prostitution."*

Desmond

Others were coming out of the woodwork. Morgan's Harbour club which had been closed, was re-opening. A small news item declared that the watering-hole, would soon be in business as before: i.e., catering to foreign tourists and Jamaican "members." Members, of course, would have to be first accepted, then pay a high annual fee for the privilege of elbowing up and slaking with the visitors.

***Fair-skinned Vera Manley was blithely writing in England: "There is little or no prejudice in that Island of the Sun."*

writing

ty, owned racing colours and held a seat on the Jockey Club,* the then exclusivity ~~to~~ Englishmen, rich jews and the less fallow mulattoes. Manley could be the one to do it; but he was not "in politics," nor displayed any real inclination.

of

He was a lawyer, a superb one, but the country was not seeking a super-lawyer; it was looking for a super-parrot who understand power and passion and ~~could explosively take these most unreable elements~~ could explosively take these most unreliable elements to just short of the critical mass (although there were some who ~~was~~ the solutions coming only after a nasty boom!) And yet, notwithstanding, it was a law action which closed ~~the~~ grip of the people on him, as their standard bearer. The old order was about, so to speak, to slip on a banana peel.

saw

the

**In 1936, his horse (or rather, Edna's) Roysterer won the big triple - Jamaica Guineas, Jamaica Derby and the Eclipse Stakes.*

Chapter 12

WEARING HIS PROCONSUL'S PANOPLY of plumed hat and short sword, the Governor spoke from his "throne" about the not-so-good year gone. The date was Tuesday, March 10, 1937. Sir Edward Brandis Denham, a rotund, peasant-featured Englishman was opening the year's Legislature with the old familiar fardel that cited the colony's success, glossed ~~its failures, and promised future felicity for its li~~ its failures, and promised future felicity for its luck in being one of the "bright gems of the Empire."

While Denham made an early acknowledgement of a fall in expected revenue, creating, instead of a £10,000 surplus, a deficit of five times that amount, the Commander-in-Chief could, towards the end of his report, ~~look~~ look into the future and declare: "I do not think there can be any doubt that the great ~~resources~~ resources of the island will be able to cope with the demands made on them during the coming year, in spite of the ~~made on them during the coming year, in spite of the~~ many problems and difficulties which we have still to meet."

The blame for the year's failure was not of course placed where it belonged: on poor, non-options planning, for this would have led back through questioning minds, to Britain, and the whole question of Colonial rule. Instead, it was laid on the weather,

Chapter 10

"the storms and hurricanes which have in the past been responsible for the setbacks which the Colony has sustained."

It was true that rainstorms, near the end of 1935, had caused an effect on the 1936/37 banana crop, but there were other accountables, such as the mysterious spiriting away of the profits on rum exports. "It is difficult to account for this loss in an industry which has had a particularly good year," Denham said plaintively. He also cited the annual heavy drag on revenue by the limping railway system, and the acceleration in the movement of job-seeking country-folk to the towns. He hoped to halt the unwanted migration by a rural works programme.

acceleration
wanted

Yet, another uneasy cloud on the horizon had appeared in the north, ninety miles off the coast, where the American-controlled ~~Cuban~~ authorities, their appetite for low-cost energetic Jamaican cane-cutters blunted by the fall in sugar prices, were not too politely suggesting that they be repatriated at Jamaican expense. "The Cuban government, I am sure, are good neighbours . . . and will avoid any embarrassment to this government."

Cuban

Nevertheless, Governor Denham took a clear-eyed view of the future when he added that "with a rapidly increasing population and the risk of its being further augmented from outside (Cuba,) it is essential that the policy of agricultural development and a programme of works should be steadily pursued."

But, in the Speech, in making the customary bow to Empire by observing that his constituents were a "happy, peaceful and contented people," poor Denham lost his fine sighting. For by the time Throne Speech Day rolled around again next year, his "happy, contented people" ~~were~~ readying to riot in the streets.

and

were

THE next (1938) Throne Speech Day was on Tuesday, March 8, when the in-giving of his stewardship led Denham to intone: "it ~~was~~ indeed been a good year," a statement based curiously on the inflationary information that "imports were considerably higher than they have been for the past six years."

has
infla-

And the causes?

Why, the weather, dammit!

He was in to it within three minutes of the commencement of the Speech: "Our balance would have been still larger had it not been for a somewhat dull ~~December caused by the bad weather at the end~~

December caused by the bad weather at the end of the year which induced people to be more economical in their expenditure." And he declared that the past year had been "prosperous."

economic-

But prosperous for whom?

Jobs were scarcer than they had ever been.

School-leaving youths, had, in the majority, no hope for regular employment for years to come; an economic fault spreading so close to disaster that the usually tightfisted government was dipping into its Earthquake Relief Fund to borrow \$2,000 towards the \$5,000 required for a Boy's Club "to meet the needs of unemployed youths and boys in the provision of healthy instruction and amusement."

that the

for

Despite his unbeaten speech, the Governor was a prudent man with a stomach for accepting harsh prophecy. Just to be on the safe side, he was also instituting a loyalty-incentive bonus of \$8,000 "for good conduct" in the police force; a prudence that

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE banana export trade in Jamaica is credited to a Captain Dow Barker, a 19th century American sea captain shipping out of Port Antonio. In the 1920s, the island was still the world's largest single banana exporter, sharing with some African countries the European market. The United Fruit Company, with its vast banana plantations and concessions, in Central America, virtually owned the American market. They also controlled the shipping and marketing of fruit to England through a subsidiary, Elders & Fyffes Ltd. At times ~~when rain windstorm flattened the fields, the or~~ when rain or windstorm flattened the fields, the UFCo would quite easily take over the shortfall in the English market.

Central

In effect, through its shipping and marketing complex, the UFCo could (and did) pull-&-play the supply lines at will.

The Company was a monolith that controlled the economy of several Central American and Caribbean countries with ruthless efficiency. Savage in encounter, and backed by the gunboat scowl of the United States, its might knew no limits. It penetrated and sometimes changed the governments of Latin American states with such blatancy that in a few years, the phrase, "banana republic" was running freely through the U.S. Congressional Records. The Company also liked monopoly.

Latin

paid off a few weeks later in May when the bricks flew.

~~One of Denham's 1938 hope was the promise of~~

One of Denham's 1938 hopes was the promise of a massive Public Works programme which increased that vote by fifty percent. But the small, ill-staffed Public Works Department, which the year before had been hard-pressed to carry through a half-million dollar budget, had hardly the faintest of chances to spend half again as much.

The Colony's failure to harness its resources was not exactly due to a lack of enterprise. Coconut planters had in the same year sought permission to establish a soap factory. Others were entreating for assent to a cement factory. But since either would have provided competition to the United Kingdom import, both were flattened at birth by the English government.

While the island's spending money was collected off the export trade in sugar and banana, the social impact of either crop was dissimilar.

Sugar was a once a year harvest, when, for three months, occurred the great gatherings of reapers ~~on~~ on the cane estates. Most of them hill people, ~~they~~ they came down to the canefields for quick wages. Sugar also had some year-round workers living in estate quarters (or "barracks"), ~~sometimes, not~~

(or "barracks"), sometimes for generations, not altogether rootless, for they had their family enclaves, but obligated to a dependence on the owners that was not seldom unjust.

But the banana-man was considered the weightier citizens. He usually was a landowner of a modest acreage, of a sturdy independence, selling his crop on the weekly "banana day" when he paraded his home the weekly "banana day" when he paraded his home port-town praising "God and this right hand ~~tath~~" I am a banana-man. *It was this group that produced the men and women who created the first national

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~~But the banana-man was cjn~~

But the banana-man was considered the weightier citizen. He usually was a landowner of a modest acreage, of a sturdy independence, selling his crop on the weekly "banana day" when he paraded his home port-town praising "God and this right ~~hand~~ that" I am a banana-man. *It was this group that produced the men and women who created the first national organisation founded to combat the control of a multi-national corporaiotn; an orgasination hammered together in the wind of naked opposition from the most powerful private enterprise ever to occupy the Caribbean, the United Fruit Company. The canefields provided the recalcitrants who would initiate 1938; the cane-belt would bring our Busta. hand

Manley would enter public life by way of the banana field.

*From the poem "The Banana Man" by the Jamaican Evan Jones.

He was, plainly, in England, a product of the longest

The co-operative would be the Jamaica Banana Producers' Association and the men ~~included~~ included Charlie Johnston, Sir Arthur Farquharson, Captain List, R.F. Williams, W. Joysey and others. It was created to make "banana-day" arrive regularly and even-priced. Its creation was to fundamentally change the lifestyle of the farmer. It was also to come near spelling disaster for Manley's political future.

He was quite early among the credits. As the island's most eminent barrister, ~~he~~ he was called in to draft a constitution ~~for~~ for the co-operative, a task that was to take him the nearest ever he had been to the issues of wages and unemployment ~~since~~ since his wood-chopping days at Guanaboa. He was among "men who knew about Jamaica's economic problems, understood them, and were worried about them," he said. "In this way, I got drawn ~~into~~ into the real life of the country and began to learn and prepare myself for the future that began in 1938."

One of the keys to the success of the enterprise would ~~be~~ be the relationship between individual growers and the ~~co-operative~~ co-operative. Many of the farmers, the potential membership, were financially dependent on the UFCo, the rapacious paper-holder to whom, if they knew what was good for them, they had better sell their crops in crisis times. Thus, a sell-out of the co-op. A contract binding both parties was the answer.

His ~~several~~ several all-night sessions at Drumblair with Charlie Johnston and the others, putting together the delicate steel of an agreement that would exert enough moral force so as not to be lightly breached, involved long discussions of social and economic history, and drew him deeply into the core-structure of contemporary Jamaica.

He had known Guanaboa Vale and the surrounding country inside out. In spite of Jamaica College, ~~he~~ he had been essentially a country boy when he sailed for Oxford. He had sound knowledge of the firepower of 4.5 howitzers, and knew, enormously, the tricks of his courtroom trade; but did not know enough about his ~~people~~ people. "I learnt about the social and economic conditions of Jamaica (as) I was drawn (in) deeper and deeper," inside the banana trade.

The banana co-operative flourished quickly and in no time was handling a quarter of the yearly harvest. But if they thought the ~~monolith~~ monolith fruit company was licked, they had miscalculated.

The creation of the Jamaica Banana Producers' Association awakened the UFCo's corporate fury. It turned savagely on the small co-operative. When the American company needed more fruit for its own marketing operations, it raised its buying prices; and hundreds of sworn loyal co-operators of JBPA would soon be making bootleg deliveries. On the other hand, a drop in UFCo's demand meant an immediate uncomfortable increase in the supply to the Co-op.

The problem became: How to hold the Co-op growers to the terms of their contracts. No way, it proved, but through the courts; and guess who had to prosecute the farmers on behalf of JBPA?

MANLEY was having his first taste of the rocky road walked by public figures. He had become accustomed to applause. He was (or could be) a social lion. But none of these meant a shoot to the small dirt-scrabbling banana farmer whose costly expedition to court, as a defendant, made him lay blame on the lawyer whose cross-examination was his undoing.

blame

Securing convictions for breaches of contract was not a good road to popularity, even for the fellow whose skill and hard work had created the one organisation designed with the farmers' prosperity in mind. The small banana man, tomorrow's mass voter, did not like him then, nor later made him forget it.

for

Later he was to laconically recall his dilemma with, "circumstances had their way." But the old artillery-man was not for huddling in the trenches. Soon he was up and back at the battery. Helping to organise a delegation to Governor Denham that would, he hoped, removed him from the horns.

laconically
their

Denham

Denham, himself an Oxford man, "was almost hostile. He vigorously counter-attacked in defence of Elders & Fyffes (the shipping subsidiary of UFCo,)" Manley declares. "He argued, and nothing could shift him, that the JBPA was not really a co-operative at all except in name." It was a point of view that would later have significance when the head of UFCo took the same line, an evidence of the link and power of a company blamed, with reason, for having a hand in any number of Caribbean and South American governments. Denham, forced to move eventually by the force of NWM's advocacy, headed for the old stopgap; he appointed a Commission. Only, that, this time the

American

he appointed a Commission. Only, that, this time, the Commission found largely in favour of the locals, reporting that their production costs were among the world's highest and that an arrangement should be worked out which would favour their survival.

The juggernaut company, used to rolling back any obstacles that got in its way in the republics south of Florida, was having its first confrontation with locals who were not only disagreeing with, but challenging its monopoly.

A heresy that brought out the UFCo's high priest himself, Sam Zemurray.

He met with N.W. Manley in Jamaica. The meeting between these two dissimilar men, one an avowed rock-ribbed capitalist, the other an intellectual of socialist bent, was to turn out curiously ~~off~~ Jamaica.

for

Zemura

Zumarry had made his acquaintance with the banana in impossibly less basic circumstances. A son ~~of poor Russian (Bessarabian) migrants to America,~~ of poor Russian (Bessarabian) migrants to America, he grew up around the docks of New Orleans, earning his first money selling banana scrounged from rejected fruit. He was a tough, ruthless Company man who believed in unbridled private enterprises.

of

~~His United Fruit Company was a soulless, utterly~~

His United Fruit Company was a soulless, utterly efficient machine with about the humanity of one of his own ship's keel. To him, a co-operative was repugnant. But pragmatist that he was, he saw also the quiet determination in the little band of businessmen patriots and offered a compromise: reform the co-operative into a joint stock company and he would work with them towards a just arrangement. Manley commented wryly that it was "impossible to argue that the co-operative was a better way to handle the banana business," a view that was a forecast of the practical visionary he was to become in politics.*

towards

business

Manley's meeting with Zemurray marks his appearance upon the national stage in a significant political part. He showed instant talent by upstaging a star without inviting disaster. He sought out the only line of reasoning that would reach a stubborn man: he never argued the economics of the trade; indeed, he *agreed* with Zemurray.

He was very proud of the role in founding the Producers' Association because it was quite simply a triumph that inserted, into the deadening colonialist economy, the opening which would broaden into the base for his own brand of socialism.

It was also the trial-blazer for the other commodity groups that eventually opened profitable markets for previously marginal farmers. But even more profoundly, Manley's involvement in the banana business would bring about the most far-reaching change in the country's social structure since 1938.

**Years later became United Brands.*

The plan was taken to New York by Manley, with two banana board executives attending, Charlie Johnston and Richard Williams. There, with the United Fruit Company's* lawyers, they set to work on structuring "an organisation that was not to be a co-operative but a strange form of Company in which all the shareholders would be (former) members of the Co-operative."

structuring

ZEMURRAY WAS IMPRESSED WITH the brilliant work of the young lawyer from a small Caribbean nation. He was also probably aware of the damage to his company's corporate image caused by his bulldozing tactics early in the negotiations. A man who thoroughly believed in cutting his ~~cloth to~~ suit his cloth to coat, he was about to tailor his ways in such a fashion fashion as to take him close to radical as he would ever get.

Out of his company's profits, he was about to encourage an example of that socialist thinking which the pressures of the twentieth century were ~~forcing~~ forcing upon the old corsairs.

In New York, he turned loose the
In New York, th

In New York, he turned loose the young turks of his company's legal troops to lay down such contractual negotiations as would enable a bedrock capitalist to do business with a co-operative. Manley and his friends, equally relentless, traded ideas for eight days until the two sides settled on the formulae to ensure a good price and a fair share of the English market, then ruled by the United Fruit Company's subsidiary, subsidiary, Elders & Fyffes.

"It was a unique and remarkable agreement," Manley has said of it. "I do not think anything quite like it was to be found elsewhere in the world." A
~~A remark~~

remark not immoderately modest of him, since he had fairly well written it singlehandedly.

The draft was adopted by the Jamaicans and Americans after two days. Manley was satisfied. He satisfied would now pack his bags and ready his farewells. Then the old freebooter Zemurray dropped a bombshell.

"He took my breath away," says NWM.

*Richard Hart, writing in 1970, questioning what he regards as Manley's changed position on direct foreign investment capital, relates that in a 1967 letter to Manley, ~~he~~ posed the question: "It was in the discussions leading up to the 1949 (PNP) Statement of Policy that I first became aware that you and (N.N.) Nethersole were thinking along the same lines as and (N.N.) Nethersole were thinking along the same lines as Munoz Marin (the Puerto Rican leader) in your approach to industrialisation and foreign capital. Looking back, I am inclined to the view that this was not unconnected with the alarming proportions of unemployment in Jamaica and ~~they~~ feeling that unless something was done to provide jobs very quickly, the unemployed would turn against Bustamante. Is this fair comment?" Manley's reply, which Hart found "interesting," declared that the "comments about the 1949 programme and what preceded are both fair and correct, although as a matter of fact I had myself in conjunction with Nethersole ~~thought~~ out the lines of approach towards industrialisation which I discovered afterwards were identical with the policy in Puerto Rico."

"I thought there were other arguments that went ~~beyond~~ the economics of the matter, but few, if anyone thought that these considerations would affect Zemurray," he recounts. "As the future (showed,) they did. For what happened was this: Zemurray asked to see me, no doubt expecting to listen to, and rebut the economic arguments at their highest level. What I did was to concede all his points from the start so as to open up other aspects of the matter. I talked about the history of our people, the difficulties they faced, ~~The values that might be learnt from~~ ies they faced. The values that might be learnt from the co-operative movement."

He had gone in for an hour's meeting. He stayed for four. Zemurray was "absorbed, sympathetic and understanding."

Manley was not so ingenuous as to believe that he could change Zemurray but he gained what he had been after, an opening into the tough old Russian mind. Crusty capitalist as he was, he would have no truck with a two-horse ~~droszky~~ of a ~~co-operative~~

co-operative.

But the Jamaican negotiator had crept up on his flank, the side of him that could remember how ~~it~~ used to be as a scofflaw on the New Orleans docks. "We worked out an ingenious plan that was acceptable to Zemurray," Manley states with sly satisfaction.

He spoke the words, and his mind ran into the thought, equally unnerving, of persuading the Legislative Council, in which his arch-rival J.A.G. Smith was a power, to put the Manley-Zemurray concord into law. For it would have no validity unless legislated

As it turned out, the last was cleared first. A sufficient number of the key legislators were planters whose exports were controlled by Zemurray's fruit company.

(One who had held no doubt how the House cats would jump had been J.G. Kieffer. The cigar-chomping United Fruit Company's manager in Jamaica had bluntly observed this to the English governor, Denham, at a King's House meeting; and ~~nobody~~ doubted. A measure of the time.)

Manley, ever quick to appraise public opinion (although with less alacrity guided by it,) reasoned that the Zemurray offer might take on the look of a bribe to betray Jamaican pride. Even worse, the Foundation for the "good and welfare" of his countrymen had the power to elicit a suspicion "that I had betrayed the Co-op and sold them out for what would prove to be just a plaything of my own."

like

nobody

nobody

It was, in brief, a volunteering, by a capitalist enterprise to lay upon itself a tax for social reasons. Zemurray proposed that his corporation mark off one cent for every bunch of banana exported from the country. The money would create a foundation for the "good and welfare" of the people ~~but~~ place its but ~~emphasis on the growers, the country-folk.~~ At the emphasis on the growers, the country-folk. At the average quantity being shipped in those years, the fund would provide about a quarter million dollars; a considerable sum for the time. But the purse was as heavy with obligation as with ~~cash~~: cash: Manley would be virtually responsible for its distribution since he would from his own managing board. Moreover, there was more. The great man himself would use his influence in getting the other, smaller fruit company operating in Jamaica to contribute.

Manley returned to his New York hotel to sleep little; he knew he was confronting an unlocking, ~~into~~ into what he recognised as his final discipline. For he had the used it would be his corridor to politics. Socialist politics.

Fate, with a grin, had buffaloeed the American free enterpriser into making a small left turn.

Manley was not reaching for sleep that night; really he eluded it. He had a contract to put together, familiar enough assignment; except that he must put in a couple of clauses made of peculiar stuff; rather close to a mixture of oil and water. He would have to convince the growers at home "who could not fail to see that (the growers' co-operative) which they had committed themselves to build and bring to maturity ~~was quick brought to~~ was quickly brought to an end."

AN EVANGELICAL LASH FLICKED the land, opening and exposing long neglected wounds. Manley's Welfare entered upon a journey of rediscovery, refunoding and putting to use values which had been forgotten by an uprooted and dispersed people: the sense of tribal care that has stayed strongest among nations whose accumulations have remained unbroken.

For Jamaica Welfare was to lay its main emphasis on co-operative ways, although it would also encourage private earners. Mainly, Jamaica Welfare turned a people to look inside for answers to their problems. In that way, it antedated by a decade the widely publicised and admirable Operation Root-strap of Manley's friend, Puerto Rican governor Munoz Marin; and only failed to achieve as much because of its stricter exchequer: unlike Puerto Rico, it had no U.S. federal funds.

And what else and above all Jamaica Welfare wrought, was to energize a dynamo of new tangibles in Norman Manley. Tangibles whihc had been waiting for just such a contract.

One of his special gifts was an extraordinary ability to attract recruits to his causes on a bonus of blood-&-sweat (a gift which would be manifest in even more astounding degree when later he began the building of a political party.) His programme of social reform through co-operation brought together a group of young men who were to become minor legends by the quality, and quantity, of their work.*

Cannily, on his return to Jamaica, he said nothing about the Zemurray offer but proceeded to seek approval for the proposed new organisation. At a tumultuous meeting of planters in the Ward Theatre, the plan scraped home after an inspired speech from Charlie Johnston won a small majority in the vote.* After a second visit to the United States to square out the intricacies of the cess, he returned and announced the creation of Jamaica Welfare. The sensible timing and a warm editorial from the *Daily Gleaner* settled it gently into place.

"Jamaica Welfare tapped a deep stream of middle class interest in Jamaica," Manley has said. "School teachers were anxious to (work with us) in terms that meant no financial benefit to them but answered a deep feeling that rural Jamaica needed special help. Those were the people who responded most readily to the call for self-government which I was to realise just two years later (through) the People's National Party."

And deep feeling it was.

**Manley spoke for an hour and faced a jolting barrage of questions for nearly 3 hours from a suspicious, hostile crowd.*

In a neat, if unstudied use of history, Welfare established itself in a crumbling mansion at the corner of Hanover and East Queen Streets, in a building once occupied by models of the two chief limiters to the welfare of the Jamaican folk-people in earlier years: in the ~~planters and the military~~ the planter and the military. **

Most of Manley's Welfare troops were ~~trainde~~ trained teachers: field-people, purveyors of ideas, leaders in the countryside where the schoolmaster was more than a pedagogue but shared also in the broader life of village and farm as church catechist, sports leader, medical adviser, serving for the absent professionals. They were messianic young men, articulate and outgoing, proper tutors and conduits of the new Manley

If someone were inclined to come near to the bowtied evangelists of the American South, a little irritating to their urban critics, the ~~deeds~~ deeds would soon obscure the parallels. In any case, they were not going for the city.

The city was a fake whose carefree swagger had drawn attention from the countryside where life grubbed along the same dirt road it had followed since 1838.

Low wages on the estates, poor husbandry on the peasant holdings, and the sundering of the family-acre to inheritance for sons and daughters, laid a dire hand on rural life. Lands were as worked out as the workers, undernourished and tired.

a dire

**Among them Evan Donaldson, Tom Girvan, Eddi Burke, Arthur Carney, H.S. Fagan, Leopold Pinnock, the young Chester Dowdy.*

***The 18th century townhouse of a merchant and sugar baron and, up to the 'Thirties, the bq of the Kingston Militia.*

***The 18th century townhouse of a merchant and sugar baron and, up to the 'Thirties, the bq of the Kingston Militia.*

**Manley wrote another social contract, when, out of his Welfare came the Central Council of Voluntary Social Services (CCVSS) which for the first time effectively focussed the work of 17 private and public agencies working among children and young adults including the YMCA, YWCA, boys and girls scouts and brigades, Save The Children Fund; and also the Salvation Army and the Jamaica Agricultural Society; and gained other notable "evangelists" including Jessie Irwin, Lelia James Tomlinson, Donald Fitz Ritson. In 1947, CCVSS shortened its title (dropping the initial C) but broadened its activities to over 50 member-organisations with interests wide ranging as the Royal Life Saving and the Land wide ranging as the Royal Life Saving Society and the Land Surveyors' Wives Association; but all in the business of bringing aid and comfort to dwellers on The Rock – the affectionate appellation Jamaicans give their sometimes hardtimes island.*

Jamaica
and

Not that the towns were much better off; where jobs were scarce, and, by the oversupplied market, subject to the whims of employers, a class that took full advantage of conditions. The Society was a peculiarly distorted pyramid.

Society

The more normal (if bad) structure, where a broad base of workers supported a few at the top, was complicated further by a sub-manipulation: workers who themselves were unable to resist exploiting the pool of cheap labour. Union Leader A.G.S. Coombs has pointed out (although he was complaining of the hardship it caused his union members) that a barmaid received ten shillings a week and had to pay 25% of her wages to her maid, an upward groping towards a black bourgeoisie that increased the disaffecteds and nourished the wider unrest.

resist

received
maid,

wider

History's rough justice would order that the occur at the first effort to effect a change in

History's rough justice would order that the break occur at the first serious effort to effect a change in the wage-labour pattern.

And Manley, now into his young middle-age, was as anxious as history to turn his own sign-post.*

And therefrom came the Jamaica Welfare proclivity for lifting spirits as they taught skills; because impoverished grounds and sad Saturday ~~nights~~* were nights* eroding the will which their ancestors had used to break the predictions of the angry ex-Owners at the Abolition. The anti-abolitionists had predicted that the ~~set~~ny hill-country, to which the ex-slaves had stony moved, would bring them to their knees, crawling back to beg for work on the sugar estates. True, most had taken to their knees, but only to dig deeper into the land. Working on their own holdings.

He was not yet committed to politics as the way to dislodge ~~the~~ social and economic obstructions. the Government had certain "duties" and these "they" should carry out, but he saw the social use of education, for a better quality of life, as an exercise which should be peculiarly Jamaican ~~since~~ since the Colonial since

**A poignant folk-song, Linstead Market, reflecting the end of a poor week-end market in the village of Linstead: Carry me ackee go a Linstead market Not a quattie wut sell/Lawd not a bite not a light/What a Saturday night!*

chiefs would be ruling from England on behalf of ~~British~~ interests. He worked at developing a conscious ~~British~~ interests. He worked at developing a consciousness in the people that by their own effort on what was available, the family/village/district could become economically viable.

He declared his faith in cottage industries for those especially depressed areas given to furious droughts. Agriculture was the sum of the country, supported by the State in instruction, cahs and connections; but there were hard-bite lands to which the technology and material in hand at that time could hardly reach. So, using the banana cess, he laid the ground for a straw goods industry, which, began as thin strand of the internal economy, now claims a place in national exports. But the "Zemurray ~~money~~" money" also brought other problems.

AT FORTY-FOUR YEARS old, Manley scribbled a note to himself, in which he quoted Button: "Lord, my days run through me like water through a sieve!" But, he noted, not in despair; rather an urge to pay attention to time and continuity. Oddly enough, he had used the same words five years earlier in angry reaction to his "half-dead" compatriots in "the tropics," i.e., Jamaica.

His urgency was growing. He had done all he cared to do in the Law.

He was still a year away from the convulsive events that would make him over. His own far-flung, unsparing occupations were to blame ~~for~~ the way for time seemed to fly. His law briefs, if all were accepted, would have more than doubled those of the next leading advocate. He was a

leading advocate. He was a newspaper critic on music, painting, books, He was occupied in sports, farming, occupied in social work: in guidance, by comment and performance. Somehow all were being well handled. The so-called year of awakening was waiting; in that Spring of 1937.

Meanwhile, almost singlehandedly he was wrestling with the element which he asserted to be the key to progress; that is, the manner in which the land was husbanded.

Manley calculated that the current popular preference for the five acre farm as the viable ideal was a "false ideal." He thought the average farming family required no fewer than twenty acres to be truly viable. In this, he was joined by several men of his time. Manley to be

But Manley went further. He did not, as did many, believe that what he called "true homes," would necessarily result from more lands. A spiritual expansion should accompany the widening of fields. The apparatus for personal responsibility had been systematically destroyed during three centuries of servitude and dependence. Secure self-respect, as you opened opportunities. Catch at the light in home and field. Productive lands and lively cottages. fields.

Good harvests and gaiety.

"Let us build a new Jamaica!"

build

THE YEARS OF APPRENTICESHIP were ending. He was about ready, as he spectacularly thought of it, to "wrench myself off the banks of contemplation." He was not happy about getting off the banks, for ~~that~~ meant involvement with the vanity of others, a team discipline for which he was not ready. So far, his only teammate was Edna.

that

powerful

Early in 1937 she had flown with him to the United States (where the Welfare agreement was confirmed by Sam Zemurray) and then both went to England to prepare for the March showing of her sculptures in London's French Gallery; among them the ~~powerful~~ *The Prophet* and the now legendary *Negro Aroused*.^{*} He flew back alone on March 30. Four days afterwards he "decided, belatedly, to keep a diary (because) it becomes increasingly difficult to remember what I do from day to day."

He would not be a faithful diarist, omitting years at a time. However, ~~one~~ of his early entries was a blast against the British critics for some patronising reviews of the show. "It takes a tough skin to stand these Olympian pats on the head from those who refuse to essay the inner significance of (the) work

one

**Later immortalized as the symbol of the Jamaican worker, after it was bought by the Institute of Jamaica and brought back from the United Kingdom.*

Kingdom.

superficialities

and prate about in jargon, on superficialities of technique and ~~from~~

form."

The months were made lonelier by Edna's illness in London and the likelihood of surgery. A ~~two-~~ week holiday in Holland lifted her spirit but inflicted more physical distress. Returning to England, ~~she~~ took her operation at the Queen's Gate Nursing Home, losing her appendix to the project. Now, the Queen's Gate Nursing Home was used to Quality. The King of Greece and the Dutchess of Kent had received its ministrations. But the Queen's Gate Nursing Home would have tripped over its tiara could it have read the ribaldry buried in the cablegram sent by the elegant young Colonial lady to her Jamaican lover, celebrating some certain new freedoms ahead:

two-

she

All's well . . . very happy . . . going to be superwoman.

MANLEY found he had to go up against the Old Guard thinking that would put the new money into tired old "credit schemes," Such a venture would have none of the dramatic impact he saw was required for significant assault on the apathy which centuries of short hope had ingrained. "I do not agree that 'credit schemes' ought to be privately attempted," he said at the time. It was "essentially government's job . . . a duty which must ~~soon~~ be soon recognised."

He was, of course, still some years short of the cooperative and credit unions surge which was to take the imagination, almost the passion, of a rising young middleclass caught in the gospel of Rochdale. At that time, he saw that since "our foundations are flimsy, (our) superstructures are wasted efforts. are flimsy, (our) superstructures are wasted efforts. You can't build a palace on mud." A conclusion challengeable only in Borneo. Nevertheless it was an example of the hard, cool reasoning at work, earning him the reputation for composure and confidence.

To the public, he was an unemotional man whose infrequent outbursts were generally well directed. Partly true. Once after a legal conference with a colleague who had been "rude and provocative," he commented that "I lost my rage and it had the desired effect." Privately, like other men great and small, he had his self doubts and confessed to often acting intuitively,

The setting up of the banana trust fund and Jamaica Welfare was the first public weight of large proportion he was to bear; and it sat heavily on him. "This business of spending money for Jamaica," he said, "it gets messed up in my mind." Nevertheless, he would structure a policy that was to hold the line against confusion all the long life of Jamaica Welfare,* putting the money and effort into social, logical and agricultural causes; educating for cottage and field.

logical educating

**The name changed to Social Development Commission by the Labour Party when they gained office in 1962 has not changed its purpose still serving as the essential base for social action.*

**He once told Barbara Gloudon, a Gleaner editor, that the best way to self-education was to read a page daily of a good book on an academic subject you found dull.*

BUT, another category of balances was blurring his blueprint for Jamaica Welfare. He confessed to being "shaken by the argument that you cannot build ~~palace on mud.~~" Much of the available talent was a palace on mud." Much of the available talent was soft, untried. It would be slow work laying the foundations.

As he prowled the unmarked wilderness of social obligation that was Jamaica, searching for people to serve on Welfare's managing board, he was frequently sharply critical of attitudes, denying, under stress, his own insight. He thought, in an instance, that Rudolph Burke, the eminent planter and later President of the Jamaica Agricultural Society, was "too burdened with consciousness of his origins, the past, and the want of opportunities." These he saw only as "apologies for a sense of personal failure or doubt."

stress, his

But in the society of his day, Burke, a very black and educated man, would have been singularly insensitive not to accept the evidence of the handicaps a colonial policy had laid on him.

After all, he, Manley, had himself in near despair walked down similar alleys, dismal, beleaguered by the racists of England, and had not emerged utterly annealed. And yet, Burke strove and was to become a highly important achiever. Still and all, at the same time, he appreciated the gifts in his junior (by 6 years) Jamaica College colleague* and eventually was to invite Rudolph Burke to the founding directorate of his "banana fund trust."

despair

**Like NW, once cricket, football and track captain of JC and a record holder, 1/4 mile.*

**Like NW, once cricket, football and track captain at JC and a record holder, 1/4 mile.*

"That," Norman, at home, commented drily, "defies comment."

MEANA

MEANWHILE, as he waited her return, he was minding the boys and working at his heavy legal load, supervising the farm at Drumblair and carefully nursing the fledgling Welfare. Douglas was fifteen years old and growing "tall and bright and secretive," a description not unsuited to Dad. Boarded at Munro, a high school in St. Elizabeth parish and the most prestigious on the island, he was home only during the holidays. Michael, 13, was at Jamaica College, the Hope Road high school that was still freshly aware of the fugleman performance his famous progenitor had given in track and field, in academics and knife-edge chancing of the headmaster's axe.

He was ~~enjoying~~ his two boys, but moreso at that time, Douglas, with whom he held long talks on socialism and capitalism — and books. Books of plain realism and raw life that were, to his thinking, the firmest road to effective education.* Michael was too engrossed in his Lower School activities at Jamaica College to mind Marx. Moreover, Mike was having his own problems, having been caught lately in the heinous crime of puffing on a cigarette in his bedroom, as it eas, a minor crisis for Dad, in the absence of Edna, that knitter of loose ends.

NW was also angry and snapping at his Old School for its "butchery of babies." Michael was being bullied, as his father had been in his time and fought his way out of it. He considered moving Michael; but after a while, bottled his anger and sat down for an intoxicating evening with *Orpheus In The Underworld*. He was later rewarded with an apologetic note from Michael about the smoking.

It brought a comment on the character of a future Prime Minister of Jamaica for displaying "guts and far more sensitive feelings than I can pretend to . . . Given half a chance, what possibilities!"

N.W. was also having a ~~kind~~ of felicity in court. kind Capital crime was not the humdrum line of work it was later to become among the thugs of our time. He had not appeared in a murder trial for over a year. But then turned up a pure Jamaican one with just a brush of obeah to smoke the jury's eyes. A rich smell of garlic pervaded the court; a condiment considered by the cognoscenti to be very thorough in putting down rival witchery. The lady witnesses wore ~~sun~~ sun-shades in the trial room; a safe cover, too connected with the feminine mystique to be questioned by the masculine court. A bemused Manley could only comment at the end of a day, rich in story and innocence, "Women make magnificent liars in the (witness) box, and education has nothing to do with it. It is their native flair for the ready tale, spiced with humour and invention."

He added, with a touch of wonder, "So ~~Nature~~ Nature redresses the balance."

IT IS NOT POSSIBLE IN the British Isles to be closer to Jamaica than at Penzance; in Cornwall. Penzance (and the country about) has more sunny days they say than any place in England. In its gardens grow the blooms and vegetables that also flourish in the Jamaican Blue Mountains. And close to Penzance lay such hamlets as Mousehole, and Gulzal, and Lizard Head and Brown Willy beyond, homely, easily-taken-to names ~~that~~ that could have turned up in the little green covered *Jamaica Geography* in use generation of schooldays ago. Newlyn is also in use a generation of schooldays ago. Newlyn is also close by, a satellite of Penzance and later taken into the borough.

Newlyn has a special fame; as the place on earth from which elevations on maps ~~are~~ are calculated. It also calls urgently to artists in the rugged coastline, the clear light, the variety and profusion of foliage. Across the ~~water~~ water from it are the storied Scilly Isles. Within a Sunday walk lay the most westerly (Land's End) and southerly (Lizard Point) reaches of England.

These are fine romantic reasons for its popularity; but moreso, to artists on short commons, the warm sun and ready inexpensive food gardens. In this extraordinary country of high ground and ocean, of colour and isolation, Edna Swithenbank, though born in Bournemouth, grew up in a country ~~Pastor's~~ pastor's manse, an unconfined spirit whom Norman first saw as "a little girl of fourteen, a strange, shy and highly individualistic person, quite unlike the rest of her family and indeed ~~unlike~~ unlike anybody I had ever known." He had turned twenty-one, embarked on the Rhodes but destined to quit, for a while, the green fields of academe for the bloody French barrens.

The relationship survived the four years interruption in a way not infrequent among the young; while Nature, undeflected by a war, thoughtfully kept at work and brought her to N.W.'s appreciative eye "a most exciting girl," next time he returned from France.

There must have been a special strength and light in the encounter of the two sensitive and highly intelligent young people, struggling to touch and grow together in a society so captive to its racial mores as England's; so tight-lipped about its sickness, to the schizophrenia of affecting it did not exist, as it enacted statutes against it. They saw ~~and~~ and were ~~were~~ of a decision inside themselves; and this decision shed its own inner candescence, sustaining ~~them~~ them in a land that gave back coldly to their warmth.

HE had an intent to go *into* people, the indices he stored as lawyer, leader and intellectual gave him no alternative. The need to *know* was a passion all his life. The long, introspective non-look he ~~some~~ times wore in a private conversation could cause discomfiture to a companion. He was appalled at in-
~~veracities but could understand dissemblings. When U. Theo McKay* leaked to newspaperman "Nattie"~~

some

U. Theo McKay* leaked to newspaperman "Nattie" Parker the as yet unpublished story of the ~~Zemurray~~ ~~cess~~, he could chuckle ~~in~~ secret at the innocence in McKay's subsequent note enquiring of the news leak.

in

Zemurray

Zemurray

ONE pursuit in which his capacity for levity lagged,

was in law and justice. He was severe on incompetent fellow lawyers and judges, although in the case of the latter, the law of contempt being so notional, prudence kept his opinions private. But in "private," "lazy" courts exacted his severest comments, particularly judges who had not "trouble to
~~ments, particularly judges who had not "trouble to~~
 read more than a page of a textbook."

He particularly abhorred and castigated "expert" witnesses who, under his merciless cross-examination, proved progressively inept. Those he was known to destroy. Yet, such was his respect for the system that he would endure "gratuitous rudeness" from a Bench, occupied by a poor lawyer, as an exercise in self discipline. **

confronta-

But his therapies were not, as a rule, flagellate. He ~~could~~ turn instantly from a political ~~confronta~~ tion, to finishing a frame and stretching a canvas with Edna, or assist his cow, Rhoda, at her calving, or ~~be~~ lulled by a recording of Orpheus ("What a lyric! Intoxicating!") or tell outrageous tales of crooks to a heartily disapproving young Douglas. He was seldom undevoted to his contradictions, nor reluctant to voice them. A sometimes ~~asly~~ critic himself, he could be furious at an unflattering piece ~~of~~ Edna's art and, deliver of himself the pronouncement that "criticism is a parasitic futility."

could

be

salty
on

But the real reasons for this latter contrariness lay in a love story which ought to be told.

*A brother of Claud McKay

**In later years, his sound and unrivalled knowledge of the law, always at the disposal of a floundering judge, and his reputation for the cutting retort honed to fit meticulously, unreachable of the engulfing contempt laws, won him the unusualness of instant and unwavering attention from high court benchers, some of whom were notorious for arrogance and savaging of witnesses and advocates.

disposal

(3)

Neither Norman nor Edna came near to being defied. Artists seldom worship; and on his side Manley had very questioning men; political actors on ~~the stage he undisputably managed but who were as~~ the stage he undisputably managed but who were as temperamentally singular. At no time in its history was the PNP without infighting, sometimes perilously close to being torn apart.

product

Edna turned a prodigious and passionate energy into every influence that could provide assistance for young or struggling artists, guiding the disordered into discipline and perhaps marketing the ~~product~~ when the rent was due. She held art classes for children at the Junior Centre on East Street. She founded the justly famous FOCUS magazine when it was ~~evadint that wt~~

evident that writers were dying on the vine for want of outlets.* She also shared her husband's interest in athletics, particularly prizefighting and is credited with an assist in the training of a fine light fighter of the 'Thirties called St. Andrew Pup.

silver fippences;

She had never been a Wednesday afternoon social worker, descending gloved and tea-hatter to the ghettos for a brisk one-hour workout at a conscience bash, scrubbing babies or distributing ~~silver fippences;~~ but later, when N.W. went into politics and her awareness broadened, she was soon with characteristic energy strongly into child care and women's welfare. And whatever the spousal advantage, her concern was intense and personal.

In the next years, although she more than stayed ahead with the chisle, gaining international reputa as a sculptor, her generation of young painters ~~saw~~ was delicately but firmly brushing past her, to the glad applause of this unusual woman.

She *liked* people to succeed because she *liked* people and believed in humanity, whoever and whatever they were. It is the core of her character. The youthful Norman had been buoyed up by it ~~in his~~ in his courting days in England; for he could not, as he has said, ignore the matter of colour. It had stirred up enough apprehension in him to notice that the ~~announcement of their engagement brought no~~ "imme-

And in like goodness, later in Jamaica, the creativity of their love was to open ways to achievements of astonishing breadth and diversity in a severely limited island. They were bolts from different parts of the cosmos, he with his intellect and logic; and Edna with the artist's ineluctable compulsion to swerve and challenge the devil-muse at every crooked crossroad. They walked, ~~and~~ stumbled, and went on and again. Over and over they were to show they had the gift for the long journey. At times it could make them incautious and too certain.

Edna, elegant and earthy, laced with a malicious wit that wrinkled the pompous as it enlivened the scene, was, very probably without intent, establishing the role of active concern for the welfare and artistic integrity of young artists that would one day bring a charge from her critics that she was endeavouring to found a "school." (Her idealizing of Adolph Hitler in the days before his unmasking, an indulgence that still drew comment forty years later, seems hardly to have been political; more of a fierce retort to all the arrogantly complacent people who had, in England, made her Norman uncomfortable. She had much company. At the time, many outwardly "loyal" Jamaicans, while not wishing the defeat of the Empire, were considerably cheered with the thought of a mild comeuppance to the haw-haw colonial Englishman.)

Hers was a genuine compassion mingled, it is true with an engaging gregariousness.

Drumblair, with its grounds, and trees, and rambling old house, its two gifted and lightly imperious

Drumblair, with its grounds, and trees, and rambling old house, its two gifted and lightly imperious occupants, and a frenetic frequency of proficient and tyros usually hanging about, could, and did suggest that inevitably there would be a wake; a wake in which the young artistic talents would settle, perhaps borrow shape, and provoke her critics that there was a Drumblair artistic endowment. But the fact was that Edna brought to Drumblair not only painters and sculptors, but musicians, novelists, preachers, race horse trainers, essayists, gardeners, boxers, journalists, dancers, engineers, doctors and even a few lawyers and several politicians.

Chapter 19

Westmoreland

AN UNUSUAL FEATURE ABOUT the parish of Westmoreland is its flatness. In a reverse of the island's total land fall, over 75% of the parish is below the 1,000-feet level. Well watered and fertile, the great plain was the choice of Tate & Lyle, the large English-owned international sugar company, for locating its central sugar factory.

Tate & Lyle entered the Jamaican field in 1937 when they bought land extensively, mostly from the old bankrupt Charley estates, and settled down to becoming the potent factor in island agriculture. The "Central" begun at Frome would be the largest and the most modern and efficient sugar factory in the British Caribbean territories. It would replace the half a dozen or so decrepit mills scattered over the Westmoreland savannah. The project would require many workers.

over

Petersfield

There had never in the past been a shortage of workers on the plain. Hundreds of resident labour occupied the estate "barraxks" during the "weeding" or out-of-crop season, between April and December; and ~~the~~ in harvesting-grinding months, a veritable flood of wage-seekers descended on the ripened fields and on the factory, coming in thousands from the larger towns, Savanna-la-Mar, Grange Hill, Little London, ~~Petersfield~~ and from the mountain settlements around Darliston.

in the
from

announcement of their engagement brought no "immediate warmth of approval" from her family.

But jolly for the benefit of the doubt: it could be, could it not, that a Methodist uneasiness may have flinched Ellie Swithenbank? An unease begat of the old *Table of Kindred and Affinity*, a document which declares among several anathemas, dire descents of the Diety upon the head of the man-who-marries-his-mother-in-law, or the woman who gets herself exposed to a step-grand-uncle?

Ellie's late husband had ~~been~~ a fanatical upholder of the 18th century fevour shown by Cornishmen in the Methodist movement. Norman was her nephew; Edna his first ~~cousin~~. Wasn't it close enough to trouble for a body to be still and not applaud such a doubtful betrothal?

~~Gwan! It was colour, but the Manleys didn't care.~~

Gwan! It was colour, but the Manleys didn't care.

And the union turned out to be nearer made-in-heaven than most amalgamations.

Much later, in a burst of quiet exuberance at his luck, N.W. was almost compromised into publishing a brochure on the joys of monogamy. The quaintness and audacity of the subject in the aquarious age ~~ness and audacity of the subject in the aquarious age~~ may just have floated it among the best sellers.

For the fact is, they *did* manage to work an orderly, constitutional, organic structure that ~~raised~~ hell and kids with great good fun within the monogamous bounds that for so many, in the repressive 'Thirties, 'Twenties and 'Thirties, turned into boredom. Edna was ever to be his "wild bird on a tall tree on a bare hill," the luminous felicity he once used in describing the "elusive beauty" of a thought he never identified. But that was she, I believe, and that the identity. It was their love affair. An elusive happening of great beauty between two creatures.

He was sometimes ~~mystified~~ by its intensity. One Spring day in 1938, he watched her at work, the chips flying frim the wood after a time of drought when nothing ~~had~~ come from her chisel. He knew then, clearly, that, to him, her work and fulfilment held importance over his own ambitions. "After twenty years, this still matters more than anything else," rode his thoughts in quiet wonder at their love affair.

But we have gone ahead. For first, there was Frome.

Chapter 19

*Not only in Westmoreland were the estates almost tiny "cane republics." P.A. Bovell, attorney for Caymanas Estates in St. Catherine and a Justice of the Peace, in the 1938 Troubles, not only read the Riot Act (as a J.P.) himself, but swore in his senior staffers, armed then and allegedly gave orders to fire on a crowd at his gate, wounding six.irate Spanish Town citizens marched on Caymanas but were stopped by the police.

factory So this was the pattern of the 'Thirties: the regular workforce of hoemen, spademen, planters, weeders, functioned all year; the great regiments of reapers and ~~factory~~ hands marched in at crop-time for the three to five months when the mills rolled. And then the whole countryside was transformed.

Kerosene Suddenlt, the *wappen-bappens* proliferate, selling liquor, women, food, ~~like~~ a goldrush town. ~~Kerosene~~ like lamps shed smoky light on the crown-&-anchor tables, three-pebble conmen and pencil-in-the-belt *ginals*, the *sam-fie* sleight-of-hand artists whose old colourful skills have disappeared under today's onslaught of ~~betting shops and bingo halls.~~ ~~The long, squat, ugly~~ betting shops and bingo halls. The long, squat, ugly barracks of wood, or broken "Spanish" walls, are packed thigh to thigh with itinerant cane-cutters and loaders, who, like any ~~man-jack~~ footloose in foreign territory, away from the discipline of home and brood, turn lustful, boasting and brawling.

man-jack

The hugh sugar workers commenced at Frome was the biggest industrial enterprise ever conceived in Westmoreland (or, at that time, in Jamaica.) It attracted such a worker inflow as had never before gathered in any rural community. What was more, most of them came from the massive divisions of unemployed in the city. Seeking a piece of the action, they bore down on the parish.

As ~~city~~ workers they were accustomed, when city there was work, to higher wages than the sugar belt employers were prepared to pay. Added to that ~~set-~~ set-back, the hugh influx had created an overweight labour supply for the market. Both were undeniably good for trouble.

Nor were the circumstances made easier by the traditional attitudes of estate management.

The distance between deeply rural Westmoreland and the capital was more than long dusty road. Folk grew old and died in the parish without venturing east of Rat Trap, a border hamlet. Even among the educated, there was a distinctive Westmoreland way with words, e.g., "bile" for "boil," "yam" for "yam."

Into this anachronism came the migrants from the city, attracted by the promise of jobs, impelled by the same hope which had sent their progenitors into the canefields and banana fields of Cuba and Costa Rica, to dig the canal at Panama, to work and write poems and books and take politics to the streets of Harlem, U.S.A. At Frome were such diverse men as Alfred Francis, an "honest-minded man with my box of tools and hymn-book" who would be tried as a ring-leader of the riot, and sea-pilot Vicker Hayden,

*

doubling as a roving *Daily Gleaner* reporter whose early despatches gave spot coverage of the "dollar-a-day" riot.

The only earlier occurrence that bore a resemblance to the Frome troubles happened in Kingston in 1924, the "Darling Street riots." As at Frome, it was the staging of a project offering unusually large job openings — asphaltting the city streets, then surfaced in macadam — which caused results: a sudden two

which
migrant

in macadam — which caused two results: a sudden and heavy tilt in the job market as migrant (rural) workers rushed into the city; and the unlucky seekers inciting the succeeders to ask for more.

On most sugar estates, the unwritten law dictated that middle management posts, i.e., overseers, field book-keepers, section-clerks, were filled by whites, mulattos or browns; generally, arrogant men who rode their mounts and wore their Balaclavas with the air of calvary officers.

Frome was half a century behind the city in labour relations; indeed, had hardly left 1838. Fines and other punishments were inflicted at whim on ovrkers. One estate even notoriously had its own private lock-up for jailing minor infractors.*

The overseers and book-keepers, strong, well-fed many ignorant men pursuing the ancient prudence of of slave times, begetting bastards among the field women or laying a quilt across the shoulders of a hoe-man, quilt were hardly the kind to easily take to the brash, more "democratic" city migrants who were already fired with the growing dissidence in Kingston through the enquiries ~~to~~ men like St William Grant, and Busta of mante whom Grant had by now brought to his public forum around Victoria Park.

As in Oliver Twist, the keepers were aghast. After all, just recently, in a House debate on shop conditions at the Mental Hospital, only that indefatigable champion of the people, J.A.G. Smith, the Member for Clarendon, saw cause for condemning a ~~a system which ordered a (female) nurse to work~~ system which ordered a (female) nurse to work 35 consecutive nights of 12 hours each. The others could not fault it. Indeed, one member, H.E. Vernon of St. Mary, suggested that when a nurse had ~~to~~ be fired for being caught nodding in any of those 35 nights, the Director of Medical Services ought to "hold a little enquiry for the sake of what I call giving satisfaction to the country (and) after that, the dismissal? can take place."

dismissal.

Vernon was a ~~jokify~~ man, but his comment evoked no chuckle from the House; so one must conclude that at least to his hearers, the Honourable Member was in dead earnest.

jokify

ON FRIDAY, April 29, 1938, day workers on one of the West Indies Sugar Company's (Tate & Lyle) estates stunned the *bushas* by refusing to accept their wages at the Company's paytables. They claimed to have expected more.

Yet, bad as it ~~was~~, the Company was doing better by its workers. A newcomer to the ranks of ~~the long entrenched, exploitative sugar families of~~ the long entrenched, exploitative sugar families of Westmoreland, WISCO had been really souring the patch for the old marauders. For example: Labourers paid one shilling and sixpence ($1\frac{1}{6}$) per day under the previous ownership had been given threepence per day increases.*

The old scotch-swelling rum manufacturers sulking on their "great-house" verandahs were apologetic at the "foreigners" munificence which they would have to match if they would keep their work-force. These old plantocrats had for generations fed their profits from an inexhaustible labour pool. And although the sugar market had fallen on poorer times in the post-World War I years, sensible (i.e. extortive) management could reap enough to keep a reasonably luxurious life style, until, say, the next war, when prices would plump up again. The barons grumbled that WISCO was mucking about with a system that had served splendidly since Emancipation.

There was worse inside the Company fence. A fence. A rumour had come to the workers that the Company had intended to pay *four shillings* a day, near enough to a 200% increase.** Some cynics were later to speculate that the rumour could have been spread by the local sugar barons to incite a strike on the WISCO estates. Whether or not, it did.

More than a thousand workers were involved. Speeches and more hearsay*** over the weekend fed the discontent. The attitudes of the traditionally feisty field book-keepers and administrative staff, long used to cowing the workers by threats of fines or firing, assisted at tightening the tension. With a flourish of their riding quirts they offered a like-it-or-lump-it stand.

**The day began at 6:45 a.m., ended at 5:30 p.m.*

***L.A. Grant, Frome's general manager, later offered two shillings a day but the situation already polarized, it was furiously rejected.*

****Or susu tales as the Anancy storytellers of Westmoreland say.*

The ingredients for the explosion were being shaken together.

MONDAY morning broke on a noise of people closing on the compound of the old factory at Frome.

The Sabbath of rumours and speeches had not been lost on the police from Sav-la-mar and they were there in force. But the peace-officers of those Empire days did not march out of barracks, wearing brass-bound serge and chin-strapped balaclavas on a mission of peaceful persuasion. They toted Mark VIIIs, long-barrelled British Army issues carrying the brutal .303 shell in their chambers.

The police of the West Indies colonies was a para military force, trained to aggression; fine black men programmed to shoot in protection of the white oligarchy. No riot control weapons, e.g. teargas canisters, were in the arsenals. Fixed bayonets replaced the baton.

The old ramshackle factory, a few hundred yards from the building site for the new Central, was still in use, taking off its last crop. It stood a hundred yards in from the main Savanna-la-Mar/Grange Hill road, behind a lovely fieldstone wall. Across the road from the compound was the Frome market, called the "shambre."*

Newspaper accounts later claimed that at six a.m. that about three hundred people were on the Frome compound, singing religious hymns and listening to religious speeches from the spontaneous leadership spawned by any instant revolution. Facing them were about a hundred policemen under a couple of Irish Inspectors, a land which had for many years sent its corporals to Jamaica to become officers and gentlemen. had

*Perhaps from "shambles," Old English dialect for a meat market.

Chapter 19

old

particularly

THE action began impersonally enough with an attack on a sugar truck hauling out for the wharves at Savanna-la-Mar. But soon it turned to stronger grievances, singling out the home of a particularly unacceptable official for attack; he survived by his absence. But that turned the crowd's rush towards the decrepit frame factory and an office building into which Manager Grant and his staff had scurried.*

The refuge underwent a siege. The siege was broken when the police opened fire and made a bayonet charge that killed, near the lovely ~~old~~ stone wall, four, and wounded nine. The stone-throwers had used the wall for a breastwork. Stones were no match for rifle shooters. The unwounded ran for cover in the canefields.

So the Frome riots ended, except for retaliatory canefield fires lit by the fleeing folk. The casualties included six women and seven men. One of the four killed was a woman.

MEANWHILE, the Colonialists were taking a few small steps towards improving life in Kingston's cactus ghettos. Roads and housing were planned for Trench Town, then a wilderness of thornbush dotted with homes in discarded auto bodies. Montego Bay's A.G.S. Coombs was planning a hunger march. Coombs, tall, tough, dedicated, was one of the pioneer labour leaders in the colony and president of the Jamaica Workers and Tradesmen Union.

A new weekly paper trenchantly called *Public Opinion*, with an option on a nationalist-socialist purpose as it exerted a strong cultural interest, had been founded by Osmond Theodore Fairclough (later co-founder of another greater event, the PNP) and an English scholar named Headly Powell Jacobs, who, coming to Jamaica at 22 years old in 1926 and marrying the niece of Jamaican poet "Tom Redcam" (MacDermot,) would spend all his long years here.

**To the statement of a police inspector, an Englishman, that Kingston was quiet, St. William Grant, by then being called by the media, Alexander Bustamante's chief lieutenant, reported, "No sir. Kingston is not quiet! On the contrary, the city is seething!"*

lieutenant,

Those three weeks in May were to be the end of the Old Jamaica. The New Jamaica was about to institute its birthpangs.

BUT, the fires lit at Frome were to spread around the island and force into leadership the two most famous men in our annals. "By the time of the end of the Frome riots, Bustamante had been made the best known person in Jamaica," Manley reflected in 1969. He charged the *Jamaica Standard*, a new daily rival of the century-old *Gleaner*, with the responsibility. The *Standard*, he said, made "a legend of Bustamante." (Busta himself must have been anxious for the legend to stand, since his moneylending business was being battered by the new Usury Law; it was directed against loansharking, but was, of necessity, flaying too at the legal lenders. Busta was also into his political pattern of pulling away from any serious obligation to a challenging colleague. Now it was from St. William Grant who had fetched him into the public eye and in scale of street acclamation, still held his ovation level.) Within days, labour commotions were breaking out on cane estates and at banana ports.

the
made

severances.

The city stayed quiet — on the surface.* Tramcar men, of some influence among the workers because of their semi-skills among a largely labouring people and the glamour that rode with them on the swaying, rocketing platforms, were about to be made obsolete with their streetcars through a takeover of public transport by moto bus. The iron lines already were being ripped out even as Ken Hill's National Reform Association fought for better severances.

Shorted by the action, Ken took to the streets. A jockeying that added to the tension.

Riflemen have no place in riot control. Especially when, as in this case, the rioters had no explosive weapons. ~~Their~~ Their arms were the ubiquitous *coco-macca*, used as a walking cane or for stick-fighting. With the small slaughter at Frome still in mind, one newspaper, while carefully refraining from any criticism of the rulers, observed in an ~~obscurely~~ obscurely placed paragraph that ". . . as a means of dispelling possibly riotous assemblies . . . it certainly is a tremendous ~~pity~~ pity that (teargas) had not yet been introduced into Jamaica."

Before the day was out, rifle-fire had killed Mrs. Sarah Thomas, a candy-seller, and her small son, Stanley, at their gate, No 103 Matthews Lane, and wounded another 9 year-old son, Henry. Mrs. Jackson of 137 Princess Street looked out of an upper floor window and received a .303 bullet in her back.

And some time in the forenoon of that eventful day, history made a punctuation in the Jamaica story. Alexander Bustamante and St. William Grant, passing the Central Police Station on the way to the main fire station on Sutton Street, were pounced upon by a police party and dragged into the station. Both Bustamante and Grant were arrested.

It was a footling act of authority. As nothing else, the arrest of Bustamante would haul Norman Manley to the public stage and initiate the great events which would make the next quarter-turn in the wind and face directly into political independence, the first in the British Caribbean.

EARLY MONDAY MORNING, STRONGLY rushing teoops of longshoremen, wearing their cloth caps, wind-filled "drill" shirts billowing off their backs, baggy trousers ankling down on feet bare and sneaker-shod slapping the pavement, aggrieved men, determined and aggressive men, pounded through Harbour Street. They split columns to run parallel on Port Royal Street.

And split soem more to penetrate the tar-soaked waterfront lanes.

Deligent in their duty to close the city and rouse the citizens to havoc.

To pull down the strongholds of common purpose built up by generations of bad employers working with an overflow labour pool.

Led by the stevedores, the attacks were low-keyed in accord with the times, when violence was more noisy than destructive, They banged on overturned garbage cans, but fired no guns. They forced the shutters to drop, but burnt no shops. They hijacked a clip of electric trams and joy-rode light-heartedly on Kings Street. They broke some gaslamps, illegally skipped pebbles into the Victoria Park pool, and, bored with all that stuff, fanned their columns and, the city to shout the acceptable day of release and of New Times.

King Street.

That somehow, by the grace of wrath, they had turned a corner. Others cleared the piers of strike-breakers the shippers had brought in.

At mid-morning, police and men of the English regiment on station were put on patrol; but by that time the strikers had effectively buttoned up the city.

Firemen, tramwaymen, sanitation workers joined the longshoremen in making the work stoppage official by stating demands for better wages (some tramway motormen were paid about five cents an hour, fire brigade rank-&-filers from about \$2.08 a week.) The authorities reacted — with rifle-fire.

The

ask
for
There was, however, a scruple in his mind that he was obligated to explain to the Commission. If required, he said, he would assist "in bringing facts" before them. He "did not desire to interfere unduly, or to ~~ask~~ to be allowed to interfere unduly. Anything I do will be with the view of giving the fullest assistance ~~for~~ the fullest enquiry to be made from everybody's point of view." Not everyone among "the people" took kindly to the apologia nor to his place at the enquiry. Dismissing his position as a legal nicety, he was, they said, a main man for Big Business. They should have asked Edna.

Business.

THAT MONDAY MORNING, N.W. Manley was at the other end of the island: in Savanna-la-Mar holding a watching brief for the West Indies Sugar Company, before the Frome ~~Riot~~ Commission. Manley was not yet altogether the people's man. He was the most sought-after lawyer; and wealthy WISCO, like other large corporations and rich family businessmen, held him by retainer; in spite of his known straying towards closer encounters with the third kind, the poor-people of Jamaica Welfare's enthusiasms.

sides Many, on both sides of the economic halves, were aware of the Manley dilemma. All had been peering at him, obscure in the wings. Not really whether cloaked and muttering, as wondering whether the casting director had shagged in casting an essentially solo performer for arena theatre. But when he did emerge theatre. solo performer for arena theatre. But when he did emerge, he would come out winging.

time Within a few days he would be publicly commenting that "for many years, we have been educating our people and we have been making them conscious of their powers and their rights. It is high time it was realised that we have got to make a step time it was realised that we have got to make a step forward and organise and train the people so that they can properly use their power for legitimate ends. No progress will ever be made until this end is recognised and met."

But on this Monday morning in the fine-looking Georgian courthouse on Savanna-la-Mar's Great George Street, he was all advocate, doing the job his education and professional commitment required. As a lawyer, his client's case, rich or poor, was his cause.

Might have been able to . . . *might* give some consideration.

Even now, the truth had not reached: that the working people were declaring against the old unilaterals in labour-employer relations. Industrial relations of the day went in on the whip-crack. A negotiated settlement of a labour problem was as alien to their "baccra-massa" thinking as rubbershod polo ponies.*

ma

Manley, that morning, "perambulated" to the fire brigade station where he met two of the city gentry, Audley Morais, a cinema operator, and G.M. gentry, Audley Morais, a cinema operator, and G.M. DaCosta, a merchant.

Proprietors in the wood-&-brick city were especially concerned over the fire brigade strike. Both Morais and DaCosta, being of the particularly distrusted "mulatto St. Andrew" class, and neither of them possessing the charisma to approach the fire men ~~men~~ with any confidence, they saw the godsend in the approaching perambulator and fell on him. "They insisted that I break up the strike," Manley recalls. Morais, he said, was near tears. His film stores were particularly vulnerable. They pushed hard but Manley was reluctant. He did not, he pointed out, know the facts.

Manley must have been conscious of the company he would be keeping. He was not a St. William Grant, so much obviously a man of the people, nor of the flamboyance of Bustamante, who, despite his Caucasian appearance, resided and moved despite his Caucasian appearance, resided and moved with the proletariat.* In those two fateful days, Bustamante's constant companion was Grant, an unmistakable black and a veteran street-corner battler for black rights; Manley was walking with Morais and DaCosta, both white or ably "passing." It would have done him no good with "the people."

However, the newspapers were leaning on Bustamante. H.S. "Speedy" Burns, a rising young journalist, was writing of "A Socialist Jamaica" and "a Communist group" waiting to "make 1940 a peak year." And under the same dateline, a Montego Bay reporter was relating a belief that "Communists from Cuba were responsible for the recent Frome riots and other present strikes in the island." Cuba, where Bustamante was fresh from; a little detail which would not rest easy with the Establishment. Manley would have seemed a safer repository for whatever small degree of will they would allow through to "the people."

Nevertheless, Manley's willi Establishment.

Nevertheless, Manley's growing willingness to be involved and identified with the unrest made him open to charges. He had to go into defence.

"It has been rumoured," he was forced to state, "that I have advised some of the activities of the past few days. It is sufficient to say that nobody knowing me could possibly believe that I could think that Jamaica's interests would served by letting loose be Jamaica's interests would be served by letting loose the irresponsible pandemonium of the past two days. But I believe that the genuine labourers themselves are responsible enough to know that they can secure their rights by different methods and I believe that they will try to do so."

Remember
Foot-note

FOR Edna Manley, knowing the way her husband's mind was turning ever more strongly to the personal covenant he had made years before, instantly sensed that this place this morning of May 23 was not in the courtroom but on the streets. She sent him a telegram. With her usual lucidity, she brushed in the picture for him. *All hell*, she explained in the wire, *has broken loose*.

Nevertheless, "I came home late and am abused," seemed Manley was to note ruefully years after. Edna seemed to have lit sharply into him. His "exciting" woman was not about to allow any little matter like the law's delays, nor rough winding roads, to frustrate the real start to his race. So they settled down to an evening of talk, conjectures, plans and projects at Drumblair, phone calls and visitors flowing in and out, *tasting* and *tasting* the happenings, which, for the first time in a hundred years, since the 1831/32 *rebellion*, when English warships had been warped inshore so their cannons could rake the streets, had shut down the ancient city.

tasting
which,
rebellion,

Manley was up early next morning after his usual short sleep. It was a holiday, ironically, Empire Day, and it was to see the thinnest of wedges inserted that would one day part this outpost from rule by the Crown.

into

ran

The May morning was sunny and hot as he breakfasted and motored ~~into~~ the city. He parked the car and proceeded, as he has impishly put it, to "perambulate" the deserted downtown streets, shuttered and eyeless in the sunlight. Occasionally, roving squads of people ~~ran~~ a block and disappeared, briefly exploding the silence. Police and military vehicles nosed restlessly through the lanes and the alleys.

half
martial

The city was strangely ~~half~~ alive. "Something in the nature of a general strike . . . something in the nature of ~~martial~~ law . . ." mused the *Jamaica Standard*. The newspaper ~~was~~ *ard*. The newspaper went on to say, "For the most part, the strikers are ill-informed, lacking in leadership and in many cases, know not what they want."

But this was so, too, of the employers and the government.

Council,

forget
representatives
(of

Lacking in elected leadership, the central government had to look to the Mayor of Kingston, a general practitioner from Cross Roads, Dr. O.E. Anderson, and his ~~Council~~, to provide a liaison with the people; the elected members of the Legislative Council, the Crown dominated Parliament, were hopelessly out of touch. They "have palpably failed to look after ~~(our)~~ interests. ~~Thei~~ country (will not) easily forget (our) interests. This country (will not) easily ~~forget~~ the apathy with which the ~~representatives~~ of the people received the news ~~(of the events,")~~ observed the *Public Opinion* weekly.

Yet, the silence of the statemen was golden as against the utterances of the employers.

out-73

been
consideration."

The daddy of them all, the sprawling and powerful United Fruit Company, whose ukases from Boston often weighted the decisions of the English governors in King's House, spoke through its acting general manager, C.M. Hislop (Kieffer, the great Khan, was not much given to public statements:) "We never had a deputation from our workers at all. If we had, we might have ~~been~~ able to consider their case. Even now, should we receive such a deputation, we might give the matter some ~~condi~~

Norman

that

FLANKED by his two "white"*** companions and facing the irate firemen, Norman Manley quietly spoke the rejoinder he was to offer so often in the years ahead. "I believed," he said, "that I am a person whom you will trust." And with ~~with~~ confidence in his own ability that sometimes mortified his rivals, he declared that they should "tell me your grievances (and they) will be rectified."

But

But that day his listeners took to it. "They know me well."

They spoke to Citizen Manley as if he was the elected leader, giving him the data he required on wages, pensions and a new insurance scheme they had in mind. And they were not the only claimants to Norman Manley.

~~The Fire Chief, an U.K. white, displayed the~~

The Fire Chief, an U.K. white, displayed the ambivalence Drumblair wrought on the social echelons by appearing from his office and shouldering among his men to present the case for the Establishment; a voluntary which that British officer would never have performed for the black peasant, Grant, and hardly for the not socially acceptable Bustamante — hardly for the not socially acceptable Bustamante who lived in "downtown" Kingston.

ma

Manley thus casually had assumed power about the same time as his cousin. Each had gone at

Manley thus casually had assumed power about the same time as his cousin Alec. Each had gone at it in his own way. Busta leaping in to take over the war, shooting his sleeves for battle; Manley sitting on the edge of a table, talking long, easily and persuasively to the firemen. The threat of strike receded as he talked.

Bustamante would be called a gambler. Of opportunity. So was Manley. Only men with no fear for that single knock are excused its tyranny. Both strode into history because their genius allowed no other road.

in

he

His questions revealed what little machinery existed for reconciling labour disputes. He cooled the tensions by inviting the men to his office, where, in the quiet, bookish Chambers — tactically a setting to make an impression on fellows who made their living swarming through fire, mud and ladders — he could learn more about firemen's work and conditions. Then, through as ever, he returned to the fire station for a spot check. Only then was he ready for Mayor Anderson.

The fire brigade episode was also to cast Manley for the first time in his 1938-43 role of putting back the play together whenever co-star Bustamante came near wrecking the performance because of his predilection for scene stealing. Between N.W.'s first and second visit to Sutton Street headquarters, Bustamante had stopped by the fire station and threatened fire chief Mitchell with a work stoppage. "If this (raise) is not agree on by tomorrow, government will have only themselves to blame for what may follow."

Returning after Busta's bellicose departure, and recognising the danger of a collapse and a subsequent clash with the armed forces, Manley, who had already put the wheels for their job reform into motion, claimed the men. It was a small personal triumph; but in the wake of Busta's massive passage over the past two days, followed by great cheering crowds and hurling defiance against guns and imprisonment, it was an encouragement.

The stage was being set for the ~~main two~~ actors and the country needed *both*, then: the one of ~~cool~~ cool logic; and the kinetic arouser hurling thunderbolts. The conflict of line would set before the wallahs in ~~no more false~~ London the appearance of a political sophistication no more false or more misleading than their own reputation for colonial genius. It is not unlikely that the events of May, 1938, streamed some new light into the musty Colonial Office rooms in London and quickened, however feebly, the decision to dismantle the creaky old Empire.

However, the two men were to be even more firmly planted into history with the arrest of Bustamante later that day; and Manley would become tactical leader in the moves to restore the people's new man to the bosom of his public.*

AN old yoke tree grew on the grounds of Drumblair. It was a conference-tree for Norman and Edna. Away from the house and kids and servants. That night the gardens was fresh from the Spring rains and scented with the magnificent rose bushes. They sat under the old yoke tree and talked about the day and the future. Some symbols won't go away: that night under the old yoke tree, Manley, after forty five years, at last fell into the political yoke that would never unharnessed until his final days. "(We) never be unharnessed until his final days. "(We) felt very strongly that somebody (should intervene) in the interest of the workers. I had a profound feeling that I was going to make an offer that had unforeseeable consequences."

He did. He phoned the Governor. The response was swift. A meeting was set for next morning.

tomorrow main tea ma
two main London for rooms
cool

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**When an elite special constabulary was later formed to protect the states from the incendiaries of incensed workers, some turned up for recruitment wearing white polo helmets and provided easy targets for bricks in the dark.*

~~**Busta lived "downtown" and was an habitue of Arlington*~~

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**Busta lived "downtown" and was an habitue of Arlington House, a popular eating and watering-place on East ~~Queen~~ Street.*

Queen

126

***A kind of wry caution causes Jamaicanss to term their "white" or "near white" island-born compatriots, "Jamaica-white," since almost all Jamaicans are mixed-race to varying degrees.*

Jamaicans

128

**The Colonial police in the racist tradition of their training clubbed the black (St. William Grant) to the ground but ~~quiet~~ ly took the "white" (Busat) into custody.*

quiet-

Chapter 23

①

GOVERNOR SIR EDWARD DENHAM, that slow thinking, maligned and patient man, was worried at the lack of leadership among his subjects. He had been more than once berated by those whom economist/writer J.A.G. Edwards called the "Company of Permanent Jamaica Governors & Privy Councillors." These were the leaders, in local commerce and of the multinationals, who usually called the shots; instructing, by "advising," or by the use of the power accumulated when flag followed trade into the under-developed territories.

For Denham had a genuine concern to provide better wages, housing and education to the poor-

For Denham had a genuine concern to provide better wages, housing and education ot

For Denham had a genuine concern to provide better wages, housing and education to the poor-people; about 90% of the population.

He had been forced, on a few occasions, to publicly remind his "advisers" that there was but "one King's House and one Governor." Although he had not foreseen the power of the current boiling angrier beneath the surface than before, he had recently appointed a Commission to examine labour conditions.

Many of his advisers spoke up for using force. They advocated turning the armed units on the people — the Kingston Infantry Volunteers, the Sherwood Forresters, an English line regiment on station in the West Indies wearing "battle Bowlers" and carrying machine guns, and regular and auxiliary policemen with Mark VII rifles. Denham was seeking to find leaders and to keep in contact with the demonstrators.*

creative

He had talked earlier that morning with the Mayors and Councillors at King's House but evidently Mayor and Councillors at King's House but evidently had found a scarcity of creative thinking among the politicians; so the Monarch's representative and political head of the colony, at their meeting, drafted Plain Citizen Manley to stem the civil upsurge. Hewas a trifle late. Bustamante and Grant had been arrested. For the first time among Jamaican workers, the name of the game was solidarity.

to
and

Although as the troubles wore on, Denham took the then normal vice-regent's route of arming the gentry and their approved servants with legality, to aid the uniformed forces, he knew that in the last analysis, the country would need not conflict, but

conference

conference and compromise.** He had shown during his tenure an awareness of the hardheaded ways of the employing class; spoilt by having had it all downhill for generations, and now, in an obvious gamesmanship, demanding that the workers return to their jobs *before* negotiations.*** C.W. Varney, the British manager of England's Royal Mail Lines and a large waterfront employer, stated that "We have all along been prepared to . . . hear their grievances and wer still intend to."

Mail

Then, apparently unable not to show his hand, added: "Our men are quite satisfied but they are prevented from working by others." An exposition disquietingly inconclusive about the future of those grievances.

Local employers were not behind in whip cracking. Cried Charlie D'Costa of Lascelles de Mercado, the Jamaican wharfowners, "The strikers will only paralyse themselves!" It was to stay the approaching polarity that Denham saw Manley. "He suggested that I act; he begged me to. I told him I would think it over."

Denham was looking for more than a city leader. Already the unrest was reaching once bucolic hamlets. Small outbreaks had flared here and there, ever since Frome, and now were ~~the~~ at two next largest urban areas, Spanish Town and Montego Bay. Dock-urban areas, Spanish Town and Montego Bay. Dockers were refusing to work the port in Montego Bay. In Spanish Town, a march of 3,000 workers closed ~~down the Old Capital; a few railorad blocks were~~ down the Old Capital; a few railroad blocks were indulged in by tumbling boulders to the track.

But the city tumult was deafening. Bustamante, as he led the heaving curb-filling march down King Street into ~~Harbour~~ Street in the earlier morning, had, beneath the balcony of the Standard Fruit Company's offices at the George's Lane corner, appealed for quiet from "... this terrible noise which prevents me from thinking while our enemies are thinking against us!" Now the quiet had come after his arrest; but sullen and ominous. Manley, close to the city's pulse, sensed it. He moved swiftly. By evening he had called in the newspaper reporters.

He publicly offered his services to the country.

Harbour

better-

grievances"

grievances

"Events have proved how necessary it is today that the people of the country should have good leadership and good advice in putting forward their grievances and making their demands for their betterment. I have received the assurance of (the governor) ~~that the government (desires) that the people should~~ that the government (desires) that the people should have an opportunity of making representations and that their grievances should receive fullest consideration. (The government) is prepared to appoint a Conciliation Board where both sides could be heard. One of the difficulties in the way of the government to assist is the difficulty of finding persons who are willing to assist the labouring classes and putting forward their grievances"

And in his next sentence, N.W. Manley made it official that he was in the business of public office.

my

had

reasonable

"If any labour group will accept ~~my~~ services in investigating their grievances, in acting for them, and by leading their deputations to employers interests, or to the Governor, or to the Labour Commission which ~~had~~ been appointed, I pledge myself to serve their interests fairly and properly, and to give every assistance to see that ~~reasonable~~ and fair demands are met in a proper spirit."

A leach of the years ahead, the agonies and the rivalries, the gains and the foolish losses, may have passed behind his eyes. For cautiously, he left the door ajar. "If (workers) can find the services of any responsible person who is willing to assist them in putting forward their case, I am confident that they will be heard." The real labour leaders could yet be Busta and Grnat, and even "Fighting Barrister" Erasmus Campbell — although he had been booed ~~into silence the day before because he pto~~ into silence the day before because he proposed moderation.

Chapter 23
He knew the need for trade unions, the day-to-day monitoring of employers who had the rapacity of Barbary Coasters, a job he could hardly undertake with his weighty court briefs. "When these troubles are over, I hope that some group of responsible people will recognise the necessity for organising proper trade unions in this country."

For a few hours that day and the next, Manley ~~was the only working labour negotiator in the country~~ was the only working labour negotiator in the country — although he was working the *noblesse oblige* bit to death. A little of the aristo under obligation; a mannerly bow to the court for permission to speak *amicus curiae*.

LEGALLY, and politically, it was an exotic night for Jamaica. For while Manley was giving his press conference, an unusual media scene for that time, a Night Court was in session.

King's House pressure, with some Manley heft, had caused the hastily convened court; to hear arguments from Barrister J.A.G. Smith and Solicitors Ross Livingston and Allan Wynter for the release of Bustamante and Grant. Charged with disorderly conduct, by the time the case reached the court, matters were more substantial. Bustamante's was highest: sedition and inciting unlawful assembly. Grant's was the latter, plus a smaller one for refusing to obey a police officer; which neatly took care of the police clubbing.

The hearing, held in the crowded little office of the police inspector at Sutton Street, was barred to newsmen. The Magistrate remanded them in custody, refusing bail because "though Mr. Bustamante and Mr. Grant might be willing to stand trial, the crowd would not allow them." The Magistrate was probably a historian. The 1865 Experience was somewhere in his ruling.*

For this

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Manley had also tried for their release that night, for he "felt a martyr was being made." Denham had demurred. But why should a martyr not be made? Was this a torn Manley, responsive to the now and future call, but held in the tiem frame of his education and British unbringing? Since the French connection at Orleans, the English psyche has passionately excluded martyrs.

The court ordered a bed put in a cell for Bustamante. Not for Grant.

Footnotes for chapter 13

pages:

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*At the height of the disturbances on May 24, the units on street patrol included 400 regular and 250 special constables, 100 KIV's, 80 Sherwoods.

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**Mayor Anderson's 3-day Ward Theatre economic and industrial conference, 6 months earlier, on ways to energise the island's resources, had roused a great deal of interest.

***~~The workers for~~

131

***The workers were for the first time to have their exposure to the sport by stubbornly staying away from work until Bustamante and Grant were released.

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*The "Morant Bay Rebellion" in 1865 had its immediate beginnings in the rescue of their comrades by Paul Bogle's men, who, in their opinion, were unjustifiably found guilty of offences. They rescued them from the courtroom and started the chain of events which culminated in the upheaval. National Heroes Bogle and George William Gordon were executed in the bloody aftermath.

Chapter 24
with He was especially pleased with the incoming of
William Seivright, first of the middle-class entre-
preneurial people ~~hw~~ was hoping to recruit. He was
he deeply touched by the response. "My love and
respect for that man grew greater and greater as the
years went by."*

Problems were also pouring in. That May 25th,
he while ~~he~~ was being hailed for his "sincere and brilli-
~~ant~~ advocacy on behalf of the co-operative idea
ant among the peasantry in the days when the fate of
the Jamaica Banana Producers' Association hung in
the balance,"** he was being denounced by word and
pamphlet on the waterfront as an enemy of "the
little man." A cause traceable to his appearance for
the West Indies Sugar Company before the Frome
Commission, and not unconnected with his retainers
from all the more important corporations.

Money had been raised by the Jamaica Pro-
gressive League in New York, led by novelist/historian
Adolphe Roberts and journalist W.A. Domingo, both
Jamaicans, to help provide legal aid for the Frome
accused; and his inability to represent them without
a release from his prior commitments aroused a great
deal of general antagonism.***

**Seivright was later Mayor of Kingston, and in the House,
PNP Minister of Agriculture and then of Home Affairs.*

***By D.T.M. Girvan in an article on Jamaica Welfare Ltd.,
Daily Gleaner, May 25, 1938.*

****That the League did not discredit Manley as had been
hoped by a faction, was because he was able to show the
records of his two retainers from WISCO: the annual binder,
and a special drawn up on May 5, with specific directions to*

Chapter 24

GOVERNOR DENHAM HAD A PROBLEM. He telephoned it to Manley early on Wednesday morning. He had liked the Manley statement the night before. But what about the usual proviso?

the He was talking about the mind-bender usually issued to strikers by employers. That no matter what ~~the~~ provocation, workers must return to their jobs, at all the old dissatisfactions, before negotiations begin. Manley's retort was blunt. He was acting for the strikers and would do so only if he had a free hand. Governor Denham took notice and acquiesced. He issued a statement from King's House declaring that "government welcomes the offer made by one of the most distinguished sons of Jamaica, Mr. Manley, to represent the cause of the labourers and is perfectly willing to see that the fullest consideration is given to representations made."

of he Manley was elated. He had reason to be. What with his role as prosecutor of small-farmers who breached banana delivery contracts, ~~he~~ was aware ~~to~~ the hazards for a political future. The acclaim given his work with the Jamaica Welfare had been helpful; but this virtually official and national acknowledgement of him as spokesman for the working classes was the cake under the icing.

Years later, he wrote, "I go to work feeling like a man in a dream."

when And the dream quickly became a reality; for he had hardly settled into his creaky office chair ~~when~~ the Duke Street door opened and in came his "first followers, four women capmakers." But that was only the beginning. For within minutes, the flood commenced. "Twenty dockers poured in." And so it went.

Mistrust of his motives dogged his movements about the city; but he had a good moment at Malabre's Wharf where a huge crowd of striking dockers heard him. An unusually subjective Press report spoke of thousands of "obviously bona fide wharf hands" listening to him on South Street. He was remarkably fresh and easy-voiced, despite a rough day of conferences and negotiations. Leaning from one of the upper windows of the Adolph Levy building, he repeated his offer of ~~ten~~ previous night, to lead if they required him. Mobile soldiers, police and special constables were parked in Orange Street ready to move in, and Manley urged that the workers go home quietly.

He would meet them at the Number One Pier, next morning, and commence the negotiations with the wharf owners.

MEANWHILE, Bustamante and Grant ~~had~~ been moved to Rae Town prison and J.A.G. Smith was in the corridors of the Supreme Court applying every known legal gambit his high skills and experience knew. Manley had not been able to engage in the matter all day that. His work had been made doubly hard by having to fight off some hawkish friends who were for wholesale military solution. What irked employers was the rash of lightening strikes, deliriously pegged to the idea that happiness was a dollar-a-

represent the Company at the subsequent enquiries. As it turned out, Manley had, in fact, promised another barrister (and later Labour Government Minister) E.R.D. Evans to appear at Frome for the workers, but had been stopped in his tracks by a gentle reminder from WISCO that legally he was theirs. He had written to Evans a week later regretting the oversight and pointing out ~~that~~ he was "bound by professional rule not to appear for the rioters." And so ended what could have been a nasty imbroglio with the League, which, in later years, was a powerhouse for his People's National Party and the colony's ~~progressive~~ to independence.

day. But there were some employers who understood.

"Charlie Johnston* was a tower of strength against (the use of) force," Manley has said. "He sees that all wages must go up. He sees very far." But ever scrupulous, if sardonic, he goes on: "So does R.F. Williams — who doesn't like what he sees and is for force."

Hart,

The opposition was not peculiar to business leaders. Richard ~~Hart~~, the young lawyer who was to become a great political writer and activist and the island's most famous resident Red, and Hugh Buchanan, the first self-avowed Marxist, also, held causes rooted in Manley's failure to defend the Frome rioters.** But an endorsement from Ken Hill's National Reform Association somewhat eased the pain.*** Hill observed that Manley enjoyed "a unique

*C.E. Johnston was co-managing director of Jamaica Fruit & Shipping Co. and a founder of the ~~Banana~~ Producers Association.

Banana

of

**Buchanan, a bricklayer son of a successful May Pen farmer, was a dedicated Marxist who found his way to Hamburg, Germany for an International Communist conference in 1937. A man of strong intellect and moral courage, it is said he was not very personable and never attained popular leadership. He became the first General Secretary of the BITU and was once jailed for sedition. He led the group that stiffened the strikers' resolve to stay out until Bustamante and Grant were released. But his stay in the BITU had never been happy; not surprising, considering he had been the General Secretary of A.G.S. "Father" Coombs' union which had expelled Treasurer Bustamante the year before for trying a takeover at "Father" Coombs' expense. Although Dick Hart was to become a member of the PNP Executive, Buchanan remained strongly anti-Manley until his death in the 'Sixties, soon after returning from a Moscow visit and disillusionment with Communism. "Not for blacks," he said.

considering

Trea-

Manley

Chapter 24

***"The NRA is resolved to co-operate with Mr. Manley in his efforts and makes an appeal to one and all concerned to free their minds of any doubt. The NRA is so convinced of Mr. Manley's sincerity and honesty . . . that its (proposal) to the dock workers (to form) a registered trade union with Mr. Bustamante as president, was calculated to strengthen Mr. Manley's hands in the negotiations with the shipping companies. The idea of a trade union for longshoremen is not new. Mr. Manley and Mr. Campbell have themselves so advised."

themselves

*A columnist next day sympathised with his dislike of this "instrument."

island.

position in this ~~island~~. He is trusted by Capital and can be trusted by Labour as well."

THE Thursday morning meeting stood at over 2,000 waterfront workers but bore a mixed success. Public address system were new-fangled in the 'Thirties, a mechanical hoodwink used by nightclub singers to conceal the cracks in their larynxes. His suspicion of, and failure to use the microphone made ~~his reach all the more arduous~~

his reach all the more arduous.

~~He spoke from a car at Number One Pier~~

Williams,

He spoke from a coal car at Number One Pier flanked by Edna and W.A. Williams, a worker delegate, and, curiously, the Director of Public Works, a man of the Establishment. He may simply have climbed abroad to escape the press, but he was Jonah abroad. Workers would figure that the fix was in. The mood of the men hardened. No number of concessions would make them break the strike until Bustamante and Grant were freed. They would accept one shilling an hour (double for overtime) plus freedom for their leaders. Manley saw it was time to make it clear he was not setting up a leader labour.

concessions

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"The people," he told them, "whom you regarded as your leaders had the ~~misfortune~~ to be arrested and put in jail. They are still in jail. In that situation, I felt that somebody who had the cause of the people at heart should come forward . . . and ~~let~~ you realise that there were intelligent people in the country (who) sympathise with your position and were prepared to put forward your case . . . to speak on your behalf."

The indelicate but factual predication would not elicit ~~elicit~~ zest for his leadership. Nevertheless, he laid it on the line:

"I am not a labour leader. I am a lawyer and my work is in the courts where I work for anyone who desires my services, to the best of my ability

~~When the time comes that org~~

When the time comes that organisations are to be formed by labourers to protect themselves and their rights, I do not say it will be possible for me to form these organisations, but I am prepared to give my services free. Working people are entitled to elect their own representatives to lead them . . . men who know their conditions . . . their grievances . . . men whom they can meet, men ~~whome~~ they can trust."

insight

Obviously, at this time, he neither sought nor expected a mass base for whatever future his insight reflected. He established what his role was. He would advise, not lead. The dependence of Jamaican politics on union power was not yet a reality. He was filling a breach, waiting for the release of Bustamante, a matter that was in the "hands of a very great lawyer and a very great worker for the people," J.A.G. Smith.

very

As it proved, the Smith rescue was to break on a stubborn Supreme Court; both men would be free only after some fast quiet work at King's House by Manley.

had

At this point in the waterfront meeting, Manley stated that he ~~had~~ been asked by certain workers' representatives to negotiate a settlement with the shippers. He reported the result: twopence an hour more to make the rate elevenpence (about 10 cents.)

It was rejected out of hand.

their

For an hour he reasoned on the coal car. He reminded them that any increase in labour rates would be ultimately born by the local producers, ". . . your own people . . ." But that homily was counter productive to the banana loaders on the waterfront who had no identity with banana growers on the mountain. He shook the record at them, pointing out that no previous negotiator had been able to secure even "one farthing," but they shook ~~their~~ heads.

Implacable faces turned up to him, they asked what about the overtime.

When they were told tath not only was the double time rejected, but that "nothing" would be added to the current o.t. rates, the planks of the old fingerjetty vibrated under their hurt roar. But after they had quieted down, he faced them with the facts of negotiation

negotiating.

"Bargaining is a word you will hear more and more in Jamaica from now on," he said. "You cannot strike, and stick our forever (for) one price. There is more . . . to consider. When the price of dock labour goes up, food is going to become more expensive (and) there are many people working ten hours a day in factories for ~~the~~ shillings a week."

the

It took a firm, disciplined resolve and a call on his reserves of adriot advocacy to keep the big crowd in the frame of mind that would leave the door open for more talk. The crowd was discontented and uneasy, but standing beside Manley was a workingman who would have a subsequent influence on the labour movement.

Williams was a tall, powerfully built black man of strong personality and big impassioned voice.* At the end of a speech endorsing solidarity in their demands, he raised the single song which above all else could be counted upon to put a grip on any West Indian crowd in the pre-World War II years. Hats and caps instantly doffed, the men, whom Sir Leonard Lyle, the head of Tate & Lyle, owners of WISCO, had recently savagely assaulted for "not remotely" resembling "the English labourer in life or mentality," stood at attention as they sang *God Save The King*, and dispersed quietly.

*He was interned during the war with Bustamante, Ken and Frank Hill and others.

MANLEY'S MOVES TOOK ON new urgency. On Thursday at noon, he contacted Governor Denham and "demanded" that a Conciliation board be set up. Within three hours, Denham, now chugging along with unaccustomed speed, had his selectees at King's House and the terms of reference drafted. With another dockers' meeting set for Friday night Manley turned to the Bustamante impasse. He offered a strongly worded argument for Busta's release. He saw that only then would the country be at work again. Bustamante, in his mind, was now the charismatic leader.

In such roughly sketched ways, in that week of crisis, were the political lines being drawn.

He had been ~~moving~~ moving quickly, but carefully, since Tuesday, here and there crimping the edges so as to separate organised labour from organised ~~politics~~ alien disciplines in his reading then; at once tongue-lashing his friend Noel Nethersole for talking of taking the National Reform Association into labour activities, then turning hotly to defend himself against lawyer Ross Livingston, already a Bustamante man; and ever watchful of the guileful J.A.G. Smith, his most formidable courtroom rival who having lost supremacy to the brilliant young man, could not have taken kindly to his appearance on the political field.

The Conciliation board was for Manley a triumph. Just two days before, the Governor had been heard against any show of softness to the strikers unless they returned to work. The Board was the first significant step towards industrial arbitration. It had settled well with the thinkers of the day; and would have been effective all around if the Supreme Court had not quashed the plea for the release of the two folk heroes. (By now the rulers were muttering their fears that once let loose, Busta would abscond; possibly to Cuba.) The fury of the preceding days drew away, but the power lay around. The situation needed defusing.

But was he the one to do it?

Because of his life-style and accomplishments, he had been chosen by the upper elements as the safe layer against Bustamante, the dangerous fellow. *Gleaner* establishment writers were exhorting the workers to "Listen to Mr. Manley!" An editorial titled *patriotism*, lauded his integrity as it sought to soothe the dockers' fears. But these death kisses may have effected more suspicions.* In yet the other daily, the *Jamaica Standard*, a correspondent was giving a strong vote for leadership to the England-born journalist H.P. Jacobs over Manley: "Mr. Manley . . . is paying too little attention to the mentality of the workers; seeing that he already represents more Capitalist concerns than anyone that we know of, the thing is simply absurd."

"Absurd" "Abruse" was strong but not unreasonable. Manley had been picked as mediator by the Other Side — the Governor in King's House. In contrast was columnist Ester Chapman's sniff that Bustamante was a mere "local labour leader who has been given formidable importance as the result of ill-advised publicity"

*"Mr. Manley is not the individual to shrink his responsibility because he happens to be counsel for a shipping company (or) organiser and ~~chairman~~ chairman of Jamaica Welfare to which the United Fruit and Standard Fruit Companies contribute money" Editorial.

The charade had its funny side.

In a country hilariously shade proud, in those racially farcical times, anybody with a bone of humour looked on in awe at the goings-on. Bustamante, who had not hesitated to pass-for-white living among the bestially-bent white natives of the American racist states, had cannily identified with the ~~black~~ power base in the island; while Manley, the darker-hued, a race victim in England, fought for a footing.*

~~ma~~

Manley's press statement late Thursday afternoon made a subtle nod in this direction when he observed that the Conciliation Commission had come about as a result of representations from "those of us who are working in the labour interests and I believe supported by the employer interests." The Commission included a high judge, the Collector General two politicians, H.P. Jacobs and the head of the United Fruit Company, Kieffer.**

Manley was now in the thick of things. So thick, he was now asking for more help while acknowledging he was now asking for more help while acknowledging the "valuable assistance" he was receiving, and sent out a call for those "sincerely on the side of labour" to a meeting in his office on Friday morning.

High on his list of most valued assistants was Edna — and a dockside laundress and caterer named Agnes Bernard, already beloved for "carrying" many

**Education, commerce, politics, the church, and all else, had a racial bias. Social progress of the children of the folk was encompassed by a set of stiff rules understood by everybody including the blacks. Each of the 14 elected legislators, although mostly black, was second fiddler to the custos (white and appointed), in the parish. The prominent legislator H.E. Allan, appointed by the Governor to the Frome Commission, replying to a ~~reporter's~~ question on its work, ruefully said: "I must be careful what I say being the only black sheep in the lot." He was later knighted by his Sovereign, the "first black knight."*

***The Kieffer appointment, a notoriously anti-labour and racist employer and much disliked by the people, met with strong objection from the longshoremen.*

a down-at-luck docker, some of whom, for all the much publicised one-&-six (one shilling & sixpence, 15c) an hour, often was hired for only one hour's work a week. "Aggie" established a soup kitchen at No. 9 Princess Street and gave free hot meals to the strikers.*

had A DOUBLE endorsement of Manley and Bustamante by over 2,000 dockers made the Friday morning meeting at Number One Pier, memorable. Appropriate to the incoming industrial/union age, as ~~had~~ been the quiet redbrick Coke Chapel steps to the leisurely intellectual exercises of the oldtime politicians, Manley spoke from the now familiar railway car which he had made his own forum. Opening the agenda was the bidding from the National Reform Association, the only national political people-oriented organisation in place in that watershed years. It had been approved in prison by Bustamante and was read by his solicitor, Ross Livingston, urging the dockers to "form themselves into a trade union and place Mr. Bustamante as president . . . legally ready and able to negotiate with wharf owners, shipping companies and government."

The strategy, drawn up by NRA president Noel Nethersole, and general secretary Ken Hill, was clear. It would give validity to Bustamante's leadership and ~~secure careful treatment from the courts. A massive~~ secure careful treatment from the courts. A massive sentence for sedition in the savagely Colonial court would be less likely.

Manley's bid for acceptance by the dockers received favour when he firmly if expediently denied

priest

**Neither lady would have succeeded so well at boss-busting was it not for an unconformist Anglican priest named Revd. A.H. Webb, chief of the Children's Lunch Fund, who stretched his ethics serevely to place his facilities in service, offering, in the words of Edna Manley, "a meal for 1,500 at four hours notice."*

~~any personal interest in office. "I am not going into~~

any personal interest in office. "I am not going into politics," he said. "I have no time for politics (so) I hope there will be no jealousy or suspicion in this cause." And as the mood was good, he showed them a Buchanan-circulated pamphlet.

jealousy

pamphlet

WORKERS! DO NOT TRUST MANLEY AND (ERASMUS) CAMPBELL. THEY ARE THE TOOLS OF CAPITALISTS. SUPPORT BUSTAMANTE AND GRANT.

The slice of risky Mark Anthony turned out to be good cheese. The dockers shouted their disapproval of the pamphlet and Manley made his own first of several public statements to lay the partner-of-plutocrats spectre with which his traducers were haunting him:

case "It is perfectly true that as a lawyer I represent a great number of companies but I do not represent ~~more companies than I represent poor people in our~~ more companies than I represent poor people in our law courts." He applied his lawyer's knack of turning the prosecution's case to his advantage by explaining how his close acquaintance with the employers would enable him to "go and speak on your behalf to men who will trust me to put your ~~case~~ fairly."

His speech that followed has been credited with being the clearest exposition up to then of a trade union. It was simple, deliberate, repetitious on some issues, persuasive and urgent. He spoke without a microphone but his passion gave him good voice and it carried over the great asphalted yard of goods sheds and rail-cars idled by the general strike.

"Many people have asked me whether they must put their signature on a piece of paper for the formation of a union.

"My advice to you is: sign it.

"Because by doing so, you are only promising to join a union.

"If you agree to join, you (must select) men . . . and give them power.

"The strength of the union is in unity. You must train yourselves to be loyal to your union and to stand together in decisions. (You) have proved today that (you) can stand together and be loyal to each other.

divide "Do not allow people to split you into groups. Do not allow quarrels to ~~divide~~ your ranks.

"The first step, is to teach that difficulties can be adjusted by compromise.

"Remember, "Remember, you cannot all lead at the same time. I ask for a little trust, a little patience.

"Be careful and wise in the choice of the people who lead you . . . not only men who can talk, but men who can think.

"(This)) may be the starting-point for (a better) island.

"Trust your union, serve it, and you will (gain) security and hope for yourselves."

SHREWD tactician that he was, Manley saw through what was the first strong effort of the employers to kill in the shell any serious organised move to union. In a play rigged to cut off the workers from Bustamante, the shipping men were agreeing to all Manley's demands for the longshoremen, expecting, that as had frequently happened, a whiff of money would overpower principle.

Manley, the shippers hoped, would be the bag-man.

would Manley, said the Harbour Street mafiosi, ~~would~~ shove it to the stevedores.

"They had the idea that I was the best person to let the workers know (of the new rates) and would not only get acceptance but (was more acceptable than Bustamante) in their eyes." The dump-Bustamante-for-Manley plan collapsed when N.W. found it an offer he could refuse.

THE WEEK WAS ALMOST over. With Bustamante ruthlessly taken out by the authorities, Manley was the figure at the centre. He was now wholly engaged in the effort to return Busta to the streets; a Bustamante armed with the legality of an elected union chief.*

The elected legislature was not part of Manley's forces. Except for Smith, most of these men, put into power by a better privileged minority electorate (adult suffrage would not be for another ~~six~~ years yet,) saw their duty in arming "the governing body to deal with the matter," although they did recognize, as spoken by Trelawny legislator Revd. Maxwell,** that "social and economic injustice" was the true cause ~~to~~ the Troubles; and wondered aloud about "new legislation" to ~~allow~~ the establishment of trade unions. Stringingly General told trade unions. Stringingly the Attorney General told the unsearching office-holders that such legislation had already been enacted 19 years before.

*Another union leader, barrister Erasmus E.A. Campbell, chief of the white collar Clerks' Union, was of great assistance to Manley during the week. Campbell had been often attacked by Bustamante for what the flamboyant Busta regarded as his "jealousy." Colourless but unabashed, Campbell would for many years be a factor in labour activities.

**Father of Journalist John Maxwell.

The English press, despite the London Times reactionary comment on "local firebrands and visiting agitators," was in favour of getting at the economic roots of the trouble. The London Daily Express pointed out that Britain bought more sugar from Cuba than Jamaica, although selling less goods to Cuba. The British Communist M.P. William Gallagher facetiously asked in Commons whether the Colonial Secretary was aware that "Empire Day was celebrated in Jamaica by the execution of mother and child."

One settled area in the rumble belonged to the city government. Bustingl Mayor Dr. Anderson had city government. Bustling Mayor Dr. Anderson had made his own unilateral moves by offering a 50% raise (to four shillings & sixpence or 45¢ a day) to his street cleaners, and was conferring closely with Manley on ways to ease the tensions, especially among the fire brigade. But it was agreed by everybody who knew the streets, that the only road to quiet lay in freeing the two leaders, Bustamante and St. William Grant.

So when, on Friday, the Conciliation board reported to Manley its decision to double the overtime rates on the wharves, acidly Manley told them the offer was too little too late. "I told them to release Bustamante or Kingston will burn," he has said.

Dr. Anderson agreed with him and the board loaded themselves into motorcars and sped off to see Denham in King's House. Manley stopped off first at the fire station to keep his firemen cool, then continued to King's House. He knew the dockers were key. The tough, competitive, truculent longshoremen, unlike the itinerant sugar estate workers, were a cohesive group, kingpins of their enclave of winches and high-wheeled drays from Harbour Street to the sea.

THE lights were burning in Governor Denham's office where anxious men worked to relieve the beleaguered downtown; now dark and deserted under the smashed street lamps, save for police prowl waggons and occasional bands of youths bent on window-breaking.

At King's House, Manley says laconically, "there is a mad party."

They were waiting for him. Of the seven or eight men present, only he had been in close physical touch with the strikers all day. He had witnessed the moods, felt their approbation and disapproval. He had been in battle with friend and adversary during the day and the night before.

He had fought with fellow lawyers, the volatile and passionate young Marxist Richard Hart, and Hart's friend, Buchanan, vitriolic and devotedly anti-Manley. He had worked to reeling, on the wage increase to the longshoremen, only to have the offer rejected by the immovable shilling-an-hour stand engraved by Williams, a reasonable man turned intransigent by years of wharf owners' exploitation. He had crossed swords with Lawyer Livingston and rebuked Nethersole for "jumping in the union business" with his National Reform Association.*

~~Only the cheerful and intelligent assistance of his~~

Only the cheerful and intelligent assistance of his wife, Edna, had lightened, considerably, the burden of the day; supported by the practical contribution of the feeding programme she had set up with the youthful, dynamic, articulate Aggie Bernard.

"Her (Edna's) great work did more to help than all I did," he has said.

action

**He perhaps saw Nethersole's ~~action~~ as liable to lose them friends. The catch-all NRA had brought together such apart people as merchant J.B. Stivens and communist Buchanan, conservative U. Theo McKay and agitator St. William Grant. It was also the crucial that had annealed the anti-establishment ideas and prepared the ground for support of the young Jamaica Standard, the lively, robust and very professional daily then challenging the Gleaner. Or was he even then looking into the future at a potential, powerful, purely political party?*

candour,

the

AS it was, he was an edgy man at the heel of the day when he entered Denham's office. To their anxious queries on the state of the city, he offered no comfort. With unkindly ~~candour~~, he observed that even yestruday's hope had worn out. He could no longer promise a quiet city in return for Bustamante's release. Yesturday's failure to grant Bustamante bail had stiffened the strikers' resolve, and even convinced many that only a violent overthrow of ~~the~~ system would do.

This crumpled the company. In rising panic, they threw the problem to Manley and made him a oneman Conciliation agency. They begged him to go to Rae Town prison, He should see Bustamante and get his assurance that the system would stand. So long as he, Manley, was assured, that would quiet their fears.

The missing essential among them was a sympathy for the wretched conditions of the poor.

While the arch conservative *London Times*, perhaps from new information, was scoring the "long years of neglect by the Colonial Office, local governments and employers" for the "standard of life of the West Indian labourer" which was far below even "halfway tolerable," the Jamaica *Gleaner* was blasting away at the Coloured Social Welfare Societies in London and George Padmore* for observing that "while Tory politicians sing of the glories of the Empire on which the sun never sets, for millions (of other) British citizens . . . the sun never rises."

The *de facto* if temporary abdication of the Board had been expected by Manley. He had been close to the action in all areas — with the strikers, the King's House strategies, and with the Smith-Livingston which he was meeting with an in-Livingston axis which he was meeting with an increasingly smoky eye — had correctly judged the future. He had seen Smith and Livingston before the King's House meeting, and put them to arranging an interview with their client in Rae Town prison. (Bustamante and Grant had been transferred from the Sutton Street jail under cover of early morning darkness and a police/military escort bristling with arms.)

It appears that while Livingston liked the idea of the ~~Manley-Bustamante~~ meeting, Smith did not. "In fact," Manley says, "Smith spent two hours trying to get Bustamante not to see me."

Manley-Bustamante

Hurrying across to Drumblair (his lands nearly adjoined the King's House grounds,) Manley had a quick meal and change and was ready when the telephone summons came from the prison. Behind the iron doors and high redbrick walls, the cousins met and spoke at length for the first time in years. He had been consulted by Bustamante around 1932, just before going on one of his voyages to Cuba, Manley has since recalled, but they had not talked since 1934 when he returned. They had passed on the streets of Kingston for years without a nod.

"Well, Norman, I'm so glad to see you," Manley relates as the first words that night at ten o'clock in Rae Town prison. "It is our enemies who have divided us. Let us forget the past."

"Okay," Manley said.

THE release of the two men was staged with the strictest legal protocol so as not to damage the system. Manley would go to the prison, talk with Bustamante, and later assure the court in session "that in my judgement, as the person in touch with all the strikers in Kingston, it was both safe and essential to let him out of jail." He kept the ploy going by talking Smith, Bustamante's counsel, into overnighing in Kingston instead of heading out to his Clarendon constituency for his weekly political fence-mending.

Gravely, and all according to the book, the two men laid plans for the renewal of the *habeas corpus* application on the new evidence from Manley. Saturday's sitting in Chambers was of course a formality, since the application had already been granted by the real power sitting in King's House on Friday night — although all this was not known then save by the principals in the cast. Bail went to Bustamante (\$500) and Grant (\$100) and they were released to a rocking, jubilant city.

Bustamante's
instead

THE WORKERS HAD WON their first clearcut victory. A new kind of loyalty had emerged among them; when they stood together for principle. Disorganised, broke and hungry, faced by rifles and machine guns on land, a called-up British cruiser offshore, and a hostile, mostly mindless employer class with the economic power (and a kind of legal vigilante status, which in emergencies was invoked, for them to bear and use arms) to bring them to their knees, the small folk had dug in, holding ground with the stubbornness of St. Elizabeth mules.

What was even more rewarding, was, that resolute, discerning leaders had been found among themselves, men and women capable of resisting, and yet, in spite of their betrayed and exploited generations, also capable of trust.

It was a good year for Manley and Bustamante to be ready in. And a good year for the dead ones, the executed resistance leaders across three centuries, whose *in memoriam* was the courage and the hammering spirit of the dockers, and the sugar workers, and the firemen, and the banana carriers, and all those others who made their stand and singlehandedly seized the time.

ON the face of it, the coal car party had a jolly time, with congratulations passing among the leaders. But even then, on that railroad car (to which Manley with an athletic bound had led them,) the lines were being drawn. There were already a few well defined ones, such as Manley noticing what he saw as Smith's studied avoidance of crediting him with any part in the successful bail application, and Busta's one-upping the Manley tuppenny increase with the promise of double overtime a request the shippers had denied Manley in the earlier negotiations, but which had been agreed to on the Friday evening, and kept quiet at Manley's insistence.

Odd little quirks occurred, such as Bustamante addressing the workers as *Comrades* — a word that was to become anathema for its place in the PNP tradition — and Manley advocating the forming of a "labour party," a form which Bustamante was to preempt for his own political force and the country being aware for the first time of the cousinly bond between the two Shearer descendants as revealed by Bustamante.

The meeting ended. The crowd surged forward to the coal car, lifted Bustamante, Smith, Mayor Anderson and ~~Livingston~~ and bore them away on their shoulders. The main gladiator is left in the ring.

They did not offer to shoulder him. Hurt, a little saddened, he walked away with Edna. He once said of this moment, "I go home sadly. The first round is over."

Number

class,

A TRIUMPHANT MOTOCADE EMERGED from the penitentiary gates in the early afternoon and drove the mile to the ~~Number~~ One Pier. With Manley Bustamante and Grant in the procession were Smith, Livingston and solicitor Allan Wynter. Edna Manley was waiting at the pier with Seivright, Ansell Hart and Willie Foster Davis, the unofficial delegates from the middle ~~class~~, declaring an intent to follow the Manley lead in forging a link with the folk.

As it turned out, the middle-class support would be the binding strength of Manley's People's National Party in the years yet and it is at least arguable whether this did not alienate the mass support which adult suffrage was so soon to catapult into supreme importance.

The meeting on the pier was a short one. Manley and Bustamante left for the Conciliation board where, Manley dryly commented, they "greeted Bustamante like a brother." So brotherly in fact that they agreed to pay double for overtime on the docks though they would not budge from the twopence an hour straight-time increase.